NEOCONSERVATISM AND THE NEW AMERICAN CENTURY

Maria Ryan

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by

Maria Ryan

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To the memory of Mary Murray

and

To my parents

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INTRODUCTION

THE PRE-9/11 YEARS

> Did we keep alive a certain way of looking at American foreign policy at a time when it was pretty unpopular? Yes. I think probably you need to have people do that so that you have something to come back to.
>
> Robert Kagan, 2005[1]

IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE 9/11 TERRORIST ATTACKS, neoconservatism became the "*cause célèbre* of international politics." The ideology of neoconservatism was, it seemed, the intellectual justification for the Bush administration's new "war on terror."[2] A number of influential neocons served in, or as advisors to, the Bush administration, and it became apparent that these neoconservatives had lobbied for many of the policies now being pursued under the aegis of a "war on terror" several years before the 2001 terrorist attacks that catalyzed them.[3] As Robert Kagan observes in the quotation prefacing this introduction, neoconservatism had provided "something to come back to."

The neoconservative foreign policy project had already matured by the time of the 9/11 attacks, and the attention it began to receive shortly before the 2003 Iraq War was belated. In a September 2000 report by the neocon lobby group the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), which was signed by five members of the future Bush administration, the authors observed that their vision for unassailable military supremacy was so ambitious that implementing it might prove difficult "absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor."[4] This unwittingly prescient comment indicated that should such circumstances come to pass, these neoconservatives knew how they could be exploited to further long-standing objectives. Yet, during the Clinton years, neoconservatism had matured with remarkably little attention. Although it was always a public—albeit very elite—enterprise (what lobbying efforts are not public?), for the most part it had been absent from public debate since the Reagan years,

when an earlier generation of Cold War neoconservatives had served in government after constructing a critique of détente and putting forward a strategy of aggressive containment. After the collapse of Soviet communism, this earlier generation of Cold War neocons lost its defining purpose (at least in terms of foreign policy). Their strategy had been defensive: premised on the existence of a competing superpower, which they regarded as an existential threat. When that threat disintegrated, they generally began to advocate a much-reduced global role for America.[5]

However, in the early nineties a second generation of younger post–Cold War neoconservatives emerged. This generation of neocons advocated dramatically different solutions. They posited that the world was no longer bipolar or even multipolar; it was "unipolar." According to neoconservative columnist, Charles Krauthammer, the United States was now the "*single pole of world power*" and there was "no prospect in the immediate future of any power to rival the United States." America, Krauthammer claimed, was "unchallenged." Now free from the constraints of superpower rivalry, the United States could be "a decisive player *in any conflict in whatever part of the world it chooses*" (emphases added). Krauthammer was setting the bar high: he believed that after the demise of the Soviet Union, the United States had unprecedented freedom of action; suffice it to say that this was a serious overestimation of American power in many ways. Nevertheless, it was "unipolarity" that became the new strategic touchstone. For the neoconservatives, such apparently unprecedented freedom of action was something worth preserving; thus they argued that the United States' new global strategy should not be *de*fensive, as it had been during the Cold War, but *off*ensive: to actively preserve America's position as the single pole of world power. Krauthammer's "unipolar moment" should be extended as far into the future as possible.[6] This book will argue that, during the nineties, the chief objective of neoconservative foreign policy advocates was no longer to contain communism, nor to "export" democracy overseas but to ensure that the United States remained the single pole of power in every region of the world.[7] *Unipolarism* thus constituted the new defining strategic and ideological touchstone for neoconservatism in the post–Cold War period—and, indeed, the two terms, "neoconservatism" and "unipolarism," would become almost (although not completely, as we shall see) synonymous.

During the Clinton years, while they were "in opposition," as it were, a network led by neoconservative intellectuals, journalists, academics, and political activists debated what preserving the unipolar moment actually meant *in practice*. Remaining the single pole of power was the goal but how could this be achieved? How should areas of core national interest be approached? Did conflicts in peripheral regions affect the U.S. position?

If so, how should America respond? The maintenance of unipolarity *in practice* was the main source of disagreement among the neocons and their supporters during their years in opposition (though they did not disagree in all cases). When members of that network entered government in 2001, they did so with the broad objective of preserving America's unipolarity, its supposed position as the single pole of power. Having an objective is one thing, however; agreement on how to pursue it and having an opportunity to do so is another. It was 9/11 that would serve as a catalyst for those seeking to preserve American unipolarity, an objective discussed, debated, refined, and redefined by the neoconservative-led intellectual network during the 1990s.

The history of the first generation of Cold War neoconservatives has been well documented.[8] As such, this book will be devoted to the 1990s—a period on which there have been no book-length studies of the neocons—when they were in opposition and developing the strategy for unipolarism. The array of neoconservative journals, monographs, and, especially, output from think tanks in the 1990s provide a vast archive of their post–Cold War intellectual development. This book utilizes that archive to trace the development of contemporary foreign-policy neoconservatism from the fall of the Berlin Wall to the election of George W. Bush in 2000. It examines the emergence of a broad-based political and intellectual network led by, although never exclusive to, neoconservatives, which sought to put forward a new conception of U.S. foreign policy. This conception rejected the Cold War paradigm of containment and deterrence and proposed instead an offensive strategy of preserving and extending "the unipolar moment." It examines the way in which the neoconservative-led network interacted with the state (successfully changing Clinton's policy on National Missile Defense, for example, by challenging the intelligence analysis upon which it rested); how the network set itself up as an intellectual vanguard against traditional balance-of-power realism and what they viewed as neoisolationism in international relations; how it prepared for a possible return to power; and, ultimately, how it failed to reconcile the imperatives of unipolar power with a purported emphasis on moral ideals.

In addition, the book contends that although the objective of remaining "the single pole of world power" was clear, there were problems and disagreements about how to achieve this in practice. Although neocons and their sympathizers agreed over National Missile Defense and Iraq, they disagreed about the extent to which preserving unipolarity required involvement in "peripheral" cases such as Bosnia and Kosovo and, if it was necessary, what methods should be used in those cases. The book will also argue that the neoconservative strategy was incomplete: they

seldom wrote about or discussed countries such as Iran and Russia because, despite having a clear global objective, the strategy to preserve unipolarity emerged in an uncoordinated and often reactive manner, responding to the issues of the day and pushing their own agenda only if there was a clear political pretext for doing so. Finally, the book will argue that the whole premise of the neoconservative strategy was flawed because the United States was never unipolar. The neocons and their supporters had a superficial conception of power; they ignored realms of international power that were not military and state-based, and they were virtually blind to unconventional ways in which American power might be resisted.

Thus far, studies of neoconservatism and post–Cold War U.S. foreign policy have omitted large and revealing sections of this history. They have concentrated more on the Bush administration than on the neocons in opposition and drawn conclusions about neoconservatism that conflate idealistic rhetoric with strategic reality and are often based on post-9/11 reflections of the Bush administration rather than on an evaluation of the development of neoconservative thought during the Clinton years.[9] This incomplete history has led to misreadings and misconceptions of what post–Cold War neoconservative foreign policy actually was. Since it was during the 1990s that neoconservatism matured, it is only by examining this period in detail that we can build up an accurate picture of what neoconservative strategy actually was and what its proponents hoped to achieve—the preservation of America as the single pole of power in every region of the world—if and when they might enter government. Although a full examination of the Bush administration's foreign policy is not within the scope of this book, its conclusions have major implications for our view of what neoconservatism actually contributed to the Bush foreign policy and how and why different factions within that administration were able to collaborate.

The dominant perception of neoconservatism among journalists and professional scholars is that neoconservatism is characterized by the desire to "export democracy."[10] This is a perception that has united critics and supporters alike. Neoconservatism is depicted as an ideologically determined strategy that places democracy promotion and moral ideals on a par with or even above material vital interests for strategic or moral reasons or both. Some have gone so far as to equate it with humanitarian interventionism. In the lead-up to the 2003 Iraq War, many liberal interventionists argued strongly that a U.S.-led invasion, under the stewardship of the neocons, would lead to the liberation of the Iraqi people.[11]

This perception—or rather *mis*perception, as I argue it is—about the place of democracy promotion in neoconservative strategy has been exacerbated

by neocons themselves, some of whom, since 9/11, have elaborated a revisionist history of their own motivations during the Clinton years. In September 2003, for example, Joshua Muravchik of the American Enterprise Institute claimed that one part of the neoconservative sensibility that had emerged during the Clinton years was "a greater readiness to use American power and resources where nothing but humanitarian concerns are at issue"—even though Muravchik himself all but ruled out such interventions at the time—and that the neocons developed a strategy of "implanting democracy in the [Middle East]," a notion that, contrary to popular perception, was almost entirely absent from the neoconservative debate at the time.[12] In his valediction to neoconservatism, Francis Fukuyama claimed that the neocons had "supported humanitarian intervention in the Balkans," despite the fact that, at the time, he himself was against NATO intervention in Bosnia because he considered the region of little strategic value.[13] Similar post-9/11 comments about promoting democracy have been made by neoconservatives such as Irwin Stelzer, Adam Wolfson, Robert Kagan, Max Boot, William Kristol, and Charles Krauthammer.[14]

The central focus of this book is to demonstrate that the purported neoconservative preoccupation with moral ideals and especially "exporting democracy"—to use Muravchik's phrase—was almost entirely abstract and rhetorical, if it was present at all. Where neocons did invoke idealistic rhetoric (and it is usually in the abstract rather than the practical), the caveats and conditions that they added to it all but ruled out military intervention in the service of democracy or any other moral ideals, although (as we shall see in Chapter 5) some of them acknowledge that the rhetoric is useful for the galvanizing effect it has on the public.[15] Specifically, and most importantly, the neocons drew a clear distinction between the differing uses of military and *non*military power: military power, they argued, should be used only for the protection of strategic interests that were vital to the preservation of American unipolarity rather than for the protection or advancement of moral ideals. *Non*military methods might be considered as a way to encourage democracy, but only if this would not conflict with the strategic imperatives of unipolarity—and there were very few, if any, examples of this from them in the 1990s. In other words, beyond the abstract and grandiose rhetoric often employed by the neocons, they *themselves* recognized that strategic interests and moral ideals did not always converge and that military power should therefore be reserved for the protection of vital interests. In the words of Muravchik, "rarely should force be used for values alone. It should be reserved for situations where our interests are at stake."[16] At best, then, moral considerations were a secondary, if not tertiary,

concern, invoked only when doing so would support existing strategic interests. What this book will show is that the rhetoric deployed by some neocons was deceptive because it was grossly disproportionate to the actual emphasis they placed on moral ideals in practice. The contention that they were motivated by high ideals conflates and confuses rhetoric and practice. It was through the prism of the imperatives of maintaining America's supposed unipolarity that the neocons and their allies viewed every international issue. The question they asked was whether a given situation impacted upon America's position as the single pole of world power and, if so, what action was necessary.

In making the argument that neocons have always prioritized interests over ideals, I do not seek to criticize them for failing to prioritize democracy promotion at the point of a gun (a challenging, if not impossible, prospect indeed). Instead, my analysis highlights the caveats, qualifiers, and conditions that neocons *themselves* attached to the use of military force and the promotion of democracy. This requires looking past their ostentatious rhetoric and reading their proposals about the use of force in detail. Accordingly, a central argument of this book is that neoconservatism should be evaluated on the basis that it was a strategy dedicated to preserving and extending America's supposed position as the single pole of world power. It was not a universally resonant endeavor that transcended American national interests in pursuit of a Kantian-style democratic peace. It did not constitute a new variant of Wilsonianism.[17] Rather it was a strategy that was devoted to projecting American power in accordance with an expansive definition of the national interest; namely, remaining "the single pole of world power" that could intervene decisively "in any conflict in whatever part of the world it chooses."

By evaluating neoconservatism in this way, we can identify the foundation for the link between neoconservatives and other conservative nationalists, such as Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney, with whom they were allied. So often the question is asked: how do these individuals fit into the story of the neocons when they themselves are not neocons? The answer offered here is that this latter group shared the neocons' belief that maintaining unipolarity was the chief and overriding objective of U.S. foreign policy.[18] Because neoconservatives reserved hard power almost exclusively for the protection of security interests, they, in fact, supported military intervention *for the same reasons* as other conservative unipolarists: to protect interests perceived to be integral to American unipolarity. Thus, neoconservatism was not particularly unique, and the close alliance between neocons and other conservatives was based on their shared conception of the national interest as global unipolarity. In sum, they were all unipolarists, although Cheney, Rumsfeld, and others

eschewed the grandiose ideological rhetoric of self-described neoconservatives such as Robert Kagan and William Kristol and did not appear to share the neocons' (rather tepid) claim to advocate nonmilitary means to encourage democracy if it did not conflict with U.S. interests. Overall, though, the difference between them is, as we shall see, more stylistic and rhetorical than substantive, because ultimately it is difficult to find a neoconservative who advocated using hard power solely for the purpose of democratization.

Both groups of conservatives were firmly in the realist tradition then, but theirs was not the balance-of-power realism of George Kennan and Hans Morgenthau for it incorporated a much more expansive definition of the national interest. This is not to suggest that these different strands of conservatism are all exactly the same, however. Many commentators have been struck by the forcefulness and grandiosity of the neocons' rhetoric, most particularly after 9/11, and it is important to acknowledge the effect that this has on observers (i.e., the assumption that neoconservatives seek to "export" democracy) and the galvanizing effect that neocons such as Kristol, Kagan, and David Brooks hoped and intended this ultrapatriotic language to have on the public. Many in this group of activists are also self-described "neoconservatives," and that name persists because it refers both to a particular historical genealogy, a unique route that neocons took to reach their convictions and to a distinctive style of activism. So to refer to these two groups of conservatives as unipolarists and nothing else would remove the nuances that distinguish each of them—hence my earlier comment that "neoconservatism" and "unipolarism" were almost, but not completely, synonymous. Nevertheless, the substantive differences between the two groups of conservatives were minimal.

In deploying the strategy of unipolarism during the Clinton years, these intellectuals and activists formed a network of think tanks, magazines, and journals that was led by neoconservatives but was never their exclusive domain. This network was the organizational hallmark (and, in the long term, success) of the neocons who led it, and although it was always very public, it was also thoroughly elite. The network made no attempt to cultivate a grassroots constituency. Its funding came from a handful of well-known conservative philanthropic foundations. Its lobbying was aimed primarily at two elite groups: first, the Congressional Republican Party (so as to purge it of balance-of-power realism and incipient isolationism); and second, in a broader sense, the Washington, D.C.–based foreign policy establishment; those who shape opinion on foreign affairs, or in Bruce Kuklick's words, "the decision-making class."[19] Finally, they were in no small part motivated by the desire to position themselves as credible candidates for positions in a future Republican administration.

An alternative conception of this network as a group of intellectuals influenced by the political philosopher Leo Strauss (the so-called Straussians) has also attracted some attention in recent years.[20] In the most prominent of these accounts, Anne Norton demonstrates that there is indeed a political-intellectual network of Straussians that has moved in and out of government and academia, whose adherents have held influential positions in successive U.S. administrations and contributed to both domestic and foreign policy. Some of these are also neoconservatives—but only a minority. While some of these neocons have extrapolated from Strauss' philosophy to inform their own ideas (particularly with regard to intelligence analysis, as we shall see in Chapter 7), Strauss is in no way integral to the strategy of unipolarity and is thus an unsuitable referent for the formation of the neoconservative-led network during the Clinton years.

In making the argument for unipolarism, the book includes but also goes well beyond a discussion of Iraq, the case that has dominated the debate about post-1989 neoconservatism. This case alone does not define neoconservatism because it was not just a strategy for the Middle East but purported to be a strategy for *global* dominance through striving to maintain the U.S. position as the single pole of power in *every* region of the world.[21] Through examining neglected cases and casting new light on those already associated with the neocons, we will evaluate what preserving unipolarity meant in practice. In other words, in translating their objective of unipolarity into practical policies, how did the neoconservatives decide where to intervene and why and what kind of intervention was necessary in each case? How important, for example, was intervention in Lebanon or China? Why did the methods advocated differ in each case and how did the neocons evaluate this? This analysis will also make use of the Cold War global template of the "core" and the "periphery" (as Robert Kagan did in 1994) to further consider the specific imperatives of intervention for the neocons. Post-9/11, Iraq became their signature issue but examining ostensibly peripheral cases (in Africa, for example) sheds light on the importance of peripheral conflicts in a global strategy that consciously attempted to move beyond the narrower dictates of balance-of-power realism and beyond the pursuit of preponderance vis-a-vis the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Examining a broader range of cases also demonstrates both the considerable agreement that existed in the neoconservative-led network with regard to the overall strategic objective of U.S. foreign policy and the methodological disagreements that also emerged over how to achieve this in practice.

The book will also consider whether the policies developed by the neoconservative-led network constituted a coherent global strategy. One

of the most important issues in this regard is the premise on which the strategy was based: the assumption of unipolarity. A number of scholars have concurred that the United States was indeed a unipolar power and that this was therefore an acceptable premise on which to construct a global strategy.[22] However, Krauthammer's invocation of unipolarity betrayed a rather one-dimensional conception of power. This book will argue that this was a false and superficial premise on which to base a strategy because, as scholars such as Stephen Walt, Joseph Nye, and Richard Crockatt have demonstrated[23] (although without reference to neoconservatism specifically), the United States was never the single pole of power. Through an examination of the neoconservative position on China, the book reveals more fully the infeasibility of the unipolar premise and the neocons' unsuccessful attempts to overcome this. A further strategic tension emerges in the purported global strategy when one considers the seemingly critical countries and regions that the neoconservatives never considered. This book asks why certain cases came to the fore and others did not; why the unipolarists embraced some issues but ignored others that would appear to be critical where the objective was defined as being the single pole of power in every region.

Lastly, we will consider whether the unipolarist strategy was revolutionary, whether it was radically different from what preceded it.[24] By comparing the strategies and objectives put forward by neocons to their counterpart policies in the Clinton and George H. W. Bush administrations, I argue that the neocons merely accentuated existing trends in U.S. foreign policy; they did not overturn them. As Andrew Bacevich argues, the post–Cold War years witnessed the emergence of a long-term, virtually unchallengeable bipartisan consensus in U.S. politics that the country should remain the world's preeminent power.[25] This analysis supports that argument and contends that although the neoconservatives characterized Clinton as their nemesis, in fact they differed from him only in degrees; if and when they came to power, their strategy would accentuate rather than revolutionize.

* * *

To make this case, the book will be divided into ten chapters. Chapter 1 reflects on the early emergence of the neocons inside and outside of the George H. W. Bush administration and their immediate focus on maintaining America's "unipolar" position, as opposed to spreading the ideals that won the Cold War. With the loss of the 1992 election, these neoconservatives were forced into opposition. Chapter 2 examines in detail their response to the Clinton administration's foreign policy and its impact upon the further development of their own ideas. Chapter 3

examines the nature of the network led by neoconservatives in the 1990s, which was increasingly active from the middle of the decade onwards. We look in detail at how the different components of this network interacted with each other and consider the financial network behind it. Chapter 4 focuses on how the neoconservatives interacted with the 1996 Presidential campaign of Bob Dole and used the momentum of that year to further develop their own ideas and organizations in the belief that they would in fact remain in opposition for another four years.

Chapters 5 through to 8 examine particular case studies that attracted intense lobbying from the neoconservatives in the second half of the decade. Iraq, National Missile Defense, Kosovo, and China are all considered in detail from the perspective of what they tell us about neoconservative methods and objectives (and their tensions and complications); what they demonstrate about how the network functioned; and what its short- and long-term objectives were. Finally, Chapter 9 looks at neoconservative activity during the 2000 Presidential election campaign—both inside and outside of the Bush campaign—and argues that the worldview and policies espoused by George W. Bush during the campaign were very sympathetic to the objectives outlined by neoconservatives over the previous decade. Thus, his administration, which included many neocons and conservative unipolarists, entered office with the objective of preserving a supposed American unipolarity. The Conclusion briefly considers the impact of the neocons in power and the inauguration of a "war on terror."

This, then, is the story of how the neoconservatives and their supporters—to return to Kagan's words—"ke[pt] alive a certain way of looking at American foreign policy" and provided "in a way … a ready-made approach to the world."[26]

CHAPTER 1

FROM BERLIN TO BAGHDAD: THE SECOND GENERATION AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

WHEN NORMAN PODHORETZ AND JEANE KIRKPATRICK, two veteran neoconservative Cold Warriors, made their first visit to the USSR in June 1989, they were stunned and bewildered by the freedom of expression and political dissent they heard in Moscow.[1] Since 1979, most neocons had subscribed to what had become known as the "Kirkpatrick Doctrine" of totalitarianism. Writing in the seminal neoconservative journal, *Commentary*, Kirkpatrick had famously claimed that totalitarian states, like the USSR, were immune to all liberalizing tendencies. While authoritarian regimes may provide limited space for liberalizing influences to take root, state control in regimes like the USSR was so total that this was not possible. This meant that morally as well as strategically, the United States was justified in supporting anticommunist authoritarian regimes in an alliance against the greater evil of the Soviet communism. Her article had a wide readership, including Ronald Reagan who was so impressed that he offered Kirkpatrick a job in his administration.[2]

That day in Moscow, however, Kirkpatrick and Podhoretz realized that liberalizing tendencies had indeed taken root in the Soviet Union; that, contrary to all their predictions, glasnost and perestroika were real and Soviet communism was collapsing from within. They were amazed even further when they met Mikhail Gorbachev's Chief Political Strategist, Aleksandr Yakovlev, who nonchalantly informed them that Eastern European governments facing internal dissent would no longer be kept in power by the Soviet Union.[3]

For the first generation of neoconservatives, the demise of the Soviet Union was a confusing event that defied beliefs they had long held about the nature of totalitarianism and communism in particular. Having made what is now a well documented journey from the Trotskyist left, through vital center liberalism, over to the right (although for some, such as Kirkpatrick, the journey began in the Democratic Party), the first generation of Cold War neoconservatives had always believed that it had a unique perspective on leftist politics, with many having firsthand experience of the power that communist ideology had over its adherents—including, they claimed, those in the Kremlin. The Soviet Union had been an indispensable focus for an ideology that developed, in no small part, in opposition to communism, and now it was gone. The startling events of 1989 left the Cold War neocons adrift. In its December 1989 issue, *Commentary* did not run a single article about the demise of the Soviet bloc. Now that their mortal enemy had expired, this generation of neocons had reached the end of the line.

Although they may have been misguided, most of these neocons had apparently been sincere in their beliefs. For them, the Cold War was not simply an excuse to project American power; the purpose was to counter the Soviet Union. Now that that threat had ceased to exist, the vast majority of them called for America to adopt a much more modest foreign policy. "The last thing that we need, or that the world needs," wrote Peter Berger, "is for the United States to become the world's policeman." The post–Cold War world was "a time for modesty" according to Nathan Glazer, and he admonished those who tried to find new excuses for the U.S. troop presence in Europe and the continuation of the NATO alliance. The Cold War had given "an unnatural importance" to foreign affairs, Kirkpatrick believed. The military obligations undertaken during the Cold War were now outdated, and it was time to "give up the dubious benefits of superpower status." It was now time, she claimed, for the United States to become "a normal country in a normal time."[4]

With the demise of the Soviet Union, the foreign policy agenda of this first generation of neoconservatives had become obsolete, and they knew it. But this was not the end of neoconservatism as an intellectual force in foreign affairs. As the first generation was calling for an era of modesty in U.S. foreign policy, a second generation of self-described neoconservatives—some with personal and familial links to the first—was emerging and advocating very different ideas. For this younger generation of neocons, America's victory in the Cold War was a cause for celebration and, far from being the endpoint of containment, America's position as the sole remaining superpower was a springboard to greater things. The second generation of neocons did not dispute the

legitimacy of containment within the context in which it took place, but they believed that the demise of the Soviet Union had removed international constraints on U.S. freedom of action and this was something to be exploited.[5] Rather than adopting a more modest posture, the United States should take advantage of its newfound supremacy. Since there was no longer a competing superpower, the United States should move from a defensive posture to an offensive one and take action to ensure that it remained the single pole of world power—the "unipolar" power—for as long as possible. For these younger neocons, *unipolarism* became the new strategic touchstone, the defining element of the "new" post–Cold War neoconservative foreign policy and the concept that facilitated important alliances with other conservatives.[6]

THE EMERGENCE OF THE "UNIPOLAR" PARADIGM

America's apparent Cold War triumph had given U.S. policy makers a new problem. Finding a viable new organizing concept for U.S. foreign policy would plague all administrations until 11 September 2001.[7] But the new generation of neoconservatives came up with new strategic templates with remarkable swiftness. While some of them worked as journalists and at think tanks, others used their positions inside the Bush administration to develop new ideas, which, though never implemented, became integral to the new neoconservative foreign policy vision. Some of this younger group knew each other already through their involvement with the neoconservative network in the seventies and eighties, although they were not the architects of Cold War neoconservatism. As a young man in his twenties, Joshua Muravchik had joined the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, a neocon lobbying group established in the seventies. In the nineties, he was the first of the younger group of neocons to propose the concept of "exporting democracy" that in subsequent years would become so associated with them all. As Democrats and graduate students, Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle both became Congressional aides to Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, a neocon sympathizer, in the early seventies.[8] Other young Jackson aides included Frank Gaffney, who would work with Perle in the Reagan Pentagon and in 1988 establish his own think tank called the Center for Security Policy (CSP).[9] Elliot Abrams, another Jackson protégée became an active in the second generation of neocons, as did Robert Kagan, who had also served in the Reagan administration's Bureau of Inter-American Affairs alongside Abrams.[10]

Apart from Wolfowitz, all of these individuals were employed by conservative Washington, D.C.–based think tanks, where they used their positions to write and develop ideas about post–Cold War foreign

policy. Perle and Muravchik were scholars at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI); Abrams became a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute and subsequently President of the Ethics and Public Policy Center; Gaffney stayed at his own CSP; and Kagan would become one of the most significant activists and theorists of all through his writings in *Commentary* and his cofounding of the neoconservative lobby group, PNAC, in 1997.[11] These think tanks would become an integral part of the network led by these neoconservatives in the post–Cold War years, as we shall see, along with sympathetic magazines and journals, such as *Commentary*, *The Weekly Standard* (established in 1995), and *The National Interest*, that also published their work.

The exposition of the "new" neoconservative foreign policy can be traced back to September 1990, when Krauthammer—who, unlike most others, was a long-time nationally syndicated newspaper columnist best known for appearing in the *Washington Post*—identified America's post–Cold War "unipolar moment" and argued that the United States should maintain its position as the single pole of power as far into the future as possible.[12] The concept outlined in his brilliant and widely discussed polemic on the "unipolar moment" in *Foreign Affairs* endured as the unifying touchstone of second-generation neoconservative foreign policy.

"The Unipolar Moment" was initially the first annual Henry M. Jackson Memorial Lecture given at the AEI on 18 September 1990.[13] The *Foreign Affairs* article that developed from the speech appeared in the journal's Winter 1990–1991 edition. The most contentious part of the analysis was Krauthammer's assertion that although multipolarity might come in time, "[n]ow is the unipolar moment." "The center of world power," he wrote, "is the unchallenged superpower, attended by its western allies," and there was no prospect in the near future of any power to rival it. The end of the Cold War had left a "*single pole of world power*" (emphasis added). The United States was now so strong that it could be the "decisive player *in any conflict in whatever part of the world it chooses*" (emphases added).

It was only America's actions to protect Saudi Arabia in August 1990 that had prevented Saddam Hussein from gaining control of the entire Persian Gulf. The United Nations was "guarantor of nothing"; "collective security" did not exist and "pseudo-multilateral" actions, in which the United States led and junior partners followed, should be clearly distinguished from genuine multilateralism, which was cooperation between equals.[14] The new objective of U.S. foreign policy should be to preserve its "unipolar moment" as far into the future as possible.

To do this, Krauthammer argued, it was essential to counter the emergence of isolationism and realism within the political establishment. These two tendencies had to be marginalized and contained in order

to maintain the domestic political will necessary to maintain America's preeminent position. What isolationists and balance-of-power realists did not realize was that an active hegemon was essential to create and maintain global stability. Without using political science terminology, Krauthammer was essentially a proponent of hegemonic stability theory. His emphasis on military power and his belief in nation states as the only international actors of any worth reflected his realist roots, but he did not believe that America should remain an offshore balancer of last resort. Krauthammer rejected balances of power in favor of an expansive definition of the national interest as global unipolarity.[15]

However, Krauthammer's unipolarity was a false premise. He had made an exaggerated and superficial case, though it was a case that would be uncritically accepted by the neoconservatives. The demise of the only other superpower had fostered the illusion of unipolarity, but there were still other regional poles of power strong enough to significantly constrain U.S. actions. A nuclear China could prevent unilateral or offensive U.S. action in East Asia. While Krauthammer accepted that second-tier powers did exist, he did not acknowledge that there might be ways in which they could collectively balance American power or stymie its objectives.[16] He warned of the danger of "weapon states," such as Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, armed with weapons of mass destruction—but, for Krauthammer, these capabilities (if they existed) still did not diminish America's position as the single pole of power in these regions. Unconventional methods of resistance—such as terrorism or guerilla warfare—that might nullify America's conventional military advantage were overlooked completely. His focus on America's own power and where to project it elided any consideration of how that power might be received—and perhaps challenged—by others.

Krauthammer viewed power as a conventional military construct, downplaying if not ignoring completely other types of power. Although the United States was dominant (though not unconstrained) on the military level of international relations, on the economic and transnational levels it was far from unipolar.[17] Economically it had to accept not only the growing influence of the European Community (EC) and the Japanese and Chinese economies, but the mutual interdependence that now characterized the whole of global economy and made all states vulnerable to economic forces that operated transnationally, such as the markets in bonds and currencies. Instead, Krauthammer glibly claimed that because the economic power of Germany, Japan, and the EC did not translate into military power, they could not compete with United States (despite the fact that it was American allies including Germany, Japan, and Saudi Arabia who had covered

approximately 90 per cent of the $61 billion bill for the incremental costs of the 1991 Gulf War).[18] As the world was becoming more interdependent, Krauthammer drew the parameters of power tightly around conventional state-based military issues. His construct was not completely obsolete: to be sure, states were still the main international actors and the largest single aggregations of power, but they functioned on more than just a military level, and their primacy was being undermined by globalization and its attendant transnational challenges, such as terrorism, cyber crime, or the rapid spread of infectious diseases. Krauthammer's unipolar model overlooked completely the forces that transcended state power and the global problems that were not confined within the borders of any single state.[19] While he did not claim that America was omnipotent, he set the bar high, and for Krauthammer, whatever constraints did exist, they were not strong enough to prevent the United States from maintaining its position as the single pole of power, acting unilaterally if necessary. This was not a question of capability, only of collective national will.

Nevertheless, Krauthammer's premise of "unipolarity" was accepted by the neoconservatives and became the defining element of their emerging strategic paradigm. Rather than focusing on a particular adversary, policy should now be decided on the basis of the imperatives of maintaining America's supposed unipolarity—although considerable disagreements would later develop over what exactly those imperatives were.

Krauthammer's agenda-setting piece said nothing about spreading democracy in the post-Soviet world. He had strong views about this but not in favor of it. In an article for *Time* magazine, Krauthammer railed against the new post–Cold War liberal interventionists: "God protect us from our better instincts," he wrote exasperatedly. The liberal interventionists were

> marked by good faith but a terrible confusion. The confusion is between individual and national morality. In private conduct, altruism is the ideal. For a nation, it can mean ruin. … Intervening in a fight for reasons of right is the stuff of western heroes. Intervening in a fight because you need the weaker party's oil is not.

Ultimately, Krauthammer concluded, "[W]e should risk war when our will and conscience are challenged. *But only when our most vital interests are challenged too*" (emphasis added)—a dictum that he would repeat in the future (and also after the events of 9/11 when Republicans were back in power). For Krauthammer, moral interests alone were not enough to compel intervention.[20]

Joshua Muravchik appeared to place much greater emphasis on the promotion of democracy. In May 1991 he published a book titled *Exporting Democracy: Fulfilling America's Destiny* through the AEI. For Muravchik too, though, the pillar of the global order was American power. Echoing Krauthammer, he argued that U.S. power had been a stabilizing factor since 1945, and its removal would create a dangerous vacuum.[21] He warned against "the folly of realism"—"still the greatest long term threat to a sound foreign policy"—and against isolationism, which was "exhibiting new virulence." [22] To the question "how much military power do we need?" Muravchik answered, "enough to preserve our position as the sole superpower. That is, to assure that no other nation or plausible combination of nations can match our strength."[23]

The lofty title of Muravchik's monograph was deceptive since he in fact explicitly rejected the idea that America should export democracy by force. "The term 'export' can be a kind of straw man," he acknowledged. "Democracy is not a product that we can sell or barter. Nor can the United States control the political future of other nations." The real question was whether the United States could "influence the political development of other nations to make them more democratic." This was something that would be pursued thorough nonmilitary means: through crisis diplomacy, foreign aid, overseas radio broadcasts, cultural exchanges, and assistance to dissident democrats from the National Endowment for Democracy.[24] But hard power was to be used for the defense of security interests, not moral principles. If the United States was drawn into a military occupation while protecting its vital interests, then it should try to democratize the country, but this was completely different to intervention solely for the purpose of democratization, Muravchik claimed.[25] Regardless of the purported strategic benefits of democracies, he warned against America

> tak[ing] it upon itself to subdue other countries solely to democratize them. . . . Peace ranks with democracy as one of the highest desiderata and must not be violated except for the most compelling reasons.[26]

Muravchik did not discuss what might happen when security interests clashed with promoting democracy; the assumption throughout was that the two were largely complementary.[27] Yet Muravchik had still made a distinction between intervening to protect security interests, which he advocated, and intervening solely to promote ideals, which he did not—suggesting that there were occasions when the two were not complementary. Ultimately, Muravchik's priority was the protection of security interests commensurate with "preserv[ing] our position as the sole

superpower." Krauthammer expressed his admiration: "Post–Cold War thinking starts with this book," was his comment on the dust jacket.[28]

These views were enthusiastically endorsed by Robert Kagan in a review of *Exporting Democracy*.[29] Like Muravchik and Krauthammer, Kagan rejected balance-of-power realism in international relations and called for the development of a countervision that would justify and sustain a policy of global activism in the long term. The American people needed "a justification that goes beyond realism" and appealed to their deeply rooted moral sensibilities, to the special sense of American exceptionalism that Kagan claimed was the hallmark of the American character. Such an emotive appeal would create a political atmosphere that was conducive to the activist foreign policy that was necessary to preserve American preeminence.[30] Yet although Kagan called for a moralistic alternative to realism, he did not call for a crusade for global democracy either, but for something rather more pragmatic, to be achieved through nonmilitary means and with room for maneuver that did not compel the United States to support democratic movements if doing so would conflict with strategic imperatives. Explicitly eschewing the indiscriminate promotion of democracy, Kagan advocated

> [t]he *prudent* support of democracy, using all the many tools at [our] disposal, most of them *well short of military force*. … America can also practice the *patient* support of democracy—not forcing change when it is impossible, but waiting for conditions to ripen … "[31] (First and last emphases in original).

In other words, the United States was by no means obliged to support democracy everywhere, and certainly not by using hard power. For the most part, measures "well short of military force" would be used, and even then only if it would not clash with strategic imperatives. Thus, Kagan paradoxically claimed on the one hand that democracy would be "the polestar" of post–Cold War foreign policy, but, at the same time, it should not be followed in an "uncompromising" fashion, "in every country in the world at all times regardless of the cost or risk."[32] In short, democracy promotion should not interrupt the preservation of American preeminence.

There were also early signposts toward Paul Wolfowitz' views on post-Soviet foreign policy. Wolfowitz had set out some of his core views in an article written in 1991, while he still served in the Pentagon under the Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney, which focused on Europe and appeared in a volume edited by Perle and published by the AEI.[33] Wolfowitz argued for a proactive, rather than defensive, strategy to consolidate the Cold War victory. Though he said little about democracy, he

was adamant that America's global dominance should not be jeopardized by U.S. disengagement from Europe. Washington's strategy should be to "shap[e] the future" by remaining engaged with Europe and "prevent[ing] the kind of catastrophe that it would cost us far more to put right."[34] This meant the justification for American troops across Europe now transcended the fall of the Soviet empire; an American presence would be necessary to prevent instability in the new Europe. Washington should also maintain the NATO alliance, which could now serve as a mechanism for maintaining U.S. leadership in Europe beyond the Cold War.[35]

Bush 41 and the Unipolarists

Several of the younger generation of neocons were also employed in the administration of George H. W. Bush (Bush 41), and his government's search for a new post–Cold War direction in foreign policy involved key neoconservatives, particularly Wolfowitz; Zalmay Khalilzad, an Afghan-born naturalized American, who had studied with Wolfowitz at the University of Chicago in the midseventies; and I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, a Deputy Secretary of Defense and former Democrat who had studied under Wolfowitz at Yale.[36] Although these neocons never exercised decisive influence over Bush 41, their time in his administration would yield *the* defining strategy document of the second generation of neocons: the DPG of 1992. Yet how to achieve their aims in practice was less straightforward. The 1991 Iraq war, and the neocons' response to it, demonstrated that their ideas about how to maintain unipolarity in practice did not come fully formed.

Despite the neocons' infamous post-9/11 association with regime change in Iraq, none of them had called for the United States to remove Saddam by military force in 1991. Wolfowitz subsequently wrote that deposing Saddam would have been a strategic disaster because "[n]othing could have insured [*sic*] Saddam Hussein's removal from power short of a full-scale occupation of Iraq. . . . Even if easy initially, it is unclear how or when [the occupation] would have ended."[37] In contrast to Krauthammer, Wolfowitz exhibited a rare consideration for how American power might be received: "The regime would have become the United States responsibility and led to a long, drawn out occupation that would be resented by Iraqis." This was the same position that Colin Powell took at the time: "a largely U.S. conquest and occupation" was not "what the American people signed up for," he claimed.[38] Even Perle—outside of the administration, writing from his position at the AEI—stopped short of arguing that the coalition should oust Saddam militarily. There were "compelling reasons for seeing to it that he does not remain in power," Perle wrote,

but if the coalition were to take on this task itself, it would prove "costly and would probably be unnecessary" as long as the sanctions remained in place, "until an Iraqi government is in place that can contribute to regional stability."[39] For Perle, economic pressure to induce regime change in the long term was preferable over military action.

Wolfowitz, Lewis Libby, and William Kristol also favored tactical military decisions that would have facilitated the continuation of the indigenous uprisings in the Kurdish and Shia areas in March 1991. When Iraqi military officials asked the commander of the allied forces, Norman Schwarzkopf, for permission to fly over Iraqi airspace, he agreed. Once in the air, the helicopters brutally put down the Shiite and Kurdish insurgencies against Saddam.[40] In Washington, Wolfowitz, Dennis Ross of the State Department, and Brent Scowcroft, the National Security Advisor, all appealed to Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney, to withdraw permission for the Iraqis to fly; but Cheney and Powell both argued that doing so would undermine Schwarzkopf's authority.[41] Powell later openly acknowledged in his memoirs that Washington's "practical intention was to leave Saddam with enough power to survive as a threat to an Iran that remained bitterly hostile to the United States."[42]

Also working in the Bush administration was William Kristol, son of the famous Cold War neocon, Irving Kristol, who would go on to become one of the most important of the post–Cold War neocon activists, establishing *The Weekly Standard* magazine in 1995 and PNAC in 1997. As Chief of Staff to Vice President, Dan Quayle, Kristol did not publicly call for more to be done in Iraq at the time, or after he left government in January 1993. Twelve years later, however, he assailed the administration for prioritizing stability in the Arab world above all else. He argued that the administration's actions corresponded to a realist view of the world "where you don't change regimes unless you absolutely have to." Like Wolfowitz, he had been exasperated at the time that the Bush administration had "stood by and watched [the Iraqi rebels] get slaughtered" when U.S. helicopters and forces could have prevented it.[43] Nevertheless, none of the neocons had called for regime change through military means at the time, and for the next five years, they largely ignored Iraq, even though the Clinton administration had implemented covert policies designed to oust Saddam. It was not until the failure of these policies in 1996 that the neocons would begin to talk about Iraq again.

Despite this, they still articulated what became the defining strategy document for the second generation of neoconservatives—the Defense Planning Guidance (DPG), which gave greater substance to the neocons' ultimate objective: preserving America's position as the single pole of world power by preventing the emergence of any regional or global

rivals.[44] The DPG document was a regular defense review, usually issued every two years, which described U.S. defense strategy for senior military officials involved in planning and budgeting. This time, Cheney gave the review to Wolfowitz to work on. Wolfowitz delegated the drafting of it to Libby, his most senior aide, who, in turn, brought in his assistant, Khalilzad. Though outside the government, Perle also provided input to some of the meetings.[45]

The ensuing document encapsulated in no uncertain terms the drafters' vision of a post–Cold War *Pax Americana*. The DPG affirmed the most expansive definition of the national interest possible: nothing short of unassailable global supremacy would be sufficient. After finally winning the Cold War, the "first objective" for the United States, according to the DPG, was to "prevent the re-emergence of a new rival," be it in the Middle East, Europe, Eurasia, the former Soviet Union, East Asia, or Southwest Asia. In essence, the United States would tolerate no rivals in any region; it would be the single pole of power. In particular, it should "prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would … be sufficient to generate global power."[46] In the Middle East, especially, the United States should ensure that it remained "the predominant outside power" in order to "preserve U.S. and western access to the region's oil." The drafters of the DPG were cognizant of the fact that there was no longer a competing superpower to constrain the United States in the way that the Soviet Union had constrained it. Whereas the first generation of neocons had advocated a defensive strategy of containment, the second generation believed that Washington's unprecedented freedom of action allowed it to jettison the defensive posture and instead act in an *offensive* manner, *preventing* the emergence of rival powers rather than merely containing them.

This objective would be achieved primarily through aggressive American leadership, which would "dete[r] potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role." In particular, the United States should be strong enough to account sufficiently for the interests of all the advanced industrial nations "to discourage them from challenging our leadership or seeking to overturn the established political and economic order." In other words, its position should be so unassailable that potential rivals would be convinced that even attempting to challenge it was futile. In preserving its preeminence, Washington would also need to create "the sense that the world order is ultimately backed by the U.S.," and not the UN. The UN did not merit a single reference in the document. Instead, America would be the ultimate guarantor of the global order and should act unilaterally "when collective action cannot be orchestrated."[47] Like Kagan, Krauthammer, and Muravchik, the

drafters of the document argued that the only bulwark against global anarchy was American power. Coalitions would only be "ad hoc assemblies, often not lasting beyond the crisis being confronted." As for the promotion of democracy, this was something that could be encouraged if it did not conflict with strategic imperatives—but military intervention would be undertaken "selectively," on the basis of whether a particular situation "threaten[s] … our interests [or] those of our allies or friends." Interests that would warrant the use of military power included, "access to vital raw materials, primarily Persian Gulf oil; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, threats to U.S. citizens from terrorism or regional or local conflict, and threats to U.S. society from narcotics trafficking … " The drafters of the DPG did not envisage a new age of liberal interventionism. They focused instead on interests—but not just on the material interests necessary for survival. Their definition of American interests was more expansive. It was not enough to secure resources sufficient only for consumption; they sought to dominate any region with vital strategic interests politically and militarily. This was essential if the United States was to remain the single pole of world power. It was these strategic imperatives that would guide U.S. foreign policy in the post–Cold War world, not the promotion of liberal values.

Khalilzad's draft paper was circulated around the Pentagon for feedback with Libby's permission. However, in March 1992 it was leaked to the *New York Times* by a Pentagon official who felt that the debate about post–Cold War strategy should be carried out in the public domain.[48] The Guidance received ferocious criticism. George Stephanopoulos, then Bill Clinton's campaign manager, claimed that the DPG was a transparent attempt by the Pentagon "to find an excuse for big defense budgets instead of downsizing."[49] Senator Edward Kennedy claimed that the DPG "appeared to be aimed primarily at finding new ways to justify Cold War levels of military spending."[50] One anonymous foreign diplomat remarked to the *New York Times*, "Where do the rest of us fit into the game plan?"[51] The Bush administration scrambled to distance itself from the draft and a rewrite was ordered, but behind the scenes, Cheney praised Khalilzad's work. "He said to me, 'You've discovered a new rationale for our role in the world,'" Khalilzad recalled.[52]

Other neoconservatives agreed. "What's wrong with the Pentagon paper?" Krauthammer asked, in response to the criticism. "It's an impressive blueprint for the new world order," he declared. Recognizing the interface between that document and his unipolar paradigm, Krauthammer observed that the DPG "starts with the fact that this is a one superpower world. … It then offers a program for keeping things that way." He attacked critics of the document who "dream that if the

United States abdicates its world leadership, today's military midgets will be content to stay that way."[53] Kristol later said that Wolfowitz (to whom he gave most credit for the document) "was ahead of his time" because he "saw very early that the fundamental choice was American leadership or increasing chaos and danger," but this was not a conclusion that the balance-of-power realists in the Bush administration wanted to hear.[54] Perle concurred. It was "common sense" that the United States should inhibit the emergence of a rival superpower. It was simply a question of preventing another Cold War scenario, but unfortunately "people were already out there spending the peace dividend and there was not much interest in hearing about a new challenge," he claimed.[55]

The redrafted version of the DPG was also leaked to the press and succeeded in creating the impression that the Pentagon had substantially altered its goals; but in reality the change was mainly rhetorical with softer language used to dilute the impact of the objectives. Instead of "preventing" the emergence of rivals, the Pentagon would "preclude" them. The mainstream press generally fell for the new presentation, with the *New York Times* inexplicably leading with the headline "Pentagon *Drops* Goal of Blocking New Superpowers" (emphasis added), despite the new draft explicitly stating that it would "preclude" them and "discourage the rise of a challenger."[56] Leslie Gelb, a columnist at the *Times*, claimed that whereas the first draft had reeked of unilateralism, the rewrite "puts new emphasis on collective security"—but this was overstating the case. The redraft stated that collective action was to be hoped for—and unlike in the first draft, the UN was mentioned—but this should not be relied upon because such action may not always be "timely and, in the absence of US leadership, may not gel."[57] Only the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, often sympathetic to the neoconservatives, recognized that the DPG rewrite was not dramatically different, that it "doesn't back down at all from [the] strategy of maintaining America's military pre-eminence."[58] Muravchik, who believed that the second draft had been "severely revised" for the worse, argued that even if the Bush administration had simply purged provocative rhetoric from the document, as Wolfowitz and Libby insisted it had, "the attentive public came away with the impression that the Pentagon's original capacious strategy had been dropped in favor of a narrow focus on national self-defense."[59] This in itself was symbolically damaging.

Yet for all the controversy, the DPG was far from revolutionary. Two contemporary competing military strategies—Colin Powell's Base Force and Bill Clinton's Bottom-Up Review (BUR)—differed from the DPG only in degrees, for both these strategies envisaged a post–Cold War world in which America remained the sole superpower by a significant margin. As Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Powell realized that

Congress would seek to make cuts in the military after the demise of the Soviet Union and believed it was essential that the military work to shape these reductions rather than give Congress a free hand to wield the axe. The resulting Base Force concept set out a new purpose for the American military establishment in the post-Soviet world. It was designed to represent a floor below which the United States could not go and still carry out its role as a superpower.[60] The Base Force was premised on the concept of regional contingencies. The United States should be able to fight and win two major regional conflicts (MRCs) simultaneously—such as taking on Iraq and North Korea at the same time. It also included a reconstitution capability—first recommended in the DPG—so that the military could quickly reassemble any programs drawn down if need be.[61] It was unlikely that this would ever be necessary though, because the Base Force relied on an inflated and unrealistic estimate of the capabilities of the aggressor states that America might engage. Although Powell claimed that the Iraq War was the exemplar of the regional contingencies of the future, it was an anomalous case, an exceptional rather than a typical military threat. Iraq had been much stronger militarily in 1990 than any of the other potential aggressors listed (including Iran, Syria, Libya, and a prenuclear North Korea) and also unique in its proximity to U.S. vital interests.[62] Even Powell admitted he "would be very surprised if another Iraq occurred."[63] Yet the Base Force planned not for one comparable action but for *two simultaneously*—guaranteeing that the United States would maintain its superpower status.

The Clinton administration's own defense survey produced the BUR document that also accepted the regional contingencies framework and the dubious proposition that two such conflicts the size of Iraq could occur. Under Clinton, the military would prepare to fight these "almost simultaneously" and would be cut to two-thirds of its size in 1990, as opposed to three-quarters under the Base Force. But as with the Base Force, the two-war standard and an inflated calculation of the strength of potential regional adversaries meant that even after cuts, the Pentagon would still spend nearly as much on defense as the rest of the world put together.[64]

Despite the neocons' criticisms of Clinton's foreign policy in the nineties and their calls for an increase in defense spending, Kagan still acknowledged in 2003 that even during the Clinton years, America's post–Cold War military power, "particularly its ability to project that power to all corners of the globe, remained unprecedented," and that this resulted in Washington intervening abroad *more* frequently than it had done during the Cold War, Kagan believed.[65] Where Powell and Clinton differed from the authors of the DPG was with regard to military posture.

The former believed that primacy could be maintained through a deterrent posture and that preventive action was unnecessary; the neocons called for a more proactive strategy. This was a substantive difference, to be sure, but the ultimate objective of all three strategies was remarkably similar. In this context, the DPG was not revolutionary. The neocons would look to accentuate existing aspects of U.S. foreign policy but they did not call for a radical break from contemporary strategy.

For Cheney, the significance of the DPG was such that he still signed off the final version of it anyway in January 1993, despite being a lame-duck Secretary of Defense with just a few weeks until his departure from office.[66] Until this point, Cheney had never been a neoconservative sympathizer. He was better known as a conservative nationalist who unapologetically favored using America's military muscle to protect its preponderant global position but had little regard for ideological concerns.[67] Cheney's signing of the DPG illustrated the substantial convergence between the second generation of neocons and other conservatives, like himself, who shared an expansive definition of the national interest. Cheney was a conservative unipolarist; he shared the neocons' desire to pursue American primacy. Though he was never one of the principal activists, throughout the nineties Cheney would lend support to initiatives led by some of the key activists like Kristol, Perle, and Kagan. The convergence of these two groups of conservatives around the concept of American unipolarism would become the unifying and defining feature of their joint lobbying enterprise in the post–Cold War years. In time, as we shall see, these two groups—neocons and conservative unipolarists—would develop into a network of activists dedicated to preserving American preeminence above all else. This network would be led primarily by neocons, who were the principal organizers and lobbyists, but it would not be their exclusive domain. The rhetorical posturing of the neocons and the commitment—albeit a rather tepid one—that some of them had to encouraging democracy through nonmilitary means if it did not conflict with strategic imperatives, differed from the more understated style of individuals such as Cheney (and later Donald Rumsfeld) who eschewed the moralistic tone of some of the neocons. What did unite them, however, was their belief in maintaining America's position as the single pole of world power, and the DPG was the first instantiation of this convergence.

Thirteen years after the demise of the Soviet Union, Krauthammer reflected on the significance of that event: "It was the end of everything," he claimed; but at the same time "something new was born, something utterly new—a unipolar world dominated by a single superpower unchecked by any rival and with decisive reach in every corner of the globe."[68]

For the second generation of neocons, unlike their Cold War forefathers, this was something worth preserving. With this in mind, the "new" neoconservatives did not sit back passively, biding their time while the Clinton years elapsed, simply waiting for the chance to return to power. The opportunities presented by the end of the Cold War energized them. In 1993, the *New York Times* noticed that they were beginning to resemble "a lively counter-government, a government in exile," promoting their strategic vision in the same way that the older neocons had done in the years preceding the Reagan administration.[69] This was the beginning of the neocons' time in opposition.

CHAPTER 2

The Neoconservatives and Clintonism, 1993–1995

> [The United States] cannot succeed in shaping the post–Cold War world unless it knows what shape it wants the world to take and has the strategy and the will to make it happen.
>
> Zalmay Khalilzad, 1995[1]

In 1995, Zalmay Khalilzad warned that the United States had been operating without a grand strategy since the end of the Cold War. This had pushed the Clinton administration into "a reactive mode," which meant it was "squander[ing] a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity … to shape the future."[2] Clinton failed to define what America's national interest actually consisted of. He deferred dogmatically to the UN and America's allies; he pursued excessive and paralyzing multilateralism; and he failed to set down criteria for the effective use of force, resulting in an ad hoc and inconsistent American policy that was damaging to America's global credibility.[3] The fact that he gave only four major foreign policy speeches in the first eight months of his presidency appeared to indicate a new unwillingness to invest significant energy in foreign affairs.[4]

From outside the government, the neoconservatives began to critique the Clinton administration through the framework of the imperatives of unipolarity, though they did this in a somewhat reactive manner—responding opportunistically to the international issues of the day, such as Somalia and Bosnia, rather than creating the agenda themselves. Through these two cases, they began to debate what preserving unipolarity meant in practice, especially in "peripheral" areas—those areas where there was no narrowly construed vital material interest at stake. Clinton's first term in office was also the period when the neoconservatives began

to function effectively as a lobbying coalition, husbanding change that would otherwise have been very unlikely by exploiting a political opening on National Missile Defense (NMD). This would develop into a concerted lobbying campaign spanning five years, which would see the neoconservatives move beyond mere critiques of Clinton to actually engaging with Congress and the White House and, eventually, impacting upon the future estimating process of the CIA on ballistic missile threats and forcing Clinton to sign into law the National Missile Defense Act of 1999.

Somalia, Bosnia, and the Lessons of "Assertive Multilateralism"

The neoconservatives were not principled unilateralists. As their enthusiasm for expanding NATO and working through the alliance demonstrated, multilateralism on American terms in pursuit of objectives conducive to their definition of American interests was to be welcomed, for it enhanced U.S. power and legitimacy. Moreover, under the right circumstances—namely, if preserving American credibility required it—some (although not all) neocons were prepared to countenance peacekeeping commitments.[5] Peter Rodman, a neocon sympathizer who served in the Policy Planning Staff with Paul Wolfowitz from 1984–1986 (and would later become involved with PNAC), referred to the benefits of "muscular multilateralism" where American leadership would "*shape* the international consensus" (emphasis in original).[6]

The problem, according to Rodman, was "mushy multilateralism" where Washington did not lead; where "deference to an international consensus is a cardinal principle."[7] This did not enhance America's power; it diluted it and led to strategic paralysis. It was on this basis that the neoconservatives opposed Clinton's "assertive multilateralism" in Somalia and Bosnia.

During the Presidential campaign, Clinton had called for the United States to work with alliance partners and international organizations to be more assertive in dealing with what the administration referred to as second-tier conflicts. To this end, Presidential Review Directive 13 (PRD-13) was approved by National Security Council (NSC) in July 1993. PRD-13 outlined a strategy for second-tier conflicts that UN ambassador, Madeleine Albright, dubbed "assertive multilateralism."[8] The directive called for expanding the role of UN peacekeeping missions and the U.S. role in them in regional conflicts and humanitarian crises and for placing U.S. troops under foreign command on a case-by-case basis.

The multilateral intervention in Somalia in 1992–1993 was the test case for assertive multilateralism. Once in office, the Clinton administration opted to expand the original UN humanitarian mandate and

commit the United States to an open-ended nation-building project in which U.S. forces would participate in a UN force to subdue the conflict, capture the Somali warlord Mohammed Aideed, whose militia was responsible for attacks on the UN, and eventually enforce peace.[9] Clinton was forced into a U-turn, however, when two American Black Hawk helicopters were shot down, resulting in the death of eighteen U.S. soldiers whose corpses were dragged through the streets of Mogadishu and shown on CNN. As a result, the "assertive multilateralism" directive was watered down and redrafted twice so that the original concept was virtually removed, and U.S. forces would only partake in peacekeeping missions if vital interests were at stake, and even then not under UN command.[10]

For Wolfowitz, the original decision to intervene by the Bush administration was well-taken: humanitarian missions that had the potential to save thousands at virtually no cost to American lives were commendable. The problem was Clinton's attempt to "nation build." Peacekeeping missions designed "to compel the parties … to stop fighting without any agreement on the terms and conditions for doing so" were fraught with risks, highly likely to unravel and, absent a compelling national interest, they were simply not a cause worth risking (and, in the case of Somalia, squandering) U.S. political and military credibility for. This was compounded by Clinton's insistence on multilateralism. To use force expeditiously required acting "with only those partners that share (America's) purposes." In other words, multilateralism was fine when it was on American terms but not otherwise.[11] As a result, Wolfowitz claimed that the hallmark of Clinton's first year in office had been "a sense of confusion about defining and pursuing centrally important national issues." This was damaging to American leadership. The effective use of force *wherever it was deployed*—including in "peripheral" areas where there was no narrowly construed geopolitical interest at stake—was always a vital, though intangible, interest, Wolfowitz claimed. Indecisiveness could lead others to doubt or misread U.S. intentions in other more strategically important regions.[12]

The Somalian operation was also attacked by Republican lawyer and neoconservative sympathizer John Bolton, a former Reagan administration official who became Senior Vice President of the AEI in 1999 (and would also work for the Bush 43 administration).[13] For Bolton, the Somalian debacle "demonstrate[ed] the hard truth that the United Nations works only when the United States leads … There is no multilateral system with a life and will of its own." Rather than squandering U.S. leadership on a futile peacekeeping mission, military deployments should be reserved for occasions "where clear American national interests are at stake."[14] Muravchik concurred: it would be "foolhardy to squander

the American public's tolerance for casualties in peacekeeping missions that anyone can perform," he argued. Like Wolfowitz, he offered support for low-cost humanitarian relief operations but drew the line at the resources that would be required to build a nation and, by implication, a democracy.[15]

The issue of promoting democracy in Somalia or elsewhere was almost entirely absent from the debates. Only Muravchik touched on whether there were circumstances that might compel the United States to intervene in support of democracy. In Haiti, for instance, the democratically elected President, Jean-Bertrande Aristide, had been ousted from power in 1991.[16] Did the deposing of a democrat warrant the use of military force to restore the legitimate leader, Muravchik asked? Democracy in Haiti was in U.S. interests, after all, since democracies were less likely to go to war with each other. In these rare circumstances the use of military force might become thinkable, Muravchik claimed; however, he conceded, "many other factors must be weighed," such as "other American interests … [and] the importance of the country in question." Ultimately, it was "hard to make a case for using force solely or mainly for the purpose of democratization."[17] When Clinton intervened to restore Aristide to power in 1994, Muravchik opposed the operation, and it elicited no other comment from any of the neoconservatives.[18] Wolfowitz and Muravchik were prepared to support small humanitarian missions that could succeed without costing too much in dollars or in American lives but their renunciation of nation-building ruled out any efforts to "export" democracy.

It was not just in Somalia that "assertive multilateralism" was harming American political and military prestige. The Clinton administration's abdication of its leadership in Europe and NATO and its excessive deference to the Europeans meant that there was no coherent transatlantic policy on how to deal with the civil war in Bosnia.[19] According to Muravchik, it was Bosnia that crystallized a distinctly neoconservative approach to post–Cold War foreign policy: "A movement coalesced in opposition to American inaction. Its leaders … were almost all from neoconservative ranks."[20]

One month before Clinton's election victory, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), comprised mainly of British and French soldiers, had entered Bosnia with a mandate only to protect aid agencies and sponsor diplomatic efforts. During the Presidential campaign, Clinton had implied that he would take the lead in forging an international consensus on Bosnia and push for a policy of "lift and strike"—lifting the arms embargo on the Bosnians and carrying out air strikes against the Serbs; but once in office Clinton announced, "I don't want to spend any

more time on (Bosnia) than is absolutely necessary because what I got elected to do was to let America look at our own problems."[21] Clinton did not ignore Bosnia, but he was unwilling to impose a solution onto the NATO allies, initially preferring to work with France, Germany, and the UK as equals. However, fundamental differences over the causes of the war, who the chief aggressors were and how to solve it resulted in a rancorous transatlantic quandary.[22]

In an open letter to Clinton, published in the *Wall Street Journal* in September 1993, Muravchik, Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Frank Gaffney, Rodman, and Khalilzad, among others, made their preference for military action clear, warning that "if the West doesn't use force at all [in Bosnia] or if it uses it symbolically rather than substantially to reduce Milosevic's power … the message received will only bring American and Western resolve into contempt."[23] However, the Clinton administration dropped the lift and strike option after the French and British—whose forces were on the ground in UNPROFOR—made their objections known to the Secretary of State Warren Christopher in May 1993. Clinton acquiesced to the Europeans, insisting that although he favored a lift and strike policy, "the United Nations controls what happens in Bosnia."[24]

The neocons' chief objection to Clinton's failure to take charge of the situation was not on humanitarian grounds but on the basis that it constituted a serious blow to the prestige of NATO and American leadership in Europe. They viewed Christopher's return from Europe as an ignominious retreat, which cast doubts over Washington's ability and willingness to lead and its commitment to dealing with security issues affecting its allies. Muravchik's scathing critique assailed the administration for its excessive, paralyzing multilateralism, which heralded "the opening of a new era of deliberately reduced American leadership."[25] In deferring to the Europeans, Washington had "eaten its words over Bosnia," and this amounted to a foreign policy that "ha[d] diminished America's military strength and damaged its credibility."[26] Wolfowitz, too, warned that there had been a loss of confidence in NATO and, most worrying of all, "the appearance of American weakness and inability to lead."[27] At the height of the crisis, Perle affirmed the importance of demonstrating that the United States "will react to a blatant aggression," and suggested that if it failed, "the deeper … more lasting effect [would be] to shatter British and French confidence in the United States as the leader of an institution (NATO) which is nothing if it's not led by the U.S."[28]

Gaffney railed against the convoluted UN-NATO chain of command that was developed once the Europeans agreed to air strikes in 1994. Since the UN would be given a veto over the use of force, the British and French, who dominated the UN command, would have de facto

control—and this almost always meant vetoing them. Ultimatums issued by NATO were frequently defied or only partially complied with, as the Serbs learnt that if they threatened UN personnel on the ground or adhered to a minimalist interpretation of NATO's demands, they would break the consensus in favor of an air strike among the NATO allies.[29] Gaffney's CSP called for a "coalition of the willing" prepared to bombard the Serbs from the air and neutralize their military advantage over the Muslims and Croats, rather than relying on the existing dual-key mechanism that gave the UN a veto over the use of force. It was "unspeakably callous and deplorably feckless" to insist on consulting such an "unwieldy chain of command" before any action could be taken, CSP claimed.[30]

Absent from the debate once again was any consideration of promoting democracy in the troubled region. The discussions revolved around other issues, namely, avoiding the paralysis engendered through "assertive multilateralism" and maintaining American prestige and leadership within Europe and NATO. Humanitarian considerations did not go unnoticed but were not the determining criteria for neoconservatives' support of the Bosnian intervention or their criticism of Clinton's vacillation. Although prointervention arguments were put forward by a group of so-called liberal hawks, including Anthony Lewis and Leslie Gelb, both of the *New York Times*, their rationale was the humanitarian catastrophe that was unfolding rather than the fate of any perceived vital interest. (Most of them assumed that the United States had no vital interest at stake in Bosnia, in contrast to the neocons who believed that American prestige in Europe and NATO constituted such an interest and was threatened by the Balkan crisis.)[31] The neoconservatives' arguments reflected the principles set down in the DPG, which had called for the United States to prevent challenges to its power by accounting for the security interests of its European allies.

ISRAEL, THE PEACE PROCESS, AND MIDDLE EAST

If Bosnia seemed like a conflict in a peripheral location, Israel and the Middle East were firmly on the center stage. This region was so important to the neoconservatives that three of the lobby groups associated with their network in the 1990s were dedicated solely to Middle Eastern issues. The Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP), and the Middle East Forum (MEF) all examined U.S. strategy and objectives in the Middle East, from adversaries such as Iraq and Syria to the key regional ally, Israel.[32] A special attachment to Israel was nothing new in post-1945, and especially post-1967 U.S. foreign policy.[33] However, the neoconservative

attachment to Israel appeared to be even stronger than usual because of the amount of time and resources they dedicated to supporting it (JINSA, WINEP, and MEF) even though it was no longer needed as a bulwark against communism in the Middle East.[34]

It has been suggested that this is because many of the neocons, such as Wolfowitz, Perle, and Gaffney, are Jewish and thus also motivated by religious and/or ethnic considerations. Others have argued that regardless of their ethnicity, the neocons clearly put Israel's interests on par with or even above those of the United States.[35] There may be some truth to these arguments, but it is virtually impossible to discern private religious or ethnic motivations. There is also a strategic explanation for their unflinching support for Israel that coheres with neoconservative regional and global objectives, which were supported by non-Jews too, such as Khalilzad, a Muslim, and Cheney. Quite simply, they believed that the United States should remain the dominant outside power in the Mid East region, and this included maintaining its commitment to Israel. Symbolism was just as important as substance in this respect. For decades America had staked its credibility on support for Israel, making unparalleled financial, military, and political investments. Israel was the most pro-American country in a region largely hostile to the American presence. If Washington reneged on its commitments or if its patrons retreated, this would invite challenges and call American credibility and commitment *everywhere* into question. Despite the decline of superpower competition in the region, the Heritage Foundation asserted that "Israel remains a dependable friend and potential ally in an unstable region" and that "*U.S. credibility in the world* . . . requires that Washington continue its commitment of military assistance to Israel" (emphasis added). Moreover, Heritage argued, the Oslo peace process was "not only hinder[ing] the attainment of a genuine peace but also strain[ing] American ties to Israel," which were vital to its regional position.[36]

So it was with considerable disquiet that the neocons witnessed the signing of the Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles (the DOP, also known as the Oslo Accords) between Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, and leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Yasser Arafat, on the White House lawn in September 1993. The culmination of the Madrid peace talks initiated by Bush in 1991, the Oslo Accords embodied the principles of mutual recognition and "land for peace," in which Israel would allow the Palestinians to form an entity with some of the attributes of a state in the West Bank and Gaza in exchange for full recognition of Israel and a cessation of terrorist operations.[37]

To the neoconservatives, the peace process that would span the next seven years was nothing but a unilateral retreat by Israel and, by extension,

hugely damaging to American interests and credibility in the region. According to CSP, the deal was neither in the interests of Israel "nor of other nations, notably the United States, that have a stake in Israel's security and stability in the Middle East."[38] The most vocal neoconservative opponents of this process in the early nineties were Gaffney, the CSP, and Douglas Feith, a neoconservative Washington lawyer and former member of the Reagan Pentagon, where he worked with Perle. His writings on foreign policy, and Israel in particular, appeared in *Commentary* and the *Wall Street Journal*, as well as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. Feith was also associated with several of the lobby groups in the neoconservative-led network, including Gaffney's CSP, and became one of the key figures in the network over the next decade.[39] Gaffney and Feith's critique of the peace process set the standard that was followed by other neocons when commentary on the issue proliferated in the second half of the decade.[40]

Their criticisms were not just directed against Clinton but also against Bush, who had set the Oslo talks in motion. When the Bush administration first attempted to promote Palestinian-Israeli dialogue in 1990, Feith stuck to a narrative of intransigent Arab rejectionism.[41] Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories was not the cause of the conflict; rather it was the Arabs' principled rejection of Zionism, he claimed. The Bush administration's diplomacy was futile because it did not have a valid idea of why the Arabs and Jews were fighting: "smart rejectionists long ago grasped the need to speak to the world at large in the vocabulary of liberal democracy even (especially) when one's aims are belligerent and illiberal," he claimed.[42] After the Oslo Accords were signed, CSP asked, "Is it realistic to expect the Palestinians to settle for only what they get under this accord?" It was more likely that Oslo was "a devious two step strategy to destroy Israel," using a Palestinian state as a springboard.[43] This failure to comprehend the real intentions of the Palestinians meant that the "land for peace" formula amounted to nothing more than a series of "*retreats* by Israel—unilateral, headlong surrenders of strategically vital real estate" to Arab interlocutors "committed to its destruction" (emphasis in original).[44] Krauthammer concurred: "[T]he letters and documents, the signings and ceremonies … are there mainly to give retreat *the appearance of orderliness and mutuality*" (emphasis in original).[45] The settlements that Israel was required to leave in the West Bank and Gaza would deprive it of vital strategic depth necessary to deter and defeat its Arab enemies.

In fact, under the terms of Oslo and subsequent agreements, Israel would maintain the largest settlement blocs and annex the Jordan Valley. Consistent with this, the final status plan presented by Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, in May 2000, envisaged a demilitarized

Palestinian entity comprised of four disconnected cantons in the West Bank amounting to 60 percent of its land and a fifth canton comprising 80 percent of the Gaza Strip.[46] Nevertheless, Feith, Gaffney, and others claimed that giving up the settlements would mean "Palestinian Arab appetites for Israeli-occupied land will be whetted, rather than sated," and a radical Palestinian Islamist state would likely emerge, from which Israel, bereft of the settlements, would have difficulty defending itself.[47] JINSA—whose board of advisors included Dick Cheney, Muravchik, Bolton, Feith, Perle, and Woolsey—argued that Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory was in fact in accordance with UN Resolution 242 of 1967. Israel "has never been ordered by the UN to vacate" because it had not received security guarantees from the Palestinians and so "[t]hat is why Israel's occupation of the territory is legal to this day … contrary to the popular press."[48]

Similar arguments were made about Jerusalem. The United States should ignore the PLO's claim that the city should also be the capital of the Palestinian entity and relocate its embassy to Jerusalem. According to Feith, this symbolically important gesture would make clear Israel's "enduring ties to the United States, and, since the end of the cold war, our (Washington's) unchallenged global predominance."[49] Rejecting land for peace, Feith and Gaffney advocated "peace through strength"—Israeli and American strength—a formula that prioritized Israeli and, by implication, American security interests over Palestinian national aspirations and would avoid any more humiliating retreats. On these issues they remained consistent until the collapse of the peace process in 2001.

Limits of the Neoconservative Critique

Although they had articulated their seminal objective—maintaining unipolarity—the neoconservative engagement with Clinton's foreign policy was only partial and opportunistic. Beyond Somalia, Bosnia, and the Middle East Peace Process, they had little to say about other regions. Iraq was a case in point. Since the ignominious conclusion to the 1991 war, it had not attracted much interest from the neoconservatives. There were sporadic calls from CSP for the deposal of Saddam, but it issued only very occasional Decision Briefs about Iraq during Clinton's first term. In 1994 there were twenty-nine Decision Briefs, none of which discussed Iraq; in 1995 there were thirty-four, of which only four were devoted to Saddam.[50] The issue of Iraq died down as the international community settled on weapons inspections, sanctions, and bombing of the no-fly zones, all of which proceeded without too much controversy for several years.[51] It was not until the apparent failure of the UNSCOM

inspections process in 1996–1997, and the arrival in Washington of an organized Iraqi opposition that space opened up for the neocons to step up their campaigning and embrace regime change.[52] But until these opportunities presented themselves, they had little to say about Iraq.

Iran was a similar case. The regime's involvement in arming the Bosnian Muslims was highlighted by CSP but, despite Gaffney and Feith's opposition to the peace process, there was no detailed critique of Tehran's relationship with Hezbollah, its early opposition to the Oslo Accords, or its aspirations to regional power status.[53] The internal dynamics of the Iranian regime seemed to preclude this. Since the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in June 1989, the Iranian regime had generally become more moderate. His death ushered in a period of increased pragmatism in Iranian foreign policy, whereby the ruling clerics pursued their national interests through diplomacy and trade and proposed mutual security pacts, rather than attempting to export the revolution. Iran normalized its relations with European states and sought regional détente with its neighbors in the Gulf. This culminated in the May 1997 election of Mohammed Khatami to the Presidency and his calls for reform at home and a "dialogue of civilizations" abroad.[54] Iran's increasing moderation and the Clinton administration's general inclination to minimize tensions with Tehran meant there was no obvious opening for a concerted campaign against the Iranian regime.

Iran and Iraq were not the only cases absent from the neocons' critique of Clinton. Consistent with their prioritizing of strategic interests, they declined to devote much attention to issues they perceived as purely humanitarian. Neither *Commentary* nor *The National Interest* ran a single article about the Rwandan genocide. Brief references asserted that, despite being a humanitarian tragedy, there was no American interest at stake. Haiti was barely mentioned. Muravchik wrote the only *Commentary* article dedicated to it: a single page in which he argued that military intervention was not justified since, unlike Grenada in 1983 and Panama in 1989, there were no American lives or security interests at stake.[55]

Neither was there much attention paid to Russia. The DPG had advocated that the United States hedge against the reemergence of an imperialist Russia, but with the defeat of the Soviet Union still so fresh, the neoconservatives seemed to be looking elsewhere for new threats. Russia was significant in terms of missile defense and the ABM Treaty (as we shall see below), but in and of itself it did not attract a significant amount of attention. After the demise of the USSR, the most serious long-term great power rival was considered to be China. Nor did many neoconservatives have a particular interest in Russia. At the AEI, there were only two scholars—Nicholas Eberstadt and Leon Aron—who were Russia specialists, although Eberstadt, who later became involved with PNAC,

wrote more on North Korea and East Asia than Russia.[56] Other think tanks, such as JINSA, MEF, and WINEP focused exclusively on the Mid East. Europe was no longer viewed through the prism of Russian expansion but American leadership within NATO and the alliance's enlargement. There was little need to consider how Moscow might respond to NATO's eastward thrust either: William Kristol simply assumed that there would not be a backlash against it in Russia and that, "in time, there is a good chance that many of the more thoughtful Russians will come to appreciate [it]"—echoing Krauthammer's assumption that the projection of American power was a one-way process.[57]

One case where the neocons did have an opportunity to attack the Clinton administration was North Korea, although the critique was limited. The protracted post–Cold War standoff over the North's nuclear program and its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) culminated in a brief but real threat of war between the United States and North Korea in mid-1994. The crisis was defused through the Agreed Framework, signed in October 1994, which allowed Pyongyang to suspend, rather than abandon, its plutonium enrichment program and, in return, pledged American deliveries of much needed heavy fuel supplies to the country, the construction of a light water reactor by an international consortium to take care of Pyongyang's long-term energy requirements and the gradual normalization of relations between the United States and North Korea.[58]

Only a handful of neocons commented on the Agreed Framework but the priorities for them were the maintenance of American credibility in East Asia and the world at large and the futility of making agreements with a totalitarian state, an echo of the attitude of the first generation of neocons toward the USSR. Krauthammer derided Clinton's negotiations with the Kim regime as "appeasement" while Perle remonstrated that "[w]e're being jerked around by North Korea and we're appeasing them through feckless diplomacy." Like the Soviet Union during the Cold War, North Korea was a regime "that you cannot reliably enter into agreement with," Perle claimed.[59] The Heritage Foundation warned that "a failure of American leadership may invite conflict or cause other states in Asia to consider building their own nuclear weapons."[60] When the Agreed Framework was finally made, it was denounced by CSP as "appeasement" that would "*assure*—not prevent—conflict with Pyongyang" (emphasis in original). Through "rewarding" North Korea, Clinton sent a signal to leaders such as Milosevic and Saddam, the Chinese regime, and the "imperialists" in the Kremlin that he was willing to accommodate them.[61] To Perle, the structure of the Agreed Framework was "a relationship between a blackmailer and one who pays a blackmailer."[62] The Clinton administration,

as in the ongoing Bosnian debacle, was allowing others to dictate its terms, thus jeopardizing American credibility not just in East Asia but in every other region of the world too. In particular it sent the wrong message to Beijing, given what CSP claimed were China's "worrisome aspirations to regional and even global military power" and its trade surplus with the United States that was underwriting China's "troubling new assertiveness internationally."[63] Yet, beyond the denunciations of the Agreed Framework and the apparent diminution of American prestige, the neocons offered no coherent alternative. Ten years later, Perle claimed that "a precision strike to destroy the [nuclear] facility" should have been considered but conceded that at the time he had "never looked at the details of how such a campaign would be conducted. So I would certainly not have recommended that at the time."[64] In this case the neocons were strong on criticism but lacked a viable alternative approach.

"DEMOCRATIC ENLARGEMENT"?

Another Clinton policy that the neoconservatives barely engaged with was "democratic enlargement," later codified as the 1995 National Security Strategy of "Engagement and Enlargement," which ostensibly sought to enlarge the global community of market democracies.[65] In practice, Clinton's commitment to promoting democracy was contingent on other strategic, economic, and political considerations; in other words, it was similar to the neocons' own invocation of democracy. While both the Clintonites and the neocons (barring Krauthammer) *spoke* about democracy, in *practice* neither of them would prioritize it. Instead it was something that might be pursued if it did not conflict with other interests. In practice, the Clinton administration prioritized markets over democracy.[66] Economic security was a key part of Clinton's diplomacy. He controversially delinked China's Most Favored Nation trading status from its human rights record in 1994, despite his campaign pledge not to and his criticism of George H. W. Bush for visiting the Chinese leaders in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square.[67] For a President who had won power promising to elevate the role of economics in foreign policy, who had established a National Economic Council as a counterweight to the NSC, democracy promotion could only ever be pragmatic at best.[68] This pragmatism was implicitly acknowledged by Clinton himself in an October 1992 campaign speech titled "Democracy in America."[69] Although he had accused George H. W. Bush of coddling dictators in Beijing after the Tiananmen Square massacre, Clinton made it clear that he did "not want to isolate China," and that U.S. actions abroad had to be "tempered with prudence and common sense." In particular, there

would be times "when other security needs or economic interests" would trump concerns about democracy and human rights.[70]

The same year that the Engagement and Enlargement document was released, Khalilzad, then working at the RAND organization, authored a pamphlet about post–Cold War U.S. global strategy, *From Containment to Global Leadership*.[71] It was a striking reiteration of the principles and objectives of the DPG. In it, Khalilzad affirmed that democracy promotion came second to imperatives of preserving unipolarity. In a section titled "Preserve American Military Preeminence," Khalilzad stated briefly that there might be occasions when "lesser regional crises" (LRCs, defined as "internal conflict, small wars, humanitarian relief, peace keeping or peacemaking, punitive strikes, restoring civil order, evacuation of Americans, providing security zones and monitoring and enforcement of sanctions") "*might* so challenge American values so as to produce U.S. military involvement" (emphasis added). In addition

> the United States *might* also *consider* participating *with allies* in *some* LRCs because of a desire to either extend the zone of peace or prevent chaos from spreading to and destabilizing critical regions (emphases added). [72]

This was the most overt commitment that any neoconservative would ever make to using force solely for the protection of values—but the number of caveats and the application only to lesser regional conflicts made it a somewhat tepid commitment, as well as an anomalous one since most neocons rejected missions that were purely humanitarian. Moreover, Khalilzad did not identify a single LRC that met these criteria during the nineties. The strategic touchstone of his vision (again) was that America should "preclude the rise of . . . multipolarity" and that *this* was the standard to use as a "prism for identifying threats and setting priorities," not threats to values, such as democracy.[73] Although on this occasion Khalilzad went further than other neocons by suggesting that there could conceivably be circumstances under which the military might be used in support of values, ultimately there was no firm commitment to this because it was not the prism through which challenges would be identified. This echoed the caveats and qualifiers that the Clinton administration invoked in the Engagement and Enlargement document, whereby democracy promotion was conditional on other more important considerations. For the neocons, those issues were more likely to be military, for Clinton they might also be economic. Despite the neoconservatives' harsh criticisms of Clinton for failing to identify the national interest in Somalia and for squandering American prestige in Bosnia, his view of when to promote democracy was remarkably similar to theirs.

"THE CASE FOR GLOBAL ACTIVISM"—DOMINATING THE PERIPHERY

These criticisms of Clinton culminated in the advancement of a comprehensive new global strategy for guiding foreign military interventions by Robert Kagan. In November 1994, Kagan sparked off a spontaneous debate in *Commentary* about when and where to intervene with an article titled "The Case for Global Activism."[74] In it, Kagan fully conceptualized for the first time the theory that maintaining America's position as the single pole of power required intervention not just in core strategic areas, where there were tangible vital interests at stake, but also in "peripheral" cases, where there were no narrowly construed material interests at stake but which could still damage America's credibility and prestige. According to Kagan, conflicts such as those in the Balkans were the new Manchurias and Abyssinias, tests of American willpower and commitment in an age of no overarching adversary. Whereas balance-of-power realists adhered to narrower dictates based upon tangible vital interests, unipolarism required the protection of a world order, and this could be challenged anywhere, including in peripheral regions. If America consciously set itself up as the ultimate arbiter of a global system, it could not "allow potential challengers of that order to act in the confidence that the United States will stand aside," Kagan argued.[75] Challenges had to be met wherever they were located, including in peripheral areas because unipolar leadership was indivisible. Remaining the single pole of power meant leading in *every* region of the world. If challenges occurred in peripheral areas, they had to be met. This did not mean, however, that United States would have to intervene *everywhere* on the periphery; only when a problem was perceived to challenge the American-led world order. Not every conflict would meet this standard.[76] Nor was it possible to set out precise criteria for intervention in advance, Kagan claimed, since each case was unique.

Kagan was seeking to put forward a "general approach to foreign policy" tilting toward activism and engagement in peripheral areas but still making choices on the basis of the unique circumstances of each situation.[77] His goal was to push against "the increasing drift" in the Republican Party against "an expansive view of America's role in the world"; but he did not intend to suggest "constant intervention everywhere and at all times." Selectivity was vital. There would always be competing priorities and prudence was required to match resources to commitments.[78] Activism on the periphery did not mean indiscriminate interventionism.

Nevertheless, Kagan had begun to blur the distinction between the "core" and the "periphery": if an ostensibly peripheral conflict—one where there were no tangible interests at stake—challenged the U.S.-led

world order or America's commitment to that region, then its resolution became a core U.S. interest. If a conflict had the potential to harm interests that were integral to the maintenance of unipolar power, it would require U.S. involvement regardless of whether there were any material interests at stake. This included conflicts such as Bosnia, where the main issue at stake was America's position as the guarantor of European security via the NATO alliance. These conflicts were the contemporary tests of American will power in the absence of a single overarching threat.[79] Protecting credibility in peripheral regions might also mean intervening at an early stage, before conflicts metastasized, in order to *prevent* instability or challenges to the world order, rather than merely containing them after they had already emerged.[80]

Moreover, global activism was not just good for America and the world; it was also the best electoral strategy for the Republican Party. The GOP had a natural advantage over the Democrats on foreign policy, which it needed to exploit. Only the Republicans "ha[ve] the understanding and the confidence to use American power in defense of the nation's interests," Kagan claimed. With the Presidential election just a year away, it was time for the GOP to reassume the Reaganite mantle and become, once more, *the* foreign policy party.[81]

On promoting democracy Kagan had little to say. Pursuing American hegemony was simply assumed to be identical to "promoting and defending a decent world order," but there was no mention of the circumstances under which democracy specifically might be encouraged or whether it might ever conflict with the imperatives of unipolarity. Kagan characterized Washington's record in the Cold War as "preferring dictatorship to disorder but also preferring democracy to dictatorship," underscoring his pragmatic attachment to democracy promotion.[82] While he succeeded in conveying a strategic vision, it was not one that placed democracy promotion at the center but an expansive American dominance that reached peripheral regions to ensure that America retained its credibility and leadership role in every region of the world.

"The Case for Global Activism" elicited spontaneous responses from several neoconservatives. Muravchik, Friedberg, Rodman, Wolfowitz, and Elliott Abrams of the Hudson Institute all wrote lengthy letters to *Commentary,* which were broadly supportive of Kagan's vision. Beyond the abstract principle of protecting credibility, Friedberg also advocated avoiding "ironclad rules" on when to intervene, because not every peripheral conflict would be vital to America's global or regional standing.[83] Muravchik also endorsed selectivity on the periphery because some conflicts were "threats to the peace," while others were "tragedies confined within the borders of a single state": Bosnia and North Korea were

examples of the former and thus required U.S. intervention; Haiti and Somalia were examples of the latter.[84] (Elsewhere, Muravchik argued that the American standard should be to act not only in the face of danger but to intervene early to "prevent such dangers from materializing.")[85]

Rodman, too, recognized that credibility could be lost in peripheral conflicts but he cautioned against becoming overly embroiled in them, arguing that priority attention should be given to "maintaining the basic *structure* of international order" in Europe and the Far East as well as "shielding the world community from what Charles Krauthammer calls the Radical Weapons States."[86] Though he did not discount challenges from the periphery, Rodman implied that the most serious challenges were more likely to come from regions where there were core vital interests at stake. In his own volume of Cold War history, also published in 1994, Rodman also made the same assumption as Krauthammer about the reception of U.S. power: the rest of the world was "more afraid of our abdication than our dominance," he claimed, thus ignoring ways that other nations might respond to—and possibly reject—American power.[87]

None of Kagan's respondents were keen on humanitarian interventions. Rodman was prepared to support low-cost deployments as long as military forces would still be available to meet emerging strategic threats. However, Abrams counseled against them altogether, warning that they could "eventually undercut the willingness of Americans to meet even essential national security responsibilities." (The others did not even mention humanitarian intervention.)

The most significant challenges to Kagan's thesis came from Francis Fukuyama and Fred Iklé, a former Under Secretary of Defense for policy during the Reagan administration and member of the CSP advisory board.[88] Fukuyama did not dispute the goal of U.S. preeminence; he simply believed that interests integral to maintaining it were unlikely to be at stake in peripheral regions. He rejected the notion that U.S. standing was at risk in Bosnia and cautioned against squandering public support for military interventions by intervening in too many peripheral cases. While Kagan took the "use it or lose it" perspective on power, Fukuyama was of the "use it *and* lose it" view (emphasis in original).[89] Although Iklé would later align himself with Kagan's PNAC, he was skeptical about the idea that interests could be at stake in peripheral regions. The case for such intervention was "not overwhelmingly compelling," and there was a danger of intervening *"just because we have the power to do so"* (emphasis in original) rather than because important interests were at stake.[90] While there were some tactical differences between Kagan and his respondents—particularly concerning the extent to which peripheral

conflicts could threaten the U.S. position—there was a broad consensus on the objective of preserving America's post–Cold War position.

William Kristol, who had not responded to Kagan's article, concurred with his sentiments in a debate at a Freedom House symposium in April 1995, which focused on "The Emerging Republican Foreign Policy." These were Kristol's first significant comments about foreign policy and, according to CSP, he put forward a "stunning" argument that drew support from Bolton, Rodman, and Muravchik who were all in attendance. Attacking the Clinton administration's excessive focus on the domestic agenda, Kristol claimed that the "conventional wisdom which holds that foreign and defense policies no longer matter in national politics is *wrong*" (emphasis in original).[91] Like Kagan in the "Global Activism" article, Kristol noted that Republicans had won the White House in 1980, 1984, and 1988 because they offered the American people "a sense of what the nation is all about, why we should be proud to be Americans . . . A vision of America's role in the world." The principles of Ronald Reagan, which had the power to "restore American strength and greatness," could again be the cornerstone of Republican foreign policy in the face of the vacillation and weakness of the Clinton administration. Thus a neoconservative foreign policy would have the dual purpose of revitalizing the Republican Party, securing its return to power and guiding the preservation of America's unipolar position. Kristol also believed that the GOP needed "a fresh slate. You need to have people who don't have a stake in defending the decision not to go after Saddam in '91 or the decision not to go into Bosnia late in '91 and early '92 . . . [G]enerationally, as it were, you need a fresh set of people without a stake in old battles to articulate the new foreign policy."[92]

National Missile Defense: An Opening

The first issue that the new generation of neocons began actively lobbying on was NMD. Whereas Iran and Iraq were essentially closed issues for the neocons, there was a political opening on NMD for them in 1994 when the Republican Party took control of Congress in the midterm elections pledging, in its Contract with America, to deploy a nationwide missile defense system as soon as technologically possible.[93] The 1972 ABM Treaty with the Soviet Union permitted some small-scale theatre missile defenses but outlawed a comprehensive system of national defenses. For the neoconservatives, an NMD system was the "*sine qua non* for a strategy of American global pre-eminence" because it would preserve America's freedom of action by guarding against attack from the "Weapon States." By nullifying missile programs around the world,

Washington could take preventive military action without fear of retaliation against the homeland.[94] Thus NMD was not merely a defensive system, as it had always been characterized since its inception; it was also offensive in nature because by immunizing America from retaliation (at least in the form of missile attacks—the neocons ignored unconventional capabilities), NMD would facilitate offensive and preventive action.

The issue of missile defense stands apart from all other concerns that the neocons and their allies debated during the nineties because, in time, it would prove to be the only issue on which their network would move well beyond critique from outside the government to interaction with the Clinton administration on the inside, husbanding change that would otherwise have been very unlikely. Led by the aggressive lobbying of CSP, which worked in tandem with its allies—and in some cases board members—in Congress, and aided significantly by the Republican victory in the midterm congressional elections in 1994, the neoconservative-led network played an indispensable role in forcing Clinton's hand in adopting the National Missile Defense Act of 1999, which mandated deployment of the system as soon as technologically feasible. It would achieve this by challenging the CIA's intelligence on potential missile threats on which Clinton based his NMD policy. This successful lobbying campaign, spanning a five-year period, culminated in an external review of intelligence, known as the Rumsfeld Commission, after its leader, Donald Rumsfeld, which would include other key individuals associated with the neoconservative-led network. On this issue, the neocons were able to push the incumbent in a direction he would almost certainly not have otherwise taken and, more significantly, given that NMD was still proving technologically elusive anyway, the Rumsfeld Commission would have a lasting impact upon how the Intelligence Community assessed ballistic missile threats.

The groundwork for the CSP-led offensive on missile defense was laid during the first term of the Clinton administration. In May 1993, just four months after Clinton took office, his Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin, proclaimed "the end of the Star Wars era." Research funding for missile defenses would continue, but the focus would be on theatre defenses designed to deal with short- and medium-range missiles.[95] However, in 1994, Newt Gingrich and his colleague Rep. Dick Armey (R-TX) revived missile defense as a policy issue by putting it on the Contract with America and, after their midterm victory, the Republicans in the House would make several attempts to pass a mandate requiring deployment of NMD by a specific date.

CSP, in particular, embraced the cause of NMD with gusto. Since its establishment in 1988, CSP had argued that arms control treaties were

outmoded and ineffectual and that America should look for new ways of defending itself. The list of CSP associates included long-standing, active proponents of missile defense both in and outside of government. CSP National Security Advisory Council member, Rep. Curt Weldon (R-PA) cofounded the Congressional Ballistic Missile Defense Caucus with Pete Geren (D-TX) in March 1995 to "ensure the fielding of anti-missile defense systems presently in development."[96] Nine serving members of Congress sat on the CSP Advisory Council. As well as Weldon, the Board included Representatives Christopher Cox (R-CA), Henry Hyde (R-ILL), and John Shadegg (R-AZ), and Senators Tim Hutchinson (R-AR), Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), Jon Kyl (R-AZ), Bob Smith (R-NH), and James Inhofe (R-OK).[97]

The Advisory Council also included representatives of the defense contractor, Lockheed Martin, as well as many prominent conservative and neoconservative political strategists. Feith and Perle were founding members of CSP along with Gaffney. James Woolsey, Clinton's former CIA chief and a future member of George W. Bush's Defense Policy Board, was the honorary cochairman. (In total, 21 members of the CSP Advisory Council would go on to serve in the Bush administration.)[98] CSP also formed the umbrella group, the Coalition to Defend America to "educat[e] the American people about the dangers inherent in their present vulnerability in the face of burgeoning proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles with which such weapons might be delivered."[99]

Other think tanks in the neoconservative loop also took a determined stance. The Heritage Foundation and JINSA openly supported NMD and prominent individuals associated with them, including Perle, Feith, Kristol, Kagan, and Michael Ledeen of the AEI, all campaigned in favor in the mid-nineties.[100] After the 1994 North Korean crisis, Gaffney claimed that "only an urgent wholesale re-direction of the Clinton administration's approach to ballistic missile defense" could neutralize the threat from Pyongyang.[101] In contrast, however, President Clinton claimed publicly that the ABM Treaty, which outlawed full NMD, would "remain a cornerstone of US security policy and our new relationship with Russia."[102]

Yet, this was another issue on which Clinton's policy was closer to that of the neoconservatives than either of them would care to admit. Paradoxically, it was Clinton who opened the door to NMD in his first term, when he unilaterally reinterpreted the ABM Treaty so as to allow for new theatre defenses. In early 1994 the legal counsels of the departments of State and Defense and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency concluded that the Theatre High-Altitude Area Defense system (THAAD) designed to intercept theatre missiles in the upper atmosphere

violated the ABM Treaty. Since these systems were already being developed by the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, the Clinton administration attempted to negotiate a change with the Russians in the ABM Treaty so as to accommodate them. When no agreement was reached after talks in 1994, Washington simply made a unilateral declaration in early 1995 that the THAAD and Upper-Tier systems did not in fact violate the treaty at all, thus continuing its missile defense research under the questionable auspices that it was acting within the limits of the ABM Treaty. At a summit meeting in Moscow in May 1995, Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, agreed to endorse the American fait accompli, which had in fact substantially revised the terms of the ABM Treaty.[103]

Clinton's erosion of the treaty gave succor to those who opposed it completely. One private report that seized upon the opening appeared in June 1995. The Heritage Foundation's *Defending America: Ending America's Vulnerability to Missile Attack* sought to challenge the CIA's intelligence on the ballistic missile threat and prove that an attack on the United States from a rogue state was a real possibility and warranted a worldwide missile defense system that could be developed from the THAAD system favored by Clinton.[104]

The assembled study team was known at the time in conservative circles as "Team B," after another group of Cold War neocons that had successfully challenged the CIA's intelligence on the Soviet Union in 1976. With the CIA under fire for allegedly being "soft" on the Soviets, the Ford administration decided to bring in a team of outside experts, who would have access to the same intelligence material as the CIA analysts ("Team A") and would interpret the information as they saw fit.[105] The neocons of the time had played an important role in lobbying for this and the ensuing "Team B" was comprised of known Cold War hawks (including a young Paul Wolfowitz as a staff member). The Team B analysis had a damaging impact on the credibility of the CIA and Cold War, and post–Cold War neoconservatives would look back on it as a great success.

The Heritage missile defense "Team B" was inspired by the 1976 experiment. This new Team B was also led by known hawks with a preference for missile defense. It included two former Directors of Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative Organization, Henry Cooper and James Abrahamson; its Systems Architect, Edward Gerry; Reagan's Science Advisor, William Graham, who was also on the CSP Advisory Council; Gaffney; and Daniel Graham, a member of the 1976 Team B and a former Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). While Director of the DIA, Daniel Graham had embraced the concept of a "Peace Shield," which became known in the media as "Star Wars." He then served as a

Military Advisor to Reagan and joined the Coalition for the Strategic Defense Initiative to counter attacks on Reagan's SDI program.[106]

The key threat finding of the Heritage Foundation's report was that

> Th[e] [administration's] optimistic view of the threat is not consistent with the observable pace and nature of proliferation, the technical facts of missile development, or the political instabilities of the former Soviet states and China. The Administration's assessment of the threat is consistent with its slow approach to developing ballistic missile defenses, raising concerns that the Administration's estimate of the threat may have been tailored to match its leisurely pace in building missile defenses. This is a huge mistake . . .[107]

Rep. Robert Dornan of California spoke about the report in the House immediately after its release, explaining at length the arguments and referring specifically to Gaffney.[108] The report would later be used by Gaffney to lobby Congress in his Congressional testimonies in 1996.

THE 1995 NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE CONTROVERSY

At the heart of the issue were intelligence and its implications for policy. If the proponents of NMD were to succeed, they needed to demonstrate that, in contrast to the conclusions of the CIA, there was a credible ballistic missile threat to America. In November 1995, a bitter and extended partisan scrap over intelligence on ballistic missiles began when the Intelligence Community released a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), which threatened to render an NMD system unnecessary.[109]

The NIE came under the stewardship of CIA chief, John Deutch, who had just assumed control of the Agency. It was politically charged from the beginning. House Republicans, including Weldon of CSP, sent a letter to the CIA requesting the early release of the NIE's conclusions. The Estimate was duly released earlier than planned but not before the administration secretly shared its conclusions with Democratic Senators, Dale Bumpers of Arkansas and Carl Levin of Michigan, to aid them in the Senate's debate of a defense authorization bill supporting an antimissile system.[110] Most controversially, the terms of the Intelligence Community's study—focusing only on the forty-eight contiguous states and not Hawaii or Alaska—did seem to preclude conclusions that were more likely to support the deployment of NMD.[111]

The key conclusion of the NIE, made public in December 1995, was that "no country other than the declared nuclear powers will develop

or otherwise acquire a ballistic missile in the next 15 years that could threaten the 48 contiguous states or Canada." In addition, it reported that "ballistic missile programs of other countries are focused on regional security concerns and are not expected to evolve into threats to North America during the period of this estimate." Iraq's ability to build an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) was severely constrained by international sanctions, and the Intelligence Community was likely to detect any indigenous long-range ballistic missile program "years before deployment."[112]

As Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee's subcommittee on research and development, Weldon received a briefing on the NIE from CIA analyst, David Osias. He later described how he "went ballistic" on hearing Osias' report: "I said, 'Do you mean to tell me that the unrest in Russia represents no additional threat?'" Weldon walked out of the briefing in disgust. He blasted the NIE as "the most outrageous politicization of an intelligence document that I've seen in the 10 years I've been in Washington."[113] However, Clinton's new plan for missile defense was based on the conclusions of the NIE. In February 1996, the administration announced its so-called 3 + 3 plan, which envisioned spending three further years researching an NMD system and then, if it was deemed necessary, a further three years deploying it. The "3 + 3" plan did not guarantee deployment, though, and allowed Clinton to judge whether it was necessary.[114] For the NMD hawks, this equivocation was unacceptable, and the 1995 NIE upon which Clinton had based his policy had to be challenged.

At the House National Security Committee's hearings on "The Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States and Its Allies" in February 1996, a number of conservative and neoconservative outside experts were invited in by the Committee to testify. Notably, Weldon was involved as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Research and Development. He chaired one of the hearings and used the opportunity to assail the Clinton administration for "assum[ing] the ostrich's position—head in the sand."[115] Gaffney, in his testimony, referred to Weldon and Kyl (both of CSP) and explained how they had convinced him that the 1995 NIE was overtly political. (Weldon did not chair the hearing the day Gaffney testified.) Gaffney presented his own version of the missile threat to the Unites States: "It's literally a present danger," and the absence of missile defenses provided no disincentive for rogue states like North Korea to acquire long-range missiles.[116] The NIE was "so out of touch" with these realities that there was only one thing for Congress to do: "Get a second opinion." Gaffney pointed out the precedent of the 1976 Team B that had provided a "more sober, pessimistic, and accurate evaluation of the Soviet threat"

and told the panel about the Heritage Foundation's unofficial Team B-style report of 1995.

William Graham, a member of the Heritage "Team B," and later the Rumsfeld Commission, asserted in his testimony that the United States should build missile defenses "today—not tomorrow, not next year, not 15 years from now, but today."[117] The President of the conservative National Institute for Public Policy, Keith Payne, who would serve as an advisor to the Rumsfeld Commission, testified that "unless we start down the deployment path now, we will be lucky to have an NMD system available" by the time rogue states develop ballistic missiles.[118] Woolsey testified in March 1996, stating that as a result of the NIE's focus on only forty-eight states, the Clinton administration had "a badly distorted and minimized perception of very serious threats … [to] some of the 50 states." He, too, endorsed setting up a team of outside experts: "I would bet that we would be shocked at what they could show us about available capabilities."[119] Perle was also invited to testify and criticized the administration's efforts to multilateralize the ABM treaty so that it was now officially between the United States and the successor states to the Soviet Union.[120]

It was not the only occasion that these men would testify. Woolsey, Gaffney, and Payne testified in May to the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee's Subcommittee on National Security and, on that occasion, Weldon himself gave a lengthy speech in favor of NMD. Gaffney and William Graham appeared in September at the House National Security Committee hearings. Woolsey and Graham testified in September to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and spoke tirelessly in favor of NMD and against the ABM Treaty on each occasion.[121] In the hearings of February and March 1995, the witness lists had been stacked in favor of the Republicans every time, with never more than one opponent of missile defense out of three or four. (On one occasion there were no opponents.) In the Committee's report of May 1996, the ranking Democrat, Ronald Dellums, offered a dissenting view to the conclusions. He reflected on the Committee's "partisan appearance" and its preference for "outside experts" at the expense of government experts. Although the hearings were specifically about the missile threat, Dellums confirmed the importance of the intelligence issue by noting the Committee's "determination to plumb the conclusions reached by the Intelligence Community" in the 1995 NIE and added that, regardless of the validity of that NIE, "it is unconscionable that we have failed to have the Intelligence Community before the Committee to testify on the NIE's contents and its methodology. I have requested such a Committee hearing on several occasions and am disappointed that this has not occurred."[122]

In spite of Dellums' objections, the Committee's report recommended setting up a panel of nongovernmental experts to review the "assumptions, terms of reference, methodology and conclusions" of the NIE, as well as a separate blue-ribbon commission of external experts to "assess the nature and magnitude of the existing and emerging ballistic missile threat to the United States."[123] Finally, Floyd Spence, the Chairman of the House National Security Committee, asked the General Accounting Office (GAO) in February to investigate the NIE.[124] Thus, by May 1996, a three-pronged assault on the conclusions of the NIE had begun, and NMD was firmly back on the Congressional and legislative agenda.

The full impact of their activities—the NIE investigation and the blue-ribbon commission led by Rumsfeld—would come later in Clinton's second term. However, their achievement so far had surpassed the impact the neocons and their allies had made in any other area. The CSP-led coalition had moved beyond external criticism of the Clinton administration, and sparked into motion the two reviews that would, in time, force change upon the administration.

The early Clinton years thus saw neoconservative activists and intellectuals and their allies put forward an expanded critique, framed through and building upon the premises of the DPG. Their objective was, in Khalilzad's words, to "prevent multipolarity." What they had now begun to debate was what this meant in practical terms with regard to Israel, NMD, and "peripheral" interventions. The lobbying on NMD also highlighted one increasingly dynamic aspect of the neoconservative campaign: the role of think tanks and advocacy groups in promoting the unipolar strategy. Rather than acting as individuals, the neoconservatives and their sympathizers formed an intellectual network, which became increasingly active as the Clinton years wore on, and it is this to which we now turn.

CHAPTER 3

THE NEOCONSERVATIVE-LED NETWORK

IN THE AFTERMATH OF 9/11, THREE CARICATURES OF THE neoconservative-led network were presented. The first—put forward partly by defensive conservatives and neoconservatives and partly by uninformed critics—depicted the neoconservatives as a "cabal," implying that they had plotted the Bush foreign policy surreptitiously and were the hidden hand behind the "war on terror." For some, the fact that neoconservatism as a political phenomenon had received comparatively little media attention in the nineties meant that it seemed like it had come from nowhere when the spotlight shone on the neocons after 9/11. For others, invoking the "cabal" caricature facilitated the deflection of criticism. Joshua Muravchik, David Brooks, a neoconservative *New York Times* columnist, and Max Boot, a neoconservative *Wall Street Journal* editor, all claimed that their critics were reliant on depicting them as a "cabal" or "conspiracy," with Brooks even claiming they were motivated by anti-Semitism; claims that they then proceeded to refute with ease. However, these loaded terms were not the words of critics but the neocons' own words. There were no specific examples cited and rarely any names mentioned. Brooks was even forced to retract his allegations of anti-Semitism and issue an apology.[1]

The second caricature—also put forward by defensive neocons—portrayed a group of people who, in Brooks' words, "travel in widely different circles and don't actually have much contact with one another," and who "agree on Saddam, [but] disagree vituperatively on just about everything else."[2] For some neocons, this also served as a way to fend off criticism of their policies, by claiming that their influence was blown out of all proportion by their opponents.

Finally, a third caricature depicted a shadowy network that followed the political philosophy of Leo Strauss and, motivated by his writings

on esoteric political messages, was inspired to lie to the public about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq; though, in fact, the philosopher had neither written about foreign policy nor suggested telling "noble lies."[3] In reality, all of these caricatures contained grains of truth but nothing more. However, no examination of the neoconservatives would be complete without considering the structure, role, and scope of their intellectual network.

NETWORK PERSPECTIVES

The intellectual network that emerged was comprised of an alliance of neoconservatives and conservative nationalists who shared the objective of preserving America's position as the single pole of world power. Within this network, the neocons were the principal organizers and strategists but they received important support from other conservative nationalists, such as John Bolton, Dick Cheney, and Donald Rumsfeld, who shared their commitment to American unipolarism. It was therefore a network *led* by neocons but it was never their exclusive domain. The network was not homogenous but did not need to be since the areas of agreement were substantial. What united the group was the belief that the overriding objective of U.S. foreign policy was the preservation of America's unipolar moment. The apparent dichotomy between neoconservatives and non-neocons/conservative nationalists was not a barrier to collective action or to future influence of the network on policy making, despite the stylistic differences between them. Although some of these unipolarists had studied the work of Strauss, most of them had not and, accordingly, it was not Straussianism—to which we will return—that served as the network's unifying concept but unipolarism.

The network that emerged in the 1990s was led by a core group of neoconservative activists—such as William Kristol, Robert Kagan, Richard Perle, and Frank Gaffney—that was part of a broader network of supporting alliances of both individuals and institutions, very few of which were exclusively neoconservative. Rather than an autonomous, free-floating "cabal" or a scattering of tenuously linked individuals, the neoconservatives emerged from a nexus of elite Washington, D.C.–based think tanks, advocacy groups, and magazines that had been gaining momentum with the ascendancy of the second generation. A host of think tanks, including CSP, the AEI, the Heritage, and Hudson Foundations, were complemented by journals such as *Commentary*, *the National Interest,* and *The Weekly Standard* that was established in 1995. Together, these media constituted the public space for interaction and debate between neoconservatives and their unipolarist sympathizers. Magazines

and think thanks served as the facilitators for the initial development and publication of these ideas, even though many of those forums did not subscribe exclusively to neoconservative values. In this sense, the neocons' ideas often transcended their institutional affiliations, even though most of them were also, paradoxically, reliant on those institutions to facilitate the discussion of their work. Thus, despite Brooks' argument to the contrary, the amount of direct contact neoconservatives and their sympathizers may or may not have had with each other is tangential, not only because their ideas stand or fall on their own merit, but because, for the most part, where the network really coalesced was in print. The print press provided a vital public space—albeit a very elite one—in which the network could develop and debate its ideas even without regular close contact. The resulting network was large, dynamic, public (although it did not attract much attention before 9/11), thoroughly elitist, and included many other conservative unipolarists who shared an expansive vision of the national interest.

To be sure, these two groups of conservatives did not agree on everything. Conservative nationalists did not share the neocons' commitment—albeit a rather passive one—to using nonmilitary means—or to return to Kagan's words, measures "well short of military force"—to encourage democracy where it would not conflict with strategic imperatives. Neither did the likes of Cheney and Rumsfeld embrace to the same extent the grandiose rhetoric that some of the neocons used about "exporting democracy." These differences certainly gave the neocons a distinctive style. Their rhetoric was taken literally by many and created the perception that they were committed to exporting democracy by force if necessary.[4] For some neocons, this language was also a *tactic*. As Kagan had written in 1992, sustaining public support for an expansive foreign policy required giving the public "a justification that [went] beyond realism" and appealed to their moral sensibilities and sense of exceptionalism.[5] Nevertheless, these differences were not substantial enough to prevent the development of a close working alliance between the groups of conservatives based on their shared belief in maintaining American unipolarity.

How many of these unipolarists were also Straussians? To be sure, some of the most important neoconservatives had studied Strauss. Kristol, Paul Wolfowitz, Francis Fukuyama, Gary Schmitt (of PNAC), and Abram Shulsky (who coauthored with Schmitt) were all taught by students of Strauss, and most have acknowledged an intellectual debt to the philosopher.[6] Yet other key unipolarists such as Kagan, Feith, Gaffney, and Donald Rumsfeld were not Straussians. Ultimately, Strauss's ideas were far from integral to neoconservatism, not least because he never wrote about foreign policy. His writings took the form of commentary on the classical

texts of political philosophy; he did not believe in the universality of the American experience and, in Kristol's words, he was "very hostile to the notion that we can radically change the world for the better."[7] Strauss's assertion that philosophers sometimes presented controversial messages in esoteric form to avoid persecution was applied by Schmitt and Shulsky to the world of intelligence analysis as they attempted to warn analysts and policy makers of the possibility of deception in international relations.[8] This point has consequences for our discussion of missile defense and the Rumsfeld Commission, and we will return to it later, but suffice it here to say that the Schmitt-Shulsky argument represented an extrapolation from Strauss's ideas, a political application that he did not make, and it contributed to the caricature of Strauss as the inspiration behind the "noble lie" of WMD in Iraq in 2003.[9]

In other ways, Strauss did resonate with neoconservatism. Echoing Plato, Strauss was interested in the nature of regimes and the type of people different regimes produced. For him, the timeless political dilemma was how to create a system that reconciled both virtue—the "good life" devoted to moral excellence, as conceived by the ancients—and consent, the requirement of democracy.[10] Strauss feared that the historicism of the modern state, embodied in its excessive devotion to "rights" rather than to virtue, was dangerous, for if modern democracies failed to make value judgments about right and wrong and exalted relativism above all else, they opened the door to their enemies, and ultimately even their own destruction. Strauss's anxiety about the character and fate of liberal democracies was reflected in the neoconservative preoccupation with regimes, but with one crucial caveat. Whereas Strauss reflected on the domestic ramifications of the regime-type, the neoconservatives applied this instead to the external behavior of states, arguing that nondemocratic regimes behaved deceptively and aggressively in their international relations.

The heterogeneity of the neoconservative-led network is reflected not only in the two different strands of conservatism within it but also in the institutional structures of the network. Although there were think tanks and lobby groups in the 1990s that employed industrious and vocal neoconservatives, with the possible exceptions of *The Weekly Standard* and its sister organization, PNAC (not established until 1997), these groups were far from being exclusively neoconservative or even devoted solely to foreign policy. Instead, neoconservatives and conservative unipolarists negotiated their own positions within organizations that were not necessarily exclusively devoted to promoting unipolarity, or even to foreign policy. Kagan, one of the most influential figures, was a scholar at the centrist, liberal Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP).[11]

AEI scholars had always spanned a range of disciplines and interests from social welfare to foreign relations.[12]

Similarly, as of 2007, the JINSA board of fifty-five advisors included only four neocons (Perle, Michael Ledeen, Muravchik, and James Woolsey). Dick Cheney and John Bolton were also members but took leave of absence to enter government service; Douglas Feith was a former Vice Chairman of the board.[13] In sum, neocons had never come close to dominating JINSA, but the organization was held together by its common views on the U.S.-Israeli relationship. The same is true of the CSP Advisory Council, where a similar breakdown of the membership could be found: a minority of neocons joined by other conservatives who shared some of their views on national security.[14]

Although the most important development for second generation neoconservatism came when Bill Kristol first published *The Weekly Standard* in September 1995, most of the sympathetic think tanks and advocacy groups predated Kristol's foray into neoconservative activism by years if not decades. CSP was established in 1988 when Gaffney left the Reagan administration after its signing of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty with the USSR.[15] His opposition to Reagan's arms control policies was implicit in his acknowledgment that the new organization was "loosely modeled after the legendary Committee on the Present Danger," which had "challenged the view that détente with the Soviet Union was a viable basis for American security." The Center would help to "preserve a sense of identity and community among like-minded security policy practitioners, awaiting a day when many of them [might] be called upon to serve once again in government."[16] Dedicated to promoting "international peace through American strength," CSP would also attempt to stimulate and inform national and international debates about defense and security issues by rapid preparation and real-time dissemination of information, analyses, and policy recommendations, aimed principally at an elite and influential audience:

> the U.S. security policy-making community (the executive and legislative branches, the armed forces and appropriate independent agencies), corresponding organizations in key foreign governments, the press (domestic and international), the global business and financial community and interested individuals in the public at large.[17]

Key neoconservative activists served on the CSP National Security Advisory Council. Along with Gaffney, members included Perle; Feith; Elliott Abrams; Paula Dobriansky, a lawyer and diplomat who had served in various positions in the Reagan State Department; William Schneider Jr., a Republican who served on both Reagan's terms; James Roche, a

former Navy captain and Democratic Staff Director of the Senate Armed Services Committee; and Dov Zakheim, a former Under Secretary of Defense in the Reagan administration. All of these would later take up positions in the administration of George W. Bush along with twelve other conservatives affiliated to CSP.[18]

The AEI, established in 1943, was the oldest of the think tanks. Situated in the same building as *The Weekly Standard* offices on Washington, D.C.'s 17th Street NW, the Institute was founded as a "private, nonpartisan, not-for-profit institution dedicated to research and education on issues of government, politics, economics, and social welfare." By the 1990s, it was home to over seventy resident and visiting scholars who produced in-depth policy research and convened regular conferences aimed at government officials and legislators, business executives, professionals, journalists, and interested citizens. AEI scholars also testified frequently before congressional committees, provided consultation to all branches of government, and are often cited and reprinted in the national media.[19] From 1999–2001, Bolton served as Senior Vice President, with responsibility for supervising the research program and for the dissemination of the AEI's research and publications.[20] The AEI research faculty included some other familiar names. Muravchik, Perle, Ledeen, Nicholas Eberstadt (an East Asia specialist and future PNAC supporter), and David Wurmser, author of a 1999 monograph calling for regime change in Iraq, were all resident scholars.[21] Eliot Cohen, a neoconservative military theoristat Johns Hopkins University, served on the AEI Council of Academic Advisors.[22]

JINSA had been established "as a result of the lessons learned from the 1973 Yom Kippur War" in order to communicate with the national security establishment and the general public "to explain the role Israel can and does play in bolstering American interests, as well as the link between American defense policy and the security of Israel."[23] Here the cross-think-tank links and the key activists were particularly clear, with Cheney, Bolton, Feith, Ledeen, Muravchik, Woolsey, and Perle all affiliated to the organization. At age 23, Feith had helped draft JINSA's charter in 1973.[24]

As JINSA had been born out of lessons learnt from the Yom Kippur War, MEF was born out of opposition to the Oslo Accords. The group was established by Daniel Pipes, a former Chicago and Harvard historian, on 24 January 1994, four months after the Oslo Accords. According to Pipes, this was

> a time when most specialists and policy-makers were wearing rosy-tinted glasses—prophesying an Arab-Israeli peace breakthrough, subsiding radicalism in the Middle East, enhanced economic co-operation, and so on.

> We were skeptical and made this known from the outset, pioneered issues and points of view, such as the bad faith of the Palestinian leadership; the Syrian regime's unwillingness to conclude a peace agreement with Israel; the threat of militant Islam against America and the West.[25]

MEF focused exclusively on the Middle East. It opposed the Oslo Accords, promoted strong ties with Israel and Turkey, Palestinian acceptance of the Israeli state, and confronting "radical ideologies" in the region.[26] MEF also ran Campus Clubs dedicated to exposing supposed anti-Israel views in American universities.[27] The list of nineteen experts associated with MEF included Kristol, Meyrav Wurmser (wife of David), and Michael Rubin, a young neoconservative who would serve as a Pentagon advisor in Iraq in 2003 and then become a resident scholar at the AEI.[28]

While all these organizations were unmistakably conservative in orientation, WINEP provides an example of a less-overtly partisan organization, which reflected a mix of neoconservative and Clintonite views. In this case, conservatives of any stripe were unable to dominate the organization, and very often it did not serve as a vehicle for their opinions. Still, they managed to carve out a degree of space for themselves at WINEP and, at times, used the organization as a platform for their views.[29]

WINEP was established in 1985 by Martin Indyk, previously the Research Director at the leading pro-Israel lobby, the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and Barbi Weinberg, a former Vice President of AIPAC, and was closely aligned with AIPAC from its inception. (As of 2006, fourteen members of the 100-plus Board of Trustees had served on the AIPAC executive board and some were founders or Directors of pro-Israel Political Action Committees.)[30] During the nineties, the Washington Institute was reasonably supportive of Clinton's Middle East policy. Eleven signatories of the final report of WINEP's 1992 commission on U.S.-Israeli relations, *Enduring Partnership*, joined the Clinton administration. Indyk joined the NSC and was the Principal Formulator and Spokesperson for the Clinton policy of "dual containment" of Iraq and Iran. He served two tours as U.S. Ambassador to Israel and was involved in the Oslo process, so abhorred by Feith, Gaffney, and others.[31] Yet WINEP's advisory board and list of scholars also included some neoconservatives. Though they had no say in the day-to-day output or on the research undertaken, Woolsey, Perle, and Wolfowitz were all on the WINEP board. Muravchik and Pipes both served as Adjunct Scholars. Rubin became a WINEP Adjunct Scholar in 1999.[32] (WINEP also included three others on the MEF advisory board: Robert Satloff, Patrick Clawson, and Jonathan Schanzer.)[33] Despite its connections with

the Clinton administration, on occasions, the WINEP output was more reflective of its conservative membership. As we shall see, WINEP was one of the first think tanks to call for regime change in Iraq in a 1996 report by a study group that included Bolton, Rodman, Dobriansky, Feith, and Zalamy Khalilzad.[34]

The Hudson Institute was not devoted solely to foreign policy, but nevertheless was another home to several prominent neoconservatives during the 1990s. Established in 1961 to promote "global security, prosperity and freedom," Hudson focused on both domestic and foreign policy. Neoconservative scholars, Irwin Stelzer and Meyrav Wurmser, served as research fellows; Fukuyama and Dobriansky were Adjunct Fellows; Perle was a Board member, and three future PNAC signatories were involved: Dan Quayle, former Vice President, and Donald Kagan, Yale classics scholar and father of Robert, both served as Trustee Emeriti, while William Schneider Jr. was an Adjunct Fellow. (Feith would join Hudson as a Senior Fellow after leaving the Bush administration.) Wurmser would also later establish the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) in 1998 to provide translations from the Arabic press for the English media that, according to critics, were selected to exemplify the most unattractive aspects of the Arab world.[35]

Yet important as these neoconservatives were, focusing only on them obscures the true composition of the Hudson Institute, which was not an exclusively neoconservative organization. The influential neocons who had positions there were only a small minority of the Hudson personnel. As of 2009, Fukuyama, Stelzer, and Wurmser were only three out of ninety-one Research and Adjunct Fellows. Perle had served on the Board but there were also thirty others.[36] As with the AEI, neocons simply used their positions at Hudson effectively to develop and disseminate their ideas.

Like WINEP and Hudson, the Heritage Foundation was another institute that was far from dominated by neoconservatives.[37] None of the most influential neocons were connected with Heritage during the Clinton years, although some of the first generation had been associated with it. However, Heritage remained staunchly conservative in orientation and was playing an important role in the missile defense campaign led by CSP. Baker Spring, a Research Fellow in national security affairs, wrote frequently about NMD and the missile threat during the nineties.[38] While it was not a "neoconservative" organization, Heritage intersected in important ways with the neocon network during this decade.

One striking feature of the neoconservative-led network during the nineties was its lack of grassroots support.[39] Though it never acted in secret, the network never attempted to cultivate support among the general public. It was always a thoroughly elite phenomenon. Its principal

audience during the Clinton years remained Congress, the Republican Party, and the Washington, D.C.–based foreign policy establishment; the elite audiences crucial to creating an environment conducive to their preferred policies. The network had no direct grassroots constituency or popular support. Instead, it was funded for the most part by a handful of well-endowed conservative philanthropic foundations that, in a very practical sense, constituted the network's most important alliance. It was John M. Olin, founder of the Olin Foundation, who, in the seventies, had called for the funding of a "counter intelligentsia" of scholars, think tanks, and publications to promote conservative ideas in the face of the liberal establishment. In the nineties, the principle donors to this network included the Scaife Family foundations (Carthage, Allegheny, and Sarah Scaife), the Olin Foundation, and the Bradley and Smith Richardson foundations.[40]

For the most part, these conservative foundations were considerably smaller than their liberal counterparts. In 2001, the Smith Richardson Foundation ranked at only eighty-six in the list of top 100 charitable foundations in America, with $580 million in assets. In 2000, the Bradley Foundation was placed ninety-sixth with $540 million. In comparison, the centrist foundations, Ford and Rockefeller, ranked third and fourteenth, with $10.8 billion and $3.2 billion in assets, respectively.[41] The combined grants of the Smith Richardson, Bradley, and Olin foundations ($68m per year) were less than a tenth of those given by the three big liberal foundations, Ford, Rockefeller, and MacArthur ($833m per year) as of 2004.[42] However, the conservative foundations specialized in channeling money to organizations producing research and publications specifically designed to influence U.S. policy and the media.[43] Of the top twenty-five think-tanks in terms of media visibility in 2001, the conservative Cato Institute and Heritage Foundation ranked second and third, and AEI ranked fifth.[44] Moreover, most of these conservative foundations were represented at the Philanthropy Roundtable, an association of over 600 corporate, foundation, and individual donors, established to facilitate coordination of their activities and strategy. The Roundtable offers "expert advice and counsel" on philanthropic strategies and "puts donors in touch with peers who share similar concerns and interests."[45]

The foundations and the Roundtable were home to dozens of conservative philanthropists and the extensive links between them and others in the conservative establishment remain complex. At the Bradley Foundation, Michael Joyce served as Director from 1985–2002.[46] Joyce had also been Executive Director of the Olin Foundation from 1979–85. Prior to that, he was briefly employed by Irving Kristol's Institute for Educational Affairs (IEA), which Kristol established to help talented

conservative doctoral students through their studies and then arrange for them to work at conservative research institutes or universities.[47] It was under the aegis of the IEA that the Philanthropy Roundtable first operated before becoming an independent, self-funding organization in 1991. After leaving the IEA to head the Olin Foundation, Joyce also served on Ronald Reagan's 1980 Presidential transition Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives.[48] In 2002, Joyce finally left Bradley to establish Americans for Community and Faith-Centered Enterprise, ostensibly a private group but created at the request of President Bush and his advisor, Karl Rove, to promote the President's faith-based initiatives.[49] The Bradley Board of Directors also included Thomas L. Rhodes, President of the conservative journal *National Review*, and Michael W. Grebe, a Republican National Committeeman for Wisconsin, a former member of the National Steering Committee to Elect Ronald Reagan, and in 2002 the new President of Bradley after the departure of Joyce.[50]

These labyrinthine connections characterized the Olin Foundation too. William E. Simon, the Olin President from 1977–2000, had served as Treasury Secretary in the Nixon and Ford administrations in which Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz all served. Simon was also the cofounder, along with Kristol, of the IEA in 1978.[51] As of 2010, James Piereson, Executive Director of Olin from 1985–2005, still sits on the Board of Directors at the Philanthropy Roundtable.[52] John P. Walters, head of the Roundtable from 1996–2001, left to become "Drug Czar" in the Bush administration. In January 2009, he became Executive Vice President of the Hudson Institute.[53]

The personnel arrangements at the Scaife foundations were far simpler, since Richard Mellon Scaife was the sole inheritor of his family's philanthropic trusts. Scaife was once labeled "the most important single figure in building the modern conservative movement and spreading its ideas into the political realm."[54] In the early seventies, he dedicated himself to building an infrastructure of conservative advocacy groups to counter the liberalism of the sixties, and he was an early donor to the Heritage Foundation. By 1982, 300 conservative organizations were listed in the U.S. Directory of Public Policy Organizations; 111 of them had received grants from a Scaife family foundation.[55]

The alliance between the neoconservative intellectuals and their financial backers was therefore not based on specifically neoconservative values or objectives. The foundations supported a vast array of advocacy groups, where conservatives of all persuasions were employed to promote conservatism in all aspects of American political life. However, their support was vital, for without them the neoconservatives would have been deprived of the institutional bases they used to project their ideas.[56]

"KING KRISTOL" AND *THE WEEKLY STANDARD*

The think tanks were not the only components of the neoconservative-led network. Since it was in print that the network really coalesced, newspapers and magazines were hugely important venues for the expression of ideas and for interaction between neocons and their sympathizers. The most important public forums for debate were *The Weekly Standard*, *Commentary*, the *Wall Street Journal,* and, to a lesser extent, *The National Interest*. Representative contributions to the public debate included both Kagan and Muravchik's frequent essays in *Commentary;* Wolfowitz's and Feith's contributions to *The National Interest;* Khalilzad's frequent commentaries in the *Wall Street Journal;* as well as Brooks's regular column there. Krauthammer's syndicated column ran, most notably, in the *Washington Post* and op-ed's from Perle featured in the *Post*, the *Wall Street Journal,* and the *Jerusalem Post*. Monographs were published by Muravchik, Ledeen, Rodman, and David Wurmser, and a volume edited by Kristol and Kagan included chapters by Perle, Wolfowitz, Peter Rodman, Aaron Friedberg, Donald Kagan, and William Bennett, all PNAC signatories.[57] In addition, a number of neoconservatives were prominent television news pundits. Kristol was regularly consulted on the *Fox News* channel and Fred Barnes, of *The Weekly Standard*, cohosted a *Fox* show. David Frum, Ledeen, and John Podhoretz (cofounder of *The Weekly Standard*) all appeared regularly on *Fox*, while Perle and Brooks made regular appearances on the major networks' Sunday political talk shows.[58]

By far the most important and, in time, influential print forum for the development of neoconservative ideas was Kristol's *Weekly Standard*. Established in September 1995, it became the seminal publication within the network. Originally, though, Kristol envisaged the magazine as part of an attack on liberalism in all its forms—not just foreign relations but encompassing social and cultural issues too. He believed that conservatives needed a positive alternative agenda to offer, and deliberately eschewed the contemporary conservative strategy of attacking Clinton on personal grounds. In 1993, Kristol advised David Brock, the journalistic nemesis of the Clintons, not to publish the so-called Troopergate story that falsely claimed that two Arkansas state troopers had arranged sexual liaisons for then governor, Clinton, on the grounds that the pursuit of scandal distracted from important policy battles.[59] Like the first generation of neocons, Kristol believed that liberalism could only be countered if conservatives formed a vibrant counter intelligentsia that put forward a viable alternative.

Kristol's effort had its origins in domestic politics and his immediate employment during the early Clinton years. After serving in the Reagan administration as Chief of Staff to William Bennett and under Bush as

Chief of Staff to Vice President Dan Quayle, Kristol became Director of the Bradley Foundation's Project on the 90s, thus beginning his association with one of the foundations that would contribute financially to PNAC a few years later. The Project on the 90s focused on renewing domestic conservatism and, according to Joyce, the Bradley Director; it would examine how Americans could "take back control of their daily lives" by revitalizing churches, local schools, neighborhoods, and other institutions.[60] Kristol's own motivation was to contribute to a "new conservatism," one that offered a positive alternative to the sixties' liberalism embodied by Bill Clinton. "Ideas have consequences," Kristol noted, and conservative ideas were lacking. The most immediate short-term task for conservatives, he claimed, was to "contain" liberalism, but in the long term their mission was "not to contain [it] but to transcend it" by building the philosophy for "a new, governing conservatism." The emergence of such a philosophy was not inevitable, Kristol warned; it would require a concerted effort from conservatives to create it.[61]

In this vein, Kristol and Rhodes of the Bradley Foundation cofounded a new organization in the winter of 1993, called the Project for the Republican Future (PRF) with the help of seed money from the Bradley Foundation. The PRF attempted to focus media attention on a conservative agenda for the 1994 midterm elections. Setting it up "took chutzpah," Kristol later claimed, since no one had asked him to speak for the party, and in 1993 he was far from being the leading figure in the conservative movement that he would become. Rhodes was the silent partner and the day-to-day work was done by Kristol and his team of ten staffers. Honing techniques that he would use over the next decade with PNAC, Kristol and his cohorts issued reams of strategy memos and statements, which were faxed to newspapers and opinion leaders and hyped by Kristol in endless interviews. The group "had a grad school dorm quality to it" according to ex-staffer Dan McKivergan, who later joined the Philanthropy Roundtable and PNAC. "Bill understood early on that to have a serious impact on conservative politics, you had to get yourself into the media."[62]

The PRF specialized in what Kristol referred to as "cheerful obstructionsism."[63] It focused on domestic matters, particularly Clinton's proposed national health care plan. In March 1994, Kristol expounded further on how this might fit into a broader strategy to "transcend" liberalism.[64] According to Kristol, liberalism had become entrenched in Congress, the Presidency, the media, education, and even segments of the private sector. Yet liberalism was fragile, he argued, and a push in the right direction from conservatives could "bring down the whole edifice. We saw this happen in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in the 1980s," Kristol

claimed. Most portentous from a post-9/11 perspective was Kristol's assertion that conservatives should remember that

> [I]t is easier to achieve big rather than little reforms. Most people tend to think that the best way to accomplish a task is to take one step at a time. But politics doesn't always work that way. It is sometimes like technology: *there are moments when huge, sudden leaps are possible* (emphasis added).[65]

Kristol's work with the PRF paid off when the Republicans took control of Congress in the 1994 elections and he was credited with a major role in crafting the winning agenda, thus sealing his influence and catapulting him into a prominent position within conservative circles. Kristol's belief in the importance of the media in shaping the future of the Republican Party had been vindicated and he had honed publicity techniques down to a fine art. The *National Review,* where PRF cofounder, Rhodes, was President paid homage to Rhodes' side project in October 1994:

> Above all, believers in the power of ideas (and the fax machine) can take heart from the influence of Bill Kristol and his Project for the Republican Future … Throughout the debate, Mr. Kristol was a step ahead, and a notch to the right, of Hill Republicans.[66]

Kristol now had a platform from which he could credibly seek to redefine the foreign policy of the conservative right. In an article titled "King Kristol," one critic observed that "the groveling adulation of Bill Kristol by virtually every conservative leader in the country has to be seen or read to be believed. Conservative bigshots vie with each other in heaping … extravagant praise upon [him]. … Thus, Bill Kristol is routinely referred to by virtually everyone as 'the most brilliant conservative intellectual in the country'"[67]

Kristol's new reputation led to his involvement in the April 1995 Freedom House symposium on a Republican foreign policy where he advocated a new Reaganite internationalism (see chapter 2), and it was just five months later that *The Weekly Standard* was published for the first time. The *Standard* had been planned since October 1994, shortly before the Republican success in the midterm elections when Kristol and John Podhoretz—also the son of famous neocons, Norman Podhoretz and Midge Decter—came up with the idea for a Washington, D.C.–based weekly that combined reporting with new ideas. "We had this conversation about how it looked like the Republicans were on the verge of an enormous election triumph," said Podhoretz, and if that happened, the two men wanted to be in a position to help shape the Republican agenda.[68]

The conservative media mogul, Rupert Murdoch, who had been a major donor to the PRF, was of a similar mind and agreed to finance the magazine, despite projected losses stretching into millions for the first couple of years. He reportedly invested $3 million into the *Standard* during its first year, although Kristol was sole editor and publisher of the magazine. Murdoch himself remained adamant that the magazine was simply "a meeting of minds" and that Kristol retained complete editorial control. Kristol was "happy to talk to him about content. I welcome his thoughts and ideas. But the notion he's doing this to get his foot in the door in Washington is, of course, ludicrous. He doesn't have any trouble getting his calls returned."[69] With the financial backing of his venture secured, Kristol could begin to put together his magazine. The PRF was dissolved and its staff merged into the *Standard*. "We're somewhat self-consciously trying to be the voice of the new conservative era," announced Fred Barnes, an Executive Editor. The magazine would be "lively and irreverent," Kristol said, and it would "help frame the agenda of conservatives."[70]

With Barnes and Podhoretz as Executive and Contributing editors, Kristol set about assembling an impressive roster of well-known, mostly neoconservative writers for the editorial panel. Many of the recruits were already active in the neoconservative-led network and conservative circles more generally. Barnes had spent the previous ten years as White House correspondent and Senior Editor of the *New Republic*, he wrote the "Press Watch" media column for the *American Spectator* and appeared as a presenter on the Murdoch-owned, staunchly conservative, *Fox News* channel. Krauthammer, a Contributing Editor, was equally well-known, not just for his unipolar moment thesis but also because his column was syndicated in more than a hundred national newspapers. Other contributing editors included Kagan; Boot, who was then an Editorial Features Editor at the conservative *Wall Street Journal*; David Frum, the man who, several years later, bore the primary responsibility for the phrase "axis of evil"; and Stelzer, then a Resident Scholar and Director of regulatory policy studies at the AEI. Brooks, a Senior Editor, had worked at the *Wall Street Journal* for nine years before joining the *Standard* at its inception.[71]

The first issue of the magazine appeared on 18 September 1995. Two hundred free copies were hand-delivered to those in Washington considered important enough within the conservative movement—a good indication of the intended audience. Murdoch claimed to have no advance knowledge of the content of the first issue until it was delivered to him that day. The audacious headline emblazoned across its first cover read "Permanent Offense."[72]

By late 1995, *The Weekly Standard* was at the forefront of a dynamic informal network of alliances between individuals, thinks tanks, magazines,

and foundations, though Kristol and others remain adamant that the network was never as consciously organized as it may appear in retrospect. Though staunchly conservative, the neocons and their allies were not loyal followers of Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House, who focused mainly on domestic affairs—including Clinton's indiscretions—and had little interest in the kind of expansionist foreign policy envisioned by Kristol and Kagan. Nevertheless, led by a core group of neoconservative intellectuals and activists, the network acted as a new counterintelligentsia seeking to achieve intellectual primacy in Washington vis-a-vis foreign policy realists and supposed isolationists. Through redefining Republican foreign policy they would reinvigorate the Party, play to its natural electoral strengths, and lay the groundwork for a second American century.

* * *

BOSNIA REVISITED: THE FIRST CHALLENGE FOR *THE WEEKLY STANDARD*

One of the first major foreign policy challenges for the magazine was to make the case and rally support for continued U.S. involvement in Bosnia.[73] This time, however, the issue was not military intervention but peacekeeping; in particular, whether Congress would honor Clinton's pledge to send 20,000 U.S. troops to Bosnia as part of an international peacekeeping force to implement the Dayton Accords signed in December 1995.[74] The NATO bombing campaign that compelled the Serbs to negotiate and eventually sign the Dayton peace accord had the support of the neocons and their allies, who had always favored a lift-and-strike policy.[75] In late 1995, however, the issue shifted when Clinton proposed sending U.S. ground troops as peacekeepers to enforce the Dayton agreement.

The announcement of a U.S. peacekeeping contingent was controversial in a number of respects, particularly to some of the neocons. The agreement essentially sanctioned the acquisition of territory gained through force by the Bosnian Serbs by creating a so-called Serb Republic within Bosnia alongside a federated entity for the Bosnian Muslims and Croats. It also left one of the chief aggressors in power in Belgrade. Opinion in Washington had always been that the United States should side with the Bosnian Muslims against the Serbs, but the Dayton agreement gave no official promises to arm the Bosnians—although an oral promise was given by Clinton—and it posited that the peacekeepers would be neutral, there only as part of an implementation force, rather than a fighting force.[76] The debate that ensued among neoconservatives

demonstrated their lack of unity regarding *how* to maintain America's unipolarity in practice. Kagan had argued that credibility could be won and lost on the periphery: would reneging on Clinton's pledge to send peacekeepers damage U.S. credibility in Europe and send a broader message that Washington did not live up to its promises? In other words, did the maintenance of the unipolar global order require American participation in the Bosnian peacekeeping force or not?

Shortly before Clinton's announcement, Krauthammer had written a timely broadside against "the peacekeeping fantasy" in *The Weekly Standard*.[77] Clinton's intention to send U.S. troops to Bosnia was "a serious mistake," he believed.[78] In general terms, to use U.S. troops as peacekeepers was to "fundamentally misunderstand America's role as the sole remaining superpower." Washington's job was to intervene militarily if a regional balance of power was "catastrophically overthrown and global stability threatened." Peacekeeping was the job of small countries with no stake in the outcome of a conflict. Though reneging on a promise to send peacekeepers would be a blow to U.S. credibility, the alternatives could be even worse: conceivably a humiliating retreat along the lines of the Somalian debacle, or an operation that "lingers painfully … a thankless, unwinnable and costly operation" that would erode the current solidarity within the NATO alliance.[79] Europe might be a vital American interest but the notion that the Bosnian War could spread to Western Europe was "simply absurd," Krauthammer stated, and therefore American credibility was best served by staying out.[80]

Krauthammer's views were opposed by Kagan, who made the case that Bosnia was "a compelling interest" for the United States.[81] As he had hinted in the "Global Activism" article, Bosnia was not a peripheral issue at all for Kagan; it had become a "vital interest" because it was "intimately bound up with the larger question of America's role in Europe and its relationship with its key European allies and NATO."[82] America's will and capacity to use its power effectively to maintain a stable and secure Europe was an indispensable component of "a world order conducive to American interests and ideals." Completing the job in Bosnia was vital for "the cohesion and vitality of the NATO alliance."[83] In accordance with the principles of the DPG, the United States would have to accept Bosnia as its own problem if it wanted to remain the guarantor of security within Europe, and for Kagan this meant supporting the deployment of U.S. forces as part of a multinational peacekeeping effort. Supporting the deployment also required political leadership: conveying to the public a vision of America's role in the world so that they did not see Bosnia in isolation, but as part of a broader strategy of maintaining global security.[84]

Despite Krauthammer's position as a Contributing Editor, the *Standard*'s editorial stance embraced Kagan's thesis. It was a tough argument to sell to a Republican Party newly in control of Congress and exceptionally hostile to Clinton, but the magazine urged Republicans to remember that America was essentially already in Bosnia: the Dayton Accord had been husbanded by American diplomacy and announced on American soil. To refuse to send troops to enforce the agreement would send "an inescapable signal … that America is badly confused about its global status."[85]

Reaction from other neoconservatives was more mixed, often somewhere between the poles of opinion represented by Krauthammer and Kagan. As their reaction to the Somalian operation had shown, most neocons and their sympathizers were instinctively uncomfortable with peacekeeping when there was no national interest at stake. Yet most neocons believed that the United States did have a vital interest in Bosnia because of their interest in the leadership of the NATO alliance. As a result, some of them gave tentative support to the concept of deploying U.S. peacekeepers, although they attached strict conditions that Clinton had not offered.

Wolfowitz and Feith were concerned that the President had failed to make the terms of the U.S. exit strategy clear. Rather than an open-ended deployment, he should make it the U.S. mission to arm and train Bosnian forces capable of defending the population from the Serbs. Bosnian self-reliance would be the key to the U.S. exit strategy. Without this condition on deployment, however, Congress should oppose it.[86] Perle was also concerned that the Clinton administration would not make good on its oral promise to arm and train the Bosnians and asserted that this must be the job of U.S. troops in any peacekeeping force.[87] JINSA (commenting, unusually, on a matter not related to the Middle East) recalled the problems that occurred when the United States withdrew from Vietnam, Somalia, and Lebanon, and argued that this time "what is needed is not a deadline for withdrawal but a clear methodology for determining the success of our mission," namely, for ensuring that fighting did not erupt again once the United States left.[88] In other words, the way to protect its credibility was to succeed.

The Heritage Foundation effectively ruled out the peacekeeping operation. In October 1995, it stated that Clinton had "failed to make the case" for the deployment, and that it was a "haphazard and risky enterprise" since (at the time) no objectives had been defined and no exit strategy formulated.[89] The consequences of this for U.S. credibility in Europe could be disastrous. Gaffney and CSP harbored similar doubts. The Dayton agreement had been made with the perpetrators of genocide in Bosnia and was therefore highly unlikely to endure; the deployment

would probably lead "to cut-and-run as soon as U.S. personnel in Bosnia start taking casualties," and this would intensify opposition to U.S. internationalism in the long term. Instead, the Senate should arm the Bosnians so that they could defend themselves.[90] Although Gaffney acknowledged that vital American interests were at stake in the Balkans, he objected to the Clinton plan because the details of the proposed deployment did not amount to a strategy that would protect American prestige in the short or the long term. Whether he rejected peacekeeping on principle was unclear.

The divergence between Krauthammer and other neocons over Bosnia was the first indication of what Krauthammer would claim, years later, to be a split among neoconservatives into two factions that he termed "democratic realists," such as himself, and "democratic globalists," such as Kristol and Kagan.[91] Though Krauthammer would not write extensively on the purported split until after 9/11, it was the Bosnian case (and later Kosovo) that catalyzed this purported development. According to Krauthammer, democratic globalists subscribed to a foreign policy that "defines the national interest not as power but as values," and posited that "the spread of democracy is not just an end but a means." The danger of such a policy, he claimed, was its universalism, its "open-ended commitment to human rights." It apparently offered no means to differentiate between competing cases and could lead to indiscriminate interventionism in peripheral cases where there were no worthwhile interests at stake. To counter this, Krauthammer proposed discrimination on the basis of "where it counts," in other words, only where there was a strategic interest at stake. This amounted to a more modest policy of "democratic realism," he claimed. Its maxim was to "*support democracy everywhere, but . . . commit blood and treasure only in places where there is a strategic necessity*" (emphasis in original).[92] In practice, this meant eschewing intervention in areas such as Bosnia and later Kosovo, because Krauthammer did not believe there were any vital strategic interests at stake there. To him they really were peripheral cases.

Krauthammer's labels were problematic, however. His own democratic realism consciously and deliberately prioritized intervention only where there was a "strategic necessity." Ideals were not enough to compel intervention and would never be the determining factor because the priority was protecting security interests integral to unipolarity. Krauthammer also misread the Kaganite strategy by crediting it with defining the national interest as one supreme value: the spread of freedom. The prudence, the nuances about democracy promotion, and the primacy of strategic interests in what Krauthammer termed "democratic globalism" were ignored. At the very least, Krauthammer's appellations were misleading, and perhaps

contributed to the post-9/11 perception that neoconservatism was defined by promoting democracy. Krauthammer's neat dichotomy of neoconservatism was also an exaggeration because the Balkan debates were not bipolar. Most other neocons had positioned themselves somewhere between himself and Kagan. Wolfowitz, Feith, Khalilzad, Gaffney, and Perle all accepted Kagan's assertion that the United States had vital security interests at stake in Bosnia but, for various reasons, did not embrace a peacekeeping role with the same enthusiasm, and had different opinions on the use of force.

The real difference between Krauthammer on the one hand and the spectrum that ranged from Wolfowitz to Kagan on the other was their differing perceptions of how the conflict in the Balkans affected America's global standing. Those who, to some degree, supported some form of U.S. peacekeeping force in Bosnia did so because they believed that Bosnia was intricately bound up with U.S. leadership in the NATO alliance, which was a building block of the unipolar global order. As a result, some neoconservatives were willing to put aside their instinctive opposition to peacekeeping because it was linked to a vital strategic concern. This did not mean a long-term presence dedicated to nation-building however, but a short-term deployment that might create conditions for the U.S.-brokered peace to endure after American withdrawal. For Krauthammer, this mission was unnecessary because the Bosnian conflict did not pose a threat to Western Europe, it would not lead to an alternation in the regional balance of power and therefore there was no threat to the American position in Europe. Thus, "democratic realists" and "democratic globalists" agreed on the ends—leadership in Europe as one component of global unipolarity—but not always on the means necessary to achieve it. As CSP stated, these differences were not about

> whether the U.S. should lead but the *direction in which it should lead*. Congress can agree that America's global leadership is critical without buying into initiatives like a Bosnian peacekeeping deployment that can be expected to squander U.S. moral and political authority, waste limited military resources and foster public antipathy to … military engagement in foreign affairs (emphasis in original).[93]

In any case, the campaign led by *The Weekly Standard* (Krauthammer excepted) for an enthusiastic endorsement of the U.S. deployment to Bosnia did not produce consensus among neoconservatives, let alone the Republican Party. After the *Standard*'s editorial support of Clinton's plan, some Republicans began sarcastically referring to the journal as *Mother Jones*, the progressive liberal magazine. Letters were running

20-to-1 against the editorial stance that assailed Republicans for failing on "a yea-or-nay question concerning America's continued engagement with the rest of the world."[94]

Rather than uniting it around neoconservative internationalism, the Bosnian question made the divisions over foreign policy in the Republican Party increasingly evident. Senator Phil Gramm, the Texas Republican and Presidential hopeful, was an outspoken opponent of Clinton's proposal. The Senate Majority Leader, Bob Dole of Kansas, endorsed the policy, but with some reservations.[95] The opposition within the House was underscored in early December when Representative Bob Inglis, a Republican from South Carolina, circulated a letter to Mr. Clinton that read, "We urge you not to send ground troops to Bosnia." It was signed by 186 House Republicans and 15 Democrats, putting House opponents of Clinton's policy close to the 217 votes needed to pass such a resolution. In opposition to the Kristol-Kagan vision, Inglis argued that "we can't ask mothers to send their children off to die unless the homeland is threatened in some way," and the war in Bosnia did not meet that criterion.[96]

Shortly after the *Standard*'s propeacekeeping editorials appeared, Kristol traveled to the Nixon Library in Yorba Linda, California, to appear before what should have been an admiring audience, the Lincoln Club of Orange County, a staunch conservative area. The crowd respectfully applauded him, Kristol said afterwards, but hardly anyone endorsed his views on Bosnia. There was, he said, a visceral, personal animosity against Bill Clinton, and a sense that as a President who did not serve in Vietnam, he had no right to endanger the lives of American soldiers thousands of miles away. Nevertheless, Kristol remained optimistic and confident in his vision. "Obviously the conservative grass roots aren't happy [about our stance on Bosnia]," he said, "but are they really willing to rise in rebellion? I'm not so sure."[97] With the publication of *The Weekly Standard,* Kristol's ideas were reaching people who mattered—but many of them were yet to be persuaded of the efficacy of his vision.

CHAPTER 4

"TIME FOR AN INSURRECTION": FROM THE DOLE CAMPAIGN TO THE PROJECT FOR THE NEW AMERICAN CENTURY

DESPITE WILLIAM KRISTOL'S OPTIMISTIC DETERMINATION to continue to promote an expansive foreign policy, by April 1996—a whole seven months before the Presidential election—he had already resigned himself to a defeat, probably a heavy one. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kansas), the Republican candidate, "may lose badly," he told readers of *The Weekly Standard*. In particular, Dole lacked a vision of America's role in the world. Yet despite this gloomy prognosis, Kristol urged conservatives to "aggressively prosecute their case and advance their cause with little regard to Dole." What was important was that Republicans prevented a Dole defeat from "derailing the ongoing Republican realignment and from blocking the emergence of a new era of conservative governance." For Kristol, the 1996 campaign was primarily to be used as a platform to project a new Republican foreign policy that would transcend the election. If this was done with sufficient vigor, it was not completely beyond the realms of possibility that Dole might even eke out a victory. "His best chance to win the Presidency," Kristol claimed, "is if others create a political environment that sweeps him in."[1]

Nevertheless, Kristol's campaigning through the *Standard* and the establishment elsewhere of two new lobbying organizations, the New Atlantic Initiative (NAI) and the U.S. Committee on NATO (USC NATO), were exercises in long-term strategy, which would put the neoconservative-led network in a strong position to carry on campaigning in opposition after the election defeat they anticipated.

However, not all neocons were as openly defeatist over the election as Kristol. There was a second track of activity during the election year: several other prominent neocons and some of their closest sympathizers worked for the Dole campaign, advancing issues through advising the Republican candidate on foreign policy, and thus demonstrating a greater degree of faith in the candidate than Kristol. This resulted in a campaign in which many of Dole's foreign policies clearly reflected the advisors he had chosen. Yet curiously the neocons outside the campaign, who accused Dole of lacking vision, ended up missing the considerable degree of convergence between the policies espoused by the Dole camp and their own. Kristol and Robert Kagan's obsession with a grand vision—sometimes at the expense of concrete policy proposals—led them to accuse Dole of flirting with isolationism.[2] Yet although Dole did not represent every aspect of the emerging neoconservative strategy, his foreign policy platform did reflect and expand upon many of the ideas of those advising him, even if Kristol and Kagan failed to recognize it at the time. In fact the Dole campaign exemplified how narrow the debate about U.S. objectives on the global stage had become; he hewed closely to the bipartisan consensus that America should remain the world's superpower. The U.S. goal, he asserted, was "not just to be strong enough to turn back a threat. Our goal must always be strength to guarantee that no-one is tempted to threaten us ever, ever again. That's how strong we have to be."[3]

The Presidential Campaign

Kristol believed that the Grand Old Party (GOP) needed someone with the stature of Reagan but no one in the Republican Party quite embodied it: "I see glimmers of it around but it has not been coherently developed," he claimed.[4] The attention surrounding the publication of Colin Powell's memoirs in 1995 generated debate over whether the popular Powell might also run for the nomination. Despite Kristol's reservations about Powell's actions during the Gulf War, he implied that he might support a Powell run for President because polls showed that Powell, not Dole, had the best chance of beating Clinton.[5] However, Powell decided against seeking the nomination for personal reasons. Meanwhile, Dick Cheney, who had set up a political action committee to explore the possibility of a Presidential run, was unable to attract sufficient financial backing and did not have the necessary core base of supporters.[6] It was therefore by default and without a great deal of belief that *The Weekly Standard* gave its editorial support to Dole and his running mate, Jack Kemp (a longtime member of the JINSA Board of Advisors).[7]

In March 1996, the *Standard* set out a declaration of foreign policy principles by which it hoped Dole would stand. Kristol had increasingly begun to invoke Ronald Reagan. The new GOP candidate needed to set forth the broad principles of Republican internationalism "that made Ronald Reagan such an effective foreign policy president and such a strong candidate." Fortunately, Dole was in a better position to do this than most others, since he had supported deployment of U.S. troops in Bosnia, thus "single-handedly sav[ing] the party from driving over a cliff," according to the *Standard,* and defying the accepted wisdom that supporting an activist foreign policy was a harmful electoral stance—in contrast to Phil Gramm (R-TX) and Steve Forbes, CEO of the publisher Forbes Inc., who had both run against Dole for the nomination. In the future such a policy should also include continuing Reagan's "democratic revolution," though the authors did not give any indication of the circumstances in which they would encourage its growth or how.[8]

Kristol's decision not to put all his hope in Dole turned out to be judicious. From the outset, the Dole campaign would be severely hampered by disorganization, lack of strategy, and disagreements between the candidate and his campaign advisors, particularly on domestic issues and, apart from those in the foreign policy brain trust, there had been a high turnover in personnel, including four "message consultants" in less than a year.[9] However, by February 1996, Dole's advisory team on foreign relations was in place. Despite the ultimate failure of the campaign, the conservative *Washington Times* claimed at the time that Dole was crafting a plan to put foreign policy at the heart of the campaign, guided by "a team of battle hardened cold war veterans" who believed that the Republicans could win votes by contrasting an image of mature, responsible leadership with that of Clinton's timidity and vacillation.[10] The team included Paula Dobriansky, head of the foreign policy advisory group; Paul Wolfowitz; and Jeane Kirkpatrick, now one of the national cochairs of the campaign and a senior advisor on foreign policy, who had increasingly begun to sympathize with the objectives of the second generation of neocons and would become more involved in their campaigns from then on. It also included Brent Scowcroft and Colin Powell, both ostensibly "realists" (although Powell's Base Force was not radically different from the neocons and their sympathizers who supported the Defense Planning Guidance). Finally, Dole received foreign policy advice from a group of volunteers led by Ambassador David Smith, former envoy to the Nuclear and Space talks in Geneva in the administration of George H. W. Bush. Smith's group also included Douglas Feith, Robert Zoellick (a future PNAC signatory), as well as Richard Perle and Wolfowitz.[11]

In June 1996, Donald Rumsfeld joined the Dole campaign, initially on a part time informal basis but quickly becoming a full time, indispensable leading member of the foreign policy team and chair of the Dole-Kemp national campaign. Although Rumsfeld modestly claimed his job description was just "to look at things and to give my thoughts," his remit was, essentially, to save the campaign that had struggled to develop a dynamic of its own and to let voters know precisely what Dole stood for.[12] Rumsfeld had a preexisting link with the campaign because he was a Director at the social and fiscal conservative advocacy organization, Empower America (EA), which had been established by Kemp in 1993 with William Bennett, former Reagan Education Secretary. (Kemp also brought in Vin Weber, the EA Vice President as the campaign's Policy Director, while Bennett advised on education. Rumsfeld, Weber, and Bennett would be signatories to PNAC's founding statement the following year.)[13]

Dole's foreign policy statements were coordinated by his former National Security Advisor, Randy Scheunemann. A lesser known neoconservative, Scheunemann would later become a Director of PNAC, serve as consultant to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld in early 2001, and establish the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq in 2002.[14] The Dole campaign's finance committee was chaired by another neoconservative, Bruce P. Jackson, who had worked in the Pentagon during the Reagan administration. A Vice President of Lockheed Martin, Jackson sat on the CSP advisory National Security Advisory Council, would eventually serve as a Director of PNAC, and would be instrumental in establishing the U.S. Committee on NATO in 1996.[15]

Foreign policy did not dominate the 1996 campaign, but in his speeches and in the Republican Platform, Dole and his advisors crafted a position that was markedly more conservative and internationalist than the foreign policy of the previous Republican administration.[16] In a 1995 *Foreign Policy* article, titled "Shaping America's Global Future," Dole reflected on the "inconsistency, incoherence, lack of purpose and … reluctance to lead" of the Clinton administration and attacked contemporary intellectual and political trends toward isolationism, protectionism, American declinism, and Clintonite multilateralism.[17] The first premise of internationalism, Dole wrote, was the indispensability of American global leadership, demonstrated, he claimed, by the farcical spectacle of President Clinton being rebuffed by the Europeans after politely requesting they lift the Bosnian arms embargo. What was needed was American leadership that was "respected … trusted, and, where necessary … feared."[18] Like the neoconservatives, he rejected excessive multilateralism ("allow[ing] international organizations to call the shots") but favored

"mak[ing] multilateral groupings work *for* American interests." In other words, multilateralism on American terms.[19]

The Platform elaborated Dole's global strategy further. For instance, NMD would protect the United States—including Alaska and Hawaii—from nuclear blackmail by rogue states, thereby maintaining America's position as "the world's pre-eminent military power." The strategic importance of the Middle East meant that the security of Israel was "central to U.S. interests in the region"; and although Dole favored deterrence over preventive action—the main difference between himself and advisors such as Wolfowitz—on the issue of terrorism, Dole moved beyond deterrence to advocate offensive action:

> North Korea, Iran, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, and Cuba must know that America's first line of defense is not our shoreline, but their own borders. We will be proactive, not reactive, to strike the hand of terrorism before it can be raised against Americans.

Even space exploration should be the exclusive preserve of the United States. Echoing the Defense Planning Guidance, the Platform stated that "we cannot allow its domination by another power. We must ensure that America can work and prosper there, securely and without outside influence."[20]

Although Clinton had been the first to propose NATO enlargement, Dole tried to make the expansion of the alliance his signature foreign policy issue during the campaign. He had a personal commitment to the eastward enlargement of NATO. As leader of the Senate Republican majority, he had introduced the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act, which called upon the alliance to accept the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland as full members as soon as possible, and it was finally passed in July 1996. Clinton envisioned the Central European nations joining in 1999, but Dole, attempting to put some distance between himself and the incumbent, criticized the President for acting too slowly and called for expansion a year earlier, in 1998, as well as calling for membership for the rest of the former communist bloc excluding Russia.[21] Clinton, in contrast, sought to mollify Yeltsin and promote cordial ties with Moscow by privately assuring the Russian leader that NATO would never incorporate any former Soviet republics.[22]

Upon his arrival to the Dole campaign, Rumsfeld was immediately involved in drafting a speech on NATO given by Dole to the World Affairs Council in Philadelphia on 25 June in which he framed U.S. leadership within NATO and Europe as one component of its leadership in the world at large.[23] Dole attacked Clinton for "persistently defer[ing]

to our allies and to the Russians, subordinating American interests to the interests of a dubious or ineffective consensus." This kind of "dreamy" multilateralism cast doubt on American power and resolve. Dole called instead for multilateralism that was based on "a restoration of American leadership in Europe," and a recognition that "Europe's security is indispensable to the security of the United States and that American leadership is absolutely indispensable to the security of Europe." Nevertheless, there was still considerable overlapping between the candidates' positions on NATO. Both Clinton and Dole wanted to expand the alliance to bolster the purpose and credibility of NATO in the post-Soviet world and maintain American leadership in Europe.[24] Once again, there was no significant difference between policies advocated by the neocons and their sympathizers and the mainstream of the Republican and Democratic parties.

NATO Lobbying Networks

The Dole campaign's focus on NATO corresponded with the establishment of two new neoconservative-led lobby groups, the NAI and the USCNATO, both dedicated to the expansion of NATO and closer U.S.-European ties. These organizations were significant beyond their potential to develop ideas in election year. They were platforms from which the neoconservatives could continue to campaign after the election.

The NAI was established as a project of the American Enterprise Institute in May 1996.[25] It was the largest and most diverse group of policy makers and intellectuals associated with the neoconservative-led network. The NAI included individuals from both the United States and Europe and, in some cases, from different ends of the political spectrum but was established and led by prominent neoconservatives. The day-to-day Executive Director of the Initiative was Jeffrey Gedmin, a Resident Scholar at the AEI.[26] However, its six patrons were Czech Prime Minister, Václav Havel; former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher; former West German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt; Polish Deputy Prime Minister, Leszek Balcerowicz; as well as Powell; Henry Kissinger; and George Shultz, Reagan's Secretary of State. The eighty-member international advisory board included John Bolton, Dobriansky, Donald Kagan (father of Robert), Dole's running mate Jack Kemp, Krauthammer, Kristol, Michael Ledeen, Muravchik, Perle, Daniel Pipes, Peter Rodman, Rumsfeld, Irwin Stelzer, and Zoellick (who, in total, comprised less than one-fifth of the board). The remainder was comprised of public figures from both sides of the Atlantic, including Newt Gingrich; Zbigniew Brzezinski, journalist and scholar; Josef Joffe; and French philosopher, Jean-François Revel.[27] Their convergence around

the concept of NATO enlargement and a U.S. leadership role in Europe could be used by the neocons to further their own agenda of American unipolarism. The presence of Europeans also demonstrated the existence of a constituency that did welcome American leadership. This was a case where neoconservative priorities did not have to be imposed but were welcomed by a group of European politicians who saw advantages for their respective countries in choosing American protection.[28]

Although the NAI was not the exclusive home of neoconservatives, its founding mission statement foreshadowed PNAC's Statement of Principles, by expressing concern at "a new mood of isolation and introspection in the United States."[29] "Strong American leadership" was the "sine qua non of European stability," and should be used to promote NATO expansion and increased EU-NAFTA free trade. On a day-to-day basis, the NAI would sponsor conferences, debates, and roundtables in the United States and Europe.[30] It was formally launched at the Congress of Prague on 10–12 May 1996, when over 300 political, intellectual, and business leaders gathered to debate a new agenda for U.S.-European relations. Keynote speeches were given by Wolfowitz, Thatcher, and CSP National Security Council member, Senator Jon Kyl.[31]

That same year, the USCNATO (originally named the U.S. Committee to Expand NATO) was launched by Bruce Jackson, and Julie Finley, a trustee of the National Endowment for Democracy and chair of the Washington, D.C., Republican Party.[32] The USCNATO was more focused and more exclusively neoconservative than the NAI. Its fourteen-man Board of Directors included Kagan; Perle; Gedmin; Rodman; Scheunemann; Gary Schmitt, later of PNAC; and Stephen Hadley, a partner in the Shea & Gardner law firm, and later the National Security Advisor to George W. Bush.[33]

Jackson's involvement in both of the NATO lobby groups represented something of a conflict of interest in the light of his position as Director of Global Development, with responsibility for expanding markets for Lockheed Martin, the world's largest arms manufacturer, which gave $2.3 million to Congressional and Presidential candidates in the 1996 election.[34] For the Eastern European countries, NATO membership would entail modernization of their armed forces and thus millions of dollars in contracts for arms manufacturers like Lockheed. The Chairman of Lockheed, Norman Augustine, also gave his support to the NAI. Augustine signed a statement in September 1997 that was publicly presented at the Andrew Mellon Auditorium, where the NATO treaty had been signed in April 1949, in a ceremony led by Muravchik with Wolfowitz, Kirkpatrick, Tony Lake, and Richard Holbrooke. (Muravchik was the head of the NAI's NATO Enlargement group and had organized the

statement and its 131 signatories.) It called for a "willingness to admit new members to meet a meaningful criteria of democracy and military effort" and to "renew the American commitment to Europe and reaffirm American leadership." In April 1997, Augustine toured Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Romania, and Slovenia, in order to support their accession to NATO. It was not just the neoconservatives who had reason to support the alliance's expansion.[35]

"NEO-REAGANISM" AND THE DILEMMAS OF POWER AND IDEALS

These new organizations were in keeping with Kristol's entreaty for conservatives to plan for life in opposition after the election. The neoconservatives also published widely during the election year. In 1996, Kristol and Kagan coauthored what would become one of the most famous neoconservative essays of the post–Cold War era. "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy" was published in *Foreign Affairs* in June/July 1996—a prestigious platform that neither author had appeared in before.[36] The premise of the essay was that conservative foreign policy was "adrift." The Dole campaign had failed to put forward a compelling vision of America's global role to counter the vacillation of the Clinton administration, and now that the Cold War threat had disappeared, Americans were liable to "take the fruits of their hegemonic power for granted" and allow U.S. power to atrophy.[37] "The ubiquitous post–Cold War question—where is the threat?—is thus misconceived," argued Kristol and Kagan. Rejecting balance-of-power realism, they claimed that

> In a world in which peace and American security depend on American power and the will to use it, the main threat the United States faces now and in the future is its own weakness. American hegemony is the only reliable defense against a breakdown of peace and international order. The appropriate goal of American foreign and defense policy, therefore, is to preserve that hegemony as far into the future as possible … [38]

Kristol and Kagan asserted that what the Republican Party, the country, and the world needed was a "neo-Reaganite foreign policy of military supremacy and moral confidence" so that all nations would know that it was "futile to compete with American power." Reagan, they claimed, had successfully mounted a bold challenge to the "tepid consensus" of his era that favored accommodation and coexistence with the Soviet Union and accepted America's declining power. Overlooking Reagan's pragmatic dialogue with Moscow and his pursuit of an arms control agreement,

Kristol and Kagan invoked a selective history of the fortieth President. He had championed American exceptionalism, refused to accept limits on American power, increased defense spending, confronted the Soviet Union on the periphery, and infused U.S. foreign policy with "greater moral clarity." Republicans needed a "neo-Reaganite" foreign policy that would have as its objective the maintenance of "benevolent global hegemony." (Kagan soon also used the word "empire.")[39]

There were two reasons why hegemony was possible and why it would be benevolent. According to Kristol and Kagan, American power was not resented; it was welcomed by others: "[m]ost of the world's major powers welcome … and prefer" U.S. hegemony to any conceivable alternatives, they claimed. Rather than being an imposition, America's presence resembled an empire by invitation.[40] Second, the benevolence of this empire was assured by the fact that "moral goals and fundamental national interests *are almost always in harmony*" (emphasis added). Thus the choice between supporting ideals or the imperatives of hegemonic power was a false one because, in reality, the two converged. Whatever enhanced America's power was, de facto, morally good for the rest of the world too. Thus the projection of power into every region of the world would simultaneously and automatically promote "democracy, free markets and respect for liberty."[41]

The final element of "benevolent global hegemony" was what the authors called "citizen involvement." Reagan's success was based on "celebrat[ing] American exceptionalism" to facilitate a foreign policy based on "an elevated patriotism." The public would be educated—or "prepar[ed] and inspire[ed]"—to understand the special responsibilities of global hegemony, which had their origins in America's exceptional political character. This "inspir[ation]" might include some form of military service but, most importantly, it meant giving the public a "broad sustaining foreign policy vision" and a "sense of mission" that would sustain long-term support for an activist foreign policy by affecting "a lasting political realignment."[42] Kristol and Brooks later wrote that an understanding of "American greatness" was essential to revitalize conservatism, remoralize society, and inform a neo-Reaganite foreign policy. As Kagan had written in 1992, if the American people were to support an activist foreign policy, they would require a justification that went beyond realism.[43]

There was nothing new about trying to sell a strategy to the public with an ideological overlay that was based on a special American role. In this particular case, however, the method of selling the strategy in some ways reflected Kristol's Straussian background. To reconcile what he saw as the competing imperatives of virtue and consent, Strauss called for a wise legislator to draft a virtuous code that the citizens could be persuaded to adopt

without coercion—at least, this was Kristol's interpretation of Strauss.[44] Whether Strauss genuinely believed that virtue could be discerned through philosophical contemplation or whether it was only necessary for the public to believe that it could is still debated by many Straussians; but by proposing that citizens be inculcated with "a sense of mission" on the basis of "American greatness," Kristol was using the Straussian method: if the imperatives of unipolarity were presented as a virtuous vision of America's unique global role, the public could be persuaded to accept the strategy because it tapped into popular narratives about the country's exceptional political character. The grandiose, idealistic rhetoric employed by Kristol had a practical purpose. Through patriotic appeals to a particular conception of American national identity and purpose, Kristol could convince the Republican establishment and, ultimately, the public at large to accept his strategy in the long term without coercion. While the content of Kristol's message was not Straussian, his method of political leadership did resonate with the philosopher's ideas. Nevertheless, despite Kristol's personal extrapolations from Strauss, the philosopher's ideas were not integral to any aspect of neoconservatism. Kagan resolutely rejected the term "Straussian."[45]

The *Foreign Affairs* article was a largely *abstract* vision of power. Kristol and Kagan were attempting to set an agenda and sell a vision of power, but in terms of practical application, it was short on detail. They did not address the practical realities of projecting power and the choices and compromises that might ensue. Did maintaining "hegemony" require intervention in peripheral areas or only core ones? Under what circumstances would hard power be used and for what purposes? How and when might democracy be promoted?[46] Instead, they made the glib assumption that the national interest—defined as global hegemony—was "almost always in harmony" with the promotion of moral ideals.

However, maintaining hegemony on a global scale would sometimes require the projection of American power regardless of whether or not it was welcome or supported by democratic allies. The United States could not withdraw from the Middle East and still remain the dominant outside power there and the world's hegemonic power. No amount of abstract ideological formulations could alter the practical imperatives of remaining a truly global power. There would be times when maintaining global hegemony required the projection of power simply for the sake of maintaining power—not for the sake of ideals.

Like Krauthammer, Kristol and Kagan offered a superficial analysis of the response to U.S. power, blithely assuming that it would mostly be "welcome[ed] … and prefer[red]" by others. Those on the receiving end were viewed as relatively passive actors who would accept American priorities

either because expansive American dominance was conducive to their own security interests or because they were intimidated by America's power and realized it was not in their interests to challenge it—thus ensuring that Washington did not have to resort to coercion.[47]

In a second article published in *Commentary* in April 1996, Kagan claimed that America's record during the Cold War showed that even forcible imposition of U.S. priorities did not equate to coercion:

> Some nations under the immense influence of American power might not feel the difference between American imperialism and genuine imperialism; some, especially in the Western hemisphere, may have been as helpless to resist American power as any colony. But most knew the difference between an empire and a voluntary alliance led by a powerful hegemon … [This] allowed us to wield influence without coercion.[48]

By this standard, it seemed as though Kagan had an a priori unwillingness to consider the United States capable of coercive behavior. Even when U.S. actions were impossible to resist and felt the same as "genuine imperialism" to those on the receiving end, Kagan refused to characterize them as coercive; a conclusion that would call into question the "benevolence" of American hegemony.

There was a second contradiction inherent in the theory of harmonious interests and ideals too. Though some neocons claimed that the distinction between interests and ideals was a false one, whenever they discussed the practical realities of military intervention, incongruously they still explicitly recognized a distinction between intervening solely for humanitarian or moral reasons and intervening to protect strategic interests—and they almost always clearly rejected the former or else attached so many conditions to it that it was, in reality, very unlikely. In recognizing this distinction, the neocons were implicitly acknowledging that moral ideals and hegemonic (or unipolar) power did not always converge, and that the two could not always be promoted simultaneously. Even if there were occasions when moral ideals and strategic interests were both at stake, the determining criteria for military intervention would always be the vital interests. In such a scenario, a moral dimension would be merely incidental because it was not the determinant of intervention.

In 1994, Wolfowitz asserted that for the United States, "the determination of our core interests cannot realistically be based on hard-headed calculation, divorced from the characteristic American insistence on an idealistic basis for international action." Yet he also rejected military intervention "in a place such as Haiti" because it "is peripheral to American *interests*" (emphasis added).[49] Similarly, in April 1996, Muravchik published a follow-up to his 1991 monograph titled *The Imperative of American*

Leadership. Muravchik argued that values and interests were "entertwined," [*sic*] but also stated that "rarely should we use force for values alone. It should be reserved for situations where our (security) interests are at stake." The United States should "work hard to encourage democracy . . . but we should not go to war for it."[50] Distinguishing Bosnia from other possible humanitarian cases, Muravchik wrote that

> Because our deployment in Bosnia is based more on interest than on humanitarian grounds, we are in less hurry to withdraw. However, where the stakes are more humanitarian than strategic, interventions will necessarily be brief and reserved for dire cases.

But since neither Haiti nor even Rwanda qualified as such cases, it was unclear whether there would ever be any circumstances dire enough to warrant American humanitarian intervention. "In Bosnia, where issues of global peace and security are in play, Washington has to take the lead," he wrote, "but where the issues are wholly humanitarian, it does not derogate from America's superpower status to let others take charge."[51]

Michael Ledeen also published an election year manifesto in which he called for America to lead a "global democratic revolution."[52] Ledeen claimed that America was not a traditional nation but rather the embodiment of the idea of freedom, so its national interest could not be defined "in purely geopolitical terms" because "we seek to advance ideals. Therefore our foreign policy must be ideological, designed to advance freedom."[53] Failure to do so would seriously undermine U.S. national security, because new tyrants would emerge who would inevitably threaten the United States itself.[54] Ledeen described a whole range of nonmilitary initiatives to encourage democracy, including cultural and political initiatives such as restoring and expanding American radio broadcasts; expanding NATO; exposing politicians in Eastern Europe, who had links to the former communist regimes; and possibly, giving support to dissident groups; but he stopped well short of arguing that America should use its own hard power for the purpose of democratization, despite the gravity of the security threat he claimed would come from the tyrants of the future.[55]

Moreover, Dole himself exhibited the neoconservatives' typically superficial attitude to democracy promotion and morality in foreign policy. On the one hand, Dole argued that U.S. global preeminence largely converged with its "core ideals that we have supported throughout our history: freedom, democracy, the rule of law . . . " and called for "the promotion of American ideals."[56] The Platform was even more explicit, stating that Republicans "vigorously support restoring the promotion

of democracy worldwide as a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy."[57] Yet, while Dole's abstract rhetoric exalted these lofty ideals as an integral component of U.S. foreign policy, he subsequently stated that intervention should be defined by strategic interests, not moral concerns, thus implicitly acknowledging that the two did not always cohere: if security concerns dictated, then "long-term interests must take precedence over the short term ideal of enlarging democracy."[58]

In sum, the argument that some neocons made about the reconciliation of unipolar power and moral ideals was flawed because once they moved beyond abstract rhetoric about morality in foreign policy, neoconservatives *themselves* believed that military power should almost always be reserved for situations when security interests were at stake, and that ideals were a secondary or tertiary concern that should only be pursued through nonmilitary means if and when this did not conflict with the broader imperatives of unipolarity. They also failed to consider the possibility that American power might be disputed or rejected by others and the consequences this entailed for their purported convergence of interests and ideals. In some ways this was reminiscent of the first generation of neocons. They, too, had placed strategic interests first and declined to advocate "exporting" democracy or acting in the name of moral ideals, proposing instead a rhetorical emphasis on human rights.[59] However, whereas the first generation acknowledged that their human rights strategy was only rhetorical, the second generation was much less clear on this point. Their language often implied that they would put values at the heart of foreign policy, but the devil was in the detail. Their abstract idealistic rhetoric was deceptive because it was vastly disproportionate to the actual place of ideals in neoconservative strategy, which was as a secondary or tertiary concern. If there was a purpose to this grandiose rhetoric, it was not as an indication of how the neocons would use America's military might but as a way to galvanize the public around a strategy of robust internationalism. Although values might be invoked when intervening, any humanitarian dimension was incidental because it was interests that would determine America's role in any given conflict. Values alone would not compel intervention.

WINEP Presidential Study Group: Iraq Ascends

The invocation of "neo-Reaganism" was not the only attempt by neoconservatives to influence the election year foreign policy debate. A number of prominent neocons were involved in the third quadrennial Presidential Study Group of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, which appeared in the year of each Presidential election and

was devoted solely to Middle East strategy. Convened in the spring of 1996, the WINEP study group aspired to "inject 'new thinking' into the policymaking process" and define an agenda for the United States in the Middle East.[60] For the first time, the report claimed a link between regime change in Iraq and broader regional objectives. Unlike the Kristol and Kagan article, the report eschewed ostensible ideological considerations, but it shed light on some of the actual policies favored by some of the neocons in the Middle East—and also demonstrated how similar these priorities were to other mainstream views. The study group itself constituted a cross-section of mainstream political opinion. It included neocons and close sympathizers such as Bolton, Dobriansky, Feith, Khalilzad, Pipes, Rodman, Wolfowitz, and Zoellick, as well as twenty-one others, including former Clinton NSC official, Kenneth Pollack; former Bush 41 NSC official and Brookings Institution scholar, Richard Haass; Johns Hopkins professor, Michael Mandelbaum, and Democratic Representative from New York, Stephen Solarz. (Kirkpatrick and James Woolsey were on the steering group.)[61] Despite the political mix, there were only a small number of dissenting footnotes, which the conveners believed reflected a remarkably broad consensus on the fundamentals of U.S. Middle East policy, and indicating that the neocons did not hold radically different views to other Washington policy makers and scholars.[62]

The most important aspect of the WINEP report was its conclusions on Iraq. For the first time there was universal agreement that Washington's "top priority" in the Middle East should be to take steps that "hasten the demise of Saddam Hussein's regime." It was the regime in Baghdad, not the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, that militated most of all against the pursuit of regional peace and security.[63] This was the pivot around which their proposed Mid East strategy rotated. The study group argued that Saddam had shown that he retained aggressive intentions and still sought a WMD capability; that America's allies were growing more reluctant to respond to Iraqi disputes with UNSCOM; and most importantly, "Saddam's survival works against U.S. interests elsewhere in the region."[64] Regime change was not only important in its own right but was also part of a broader strategy to transform the region and fashion a more pro-American Middle East. In particular, the authors claimed, toppling Saddam would be an effective way to contain the regime in Tehran because Saddam's lack of control in the Kurdish north and Shia south was practically an invitation for the Iranians to infiltrate those regions.[65] The report stopped short of advocating direct American military action to remove Saddam but called for Washington to go beyond the covert activities of the Clinton administration and adopt "a more aggressive

approach toward military responses to Iraqi provocations, commensurate with the objective of hastening the demise of Saddam's regime."[66]

The elevation of Iraq did not mean that the Israeli-Palestinian peace process was not a concern, however. The report claimed that further strengthening of the U.S.-Israeli political, economic, and strategic partnership was "urgen[t]," and that the U.S. focus should be on the needs of Israel not on "its putative peace partners, like the Palestine Liberation Organisation, that have long records of deceit and extremism."[67] Referring to the Oslo process as the framework for peace unsurprisingly elicited some dissenting footnotes from Bolton, Dobriansky, Feith, and Kirkpatrick, who objected to the suggestion that the United States should urge Israel to exercise restraint in expanding existing settlements because, they claimed, settlements did not impede the achievement of peace. (Notably, Wolfowitz, Pipes, Rodman, Zoellick, and Khalilzad did not sign the dissenting footnote implying that they favored a freeze of the existing settlements.)[68]

The recommendations of the report also provided further evidence that, for the neoconservatives involved, ideals were expendable when they clashed with strategic interests. Expanding popular participation in the government of Saudi Arabia could be a useful way to push through liberalizing economic reforms, the report stated, but the United States should not

> condition our relationship with them on their progress toward democratic reform and the expansion of human rights. Ever mindful of our commitment to U.S. values, our wider strategic interests dictate that U.S. priorities must be the achievement of stability first, the advancement of democracy second.[69]

This assertion did not elicit a single dissenting footnote from any of the neoconservatives involved, or anyone else. This was particularly noteworthy from the standpoint of Kirkpatrick, who had begun to sympathize with the second generation of neocons. During the Cold War, the Kirkpatrick doctrine posited that it was not always possible for the United States to pressurize its authoritarian allies to reform because it faced a more serious existential threat from totalitarian communism. In the 1990s, she identified no such existential threat yet still declined to advocate conditioning a U.S. relationship on gradual improvements in human rights and/or moves toward widening citizen participation in government. Kirkpatrick herself had argued in 1990 that although the United States could not "export" democracy, it was "enormously desirable" for the United States to "encourage democratic institutions wherever possible," particularly in the Middle East because this would "solve the so-called Arab-Israeli problem." At the very least, she wrote,

the United States should "make clear our views about the consequences of freedom and unfreedom."[70] To be sure, Kirkpatrick had made no binding commitments, but in this case, she did not even suggest that the U.S. government make clear its view of Saudi "unfreedom." Even in the absence of an apparently existential threat, her tepid commitment to encouraging democracy still came second to strategic interests.

"A CLEAN BREAK": ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST

The WINEP study was not the only election year report to argue that Iraq was the strategic pivot of the entire region. At the same time, another report was under discussion, this time an almost exclusively neoconservative one. In 1996, the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies (IASPS) based in Washington, D.C., and Jerusalem convened a group of American specialists on Israel and the Middle East to form the Study Group on a New Israeli Strategy Towards 2000. Established in 1984 by its President, Robert J. Loewenberg, the IASPS was founded to "develop strategic and allied policies dedicated to maintaining the existence of Israel." The Oslo process had apparently put Israel "on the path of national extinction," and the Clean Break study group was formed to offer an alternative strategy.[71] In June it published a paper written to advise the new Likud government of Binyamin Netanyahu, which suggested that Israel make a "Clean Break" with the peace process and work toward regime change in Iraq, with the hope that this would contribute toward another regional objective: pressurizing the crumbling Ba'athist regime in Syria with the hope of its ultimate demise.[72]

The study group was led by Perle and included Feith, David, and Meyrav Wurmser; James Colbert, Communications Secretary of JINSA; Jonathan Torop of WINEP; and Charles Fairbanks Jr., a colleague of Wolfowitz at the School of Advanced International Studies.[73]

"A Clean Break" proposed an ambitious agenda for Israel that echoed Gaffney and Feith's individual offerings in the early nineties: it should abandon the "land for peace" formula of the Oslo process and instead adopt a "peace through strength" strategy by taking offensive action to forge a balance of power conducive to Israeli interests. Israel needed to move beyond deterrence and retaliation by reestablishing the principle of preemption on a regional scale. This would translate into *"the right of hot pursuit"* (emphasis in original) into Palestinian-controlled areas and possibly cultivating alternatives to Arafat's base of power. Israel should also shape its strategic environment by "weakening, containing and even rolling back Syria." Rather than taking direct aim at the Assad regime, however, this should be achieved indirectly by removing Saddam Hussein

from power in Iraq and supporting a restoration of the Hashemite monarchy to power there, "as a means of foiling Syrian regional ambitions." (They did not consider the impact that a post-Saddam majority Shiite Iraqi state might have on majority Shiite Iran.) Regime change in Iraq was the catalyst for change across the region, this time in Syria. Damascus did not need to be challenged directly because a demonstration of Israeli power in Iraq—there was no suggestion in this report that it should be an American undertaking—would be awesome enough to affect a regional realignment and lead to the crumbling of the Syrian regime.

Wurmser pursued this argument in a subsequent paper for IASPS in which the analysis was almost identical, but this time the strategy was presented not just as an Israeli one but as a joint U.S.-Israeli regional approach. Once again, the rationale held that what was in the interests of Israel was also in the interest of the United States because an Israeli retreat meant, by extension, a U.S. retreat. Wurmser argued that the peace process was propping up failing regimes, particularly Assad's, and that both Israeli and U.S. policy should be informed by "the crumbling nature of Ba'athism" in both Syria and Iraq. A pro-Western post-Ba'ath Iraq was imperative, he argued, for, "whoever inherits Iraq dominates the entire Levant strategically."[74] Thus the United States and Israel should both work toward the same outcomes in the region: affecting a pro-Israel and pro-American regional realignment by toppling Saddam, and thereby indirectly challenging the Assad regime in Damascus.

After the 2003 invasion of Iraq, retired General Anthony Zinni reported that he had been told by members of the Bush administration before the war that "the road to Jerusalem led through Baghdad."[75] The argument that regime change in Iraq would create a positive strategic ripple effect throughout the region had originated in the Wurmser paper, the Clean Break report, and the WINEP study in 1996. Moreover, the WINEP report was endorsed by a cross-section of scholars and policy makers—both Democrat and Republican—demonstrating that, on this issue, the neocons and their sympathizers differed from mainstream Republicans and Democrats only in degrees.

"Time for an Insurrection": The Establishment of PNAC

Two weeks before election day, *The Weekly Standard*'s cover read, "Can We Get This Election Over With Already?"[76] In the immediate short term, Kristol and Kagan considered the neoconservative efforts to influence the election debate generally unsuccessful. Curiously, they seemed unaware of the substantive interface between the Dole Platform (not to

mention his advisors) and their own vision. Consequently, the two leading neocons blasted the Republican Party as "so bereft of a compelling vision for American foreign policy that its candidates don't know how to attack the President's record," and accused it of "lean[ing] toward isolationism." Part of the problem was that the Dole campaign was "incompetent, plain and simple" but most of all, Kristol and Kagan believed that Dole lacked sufficient vision: he "tries hard and means well but makes an inadequate story teller." He had failed to bring his policies "together into something larger, something gripping and alive."[77] They assailed Dole's performance in the Presidential debates for failing to repeat his commitment to NMD and for missing the opportunity to challenge the Clinton administration's meek reaction to Saddam Hussein's incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan. Ultimately, they said, "a governing Republican Party must stand for strong and assertive world leadership," which they considered lacking in the Dole campaign.[78] Congressional Republicans were "cautious timid and adrift" too, he claimed, and needed to be reminded that national security was "the paramount obligation of the federal government." In *The Weekly Standard*, Kristol declared that it was "time for an insurrection" in the Republican establishment.[79]

The "insurrection" started on 3 June 1997, when Kristol and Kagan's new joint lobbying venture, PNAC went public. With provocative clarity, the name of the new organization stated its aspirations. Dedicated solely to foreign affairs, the Project was launched by its Statement of Principles—a new manifesto that succinctly summarized the Kristol-Kagan vision. Twenty-five esteemed commentators and former policy makers—many already associated with the neoconservative-led network—lent their names in support.[80]

Echoing the *Foreign Affairs* article in both its vision of power and its abstractness, the PNAC Statement of Principles outlined a strategy of "military strength and moral clarity" to counter the "drift" in both Clinton's foreign policy and the Republican Party. PNAC aimed "to make the case and rally support for American global leadership" and underline the country's unique role in maintaining peace and preserving the existing international order. To do this, it called for preventive action ("shap[ing] crises before they emerge") and advocated "boldly and purposefully promot[ing] American principles abroad." The only hint of what this might mean in practice came with the concession that the United States should still remain "prudent"; a nod to the complications that could arise when it came to the practical implementation of such a strategy.

The Project would function primarily as a lobby group, like CSP, rather than a research institution, like AEI. The individuals who signed the PNAC statements and letters were not employees or members of

the group, and supporters of PNAC's initiatives differed from case to case. Kristol served as the group's Chairman and Kagan as a Codirector. On a day-to-day basis, they were joined by just a handful of staff, including in the first instance Gary Schmitt (of the USCNATO), and Thomas Donnelly, the former *National Interest* editor. This would later be expanded, though never by much. When PNAC ceased to function in 2006, the total staff was still only ten.[81] Its core group of staff prepared and disseminated press releases and project memoranda and organized public letters and statements. Many of the editorials in *The Weekly Standard* were publicized as PNAC memoranda and made available on the Project's Web site.

Its staff may have been small but it was especially well connected. The PNAC Statement of Principles included some well-known neoconservatives as well as others who sympathized with their unipolarist vision. Some of these names were familiar in foreign policy circles, some of them much less so. The list of signatories (and the notable absences too—Perle, Feith, and Krauthammer, among others) demonstrated that the network led by neocons was open to any conservative—from the elite political class at least—who felt inclined to support some or all of its objectives. Signatories included: Elliot Abrams of Hudson, Dobriansky, Aaron Friedberg of the AEI and CSP, Francis Fukuyama, Frank Gaffney, Fred Iklé, Zalmay Khalilzad, Lewis Libby, and Wolfowitz. They were joined by other conservative unipolarists, including Dick Cheney, Rodman, Rumsfeld, and Weber of the Dole campaign. It was also signed by conservatives who had either never been associated with the network before, or only rarely. Hoover Institute professor of public policy and future member of Bush's Defense Policy Board, Henry S. Rowen was a signatory, as was former Reagan NSC official and Harvard professor, Stephen P. Rosen. There were also conservatives whose interests were not primarily in foreign policy: George Weigel, the Catholic theologian; Gary Bauer, head of the Campaign for Working Families and former Reagan domestic affairs advisor; Jeb Bush, Governor of Florida; businessman Steve Forbes, who had challenged Dole in the 1996 primaries; and Dan Quayle, former Vice President under George H. W. Bush, to whom Kristol had served as Chief of Staff. Finally there were familial connections: Donald Kagan, father of Robert, Yale professor of Classics and trustee emeriti of the Hudson Institute lent his name, as did two Cold War neocons, Norman Podhoretz and his wife Midge Decter (whose son, John, had helped found *The Weekly Standard*). Podhoretz had written little on foreign policy since 1989 and had even delivered a "eulogy" to neoconservatism in 1996 because he believed it "no longer exists as a distinctive phenomenon requiring a special name of its own."[82] Neither

he nor Decter were the intellectual firepower behind the "new" neoconservatism. It was the younger generation's project.

With the establishment of PNAC, Kristol and Kagan now had a platform they could devote exclusively to promoting their foreign policy vision. In conjunction with the *Standard*, PNAC would lead the campaign for a unipolarist foreign policy over the next four years. Although the neocons and their allies had failed to capture the White House in 1996, their intellectual infrastructure had developed further. Whereas their first term in opposition had been dedicated primarily to intellectual development and staking out positions vis-a-vis the Clinton administration, the next four years would see much more active lobbying on issues that they believed were integral to preserving America's position as the single pole of world power.

CHAPTER 5

IRAQ

> The … enormous resources of the Persian Gulf, the power that those sources represent—it's power. It's not just that we need gas for our cars, it's that anyone who controls those resources has enormous capability to build up military forces. [1]

WORKING AS A MIDLEVEL PENTAGON OFFICIAL IN 1977, Paul Wolfowitz undertook a study examining how the United States would defend the Persian Gulf region in the event of a Soviet seizure of the oil fields. However, Wolfowitz also asked a second question that had rarely been discussed by U.S. policy makers: what would happen if another country *within the Persian Gulf* were to threaten the oil fields? In particular, what would the United States do if Iraq were to invade Kuwait or Saudi Arabia? At the time of writing, Wolfowitz concluded that Iraq not only had the capability to use force against its neighbors but that its military prowess may cause other countries in the region to align with Saddam to protect their own interests. In sum, Iraq had the potential to become a regional power; the United States needed to be strong enough to preclude this. It was not concerns about human rights or democracy that motivated Wolfowitz' initial interest in Iraq but worries about energy and aspiring regional powers.[2]

Wolfowitz's concerns changed very little over the next twenty years and reflected the views that most neoconservatives came to in the mid- to late-1990s, culminating in an intense lobbying campaign in favor of regime change in Iraq from late 1997 to early 1999 (which had been presaged by initial calls to depose Saddam from the contributors to the Clean Break paper and the WINEP Presidential Study Group in 1996). Regime change in Baghdad was an objective worth pursuing in its own right; however, a demonstration of American power and commitment would also be part of a broader strategy to fashion a more pro-American Middle East, along with making a "clean break" from the peace process

and challenging the Syrian regime. This would also be the exemplar of preventive action: Saddam was not yet in a position to build up military forces because the sanctions severely hampered his ability to exploit the country's oil wealth and, until 1997, the arms inspections were proceeding, for the most part, very effectively.[3] However, the neocons saw the *potential* power that an Iraqi leader might accrue through the country's oil and sought to prevent Saddam from ever having the opportunity to exploit Iraq's natural resources and become a regional military power. With the objective vis-à-vis Iraq clear, the question for neocons was how to achieve it in practice. What circumstances might constitute a credible pretext to attack Iraq? If so, what combination of American hard power and military activity by Iraqi exiles would be required?

The neocons were not lone voices on the Iraq issue. As Saddam's relationship with United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) deteriorated, President Clinton came under increasing pressure from both Republicans and Democrats in Congress to take a more proactive stance against the Iraqi dictator. His reliance on diplomacy, sanctions, and sporadic bombing campaigns did not satisfy the neocons and, indeed, many in Congress. If some of the neoconservatives equivocated over the use of force in seemingly peripheral regions, there was no such hesitation regarding Iraq. Whereas much of the debate over intervention so far had either been abstract and theoretical or had concerned peripheral cases, the Iraq debate revealed the consensus on using military force in a region that was indispensible to the pursuit of U.S. primacy.

Despite the neocons' harsh criticisms of the Clinton administration's handling of the issue, Iraq was yet another instance of the neoconservatives differing, for the most part, only in degrees from other conservatives and even Democrats. Many in the President's own party supported proactive initiatives to remove Saddam Hussein. In fact, during the first half of the decade, the Clinton administration had been *ahead* of the neocons in its support for Ahmed Chalabi, the face of the Iraqi opposition in Washington, and his organization, the Iraqi National Congress (INC), and ahead of them in its opportunistic pursuit of regime change in Iraq, supported by the promulgation of the "rogue state" narrative.

IRAQ AND THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

The official public policy of the Clinton administration until 1998 was containment of Iraq through sanctions and inspections. In a broader sense, this was part of the so-called dual containment of Iraq and Iran: balancing the two against each other so as to contain them both.[4] These official policies were not the whole story, however. In the

case of Iraq, Clinton followed a dual-track approach that utilized both overt (sanctions and inspections) and covert means (two CIA-backed attempted coups), and which amounted to a policy of regime change, albeit a low-intensity, opportunistic, and low-risk one.[5] This covert strategy was an expansion of a narrower covert policy strand followed by the first Bush administration in the aftermath of its military defeat of Iraq, thus demonstrating a degree of similarity between the neocons and the "realism" of the first Bush administration that they did so much to marginalize and distance themselves from.

In May 1991, after the defeat of Saddam, Bush signed a covert finding authorizing the CIA to hire the Rendon Group—a Washington, D.C., firm specializing in "perception management" services—on a $100 million contract to "create the conditions for removal of Saddam Hussein from power" in the expectation that the Iraqi dictator would be deposed before long from within, preferably through a pro-Western military coup.[6] During the Iraq War the Bush administration itself had strongly implied that it would welcome a change of government—or at least a change in military leader—but the two genuinely popular uprisings that ensued were not conducive to regional stability. The administration's deliberate inaction helped Saddam to crush the rebels. A coup, however, would meet the desire for both stability and a change of government. It would also remove the issue of how to contain Saddam in the long term. The Rendon Goup was hired to create conditions conducive to this in 1992. One of its first acts was to create an Iraqi opposition movement in June 1992 by sponsoring a meeting of exiles in Vienna at which Chalabi's INC and Iyad Allawi's Iraqi National Accord (INA) were established.[7]

The effort to unseat Saddam was expanded soon after Clinton took office; long before the neoconservative campaign for regime change began. In August 1993, Vice President Gore sent a letter to Chalabi implying support for a policy directed toward regime change. "I assure you that we will not turn our backs on the Kurds or the other Iraqi communities subjected to the repression of Saddam Hussein's regime," Gore wrote. He stressed the administration's support for humanitarian relief efforts but also suggested that it might be prepared to go beyond this:

> Secretary Christopher, National Security Advisor Lake, and I made a solid commitment to INC representatives in our meetings, and we pledged our support for a democratic alternative to the Saddam Hussein regime. I can assure you that the U.S. intends to live up to these commitments and to give whatever additional support we can reasonably provide to encourage you in your struggle for a democratic Iraq.[8]

Gore did not make any specific commitments, but in Congressional testimony in March 1998, Chalabi claimed that his understanding of the letter was that the United States would intervene directly to prevent an incursion into the Kurdish north. He claimed he had had many discussions about direct military intervention, and that the INC had received "open political assurances from the highest levels of the U.S. Government that [it] would protect the inhabitants of northern Iraq from Saddam's repression."[9] (He told an enquiring Senator Robb that the aircraft enforcing the no-fly zone would have been "more than adequate," and assumed that they would be used for this purpose.) Chalabi's maximalist interpretation of the Gore letter may have been designed to curry favor at a time when regime change was under serious discussion; the hearing was titled "Iraq: Can Saddam Be Overthrown?" Nevertheless, Gore's interest in Iraq had been real. In November 1993, four months after he sent the letter, Chalabi presented the administration with a four-stage-war plan titled "The End Game," and in response Clinton authorized a covert CIA operation based in Iraqi Kurdistan to work with Iraqi exiles in the INC, and the INA to organize a coup against Saddam.[10] Although, officially, the sanctions against Iraq were to be imposed until the regime complied fully with UNSCR 687, which mandated Iraqi disarmament, Secretary of State Warren Christopher moved the goal posts in 1994, declaring that even full Iraqi compliance with Resolution 687 would not be enough to justify lifting the embargo, thus acknowledging that for Washington only a change in the regime could bring this about.[11]

The CIA's station in northern Iraq sponsored two coups by the Iraqi opposition in 1995 and 1996. Chalabi's group organized an insurrection in the north to begin in March 1995, but the CIA withdrew support at the last minute after a rival in the INA convinced Washington that the plan would provoke a massive military backlash from Baghdad. When the rebellion went ahead anyway, it failed spectacularly. An anti-Saddam coup was subsequently planned by the INA for June 1996, but the plot was infiltrated by the Iraqi regime and failed.[12]

The latter plot was significant in another way too; a way that would be overlooked entirely by the neoconservatives and their supporters and contribute to the superficiality of their portrayal of the Iraq case later on. The 1996 INA plan relied on CIA agents working undercover in the UNSCOM team contacting coconspirators in the Republican Guard (RG) and Special Republican Guard (SRG). Since the plotters' communication equipment was discovered and confiscated, the plot—and the involvement of American spies in the UNSCOM team—was uncovered by Iraqi intelligence. Scott Ritter, the former U.S. Marine, then the head of UNSCOM (and at the time unaware of the covert dimension

of its activities) believed this could explain why the Iraqis began to deny access to RG and SRG sites and Saddam's subsequent objections to the presence of American inspectors—though not non-Americans—in UNSCOM.[13]

Not satisfied with merely sponsoring coups in Iraq, the Clinton administration also had its covert operatives in the UNSCOM team implant interception devices in the inspection monitoring equipment. The so-called Shake the Tree operation was designed to intercept Iraq's military communications and pass intelligence from the UN operation back to the Clinton administration.[14] When the neocons began their campaign for regime change, these details were overlooked almost completely in favor of a simplistic narrative that cast the Iraqi dictator as an unappeasable, rogue leader determined to defy America, expel all inspectors, and maintain a weapons of mass destruction (WMD) capability to target American interests.[15] Tyrannical though Saddam's regime was, its actions toward UNSCOM followed a logic.

Until 1996, however, there was virtually no neoconservative critique of the covert dimension of Clinton's policy, and certainly no alternative was offered. There was no engagement at all with covert developments under Bush. Clinton had in fact developed a strategy that aspired to regime change several years before the neocons. Even the Bush administration had covertly taken a more proactive stance than any of the neocons had advocated at the time. Although the Center for Security Policy called sporadically for Saddam's deposal in the early nineties, it offered no strategy to achieve this; only a general call to "utilize every resource at [our] disposal" rather than relying solely on covert tactics.[16] The aspiration to regime change was vaguely present, but the neocons did not engage with the Clinton's tentative efforts in the years immediately after the Gulf War. In September 1996, *The Weekly Standard* published its first editorial on Iraq but called only for U.S. involvement and leadership, not for regime change.[17] Then, finally, the 1996 WINEP Presidential Study Group report emerged; the first project connected to the neoconservative-led network to claim that toppling Saddam should be the top priority in the region, and sketch out a series of steps to hasten the demise of the regime, although they were nonmilitary and long term.

At this point, Wolfowitz and Perle spoke out. After Saddam's crushing of the INC in northern Iraq in September 1996, the problem of Iraq began to resonate strongly with them again. In August of that year, Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, had invited Saddam's forces into the north to help him crush the rival Kurdish faction, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and, while there, Saddam took the opportunity to slaughter hundreds of INC supporters. Wolfowitz

published a blistering op-ed in the *Wall Street Journal* (which was based on a Congressional testimony that he gave that month) ridiculing what he called "Clinton's Bay of Pigs" in Iraq.[18] Although he acknowledged that Saddam's forces had been invited into the Kurdish region, Wolfowitz still referred to it as an "invasion" of the north by Baghdad, which the Clinton administration had done nothing to prevent. Saddam's actions had proved that the containment strategy—not to mention the covert strategy of supporting the INC in the north and ostensibly protecting the Kurds there—was not working. According to Wolfowitz, this was a serous blow to American prestige; it had "huge strategic consequences for American credibility in this critical region and beyond." For the first time, Wolfowitz asked:

> Should we sit idly by with our passive containment policy and our inept covert operations, and wait until a tyrant possessing large quantities of weapons of mass destruction and sophisticated delivery systems strikes out at us? … Now that the U.S. has lost its position in Northern Iraq, it will be much more difficult to go beyond a containment strategy. But it will be no less necessary.

He did not offer a specific alternative to Clinton's policy, acknowledging that it would be difficult to develop one; but for the first time, Wolfowitz clearly implied that covert action against Saddam was not enough and that containment was obsolete.

Perle was coming to similar conclusions. After Saddam's incursion into the north, he warned that "the most serious development of all" was that "the credibility of the United States in a region of unquestioned vital interest ha[d] been damaged, perhaps irreparably." Saddam had not "abandoned his goal of dominating the gulf and controlling the region's wealth and resources." Perle endorsed the use of U.S. air power and the supply of military equipment to the INC, who would do the fighting against Saddam. Clinton should "make it the explicit policy of the United States that Saddam should go."[19]

Two further developments catalyzed the most intense phase of the neocons' lobbying on Iraq, from late 1997 to early 1999, during which time they finally moved beyond the strategy of the Clinton administration. The first was the increasingly fractious UNSCOM inspections process: the beginning of the Iraq campaign related directly to an increase in the number and seriousness of the stand-offs between Saddam and the inspectors and for those neocons who had not already publicly endorsed regime change, the inspections imbroglio was the final straw. A year before this, however, the neocons and their allies had been galvanized

by the arrival in Washington of Ahmed Chalabi, leader of the INC. Chalabi was the man who, for the first time, presented the neocons with an alternative policy; a viable military plan for regime change through working with Iraqi opposition groups. Moreover, there would be no need for a prolonged U.S. occupation of Iraq (as Wolfowitz and Cheney had feared in 1991) because Chalabi and the other Iraqi exiles would be well positioned to establish a new Iraqi government. This was a plan that the neocons could sell to the D.C. foreign policy community and the Clinton administration (and, indeed, they continued to promote it during the 2000 election campaign and afterwards). According to Francis Brooke, Chalabi's savvy Washington aide, it was the failure of Clinton's covert action in 1996 that convinced Chalabi that he needed a presence in Washington, D.C., thus leading to his introduction to the neocons and contributing to their subsequent campaign for regime change.[20] Ultimately, then, the Rendon Project, which created the INC, paid dividends although not in the short-term way that had been envisaged.

THE MAN WITH THE PLAN

Ahmed Chalabi was born into one of Iraq's wealthiest and most influential families in October 1944. His grandfather held posts in nine Iraqi cabinets and his father had been President of the senate and an advisor to the king. When the family was forced into exile after the 1958 revolution led by the Iraqi Communist Party, it lost much of its wealth and a reputed million-plus square meters of land and property in central Baghdad. After boarding school in England and a PhD in mathematics from the University of Chicago, Chalabi moved back to Lebanon to teach at the American University of Beirut. In 1977, he was asked by Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan to cofound a new bank there. Petra Bank grew to become the second largest bank in Jordan, and Chalabi became rich and influential through extending easy credit to the Jordanian royal family. In April 1992, however, he was indicted by a Jordanian military tribunal for embezzlement, theft, forgery, currency speculation, and overstating the bank's assets: in all a total of thirty-one charges. To avoid arrest, Chalabi and his family fled to London, after which the Jordanian authorities convicted him *in absentia* to twenty-two years in prison and forced repayment of $230 million of embezzled funds.[21]

Unsurprisingly, Chalabi never returned to Jordan. He decided instead to dedicate his life full time to the fate of the country of his birth. At the age of forty-eight, thirty-four years after last setting foot in Iraq, Chalabi accepted financial support from the CIA to establish the INC. For the first time since the age of fourteen, he returned to Iraq, albeit

to the autonomous Kurdish zone in the north. There he began to spend time at the CIA's base and oversaw an INC intelligence disinformation project in Salahuddin that was part of the campaign against Saddam.[22] The INC's failed insurrection of 1995 was followed by the torture and murder of hundreds of INC supporters in the Kurdish region at the hands of Saddam. After two failed coups and a military operation in the north by Saddam, the Clinton administration instructed the CIA to pack up its operations in northern Iraq and end its support for Iraqi exile groups.[23]

However, Chalabi and Brooke, who had worked on the Rendon Group's Iraq project in 1991, did not give up. They recognized that with covert aide no longer forthcoming, the INC needed to generate support in Congress in order to pressurize Clinton. In 1996, Brooke and Chalabi came to Washington, D.C., and set up an INC lobbying office. According to Brooke, they realized there were "only a couple of hundred people" in the capitol who shaped policy toward Iraq, and they set out to win them over. Chalabi realized that conservatives were far more likely than liberals to support overt regime change through military force, and so the two men decided to particularly cultivate support from sympathetic Republicans, who they knew would also use Iraq as a stick to beat Clinton with.[24]

Although Chalabi remained distant from the State Department and the CIA, which no longer trusted him after the failed coups, he established a working relationship with key neoconservatives and other Republicans. Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Donald Rumsfeld, and Dick Cheney all met with Chalabi several times, while Perle introduced him to individuals at the AEI and PNAC.[25] In January 2001, Perle acknowledged that he had been supporting the INC "for years, in the wilderness."[26] Despite Cheney's reluctance to support further overt action to destabilize the Iraqi regime in 1991, Brooke claims that Cheney was in agreement with the INC's plan "from the beginning … [He] said, 'Very seldom in life do you get a chance to fix something that went wrong.'" Wolfowitz, according to a friend, thought Chalabi seemed "an ideal opposition figure" because he said "all the right stuff about democracy and human rights."[27] Chalabi also attracted support from Trent Lott, Jesse Helms, and Newt Gingrich, all high profile Republicans.[28] Lott met with Chalabi in April 1998 and also with his military advisor, retired U.S. General Wayne Downing, who had commanded the U.S. Special Forces in the 1991 war and subsequently drawn up Chalabi's war plan.[29] (Lott's support culminated in his introduction of the Iraq Liberation Act [ILA] to the Senate in September 1998.)

Chalabi lost no time in cultivating a base in Washington after the failure of the 1996 coup. In September of that year, he addressed the

Washington Institute for Near East Policy and appealed for the United States not to turn its back on Iraq in the aftermath of the failed coups and Saddam's attacks against the opposition in the north. The opposition had to be resuscitated, but this would only happen with U.S. help. Flattering his hosts and reinforcing the neoconservatives' perception that where America led, others would follow, Chalabi told them,

> The allies of the United States in the region appear reluctant to participate in an effort to oppose Saddam. In fact, what they are opposed to is a pinprick approach. The less the United States is willing to do to counter Saddam, the more the allies will oppose those limited actions. If there were resolve to get rid of Saddam Hussein, however, they would fall into line.[30]

The notion that American leadership was key to recreating a broad anti-Saddam coalition was reiterated by Chalabi. In March 1998, he told Senate Foreign Relations Committee that if the United States declared that its objective was the ouster of Saddam and took practical steps to demonstrate its seriousness, "almost everybody in the Middle East, in the Arab world, will fall in line behind you."[31]

Chalabi first introduced his plan for an INC-led revolt in a June 1997 speech to the JINSA Spring board meeting on the subject of "Creating a Post-Saddam Iraq."[32] The title of the talk had been suggested by Tom Neumann, Executive Director of JINSA, and Chalabi thanked the JINSA board for being strong supporters of his campaign.[33] Iraq was a country of enormous strategy importance "with both water and oil—a lot of oil," he reminded his audience.[34] Chalabi went on to describe Saddam's atrocities since 1979, including, he claimed, terrorist activities against or within Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, Bahrain, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Turkey, Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, "to offer just a partial list." (Saddam "may well be behind the bombings of Dharan and the World Trade Center," he also claimed.)[35] The INC was the democratic, pluralistic, fully representative alternative to this and, what is more, it did not require large-scale military assistance from the United States. Its plan to spark a rebellion in the Iraqi army would require only logistical support for the Iraqi opposition and U.S. air power—but categorically not ground troops and no prolonged U.S. occupation either. The U.S. commitment would come in the form of political and logistical help to consolidate the INC's base in northern Iraq after the recent attacks by Saddam. U.S. air power would be needed to continue the enforcement of the no-fly zones, and the Americans could provide food and shelter for the deserting Iraqi army as it abandoned Saddam; intelligence training and communications; and

transport equipment. However, Chalabi stressed, "what we don't need are U.S. troops or high technology weapons." The INC's exile army was prepared to do the fighting, but it required political and logistical support and American air power to achieve its objective. This very modest investment on the part of the United States would yield a bounty in the form of an Iraqi parliamentary democracy that renounced both internal and external aggression, retained only defensive military forces, and was at peace with its neighbors and the region. Appealing to the widespread sense of unfinished business in Iraq, but also to the fear of U.S. entanglement in a post-Saddam Iraq, Chalabi told the Senate, "what is needed is not a U.S. army of liberation but an Iraqi army of liberation … [L]et *us* finish the job" (emphasis added).[36]

The extent to which Chalabi genuinely believed that such minimal U.S. military support would suffice is a moot point. In mid-1998, Chalabi met Scott Ritter in Washington, D.C., and showed him the INC's plan for Saddam's overthrow, written by General Downing. Ritter was skeptical that the small number of INC troops could topple the regime in Baghdad. "It's a ploy," he told Chalabi. "How come the fact that you'd need more American assistance is not in the plan?" Ritter asked. "Because it's too sensitive," Chalabi replied.[37] If Chalabi did secretly desire more U.S. military assistance, he was not alone. When the neoconservative campaign was in full swing, others would also call for a greater U.S. military commitment. For now, though, the INC plan was embraced by the neocons. Chalabi had given them an alternative to the Clinton strategy and with it the starting point in their own campaign against Saddam.

THE NEOCONSERVATIVES AND REGIME CHANGE

If it had taken the neocons some time and a little help from Chalabi to address the specific details of Iraq in the 1990s and how regime change might actually be achieved, their long-term perspective on the strategic importance of the country for a unipolar power was clear. Robert Kagan summed up their position: "A successful intervention in Iraq would revolutionize the strategic situation in the Middle East, in ways both tangible and intangible, and all to the benefit of American interests."[38] Changing the regime in Baghdad would have multiple benefits: it would prevent the emergence of a hostile challenger made rich through natural resources; it would purportedly transform the regional power dynamic vis-à-vis Israel and Syria (as outlined in the WINEP study group and the Clean Break paper), and it would serve as a demonstration case for anyone tempted to challenge the American-led world order. As John Bolton commented, "We can be certain that other rogue governments

will be watching [our treatment of Iraq] closely."[39] Although none of the neoconservatives had called for regime change in 1991, years later Perle claimed that a "fundamental mistake" had been made at the end of Desert Storm: "We didn't finish the job."[40]

The calls to "finish the job" were stepped up in late 1997, when Saddam objected to the presence of American inspectors in the UNSCOM team and appeared to be concealing weapons of mass destruction and denying inspectors access to sensitive sites. To the neoconservatives and their supporters, the Clinton administration was unwilling to sufficiently punish Saddam for his defiance, and for those of them who had not already endorsed the deposing of Iraqi leader, this was the final straw. The public calls for regime change from neoconservatives and their sympathizers multiplied rapidly, developing into a multifaceted campaign advocating U.S. military intervention in Baghdad for the explicit purpose of changing the regime. Despite the network's successes on the issue of NMD, it was Iraq that would become its signature issue, and not just because of the presence of an active Iraqi opposition in Washington or the strategic imperative of dominating the Middle East. Unlike in Iran or North Korea, the disputes over the UNSCOM process provided a genuine political opening to campaign for regime change in Iraq. Whereas in Iran the reformist presidency of Mohammed Khatami led to a degree of rapprochement, and whereas the 1994 Agreed Framework facilitated a cold peace with North Korea, the ongoing and problematic attempts to enforce the disarmament of Iraq provided the political space to assert that the problem in Baghdad was the regime. In short, the inspections standoffs could provide the kind of credible pretext for military action that could not be found elsewhere.

The inspections process reached its most significant impasse in October 1997, and serious confrontations between Iraq and the UNSCOM inspectors continued over the course of the next year. In the aftermath of Iraq's discovery of the CIA infiltration of the UNSCOM team, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister, Tariq Aziz, announced for the first time in October 1997 that the regime would no longer accept the presence of American inspectors in the UNSCOM team. (Ritter claimed this was because the Iraqi regime knew about the CIA infiltration of UNSCOM.)[41] On 3 November, the Iraqis blocked an inspection of the Al Samoud missile site because the team included members from the United States. In response, all other UN teams stopped work and on the twelfth, the American inspectors were expelled from Iraq. The remaining eighty-three inspectors were then withdrawn by the new Chief Inspector, Richard Butler. (Throughout the next year, there was a pattern of readmitting, under UN pressure, and then expelling the American members of UNSCOM.)[42]

It was the inspection standoff in October 1997 that catalyzed the concerted campaign by neoconservatives and their sympathizers for regime change. On 17 November 1997, *The Weekly Standard* editorial announced for the first time that "Saddam Must Go."[43] The Iraqi leader had "humiliated" the United States by expelling American inspectors, and his continuing development of WMD seriously threatened Washington's international credibility. It had been a mistake leaving Saddam in power in 1991, and what was now needed was "the difficult but inescapable next step of finishing the job Bush started." The editors went further than the Chalabi plan, however, and asserted that although they would support a sustained air campaign, "the only sure way to take Saddam out is on the ground." Less than half a million troops could topple the regime, they argued. The only alternative was to continue along the present course and "get ready for the day when Saddam has biological and chemical weapons at the tips of missiles aimed at Israel and at American forces in the Gulf."

Three days later, Chalabi was invited to address WINEP again. He used the opportunity to once more outline his plan for an INC-led insurrection, stressing that the issue was not a lack of popular support for the opposition but rather the need for resources to create an effective organization that could get rid of Saddam. Reiterating the argument made by the WINEP Presidential Study Group and the authors of the Clean Break paper, Chalabi made a connection between Saddam's regime and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If Saddam survived, he would attempt to upset the Middle East peace process in whatever way he could.[44]

The *Standard*'s editorial announcement was followed by a special issue of the magazine on 1 December with the headline "Overthrow Him!" emblazoned across the front cover. The front-page article had been contributed by Wolfowitz and Zalmay Khalilzad, and the issue also featured contributions from Frederick Kagan (PNAC signatory and brother of Robert), Fred Barnes, and Peter Rodman.[45] Wolfowitz and Khalilzad argued for the plan put forward by Chalabi. Rather than committing ground troops, the United States needed to arm and train Iraqi opposition forces, provide military protection from the air for units defecting from Saddam's army, develop international support for a provisional government, and delegitimize Saddam's rule by indicting him as a war criminal. What the United States should not do was base its strategy on coup plots or continue with the inspections. The latter was futile, because if the inspectors found anything suspect, "Saddam can always kick them out again."[46] Subsequent comments by Wolfowitz implied that he, at least, had avoided mentioning group troops for the same reason as Chalabi: he, too, considered it politically wiser to sell

the plan with minimal U.S. military involvement, at least initially. After the passage of the ILA in October 1998, Wolfowitz acknowledged that even a strategy led by opposition forces "might mean American ground troops."[47] In a Congressional testimony in February 1998, he was careful to state only that regime change would not require "a *major* invasion with U.S. ground forces" (emphasis added).[48] There was certainly no suggestion that a prolonged U.S. occupation would be necessary.

Perle and Joshua Muravchik also advocated a strategy that reflected the Chalabi plan, as did the Heritage Foundation.[49] Muravchik derided the "realist" worldview that had prevailed since the end of the 1991 war that informed the tactics of the Bush and Clinton administrations.[50] The Center for Security Policy contended that there were no practical alternatives left other than the use of force, but it was less clear about what this meant in practice. Frank Gaffney's organization argued that Washington should use military force "unilaterally if necessary; together with like-minded states if possible" to bring about "conditions leading to the early end of Saddam's reign of terror" *and* at the same time—in contrast to Wolfowitz, Khalilzad, Perle, Kristol, and Kagan—CSP argued that the CIA should mount a renewed and far more vigorous effort in northern Iraq and cooperate closely with the Iraqi opposition.[51]

By this point, the neoconservatives had split over how to bring about regime change: Kristol, Kagan, and *The Weekly Standard* favored incorporating U.S. ground troops, whereas Wolfowitz, Khalilzad, Perle, Gaffney, and Heritage shared their objective but claimed (at least in public) that it could be accomplished through a greater reliance on Iraqi exiles, U.S. air support, and, in the case of CSP, complementary covert action. These factions were brought together by PNAC in a January 1998 public letter sent to President Clinton and published in the *Washington Times*, which called in no uncertain terms for regime change in Iraq.[52] Kristol and Kagan, the authors of the letter, skillfully glossed over disagreements regarding the extent of U.S. involvement by stressing the objective that united the signatories of the letter and avoiding discussion of the precise details of the U.S. contribution. Removing Saddam and his regime would require "a full complement of diplomatic, political and military efforts," the letter stated. It was signed not only by Wolfowitz, Khalilzad, Perle, and its initiators at PNAC (Kristol and Kagan), but a host of other familiar names: Elliott Abrams, Bolton, Paula Dobriansky, Rodman, Rumsfeld, William Schneider Jr., James Woolsey, and Robert Zoellick were all signatories. They were joined by Francis Fukuyama; William Bennett; Vin Weber; Richard Armitage, an Assistant Defense Secretary during the Reagan years; and Jeffrey Berger, a corporate lobbyist and trustee of the Hudson Institute. The letter reiterated arguments that had

already been made: sanctions were being eroded, Saddam could not be trusted to cooperate with inspectors, and development of WMD posed a threat to the American position in the region and a significant portion of the world's oil supply. Democratization of Iraq or the region was not mentioned. Saddam was not framed as an affront to American values but as a threat to U.S. security interests. (Neither did the letter mention terrorism, an issue seized upon post-9/11 by neoconservatives as a reason to attack Iraq.)

A second public letter to Clinton followed in February 1998, this time from a one-off reassembling of an old ad hoc coalition called the Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf, which had previously campaigned for a military response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.[53] Organized by Perle and former Democratic Representative from New York, Stephen Solarz, the letter was more explicit than its PNAC counterpart about the precise actions the United States should take to bring about regime change and prevent Saddam Hussein from attaining "a position of power and influence in the region." The strategy presented once again reflected the Chalabi-INC plan, arguing that Iraq was "ripe for a broad-based insurrection" because of Saddam's unpopularity. However, one difference from the Chalabi plan—demonstrating that perhaps the authors and signatories shared Chalabi's private concern that going it alone without U.S. ground forces might not be feasible—was Perle and Solarz' contingency clause stating that U.S. ground forces should be positioned in the region so that, "as a last resort," Washington could protect and assist the anti-Saddam forces in the north and south of the country.

Like the PNAC letter, the focus was exclusively on strategic concerns, an approach that attracted many other conservatives to the campaign. Although seventeen prominent neoconservatives signed the CPSG letter, as well as Rumsfeld, these individuals were marginally outnumbered by twenty other prominent conservatives, not usually associated with the neocon-led network, including former National Security Advisors, Richard Allen, William Clarke, and Robert McFarlane; former Defense Secretaries, Frank Carlucci and Casper Weinberger; former Assistant Secretaries in the Pentagon, Armitage and Stephen Bryen; and Professor of Middle East Studies at Princeton, Bernard Lewis.

PNAC followed this with yet another letter in May 1998, this time addressed to Newt Gingrich and Trent Lott (Speaker of the House and Senate Majority Leader respectively), warning that Clinton's "capitulation" to Saddam was "an incalculable blow to American leadership and credibility," which "could well make Saddam the driving force of Middle East politics."[54] For the first time there was a passing reference to replacing

the regime with "a democratic state" and a recommendation to aid a provisional free government, but it was a gesture: once again the text was overwhelmingly devoted to strategic issues and the authors' chief rationale remained "avoid[ing] this impending defeat of vital U.S. interests."

Another missing dimension of the neoconservative critique was what might happen in the aftermath of an invasion of Iraq. None of their articles or public statements discussed what America's postconflict role might be or what Iraq might require after the destruction of the Ba'athist state. Instead, the neocons assumed that their preferred exile would be popular with the Iraqi people—in spite of the fact that Chalabi's group was unknown inside Iraq—and that any American assistance would be, as Kristol and Kagan had put it, "welcome[d] … and prefer[red]" because of Saddam's unpopularity.[55] Their entire critique focused solely on the projection of power and their own desired outcomes, with no consideration of how power might be received by others. It reflected Krauthammer's assumption that America could simply "confront … and, if necessary, disarm" rogue states "backed by as many as will join the endeavor," or alone if necessary.[56] It resonated with Kristol's 1997 suggestion that "in time, there is a good chance that many of the more thoughtful Russians will come to appreciate [NATO expansion]."[57] This assumption of success precluded discussion of opposition, in Iraq or elsewhere, to the strategic imperatives of American unipolarism and unconventional methods that might be used to challenge or neutralize America's conventional superiority, not to mention the necessity of rebuilding the post-Saddam Iraqi state.

Similarly, the neocons saw U.S. allies as relatively passive actors who would follow Washington's lead if it exercised strong and decisive leadership and indicated a willingness to act unilaterally if necessary. According to Wolfowitz, "When you are able to proceed on your own, you get a lot more help than when you don't."[58] Perle, too, had asserted that "we would have a galvanizing political effect if we were straightforward about [overthrowing Saddam]." When pressed in Congressional testimony about why the anti-Saddam coalition had unraveled, Perle responded, "Because it wasn't led … [W]e will not be followed unless we are determined ourselves."[59]

In practical terms, the neoconservative letters achieved little. The first PNAC letter resulted in an invitation to the White House to meet with National Security Advisor, Sandy Berger, but he was not convinced by their argument. "I remember walking out of that meeting with Don Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz," Perle recalled, "And Don Rumsfeld … said, 'Did you notice that with respect to every argument we made, Sandy Berger's response had to do with how it would look and not with

what it meant for our security?'" According to Perle, Berger was "[t]otally preoccupied with political perceptions of administration policy, and practically indifferent to the situation we were in, and the danger that we faced."[60]

THE IRAQ LIBERATION ACT AND BEYOND

It was not just through letters that the neoconservatives and their sympathizers lobbied for the removal of Saddam. Just as the neocons were participating in the ongoing Congressional debates on National Missile Defense, a handful of them were also active in the Congressional hearings on the Iraq threat, which culminated in the adoption of the ILA in October 1998. This made it official U.S. policy to work toward regime change in Baghdad through supporting Iraqi opposition groups. On these occasions, however, there was no orchestrating of the witness lists; there was no need to because on the issue of Iraq, the neocons and their closest allies were not alone in their frustration with the Clinton administration. This time, the neoconservative-led network was not driving the issue. Republicans in Congress strongly supported taking a harder line with Saddam, and indeed many Democrats supported the call for regime change too, resulting in what was eventually an easy passage for the ILA.

A series of six-committee hearings on various aspects of Iraq policy ran from February through to September 1998. Wolfowitz, supporting the Chalabi plan, testified three times; Perle and Eliot Cohen once each; and Ritter and David Kay, both former Chief UN Weapons Inspectors who then advocated regime change, once each also.[61] Chalabi himself testified in February 1998, along with Woolsey and Khalilzad, who both endorsed support for the INC.[62] In a then secret session in the Summer of 1998, Downing presented the plan for regime change that he had devised for Chalabi with the assistance of Duane "Dewey" Clarridge, a former CIA agent who had run the Contras in Nicaragua during the Reagan years.[63] These occasions demonstrated that the neoconservatives already had significant support from Republicans and many Democrats in Congress. Of the sixteen opening statements on record by Republican committee members that expressed a view on regime change, twelve of them were in support of it.[64] Although only two out of the six Democratic opening statements on record that expressed an opinion openly favored regime change, there was considerable disquiet about the faltering inspections process and a consensus that Iraq had to be disarmed.[65] When the ILA was introduced to the Senate in September 1998 by Trent Lott, it was cosponsored by six other Republicans (Jon Kyl, John McCain of Arizona, John Ashcroft of Missouri, Jesse Helms of North Carolina,

Sam Brownback of Kansas, and Richard Shelby of Alabama) as well as two Democrats (J. Robert Kerrey of Nebraska and Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut; in the House it was introduced by two Republicans, Benjamin Gilman of New York and cosponsor, Christopher Cox of California).[66] It may have only been out of loyalty to the President that more Democrats did not come forward to cosponsor the legislation making removal of Saddam official U.S. policy. When the ILA was referred to the House Committee on International Relations on 29 September, the Committee agreed to seek passage of it under the suspension of rules procedure, a special measure reserved only for uncontroversial legislation whereby the House does not hold a floor debate on the legislation or discuss possible amendments. After being passed under suspension of the rules in House, the ILA went through under Unanimous Consent in the Senate, the upper house's equivalent procedure.[67]

The lack of controversy over the legislation that facilitated these special measures was hardly surprising, since there had been no inspections in Iraq since August 1998, and in October Baghdad had broken off cooperation with the monitoring teams too. As a result, the ILA enjoyed bipartisan support, meaning that the neoconservatives and their supporters were less important in practical terms on this issue as they were on missile defense. Their lobbying had been noticed; it earned some of them a meeting with Sandy Berger and appearances at Congressional committees, but they had not been pivotal. They had not pushed the Clinton administration in a direction it might otherwise not have taken. In this case, the neoconservative position was a reflection of widespread dissatisfaction with the outcome of Clinton's Iraq policy and reinforced the activities and the will of Congress. As the Perle-Solarz letter showed, many other prominent conservatives shared their views, and by October 1998, when the ILA was passed, so did many Democrats. The Act—which had been codrafted by Randy Scheunemann, then Lott's National Security Advisor—was signed into law on 31 October 1998, the same day that Baghdad expelled ten American inspectors.[68]

The ILA authorized the President to distribute $97 million in military and nonmilitary assistance to the Iraqi opposition but did not require him to do so. It also provided $2 million for Radio Free Iraq and called for the President to indict Saddam Hussein as a war criminal.[69] Although it was denounced by General Anthony Zinni, Commander in Chief of the U.S. central command, as militarily "harebrained," and was derided as "the rollback fantasy" in *Foreign Affairs* by Daniel Byman, Kenneth Pollack, and Gideon Rose, the Act was unsurprisingly embraced by Chalabi.[70] It "represent[ed] a policy reversal," he claimed. The administration had "opened their arms" to the opposition, and Brooke asserted

that Clinton's public expression of support for the ILA would have a major impact.[71] It also clearly reflected the proposals put forward by Chalabi, his neoconservative supporters, and his Congressional contacts, Gingrich, Lott, and Helms.

The immediate neoconservative reaction was mixed. Kristol and Kagan saw the adoption of the ILA as a welcome first step, although it did not go far enough. On behalf of the *Standard*'s editors, Kagan endorsed the ILA but cautioned that the plan would only work if it used U.S. troops "on the ground" and, unlike 1991, if the United States protected defectors from the Iraqi regime using "overwhelming force."[72] For Michael Eisenstadt, a young neoconservative at WINEP, there was a sense that "it was a sop to the Republicans and was to protect the president's flank for not resorting to the military option."[73] JINSA welcomed assistance to the Iraqi opposition, although wished that the legislation had used the word "overthrow" outright.[74] While CSP backed the ILA, it did not trust Clinton to carry it out. Gaffney urged the President to "get serious" and use "every available means" including military power to help the Iraqi opposition.[75] Although Wolfowitz had maintained in his article with Khalilzad that only U.S. air power would be necessary to support the Iraqi opposition, in March 1999, he finally acknowledged openly that "overthrowing Saddam would be a formidable undertaking … The United States should be prepared to commit ground forces to protect a sanctuary in southern Iraq where the opposition could safely mobilize" and that a "much more direct commitment" might develop "depending on how resistance spread and whether Saddam's troops remained loyal."[76]

In the long term, however, most of the neoconservatives remained unsatisfied with Clinton's Iraq policy because the adoption of the ILA did not lead to the pursuit of regime change. For many of them, the Desert Fox campaign, just six weeks after the passage of the ILA, demonstrated that Clinton had no intention of fulfilling the spirit of the ILA. By now they had switched positions with the Clinton administration: whereas Clinton had been ahead of the neocons until the mid-nineties in pursuing the demise of Saddam's regime, now the administration had effectively settled on containing Saddam while the neoconservatives pushed for regime change. According to Bolton, they were let down during Desert Fox by Clinton's "near-compulsive unwillingness to use decisive military force to achieve critical American objectives."[77] The campaign would only have an effect if it was "the first step in a broad political-military action" to accomplish regime change, PNAC claimed.[78] An incredulous Bolton observed that the November inspections standoff had gifted the administration with more international support for use of "punishing force" than on any earlier occasion, but instead Clinton had

chosen to rely on "a series of *letters* from a regime that is one of world history's greatest serial liars" (emphasis in original).[79] Heritage, although not in favor of ground troops, called for Clinton to make sure the next serious provocation from Iraq was met with "serious military attacks … not just pinprick symbolic attacks that accomplish little." They should aim at "removing Saddam from power" rather than just aiming for suspected WMD sites.[80] For Kagan, the Desert Fox campaign "had no discernable impact on the adversary, and [therefore] serve[d] no purpose."[81] *The Weekly Standard* declared "The End of the Clinton Iraq Policy."[82]

To make matters worse for the neocons, the Clinton administration had "no current plan" to provide military assistance to the opposition, according to an administration spokesman, although "we don't rule it out at some point in the future."[83] In May 1999, nonlethal assistance to the INC and the new Democratic Centrist Current began, but of the seven groups identified as eligible for assistance, four immediately rejected it, deciding that they did not want to be tarred by association with the United States.[84] Just six weeks after the adoption of the ILA, its sponsors wrote to Clinton urging him to make good on his promises as quickly as possible. This was followed by a second, bipartisan letter in August 1999 expressing dismay at the drift in U.S. policy toward Iraq and the opposition.[85]

The Iraq issue died down after the final withdrawal of UNSCOM in December 1999. It took the Security Council almost a year to devise a new resolution governing the inspections and sanctions and, in the event, the new team, the United Nations Monitoring and Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), did not return to Iraq anyway until 2002, in part because the Clinton administration was inclined to avoid confrontations with Baghdad in election year. This removed the possibility of a new casus belli. If the Clinton administration was unable or unwilling to act after the provocations of 1997–98, it was hardly likely to act when there were no inspection standoffs. The cooling of the issue was reflected in the diminished output from the neoconservative-led-think tanks. CSP issued a mere two-decision briefs on Iraq in 1999 followed by just one in 2000. Heritage wrote no reports at all on Iraq in 1999.[86] In June 2000, PNAC issued a memorandum indicating that it was now looking toward a new administration, hopefully a Republican one, to take Saddam on.[87]

Unlike, in the missile defense debate, the neocons' campaign on Iraq was not a success on its own terms. There was no sustained campaign against Saddam's regime, and even the symbolic passing of the ILA could not have been achieved without the Republican Congress taking the lead in forcing the issue—and it was eventually supported by many

Democrats too. Like the NMD debate, the neocons had tried to force the administration's hand, but now their strategy on Iraq would only come to fruition when neoconservatives and their supporters were back inside government rather than in opposition. That regime change would be their desired objective in Iraq was obvious. How it might be achieved was less clear, since there were no longer any inspection flashpoints and some of them were hedging over the use of ground troops. Their strategy was also premised on the assumption that when regime change did occur, the intervention would be welcomed by Iraqis. By 1999, they were reluctantly waiting for a new administration to finish the job.

CHAPTER 6

FILLING IN THE "UNKNOWNS": NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE AND THE RUMSFELD COMMISSION

> There are knowns, known unknowns and unknown unknowns.
>
> Donald Rumsfeld, 1998[1]

IT WAS NOT UNTIL JUNE 2002, amid the growing controversy over intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and supposed evidence of links to Al Qaeda that Donald Rumsfeld, then Secretary of Defense, informed a press conference of one of "Rumsfeld's rules": that those who wrote and read intelligence analyses should always beware of "the unknown unknowns," the things that policy makers and analysts were not even aware that they did not know about.[2] From then on the "unknown unknowns" became irrevocably associated with intelligence and the 2003 Iraq War. However, it was not the Iraq case that had inspired this Rumsfeld "rule." This most infamous of Rumsfeld's aphorisms had been coined four years earlier while its author served as head of the Congressionally mandated Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States.

In its examination of possible ballistic missile threats, the Rumsfeld Commission would be guided not just by the known facts at hand but also by what was not known; by the possibilities of the "unknown." Through utilizing an analytical style that prioritized hypothetical

scenarios and highly speculative analyses, the Rumsfeld Commission would successfully challenge the credibility of CIA intelligence on the ballistic missile threat to the United States and, implicitly, the Clinton administration's decision to stop short of deploying a full NMD system. In 1999, under intense pressure, the administration adopted the National Missile Defense Act, which mandated deployment of full NMD as soon as technologically possible. Even more significantly, given the ongoing technological infeasibility of NMD, the Rumsfeld Commission had an enduring impact on the CIA's method of analyzing future ballistic missile threats.

THE GATES PANEL

The opening to challenge the CIA had come from the House National Security Committee investigations into the CIA's 1995 NIE on the ballistic missile threat to the United States. The Committee report had recommended the formation of a blue-ribbon commission of external experts as well as a review of the controversial NIE. These two recommendations became a reality after the September 1996 report on the NIE from the GAO, which had been requested by Floyd Spence, Chair of the House National Security Committee. The GAO report stated that the 1995 NIE had been analytically flawed because it had ignored the missile threat to Alaska and Hawaii. In response to this, Republicans included in the forthcoming Defense Authorization Act the two recommendations made by the House National Security Committee in May 1996: the organization of an independent review of the 1995 NIE and the establishment of a blue-ribbon commission to assess the ballistic missile threat to the United States.[3]

The Gates Panel to review the NIE started work in October 1996. Headed by former CIA chief, Robert Gates, it included Richard Armitage, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense under Reagan; Sidney Drell, a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and a physicist at Stanford University; Arnold Kanter, a former Under Secretary of State under George H. W. Bush; Dr. Janne Nolan of Georgetown University; Henry S. Rowen, a professor of public policy at Stanford, former Assistant Secretary of Defense, and head of the DIA under Reagan; and retired Air Force General Jasper Welch. The panel's unanimous conclusions criticized the omission of Alaska and Hawaii but were scathingly critical of the attacks on the NIE. Although it was "foolish from every possible perspective" not to include Hawaii and Alaska or to consider the acquisition of missile technology from a third party, the more serious problem, according to the Gates Panel, was not

overstating the conclusions of the NIE but understating them. The conclusions of the NIE were actually "based on a stronger evidentiary and technical case than was presented" and

> [F]or sound technical reasons, the United States is unlikely to face an indigenously developed and tested intercontinental ballistic missile threat from the Third World before 2010 even taking into account the acquisition of foreign hardware and technical assistance.

The report found "no evidence of politicization and is completely satisfied that the analysts' views were based on the evidence before them and their substantive analysis." Moreover, "unsubstantiated allegations challenging the integrity of Intelligence Community analysts by those who simply disagree with their conclusions, including members of Congress, are irresponsible"—an obvious reference to Curt Weldon. Gates also claimed that the final version of the estimate was "done in haste" as a result of the letter requesting early release by Weldon and others. In other words, the only political influence on the NIE was from the Republicans, not the Clinton administration.[4]

Proponents of missile defense, led by Weldon, were indignant. The Gates Panel had backfired on its architects. It had not produced the results they had hoped for, and so they began to attack its findings. James Woolsey testified again to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on 4 December that the NIE was obsolete because of its excessively narrow focus. Gaffney complained in the *Washington Times* that the Gates Panel had found that the NIE's "methodology, assumptions and conclusions were sufficiently flawed as to make the estimate deficient as a basis for policy making," but had still refused to describe it as "politicized."[5]

Weldon wrote a letter to Gates in which he expressed disappointment that the Intelligence Community had been "absolve[d] … for its role in producing a defective assessment." Those defects, Weldon claimed, had a major effect on the estimate and "are suggestive of politicization and deserve much harsher criticism." He charged that the panel was trying to "ignore or whitewash politicization" and that "the (Clinton) administration recognized that the NIE could be used to advantage during the debate on National Missile Defense policy."[6] CSP echoed those concerns, stating that regardless of whether or not the NIE had been politicized, its significant flaws meant it was an unsound basis on which to decide missile defense policy.[7]

Fortunately, the Republicans in Congress had ensured that there was another opportunity to challenge the NIE. The blue-ribbon Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat now began to form to provide a

competitive threat assessment to the CIA, although it took over a year for Congress to reach an agreement on the membership of the commission. In the meantime, supporters of NMD tirelessly promoted the issue to keep the pressure on the administration.[8]

In January 1997, a National Missile Defense Act was introduced to the Senate by Jon Kyl, Trent Lott, Jim Inhofe, Bob Smith, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Tim Hutchinson (all of CSP), and others. It called for the actual deployment of an NMD system by the end of 2003, although the act never came to a vote.[9] Meanwhile, Clinton spent 1997 reinforcing a newly revised version of the ABM treaty that extended it to the four successor states to the USSR through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in September 1997. The "3 + 3" plan continued, although research was marred by technical difficulties.[10]

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the ABM treaty, 26 May 1997, CSP called for this to be the last birthday for the "obsolete and increasingly dangerous accord." In an op-ed article in *The Hill,* Weldon continued his disputation, arguing that there had already been countless occurrences of missile technology transfers from Russia and China to rogue nations.[11] Weldon's fellow CSP board member, Senator Kyl, was also establishing himself as a hard-line advocate of missile defense in Congress. Kyl gave a speech to the AEI on 22 May (reprinted as a column in the *Wall Street Journal*), which took aim at Clinton's modest proposals and endorsed the Heritage "Team B" of 1995.[12] In October 1997, ten days after the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ABM Treaty entering into force, Inhofe attacked Clinton's extension of it: "I believe we should take this opportunity to reject [the extension amendment] and thereby kill the ABM Treaty." At his request, the CSP Decision Brief of 26 May, which had marked the anniversary of the signing of the ABM, was recorded in the Congressional Record.[13]

THE RUMSFELD COMMISSION

In early 1998 the Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States was finally established to "assess the nature and magnitude of the existing and emerging ballistic missile threat to the United States." It would present its report in July that year.[14] The blue-ribbon Commission was made up of nine members plus a group of seven core staff members and a DCI liaison. It had taken over a year for lawmakers and administration officials to agree on a membership list for the Commission, but in the end six members were Republican appointees and three were Democratic nominees. Like the 1976 Team B, the

Commission was dominated by external experts who opposed the preferred policy of the incumbent.

The Commission took its name from its leader, Republican appointee Donald Rumsfeld. Already known as a proponent of missile defense, Rumsfeld had signed the PNAC Statement of Principles in June 1997 and was then Chairman of the Board of Directors of Gilead Sciences, Inc., as well as an "informal advisor and faithful supporter" of the CSP.[15] Other Republican appointees were William Graham, William Schneider Jr., General Larry D. Welch, USAF (Ret.), Paul Wolfowitz, and Woolsey; all well-connected individuals in conservative and neoconservative circles. Graham had been the Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology under Ronald Reagan from 1986–89. He was also a member of the CSP National Security Advisory Council and had served on the Heritage Foundation's own "Team B." While serving on the Rumsfeld Commission, Graham was Chairman of the Board and President of National Security Research Inc., a Washington, D.C.–based company conducting technical and policy research and analysis for the Pentagon.[16] William Schneider Jr.—who had signed the PNAC Statement of Principles the previous year and would go on to serve on George W. Bush's Defense Science Board—was President of International Planning Services, an international trade consultancy. He was a member of the CSP Advisory Council and an Adjunct Fellow at the Hudson Institute. Schneider had also served in the Reagan administration as Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance (1982–86) and as Chairman of the President's General Advisory Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament.[17]

General Larry D. Welch, USAF (Ret.), was President and CEO of the Institute for Defense Analyses, which carried out research and analysis on defense systems for the Pentagon. Welch had served as Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force from 1986–90 and Commander in Chief of the U.S. Strategic Air Command from 1985–86.[18] Paul Wolfowitz was another staunch proponent of missile defense. At the time he was serving as the Dean of the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, but Wolfowitz had also been a member of the advisory panel to the 1976 Team B.[19] The final Republican appointment was Woolsey. Having served as Clinton's DCI from 1993–95, Woolsey was now a partner in the law firm Shea & Gardner, as well as being a regular advocate for missile defenses through his Congressional testimonies and his association with PNAC, JINSA, and CSP.

The final three appointments were made by the Democrats. Barry Blechman was President and founder of DFI International, a strategic consulting company that also undertook national security research for

the Department of Defense.[20] General Lee Butler, USAF (Ret.), had a distinguished military career, culminating in his service as Commander in Chief of the U.S. Strategic Command and Strategic Air Command from 1991–92. Dr. Richard L. Garwin was a Senior Fellow for Science and Technology with the Council on Foreign Relations, who was known to object to NMD deployment on scientific grounds.[21] One other noteworthy individual who served as an expert consultant to the Commission was Keith Payne, who would be appointed to the Pentagon by Rumsfeld in 2001. Payne had long argued that nuclear weapons could not only be used but that nuclear war was winnable and nuclear strikes should be used against nonnuclear countries.[22] Thanks to the Republican domination of the House, membership of the Commission was titled toward the GOP with six appointees including the leader and four of those from CSP.

The Commission had not been charged with making a recommendation on missile defense, only on the nature and magnitude of ballistic missile threats to the United States. Yet as the hearings on missile defense throughout 1996 had shown, proponents and opponents of the system both considered it politically necessary that their stance be supported by the intelligence on ballistic missile threats. If the Commission reported that the missile threat was indeed much more serious than the NIE had claimed, it would constitute a major victory for proponents of NMD and put tremendous pressure on Clinton to guarantee deployment as soon as technologically possible, rather than developing the system and then deciding whether deployment was necessary. Rumsfeld also prioritized the political impact of the report by abandoning the standard practice of adding a dissenting footnote whenever a commission member disagreed with the consensus; instead, two commissioners had to agree on a dissenting point before a footnote could be added to the final report. As a result, the conclusions were unanimous and the political impact maximized.[23]

A Hypothetical Precedent and a Straussian Connection

Political impact was also high on the agenda of the conservatives and neoconservatives who had challenged the CIA in 1976. In its formation, its agenda, its analytical methodology, and, in some cases, its personnel, the Rumsfeld Commission was modeled on the 1976 Team B that had successfully challenged the CIA's estimates on the Soviet Union. (Team B had also served as the model for the Heritage Foundation's alternative intelligence assessment group in 1995.)

In 1976, the outside experts who challenged the CIA's estimates on the Soviet Union were split into three groups. The first was an Air

Defense Panel, the second a Missile Accuracy Panel, and the third a Strategic Objectives Panel. It was this third panel, dominated by known opponents of détente, which was given a broad mandate to estimate the intentions of the Soviet leadership, and which, due to its controversial findings, has become known as *the* Team B.[24] Members of this panel included Daniel Graham (a member of the 1995 Heritage "Team B") and a young Wolfowitz.[25] The most significant aspect of their report was the highly speculative analytical methodology used, the very same methodology that would later be used by the Rumsfeld Commission. (Four years after that, it would also be used by the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans [OSP] to look for information that suggested a link between Iraq and Al Qaeda.)[26] On each of these occasions, those involved utilized a deliberate and particular style of intelligence analysis—a "hypothesis-based analysis"—that did not rely exclusively on the facts at hand but instead constructed a worst-case scenario by surveying additional possibilities that *might* be available to adversaries. The resulting scenarios, however distant or unlikely, were then presented as probabilities. Rather than constructing a "fact-based hypothesis," Team B (as well as the Rumsfeld Commission and, later, the OSP) designed a hypothesis-based analysis, which started with a preferred scenario and then looked for data that might support it.[27]

In the post–Cold War years, some neoconservatives proposed this type of analysis on the basis of their interpretation of the ideas of Leo Strauss. The hypothetical method was championed by two Straussians in particular: Gary Schmitt of PNAC and Abram Shulsky, who would later serve in the OSP.[28] In a 1999 article, Schmitt and Shulsky rejected the empirical approach to intelligence analysis because it downplayed the possibility of deception in international relations by focusing solely on the facts at hand rather than considering the implications of what was not there, of what Rumsfeld called "the unknown." Schmitt and Shulsky took their lead from Strauss in two respects. First, they claimed, Strauss's emphasis on regime-type should alert intelligence analysts to the possibility that different regimes could behave differently internationally. "Mirror-imaging"—assuming that other countries behaved in the same way as democracies—meant that analysts were liable to seriously misread the intentions of an adversary. More attention should also be paid to the ideology of a regime: "[A] careful reading of what foreign leaders say would be an obvious starting point for understanding what they really think," the authors claimed.[29] Second, Strauss's assertion that philosophers sometimes presented controversial messages in esoteric form to avoid persecution should teach analysts that political life, or in this case international relations, may also be about deception and concealment.

Schmitt and Shulsky believed that the principle of esotericism—the hidden meaning—should be applied to intelligence analysis.[30]

Both of these assertions, however, were extrapolations from Strauss's teachings; political applications that he himself had not made. Straussian principles had been taken beyond their original domestic context and applied to international relations, even though Strauss himself had not written about foreign policy. Ultimately, Schmitt and Shulsky's advocacy of hypothesis-based analysis and its use by neoconservatives who challenged the CIA said more about the priorities of the neocons than it did about Leo Strauss. (Interestingly, Charles Krauthammer had also warned of the dangers of mirror-imaging during the Cold War, though he was not a Straussian.)[31]

Although it was written over two decades before the Shulsky-Schmitt article, the 1976 Team B report foreshadowed their concern that analysts pay more attention to ideology and regime type. Team B criticized the CIA for relying on "hard" data rather than "contemplat[ing] Soviet strategic objectives in terms of the Soviet conception of 'strategy' as well as in the light of Soviet history, the structure of Soviet society and the pronouncements of Soviet leaders." In particular, the report accused the CIA of mirror-imaging because it simply assumed without question that the Soviets also believed in the doctrine of mutual assured destruction (MAD); in other words, that a totalitarian regime would behave in the same rational way as a democracy. Instead, the CIA should have been asking whether the Russian arms build-up meant that the Soviets followed an alternative strategic doctrine. Team B concluded that U.S. policy should now be based on "the *possibility* that the Russians may be pursuing not a defensive but an offensive strategy" (emphasis added).[32] In effect, a worst-case scenario based on what the Soviets *might* do.

Yet whatever flaws existed in the CIA's analyses, the estimate of future Soviet intentions by the Team B Strategic Objectives Panel was far worse. The team mistranslated what it claimed was the Soviets' guiding military doctrine from "the science of winning" to "the science of conquest." As the Soviet Union's military expenditures were beginning to slow down, Team B claimed that the Russians were undertaking "an intense military build-up in nuclear as well as conventional forces of all sorts, not moderated either by the West's self-imposed restraints or by SALT." Of the Soviet Backfire bomber, the team claimed that "there is no question that *the aircraft has the inherent capability for* (round trip) *strategic missions, should the Soviet's choose to use it this way"* (emphasis in original), and there would be 500 produced by 1984. In fact the Backfire was never able to carry out round-trip missions, and only 235 were produced by 1984. It also predicted that surface-to-air missiles

would be combined with ABM components to produce "a significant ABM capability," which did not occur either. Team B claimed that the absence of a deployed nonacoustic antisubmarine system was deliberate deception and actually signaled "that the Soviets have, in fact, deployed some operational … systems and will deploy more in the next few years"—an entirely spurious claim, as it turned out. The panel's contention that Soviet leaders "are first and foremost offensively rather than defensively minded" proved incorrect in the long term and brought into question its criticism of the CIA for adhering to the MAD doctrine in its estimates.[33]

Despite the failure of Team B to accurately assess the intentions of the Soviet Union, Wolfowitz defended its methodology while serving on the Congressionally mandated Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the U.S. Intelligence Community in 1995, three years before his appointment to the Rumsfeld Commission.[34] He argued that the hypothesis-based approach allowed policy makers to contend with uncertainty. Policy makers must have access to the evidence on which intelligence analysts base their conclusions so as to be able to make their own judgments, look for possibilities that analysts might not have considered, and put the facts together in a way that analysts might not have thought of. Policy makers themselves had to be the analysts of last resort: "intelligence production should be driven by the policy process," Wolfowitz argued. He urged that analysts see intelligence estimates as "tools" to help in the development of a policy, rather than "weapons," to determine the final outcome of the debate. "Analysts must always remember that their job is to inform the policymaker's decision, not to try to supplant it, regardless of how strongly they feel about the issue," Wolfowitz maintained. If an analyst produced an assessment that undercut an established policy, they must tread carefully and understand policy–makers' commitment to the success of their policy.

Wolfowitz' views were shared by Rumsfeld, who guided the 1998 Commission on the basis of his belief in "the unknown unknowns." As Commission member Richard Garwin explained:

> We did not gather all the facts and then ask what they meant. Rather we asked what would be required in the 1990s to have a program to acquire long-range missiles of ICBMs and what facts supported or negated such a hypothesis.[35]

Thus the analytical process was inverted again: rather than a fact-based analysis which led to a conclusion, the Commission would follow the example of Team B and construct a hypothesis-based analysis, starting

with a preconceived idea and seeing if there was any information that might support it. Work started at the beginning of 1998. In the interim, the proponents of NMD made sure the issue was not forgotten.

KEEPING THE MOMENTUM

In May, the work of missile defense advocates received a boost when both India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons. Though neither country was hostile to Washington, proponents of NMD used the opportunity to remind people of the ballistic missile threat to the United States and the futility of arms control. Kagan and Schmitt of PNAC warned of the dangers of Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Libya, or Syria using even short-range missiles to target American interests and blackmail the United States. NMD was "the vital shield that would free the United States to play its leading role, undeterred by the threat of nuclear annihilation or of attack by rogue states"; in effect it would maintain U.S. freedom of action in every region of the world.[36] CSP used the nuclear tests to ridicule Clinton's attempt to pass the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) through Congress in May. The CTBT would only contribute to the "erosion of the American nuclear deterrent," and the only solution was to "deploy *global* anti-missile defenses" (emphasis in original).[37]

That same month, the Senate voted down the American Missile Protection Act of 1998 by one vote. The Act, sponsored by Thad Cochran (R-MS) and Daniel Inouye (D-HI), would have mandated nationwide missile defenses as soon as technologically possible. CSP took heart in the fact that the Act enjoyed bipartisan support and had been defeated by the narrowest of margins.[38] Gaffney was buoyed, and two days later the Center identified an "emerging correlation of forces" propelling the NMD debate forward, not least of which was the willingness of members of its advisory board to speak out forcefully in the Senate and the House in favor of NMD. Kyl and Inhofe castigated the Clinton administration in the Senate in June for its failure to release a month-old study on the contribution that the Navy's Aegis fleet air defense system could make to NMD. Weldon, Lott, Bailey Hutchison, and Smith were also all praised by CSP for forcing the issue.[39]

In June 1998, one month before the Rumsfeld Commission reported its findings, the Ethics and Public Policy Center—home to conservative hawks such as Elliott Abrams and Jeane Kirkpatrick—published a volume of essays edited by Abrams, entitled *Close Calls: Intervention, Terrorism, Missile Defense and "Just War" Today*. A quarter of the twenty chapters were devoted to justification of missile defenses, including one each by Woolsey and Kagan. Influential syndicated columnist William

Safire, often a sympathizer of the neoconservative cause, also joined the debate, claiming that Iran and Iraq had been investing in long-range missiles. Reagan "turns out not to have been deranged on defense—only ahead of his time … The threat is here," he claimed.[40]

The Heritage Foundation weighed in too, having a legal memorandum prepared by the law firm of Hunton and Williams regarding the status of the ABM Treaty and the MOU of September 1997 that multilateralized the treaty to the Soviet Union's successor states. It argued that

> Because of the unique terms and conditions of the ABM treaty, and the underlying assumptions of the parties, none of the states (including the Russian Federation) that emerged from the Soviet Union, either alone or with others, could carry out the USSR's obligations under the ABM Treaty. Consequently, the obligations of the United States under the Treaty … disappeared.

The memo concluded that Clinton's attempts to modify the ABM Treaty "fundamentally alter[ed] the bargain originally struck by the United States and the Soviet Union in 1972." Washington could therefore only be bound by it if two-thirds of the Senate agreed to ratify the revisions embodied in the MOU.[41] In sum, by mid-1998 NMD was a prominent foreign policy issue in Congress, and the dynamic reached its crescendo in July with the publication of the Rumsfeld Commission report.

THE RESULTS

In the Executive Summary of the report, the commissioners wrote, "We began this study with different views about how to respond to ballistic missile threats, and we continue to have differences," but this was overshadowed completely by the unanimous conclusions of the Commission on the nature of the threat.[42] The collective summation stated that "[T]he threat to the U.S. … is broader, more mature and evolving more rapidly than has been reported in estimates and reports by the Intelligence Community." In addition to the existing threats from China and Russia,

> North Korea, Iran and Iraq … would be able to inflict major destruction on the U.S. within about 5 years of a decision to acquire such a capability (10 years in the case of Iraq).[43]

These states were the main focus of the report. North Korea was a potential threat due to its development of the Taepo Dong 2 ballistic missile that, if successfully tested, could target Alaska or Hawaii.

Its No Dong medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) could already threaten Japan, South Korea, and U.S. military bases in Asia. Despite Pyongyang's freezing of its plutonium enrichment program (lasting until 2002) under the terms of the 1994 Agreed Framework, the Commission asserted that North Korea did in fact have an ongoing nuclear program.[44] Iran was also developing an MRBM, the Shahab 3. Although it had not been deployed at the time of the Commission's writing, Rumsfeld was already more concerned about the possibility that Tehran might deploy an ICBM. Furthermore, the report claimed, Iran's civilian energy program meant that, with foreign assistance, it could develop a nuclear weapon in just one to three years.[45] In the case of Iraq, the Commission's reasoning was somewhat disingenuous, since it assessed only what might happen if UN sanctions were lifted, a most unlikely prospect since the Clinton administration had committed itself to maintaining sanctions even if Saddam complied fully with the UNSCOM inspections.[46]

In Russia, the report forecast, the precarious transition to democracy could easily lead to a civil crisis that could pose a risk of unauthorized or inadvertent launch of missiles against the United States due to command and control weaknesses. Moscow was also a major exporter of missile-related technology.[47] China's future was "clouded by a range of uncertainties," and there was "significant potential" for conflict with the United States because of Beijing's desire to become the preponderant power in Asia and its proliferation of WMD-related technology.[48]

Although neither India nor Pakistan were U.S. adversaries, the Commission considered that their growing missile and WMD capabilities "could significantly affect U.S. capability to play a stabilizing role in Asia."[49] The report was concerned not only with proliferation but also with the effect this might have on U.S. ambitions to project power into every region of the world:

> A number of countries with regional ambitions do not welcome the U.S. role as a stabilizing power in their regions and have not accepted it passively. Because of their ambitions, they want to place restraints on the U.S. capability to project power or influence into their regions.[50]

Missiles could provide "a strategic counter" to U.S. conventional military superiority "for those seeking to thwart the projection of U.S. power."[51] Whereas the underlying concern behind the 1995 NIE had been the potential to target the U.S. homeland, the Rumsfeld Commission also considered how to prevent potential rivals from neutralizing American power.[52]

The report also contained a section describing the methodology that had produced these conclusions. To guide its work, the Commission posed three questions: first, what is known about the scale and pace of programs in each country, including domestic infrastructure and efforts to acquire assistance from abroad; second, "what is *not known* about the threat" (emphasis added); and third, whether a power intent on posing a ballistic missile threat to the United States might be able to acquire the means to do so through the black market and thus minimize the warning time the United States might get for missile deployment. Whatever was "not known" through hard facts or data could therefore be "guessed" by analyzing the possibilities available.[53] In contrast to the 1995 NIE, Rumsfeld had presided over a worst-case scenario estimate but presented the findings as a strong likelihood.[54]

The Commission, for instance, placed particular emphasis on the potential for acquisition of technology from external sources and the potential for rogue states to help each other: "We reviewed the resources ('inputs') available and the ways in which they provide indicators of the prospects for successful missile development." As a result, "we were able to partially bridge a significant number of intelligence gaps."[55] Simply by surveying the range of *possible* external sources of technology, the Commission came to conclusions about the probability of adversaries targeting the United States and its interests. It continued: "Rather than measuring how far a program had progressed from a known starting point, the Commission sought to … extrapolate a program's scope, scale, pace and direction *beyond what the hard evidence at hand unequivocally supports*" (emphasis added).[56] This approach had the advantage of countering "concealment, denial and deception efforts," which could mean that missile programs often took "unexpected development patterns." The presence of "unknowns" could be countered by a methodology that did not rely exclusively on hard facts anyway.[57]

While truly objective intelligence remains chimerical—dependent as it is on imperfect human judgments and prejudices and its lack of insulation from the policy-making process—the hypothesis-based approach employed by the Rumsfeld Commission went far beyond any contemporaneous analyses in the latitude it gave to analysts to fill in the "unknowns" with their own predispositions; in effect, it gave much greater space than usual for politicization. One example of this was the Commission's own use of external experts on the missile threat. Frustrated by the lack of dynamism among CIA analysts who refused to look beyond the facts at hand, the commissioners found some outside experts of their own to consult on the missile threat. But rather than independent-minded consultants, the Commission was briefed first by Lockheed Martin, which at

the time was the Pentagon's Prime Contractor for theater missile defense development and had spent over $10 million in 1997–98 lobbying the Clinton administration to expand this to a national system; and also by Boeing, which in April 1998 won a hard-fought battle for the contract to become the Pentagon's Lead System Integrator to oversee construction of Clinton's missile defense plans. Boeing also spent over $18 million lobbying in 1997–98.[58] It was a briefing on 7 May by Lockheed Martin engineers, attended by Rumsfeld, which supplied the most infamous claim made by the Commission. According to Lockheed's research, which had been compiled for commercial and lobbying purposes, a third world country could potentially use Soviet Scud technology to test-fly a long-range missile within about five years. Discussion between the commissioners and the engineers resulted in the report's "5 year" conclusion.

REACTION: THE FLOODGATES OPEN

On its release the Rumsfeld report was accepted entirely without criticism, other than from the CIA. It energized the proponents of NMD, and its influence on the missile defense debate and the Intelligence Community continued into the twenty-first century. It provided the much sought after justification for advocates of NMD and forced the Clinton administration to respond. Strobe Talbott, Deputy Secretary of State commented, "We let ourselves be blind-sided. We had not realized the extent to which this train was coming at us and would drive us." National Security Advisor, Sandy Berger, added that, after the Rumsfeld Commission, "it was like trying to lasso a train to get this thing to slow down."[59] On 15 July, the same day the Commission issued its findings, George Tenet, Director of Central Intelligence, issued a robust defense of the CIA record: "Where *the evidence is limited* and the stakes are high, we need to keep challenging our assumptions" (emphasis added). CIA estimates were "supported by the available evidence and were well tested in Community debate; they were also reviewed by outside experts." While the latest CIA estimates considered an ICBM threat "unlikely," within the time frame put forward by the Rumsfeld Commission, the Agency still paid attention to the possibility.[60] Defense Secretary, William Cohen, issued a short assurance that the Administration was committed to developing a missile defense system that would protect the country from a limited attack from a rogue state.[61]

Tenet and Cohen were lone voices though. Weldon announced that the Commission's report "confirm[s] the need to move forward with a commitment to deploy national missile defense."[62] CSP issued a Decision Brief praising the report and warning that this was incontrovertible proof

that "there may be *no lead time* concerning the emergence of undeterrable [*sic*] missile threats," and so the earliest deployment of NMD must be a priority (emphasis in original).[63] Richard Shelby (R-AL), long time supporter of NMD and Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, claimed that the report demonstrated that under the Clinton administration the Intelligence Community was unable to provide timely warning of a missile attack and that full deployment of NMD was essential.[64]

PNAC argued the conclusions were "emphatically not the product of a 'worst case' report," and that "although left unstated, the clear implication of the Commission's findings is that the Clinton administration's use of Intelligence Community estimates … is misguided—and leaves this nation and its allies dangerously vulnerable." Like the Rumsfeld Commission, PNAC assessed Clinton's policy on the basis of the imperatives of American unipolarity: Clinton's plan would "inevitably undermine the country's capacity to exercise … leadership." [65]

The Heritage Foundation reaffirmed the conclusions of the legal study it had commissioned on the legality of the ABM Treaty and affirmed that the immediacy of the threat outlined by the Rumsfeld Commission required the quickest possible deployment of nationwide missile defenses, and again urged the upgrading of the Navy's Aegis system as a starting point.[66] JINSA warned that the publication of the report "sounded a strong alarm about the growing ballistic missile and WMD threat," and at the fall 1998 board meeting, they reaffirmed their commitment to missile defense and opposition to the ABM Treaty.[67]

Safire took up the report's findings in a column aptly titled "Team B vs. CIA."[68] Safire imagined a number of scenarios—North Korea attacking the South, Saddam invading Saudi Arabia, China attacking Taiwan—and the "surprise nuclear blackmail" that would ensue as a result of intelligence agencies that had "egregiously mis[led] us" about the need for missile defense." Four days later, Safire was on NBC's *Meet the Press* defending the work of "the best men we have in national defense who have no axes to grind," who had concluded that American cities could be under attack in less than five years. "Here are these tin pot dictators coming up and buying missiles and developing missiles and putting nuclear warheads on them," Safire claimed, "and we have no defense against it. … Why isn't this covered more on television? Is it dull?"[69]

The *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, which often reflected the views of hawks within the foreign policy establishment, was supportive but pessimistic: "With this kind of credibility, we'd like to think that the report would awaken Team Clinton from its missile denial. But the early word is that it will instead quietly trash the report as alarmist and politically motivated."[70]

As a result of the loud call for missile defense that followed the publication of the report, Richard Garwin, the Democratic appointee to the Commission, joined the fray to offer his personal take on it and express "[alarm] that some have interpreted our findings as providing support for a new missile defense system."[71] The analysis of the threat should be clearly differentiated from the response to that threat, he stated, and the Rumsfeld Commission "should and must be regarded as neutral regarding missile defenses." However, his interjection came too late to stop the chorus of missile defense advocates, and Garwin himself commented in a later interview that while he believed Rumsfeld had conducted the review in a fair-minded manner, the Commission's mandate was carefully drafted to boost the case for missile defense: "the charge was cooked," Garwin said; "We were not asked what were the most likely ways in which the U.S. might be attacked and how they compared to an ICBM. We were only asked to study the long-range missile threat."[72]

The Commission's conclusions seemed to be provided with retrospective justification in summer 1998. On 22 July, Iran tested its medium-range missile, the Shahab 3; then in August the North Koreans tested the Taepo Dong 1, a long-range missile that, potentially, could have reached the coast of Alaska, though its third stage failed. (Neither missile could threaten the United States.) North Korea's missile was primitive and inaccurate by Western standards, and the development program was very protracted—the last missile test had been in 1993—not to mention the paucity of Pyongyang's test site facility. A year after the failure of the Taepo Dong, the North Korean government pledged a voluntary moratorium on missile testing until 2003. The Iranians did not test the Shahab 3 again for two years and, after many problematic setbacks, did not finally begin to produce the medium-range missile until October 2001, just two years before the Rumsfeld Commission had assessed that it would be able to target the United States itself with an intercontinental missile.[73]

However, the missile tests were portrayed as proof not only of the findings of the Rumsfeld Commission but of the necessity of a full NMD system. "Last week it was Iran. The week before, it was China. Before that, it was North Korea, preceded by Iraq, Pakistan and India," protested Gaffney, and the President's response had so far been "utterly inadequate."[74] Gaffney praised Rumsfeld's "heroic legacy" and CSP honored him with its Keeper of the Flame award. Rumsfeld, himself, made a public appeal for missile defenses.[75]

The momentum generated by the Rumsfeld Commission forced the Clinton administration to act. One senior administration official recalled, "We'd been having this debate with Capitol Hill for along time, where we

had kept pointing to the NIE [of 1995] that had said that the threat was fifteen years away, and suddenly with the Rumsfeld Commission report, the NIE offered no protection against this ever-stronger push from the Hill to go farther and faster."[76] In early August 1998, Weldon, House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-Texas), and Rep. John Spratt (D-S.C.) headed a bipartisan group of more than forty members of Congress that introduced legislation to make it official U.S. policy "to deploy a national missile defense system to protect Americans from missile attack." In March 1999, the National Missile Defense Act was passed; it mandated deployment "as soon as technologically possible" and was signed by the President in July 1999.[77]

This was a huge symbolic victory. The neoconservative-led network had forced the issue and maneuvered itself into a position where it could mount an officially sanctioned challenge to government policy. In substantial terms, however, the National Missile Defense Act was less significant. The technological infeasibility of missile defense meant that the Clinton administration effectively continued as it had done before the passage of the Act: attempting to make the missile intercept system actually work. The new Act removed the President's discretion over whether or not to deploy the system once it was technologically proven, but in the absence of this, all the administration could do was continue to research and develop the system. This was probably to the relief of the President who still wanted to retain final say over whether the nationwide system should be deployed and, if at all possible, maintain the revised ABM Treaty of 1994 so as to pacify Russia and America's European allies.[78]

However, the Commission had more than a symbolic impact on the CIA. Despite Tenet's initial defense of the Agency, the Commission left its mark on the Intelligence Community's estimation of emerging missile threats. The next NIE on the missile threat in September 1999 acknowledged "recommendations made in July 1998 by the [Rumsfeld] Commission." The two most striking changes in the 1999 NIE were: first, the new focus on what "could" happen, rather than what was likely, and second, a lower threshold for identifying emerging missile threats by changing the timeline for when a threat exists from when a country would first deploy a long-range missile, to when a country could first test such a missile. (These new standards were also used in the NIE on missile threats in December 2001.)[79] Thus, although the conclusions of the Rumsfeld Commission stand up poorly in hindsight, especially when compared to the NIE of 1995, it enjoyed some success on its own terms with regard to the damage inflicted on the CIA and the pressure it put Clinton under.

Finally, in the long term, the Rumsfeld Commission and the method of analysis it championed served as another precedent and successful example

(along with Team B) of how to challenge the CIA on political grounds. When individuals associated with the neoconservative-led network returned to government and sought to challenge the CIA's intelligence on Iraq, Al Qaeda, and WMD, they would again undertake an exercise in competitive intelligence—the Pentagon's OSP—this time from within the government, which would successfully utilize hypothesis-based analysis to construct a scenario that provided political justification for their preexisting policy preference, this time the 2003 invasion of Iraq.[80]

Yet, in the short term, the neocons and their allies who had lobbied for an external intelligence review were bitterly disappointed with the Clinton administration. They claimed that Clinton was still not pursuing NMD with sufficient vigor, despite the fact that the system would not be ready to deploy until at least 2005 anyway, and they bemoaned Clinton's intention to pursue NMD while remaining a party to the ABM Treaty. In April 1999 (a month after the passage of the National Missile Defense Act), Kristol and Kagan wrote in *The Weekly Standard* that "anyone who believes the Clinton administration is actually committed to building a missile defense system—now more urgently than ever—must have been living on another planet for the past six years."[81] In March 2000, CSP organized a public letter on the issue of missile defense under the auspices of the Coalition to Protect Americans Now, a small ad hoc adjunct of CSP. This time the letter was not to President Clinton, who they had given up on, but to Governor George Bush of Texas, candidate for the Republican Presidential nomination. The letter called for a rejection of the ABM Treaty and for the deployment as soon as possible of sea-based interceptors as an interim measure. It ended by thanking Governor Bush for his leadership on the issue.[82] This was another policy on which the neoconservatives had begun to look to the future, to the next President. In both George W. Bush and John McCain, the Republican Party had candidates who were committed to casting off any constraints that remained under the ABM Treaty and pursuing NMD as a priority.[83] On this issue, the policy preference of the neoconservatives and their sympathizers was determined and unequivocal, and if the Republicans were to win the 2000 election, it would be only a matter of time before NMD became a priority issue.

CHAPTER 7

Kosovo

> We will retain the pre-eminent responsibility for addressing selectively those wrongs which threaten not only our interests, but those of our allies or friends, or which could seriously unsettle international relations.
>
> Defense Planning Guidance, 1992[1]

Shortly after the end of NATO's bombing campaign in Kosovo in 1999, Joshua Muravchik reflected that it had been a war that the United States "would not have felt the need to start had we faced up to earlier challenges."[2] The comment seemed to imply that Muravchik had favored regime change in Belgrade in 1993–95, but he had not and neither had any other neoconservatives. However, when all-out war developed in 1998 between Slobodan Milosevic's forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)—an ethnic Albanian secessionist group in the Serbian province of Kosovo—most of the neoconservatives and their supporters called quickly for regime change in Belgrade. Milosevic, the perceived aggressor, had now been responsible for two regional wars, and the second, in Kosovo, was on the doorstep of NATO, the alliance having expanded into central Europe in 1998 to incorporate Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. As they were simultaneously doing in the case of Iraq, the neocons and their allies mounted a campaign for regime change in Serbia in order to protect the credibility and purpose of the NATO alliance and America's leadership position within it.[3]

Yet, although this campaign solidified the neoconservatives' commitment to regime change as a generic policy option, rather than an Iraq-specific policy, it would be pursued very differently in the Serbian case. Whereas the neocons advocated military action in Iraq for the specific purpose of deposing Saddam, they categorically declined to advocate a march on Belgrade, hoping instead that defeating Milosevic in Kosovo

and supporting Serbian opposition groups would, in the long term, create conditions conducive to his downfall in Belgrade.

Three key themes ran through the neoconservative debates over Kosovo. First, they thought again about what preserving the unipolar moment meant in practice in "peripheral" regions, areas where there was no narrowly construed vital material interest at stake. Iraq was an easy case to find consensus on because of its geostrategic importance and its relative weakness. In Kosovo, however, the stakes were less tangible; the question was whether or not the conflict there impacted upon America's position as the guarantor of stability of Europe—one component of the unipolar global order. As Robert Kagan saw it, what was at stake in the Balkans was credibility: the ability and willingness to defend the American-led world order wherever it was challenged, including in ostensibly peripheral regions. The subtext to this was the role and future of the NATO alliance: what would the future of the American-led alliance be if it did not take on responsibility for out-of-area operations, especially ones on the European continent?

The second issue debated by neoconservatives was *how* to intervene in Kosovo. The objective of defeating Milosevic was widely agreed upon; how to go about it was not. Should the United States intervene militarily? If so, should it use only air power and aid proxy forces on the ground, or were American ground troops necessary? The answers would be determined by their differing perceptions of what action was necessary to preserve the American position in Europe and, by extension, the world at large.

A related issue was the normalization of regime change as a policy option. This was the desired objective in Serbia for most neocons and their sympathizers. Regime change was not a policy exclusive to Saddam, but an option that, if necessary, could be pursued against other regimes that challenged the American-led world order. In the case of Belgrade, however, the neocons and their allies took a more nuanced, indirect approach to achieving this. Rather than an immediate short-term imperative, regime change in Serbia would be a more long-term aspiration that would not be achieved through an American march on Belgrade but principally through defeating Milosevic in Kosovo.

Finally, the Kosovo campaign was another round in the battle for the future of the Republican Party—and a much tougher one for advocates of intervention than Iraq. With the Presidential election just a year away and the favorites for the Republican nomination clear by early 1999, Kagan and Kristol viewed the Kosovo campaign as another chance to impress upon the Party the strategic necessity of a "neo-Reaganite" foreign policy and the electoral success this would bring. It was a tough sell though.

Whereas their concerns about Iraq were widely shared, most Republicans in Congress were very skeptical about the mission in Kosovo.

PNAC, the *Standard*, and another Regime Change

The immediate roots of the Kosovo conflict lay in flaws in the Dayton Accords. In response to the grievances of the Serb minority in Bosnia, the Accords sanctioned the creation of a Serbian autonomous zone within Bosnia, effectively giving Milosevic what he had tried to obtain through aggression. Yet the equally valid demands for autonomy from the Kosovar Albanians in Serbia were ignored. There had been a movement for autonomy through peaceful means among the Albanians, but the lesson of Dayton seemed to be that only aggression would reap rewards from the international community.[4] The violent separatist KLA grew in strength and the simmering conflict between the Serbs and Kosovar Albanians boiled over in February 1998, with attacks on Serb police and civilians by KLA guerrillas based over the border in the state of Albania. These were met with harsh Serb responses. Until the NATO bombing campaign, the pattern of violence would remain such: attacks by the KLA followed by responses from the Serb army.[5] KLA leaders would later acknowledge that they were carrying out a campaign of deliberate provocation against the Serbs in order to elicit disproportionate responses from Belgrade, thus making foreign intervention on their behalf more likely. "We knew full well that any armed action we undertook would trigger a ruthless retaliation against our people," KLA leader Hashim Thaci told the BBC.[6] Milosevic bore considerable responsibility for the emergence of the KLA too. Kosovo, which was 90 percent ethnic Albanian, had had its regional autonomy revoked by Milosevic in 1989 as he pursued, in an often violent manner, a "Greater Serbia" in which there would be no tolerance of regional autonomy for non-Serbs.[7] The Kosovar Albanians were not blameless either though: approximately 130,000 Serbs left Kosovo between 1966 and 1989 because of frequent harassment by Albanians. In 1992, the Albanian regional leadership rejected serious suggestions by the Serbian President of Yugoslavia, Dobrica Cosic, that Kosovo be partitioned, separating itself from Serbia with the exception of a few Serb enclaves.[8] In short, it was a complex conflict in which both sides shared some of the blame but one in which Milosevic, in the context of his earlier aggression in Bosnia, would be cast as the chief aggressor by the West.

By May 1998, U.S. envoy, Richard Holbrooke, was engaged in a round of Balkan shuttle diplomacy that resulted in Milosevic inviting Kosovo Albanian leader, Ibrahim Rugova, for peace talks, but there was no breakthrough. By June, the KLA had taken over about 40 percent of

the province but by mid-August, it had been rolled back again by a long and ongoing offensive by the Serb army. In September, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1199, drafted by Britain and France, which called for a ceasefire in Kosovo, and threatened Milosevic with further measures if the Serbs failed to end their reprisals against the KLA. Picking up where it had left off in Bosnia, NATO also began to draw up plans for the possible use of force in Kosovo if Milosevic failed to comply with the Security Council.[9]

For the most part, PNAC and *The Weekly Standard* led the neoconservative lobbying on Kosovo. The *Standard* drew a link between Milosevic's attacks against the KLA and Clinton's failure to take stronger military action against Saddam Hussein. Clinton's weak response to Saddam had encouraged the Serb leader to believe he could clamp down on the Albanians without fear of a U.S. military response, a parallel also drawn by the Center for Security Policy in October 1998.[10] In September, as the Security Council was calling for a ceasefire and NATO prepared for the possibility of a bombing campaign, PNAC wrote a letter to President Clinton, reprinted in the *New York Times* nine days later, that called for regime change in Belgrade.[11] "There can be no peace and stability in the Balkans so long as Slobodan Milosevic remains in power," the signatories asserted; "[h]e started the Balkan conflict and he continues it in Kosovo." Instead of seeking Milosevic's support for the ongoing implementation of the Dayton Accords, the United States should distance itself from him and "actively support in every way possible his replacement by a democratic government committed to ending ethnic violence." The letter advocated five courses of action. First, the United States should put pressure on Milosevic to agree to a new political status for Kosovo (although whether this referred to increased autonomy or full independence was not stated). Second, the administration should seek "a substantial increase in funds for supporting the democratic opposition within Serbia" from Congress. Third, it should tighten economic sanctions to undermine Milosevic's grip on power. Fourth, it should stop attempting to strike diplomatic bargains with him; and last, just as Saddam Hussein should be indicted as a war criminal, Washington should support The Hague tribunal's investigation of Milosevic as a war criminal.

The letter's open embrace of regime change took place at the same time that the neocons and their supporters were campaigning for regime change in Iraq, demonstrating that it was an option that was not confined to Iraq, although at that stage they did not call for ousting Milosevic through military force. Instead, they called for nonmilitary measures that would contribute in the long term to conditions conducive to the downfall of Milosevic and his replacement by the democratic

opposition—one of the rare occasions that PNAC explicitly advocated proactive support for democratic dissidents, though this itself was not the rationale for intervention. Regime change might be a "central component" of neoconservative global strategy but it would not be used unless it was necessary.[12] Kosovo seemed like a situation where nonmilitary measures might suffice.

Like the other public letters organized by the neoconservative-led network, the signatories to this letter also formed a heterogeneous group, primarily because it had been a joint effort between PNAC, the International Crisis Group, the Coalition for International Justice (CIJ), and the Balkan Action Council (BAC), a new ad hoc group that included many neocons and their supporters, of which we will hear more later.[13] As with the letters on Iraq, it was signed by a core group of the most prominent neoconservatives (including Elliot Abrams, John Bolton, Paula Dobriansky, Bruce Jackson, Kagan, Khalilzad, Kristol, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, and Dov Zakheim), and also by individuals who were not usually PNAC supporters but happened to endorse its stance on this issue. They included Richard Armitage; Frank Carlucci, a Reagan National Security Advisor; Seth Cropsey of the Heritage Foundation; Dennis DeConcini, a former Democratic Senator from Arizona; John Heffernan, the Director of the CIJ; Peter Kovler of the think tank, the Center for National Policy; Helmut Sonnenfeld of the liberal Brookings Institution; and William Howard Taft IV, a former legal counsel to the Reagan and Bush administrations. Again, the initiative included a core group of neoconservatives who were the main activists, but it was given extra weight by the sheer number of signatories to the letter and the diversity of their backgrounds.

As events on the ground in Kosovo began to deteriorate, the neoconservative position began to harden, as did the resolve of NATO. In October 1998, the NATO countries authorized the alliance to retaliate against Milosevic if Serb offensives continued in defiance of UN resolution 1199 that had called for a ceasefire. This time, military action was averted at the last minute when Holbrooke brokered an agreement to allow a two-thousand-man international monitoring force into Kosovo to ensure Serbian compliance with the UN resolution.[14]

In response to Milosevic's failure to adhere to 1199, PNAC also called for the use of NATO air power "to destroy Serbia's military machine—thus destroying Serbia's ability to repeat its aggression"; in other words, to defeat the Serbs in Kosovo. Using NATO was essential because of its "institutionalized American leadership role," and, in addition, sanctions should be further tightened and funding for the opposition continued in the hope that Milosevic would be deposed.[15]

After a short-term decline in violence, KLA attacks began again in December, however, and were followed, again, by Serb reprisals. The discovery in January 1999 of a mass grave containing the bodies of forty-five ethnic Albanians massacred at Racak by Serb forces was a crystallizing moment for Western public opinion, and portrayed by the NATO alliance as further evidence that Milosevic's ambitions verged on the genocidal (although the Racak atrocity was still not representative of the pattern of violence so far: Serb victims of the KLA far outnumbered Kosovars killed by Serbs and, for the most part, attacks were initiated by the KLA as part of what Hashim Thaci had admitted was a strategy to entice Western intervention against Belgrade).[16]

The Racak massacre led PNAC to issue another letter in January 1999, written in partnership with the AEI's NAI, the International Crisis Group, the CIJ, and the BAC.[17] This time they argued that a NATO air campaign should be followed by the introduction of ground troops in Kosovo to prevent the return of Serb forces. "Forceful U.S. leadership" was necessary, they argued, to stop the humanitarian crisis, but also because in addition to threatening regional stability, the crisis threatened "the interests of the United States [and] the credibility of NATO." PNAC and *The Weekly Standard* reiterated their commitment to ground troops if necessary: once the United States and NATO were committed, "there [was] no acceptable alternative to success," and in case air power did not "do the job, it [was] irresponsible to rule out the possibility of ground troops."[18]

Kristol and Kagan were in no doubt as to why the operation had to succeed. Writing in April 1999, they announced that "NATO's future and American credibility [were] at stake." The United States had twice pledged to use force to stop Milosevic, first in September 1998 and again in March 1999, as the Rambouillet peace agreement was under negotiation. If it failed to live up to its word after Milosevic's apparent rejection of the peace accord, the purpose and structure of the whole NATO alliance would be called into question. NATO would look impotent on the global stage, and, as leader of the alliance, American resolve and ability would be called into question. It "[would] be the end of NATO as an effective alliance," PNAC warned.[19] For Washington to demonstrate that it was futile to compete with American power on a global scale, U.S.-led regional alliances had to keep their promises.

However, there was a more pressing concern still. NATO had been born as a defensive alliance against the Soviet Union, but since communism's collapse, it had yet to find a new role. Zbigniew Brzezinski put it succinctly in the *New York Times*: NATO could either "expand or die."[20] The growth of the alliance into Central Europe was one way of redefining

its identity. PNAC argued that it was equally important that the alliance take on out-of-area operations. Above all:

> The question is: why does the alliance still exist? If the alliance defines itself as strictly defensive, and of no value until threatened by a revitalized Russian superpower, it will define itself out of existence. No such threat is likely to emerge for many years, if not decades. In the interim, NATO would have no purpose at all. NATO will not continue to exist on that basis . . .

With NATO due to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary in April 1999, the embarrassment of a failure to defeat a relatively weak Milosevic would render it obsolete.[21]

This view was shared by Muravchik who argued in the *Wall Street Journal* that Milosevic might just save the NATO alliance. Echoing concerns over the absence of a clearly defined purpose for NATO, and bearing in mind European resentment at American dominance of the alliance as well as European failures in Bosnia, Muravchik contended that winning in Kosovo and deposing Milosevic would vindicate the American conception of NATO's future.[22] In 1991, Richard Perle had commented on the "urgent necessity" of NATO "looking beyond its own borders," otherwise it would "cease to exist in any meaningful sense."[23] In addition, preserving the viability of NATO and accounting for the security concerns of America's European allies would discourage them from seeking alternative security arrangements. In the words of the DPG,

> [I]t is of fundamental importance to preserve NATO as the primary instrument of Western defense and security, as well as the channel for U.S. influence and participation in European security affairs. While the United States supports the goal of European integration, we must seek to prevent the emergence of European-only security arrangements which would undermine NATO.[24]

Indeed even the Clinton administration had serious reservations about the prospect of an independent European rapid reaction force and stressed that it should not decouple the United States from Europe or duplicate any of the functions of NATO.[25] Ultimately, for the neocons and their allies, the issue at stake was what kind of role America intended to play in the world. Driving Milosevic from power would send a signal to other aspiring challengers, such as Saddam Hussein, that the United States would not countenance such challengers. Dictators around the world needed to know that they would be confronted by the United States and would lose power: "[t]hey need to know that they will become marked men." Kagan

had argued in his "Case for Global Activism" that how America dealt with "peripheral" threats would indicate how willing it was to protect the global order. This was the issue at stake in Kosovo. For many unipolarists, the question was whether the United States was willing

> to shape the world in conformance with our interests and our principles, challenging as that task may be? Or will we allow much of the world to slip into chaos and brutality, to be shaped by men like Milosevic and Saddam Hussein and Kim Jong-Il and the dictators in Beijing?[26]

For Kristol, Kagan, and PNAC, Kosovo also presented an opportunity to pitch their "neo-Reaganism" to a Republican Party that remained skeptical of the need for U.S. involvement in the Balkans. In early April 1999, Republican Senators voted 38-16 against NATO air strikes, which, according to Kristol and Kagan, gravely damaged the Party's ability to run in the Presidential election on a Reaganite foreign policy. In addition, 80 percent of House Republicans had voted against a U.S. peacekeeping force if it was necessary, and in May, 57 percent of Republicans in the House voted to invoke the War Powers Act and compel the President to withdraw within thirty days any American troops sent to Kosovo. *The Weekly Standard* editorialized that the Congressional GOP had become "a simulacrum of Vietnam-era left wing Democrats" who called for peace at any price. Behaving "like McGovern Democrats" was bad politics and damaging to Republican hopes in the 2000 election.[27] However, a Reaganite foreign policy "in addition to being best for the country, is a political winner."[28] Ironically, PNAC found itself in the position of supporting Clinton's course of action, urging him to go further by not ruling out ground troops and lobbying the Republican Party to support the administration. Head of the NAI, Jeffrey Gedmin, complained that "we are becoming known as the superpower that doesn't do ground troops. NATO could come to an end now, not because of weak-kneed Europeans, but because of the failure of its leader, the United States of America."[29]

THE BALKAN ACTION COUNCIL

There were several organizations previously unrelated to the neoconservative network that joined PNAC in support of the Clinton policy: the BAC, the CIJ, and the International Crisis Group. Since the CIJ was an organization dedicated to supporting war crimes tribunals in the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere, and the International Crisis Group was a global NGO dedicated to preventing and solving conflict, both could find their own reasons to support the NATO bombing and even the removal of

Milosevic, although as humanitarian organizations, their primary motivation was likely to be different to the principal concerns of the neocons whose support was ultimately based on strategic considerations.[30] That such diverse groups joined with the neoconservative-led network on this issue was indicative of its pragmatism. Although the core activists shared a common worldview, there was no ideological litmus test for others who wished to participate in pursuit of a shared objective, notwithstanding the probability of divergent motivations in this case.

The BAC was a particularly good example of this because of the diversity of members within that group alone and its establishment by individuals previously firmly outside the neoconservative-led network. Of all the groups involving neoconservatives, BAC was the most heterogeneous. It was a project of the Public International Law and Policy Group (PILPG), a nonprofit organization, operating as a global pro bono law firm providing free legal assistance to developing states and substate entities involved in conflicts. Established in 1995, the PILPG operated under the auspices of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace until 1998, after which it was recognized as a nongovernmental organization by the UN.[31] BAC, in turn, was established as an educational and advocacy effort that initially focused on Dayton implementation but was particularly active during the Kosovo War. It claimed to have organized visits to Washington by Serbian opposition leaders, and encouraged funding for them through the National Endowment for Democracy.[32]

BAC's Executive Director, James Hooper, was a former Foreign Service Diplomat and its Associate Director, Kurt Bassuener, was a former scholar at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.[33] Whereas the organization's steering committee included a number of prominent neoconservative activists—Paula Dobriansky, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Perle, Wolfowitz, and Donald Rumsfeld were all members—it also included Peter Kovler, Dennis De Concini, William Howard Taft, Helmut Sonnenfeld, Morton Abramowitz, Carlucci, Solarz, Eugene Rostow, Brzezinski, Richard Burt (a former U.S. Ambassador), Philip Kaiser (another former diplomat), and, most incongruously of all, the liberal intellectual, Susan Sontag, who had been part of the New Left generation of intellectuals so despised by the first generation of neocons. For Sontag, the rationale for intervention was purely humanitarian, not interest-based.[34]

The BAC statements and letters echoed many of the strategic concerns of PNAC. On 18 March 1999, BAC stated that if Milosevic continued to defy the international community, NATO would have to "redeem its promises, and its credibility, by using military force" if it was to avoid appearing directionless and weak. With NATO about to celebrate its

fiftieth anniversary, Congress and the American people should "give their full backing to this initiative to sustain the vitality of U.S. leadership and the validity of U.S. collective defense effort in Europe" [*sic*].[35] In May 1999, BAC combined forces with PNAC for a third time, instigating another public letter to Clinton, published in the *New York Times*, that called for ground troops in Kosovo to complement the NATO bombing.[36]

DIVISIONS OVER KOSOVO

Between BAC, PNAC, and the *Standard*, there was a consensus that the ultimate U.S. objective should be regime change in Belgrade, but nevertheless there was some disagreement among the neocons and their allies as to what the precise nature of U.S. involvement in Kosovo should be. NATO air power was one thing but U.S. ground troops was quite another. The decisive question was: what did preserving unipolarity mean in practice in the case of Kosovo? And to this, there were a number of different answers. CSP had called for regime change in Serbia as early as March 1998, and although it did not rule out the use of U.S. ground troops, it argued that the purpose of such a deployment was "very unclear and the anticipated benefits exceedingly nebulous." Its principle objection was not to the concept of ground troops but that the Clinton administration had failed to articulate a case for such a deployment or what interests it was fighting for in the Balkans.[37] Zalmay Khalilzad dissented further on the best strategy to pursue. In September 1998, he asserted the exigency of regime change in the *Wall Street Journal* and argued that "morality and self-interest in the Balkans and beyond demand that we do [take action]." However, whereas the PNAC position evolved into supporting ground troops, Khalilzad argued in March 1999 that ground troops were not feasible because their introduction could lead to a protracted ground war "in a region where the U.S. has only limited interest," an unacceptable scenario and one that could ultimately prove more damaging to U.S. credibility. But because bombing alone might not suffice, Khalilzad advocated U.S. political, military, and economic support for the KLA and dropping U.S. opposition to an independent Kosovo.[38] It was important that the United States and NATO win, but for Khalilzad, one of the principal architects of the DPG, Kosovo was not important enough in his grand strategy to warrant ground troops. Although it did not usually comment on matters outside the Middle East, JINSA issued a handful of short reports on Kosovo, which took a tepid view of the notion that there were U.S. security interests at stake in the region. On principle, the United States should not become involved in civil wars, it argued, but since it had already put its credibility on the line by becoming involved, it

was vital that it succeed. Since air power alone was insufficient to compel a settlement, the United States should arm the Kosovars, rather than send its own forces, with the ultimate objective being a change of regime in Belgrade to solve the problem once and for all.[39]

The Heritage Foundation took a more provocative stance. Kristol and Kagan appeared to have been enraged by Heritage's perceived lack of support for the U.S. effort in Kosovo. On 3 May 1999, *The Weekly Standard*'s editorial lambasted "once Reaganite think tanks" that were putting out "anti-war position papers."[40] This was rather an exaggeration of the Heritage position, but in the week prior to the editorial, it had released a position paper asserting that America's vital interests were not at stake in Kosovo, and that Washington had to avoid "endless involvement in far-flung conflicts, civil wars and sectarian feuds."[41] Echoing the DPG, Heritage declared that "America's vital interest in Europe is to prevent the domination of the continent by a hostile power or set of powers"; yet for Heritage, the achievement of that objective did not mean embracing out-of-area operations. NATO would prevent the domination of Europe by a rival by acting as a "defensive alliance" in which the United States agreed to defend any NATO ally from outside aggression, "a situation not found in the current Balkan conflict." Washington could help the Kosovars to defend themselves by supplying arms, and it could even offer air support, but it "should not fight their war for them" because it was "a marginal war" in terms of American security interests.

The most only complete rejection of the Kosovo campaign came from Krauthammer, for the same reasons as he had opposed involvement in Bosnia. He simply could not conceive that Kosovo could be construed by anyone as a "vital" American interest, and his criticisms did not engage others on the basis of what the imperatives of unipolarity actually were. Assuming that it could not be construed as anything other than a humanitarian intervention, he criticized it solely on that basis. "Peacekeeping, mending civil wars, or . . . quelling teacup wars is not a job for America," wrote a vexed Krauthammer exasperatedly. Humanitarian interventions were "a job for Canada. For middle powers with no real enemies." To suggest it was Washington's job was to fundamentally misunderstand the role of the superpower, and Krauthammer simply could not comprehend that the conflict could be interpreted by anyone as a challenge to NATO.[42] Instead he reiterated his credo: "We should risk war when our will and conscience are challenged. *But only when our most vital interests are challenged too*" (emphasis added). Moral principles were "impossible guides to foreign policy" that reflected hypocrisy and extreme naivety. Foreign policy should be "calculated and

particular," Krauthammer stated; it came down to "which son-of-a-bitch to support and which to oppose."[43] With these comments, Krauthammer was leaving a hostage to fortune. From 2002 onwards, he would argue that the reason the United States could not promote democracy in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, or Pakistan was because those countries were critical allies in a broader existential struggle against terrorism, implying that but for the "war on terror," he would advocate democratic reform in these U.S. allies.[44] But in the absence of a perceived existential threat in the 1990s, Krauthammer had still declined to support greater democratization. Instead, like Kirkpatrick in the 1996 WINEP study, he fell back on a realist argument about protecting vital interests, acknowledging as candidly as possible that taking this course would mean the United States could not always adhere to its moral principles. In this light, Krauthammer's post-9/11 comments about democracy promotion appeared highly dubious.

KOSOVO AND NEOCONSERVATISM

The Heritage assertion that U.S. foreign policy required greater "prudence" in peripheral areas such as Kosovo echoed criticisms of Kristol and Kagan made in response to their *Foreign Affairs* treatise and Kagan's "Case for Global Activism" in 1994. This criticism was understandable, yet Kagan had not disavowed discrimination in intervention. He (and Kristol) simply believed that remaining the single pole of world power required a willingness to undertake intervention in peripheral regions *when necessary*—in other words, when they judged that a conflict in a peripheral location posed a threat to American credibility in that region. Unipolarity was not a divisible concept; it was not possible to be "unipolar" by dominating in one region but not in others. By definition, being unipolar meant being the leading power in *every* region of the world. Krauthammer assumed that those who advocated intervention in the Balkans had no sense of limits—but in fact they simply had a broader perception of what was required to maintain America's position. If neoconservatives and their sympathizers were united in sharing an objective and fairly unified in what this meant in key strategic areas such as Iraq, there was a lack of agreement when it came to peripheral areas like Bosnia and Kosovo. Whereas Krauthammer was unable to conceive of what could make Kosovo an interest integral to unipolarity, PNAC viewed it as a direct challenge to NATO and American leadership in Europe. In the case of Iraq, the immediate question was not whether the United States should intervene, but how it should. In the Balkan cases, some neoconservatives

questioned or, in Krauthammer's case, disputed entirely the importance of the conflicts to broader U.S. objectives. Yet despite the differing views on how to deal with the Kosovo situation, a majority of the neoconservatives and their allies did agree that regime change should be the ultimate goal in Belgrade, although unlike in Iraq it would be a long-term goal to be achieved in a more indirect manner.

For Kristol and Kagan, the campaign had been another opportunity to convince the Republican Party to embrace a "neo-Reaganite" foreign policy. However, on the evidence of Congressional votes—such as the percentage of Republicans in the House that voted to invoke the War Powers Act—they were far from successful. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) had spoken out forcefully in favor of the policy advocated by PNAC but he was in the minority.[45] Peripheral cases were not just the ones that neoconservatives struggled to agree on; they were also the most difficult cases to convince the Republican Party to embrace.

Although PNAC mostly supported the policy of the Clinton administration in Kosovo—if not always its execution—it was unable to claim any credit on this occasion for influencing the President's course of action. Even Kristol believed that Clinton's not ruling out ground troops owed more to British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and to John McCain than to Clinton's determination to keep all options open.[46]

Moreover, despite the important rhetorical differences between Clinton and the neocons, there was some convergence between Clinton's objectives in Kosovo and those advocated by the neoconservatives and their allies. Clinton's public rhetoric focused in part on the unfolding humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo,[47] but it was the challenge to the credibility of the NATO alliance that ultimately pushed the administration into war. Clinton may have initially been reluctant to become involved in the Balkans, but by 1999, he had come to believe that another show of force was necessary if the alliance was to maintain credibility and relevance.[48] In April 1999, Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, told Congress that "Belgrade's actions constitute a critical test of NATO . . . whose strength and credibility have defended freedom for five decades." Clinton himself claimed that failure to act in Kosovo would "discredit NATO, the cornerstone on which our security has rested for 50 years."[49] In 2000, Clinton's Defense Secretary, William Cohen, stated that U.S. aims in the conflict had been, first, to ensure the stability of Eastern Europe; second, to thwart ethnic cleansing by Milosevic; and third, to ensure NATO's credibility. However, according to Sandy Berger, the National Security Advisor, the second aim alone would not have sufficed because national security issues needed to be at stake to warrant a U.S.-led intervention—an echo of the position of the neocons and their allies.[50] For Clinton the

matter was made even more urgent by the fact that the expansion of the NATO alliance was the centerpiece of his diplomacy in Europe.[51] What would the purpose be of expanding the alliance if it did not deal with serious conflicts in Europe?

The perception that the administration preferred to lead the alliance in the use of force was given further credence by the events of Rambouillet. Albright had taken the lead in pushing for the use of force since 1998.[52] However, the Rambouillet Accord—the peace plan presented to Milosevic and the Kosovar Albanians—seemed designed to be rejected by the Serb leader. Most controversially, the accord called for unrestricted NATO access by land and air not just to Serbia but to every province in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia for forces that would be "immune from all legal process, whether civil, administrative or criminal, [and] under all circumstances and at all times, immune from [all laws] governing any criminal or disciplinary offences which may be committed by NATO personnel in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia." Moreover, this demand appears to have been added on at a late stage in the negotiations, after the Serb delegation had finally agreed to the main political proposals. It was rejected not just by the Serb delegation in Rambouillet but also by the elected Yugoslav parliament. In the negotiations that began after the bombing finished in June, these demands—apparently so essential for peace in April—were dropped entirely. As Ivo Daalder and Michael O'Hanlon observe, "For some in the Clinton administration, as indeed in key allied capitals like London, the purpose of Rambouillet was not so much to get a deal that few thought attainable. Rather it was to create a consensus in Washington and among the NATO allies that force would have to be used."[53]

There was, then, some significant convergence between the neoconservative objectives and those of the Clinton administration. To be sure, the language some of the neocons used was more explicit. They openly prioritized the credibility of NATO and were frank about why a U.S. and NATO victory was important. Clinton presented a softer image, claiming he was also motivated by humanitarian considerations—and perhaps he was—but even for Clinton humanitarianism alone was not enough to compel intervention. Clinton's actions in Haiti—where he was motivated primarily by the politics of the Haitian refugee crisis—and in Rwanda and Kosovo indicated that humanitarianism was secondary to other strategic and political considerations. Although Clinton might not have subscribed to quite the same kind of unassailable global dominance as the neoconservatives, moral considerations were not the determining factor in intervention for him either.[54]

All of this is not to say that no one made a case for intervention in Kosovo based on humanitarianism. That case was made—but not by the neoconservatives or their unipolarist allies. The 1990s witnessed the rise of a new liberal interventionism.[55] The end of superpower conflict had brought about the hope among many liberals that instead of competing with Soviet communism in the developing world, Washington was free to use its tremendous power for benevolent rather than strategic ends. Former leftists, such as Christopher Hitchens, Paul Berman, and Michael Ignatieff, became the new liberal interventionists, cautiously embracing American power for the good it might achieve around the world. In academia, the theorists of Democratic Peace argued that security would be enhanced if the West could spread democracy, while social constructivists claimed that the traditional preconditions for democracy—an independent judiciary, a suitable political culture—might not be necessary at all as democracy existed as a universal value.[56] With the rise of global interconnectivity, traditional notions of sovereignty and norms of nonintervention were questioned by liberal scholars and intellectuals, and at the turn of the century, the United Nations called on developed states to embrace the "Responsibility to Protect."[57] An intellectual consensus had developed among an influential section of liberal opinion that humanitarian intervention was not just possible, it was morally necessary. It was on these grounds that many liberals called for and supported NATO intervention in Kosovo. To be sure, the "Wilsonian" case was made—but not by the neoconservatives. Although humanitarian atrocities were taking place in Kosovo, for the neocons this was incidental because for them moral issues alone were not sufficient to compel intervention. And although humanitarian issues might be invoked from time to time, it was only in cases where there was already a strategic interest that compelled intervention. In the end, the liberal interventionists supported the same policy as the neocons in Kosovo but for different reasons, and ultimately, the neocons' rationale was much closer to that of the Clinton administration than the liberal interventionists were.

Like the cases of Iraq, missile defense, Bosnia, rogue states, and democracy promotion, Kosovo demonstrated that the neoconservatives did not deviate radically from the bipartisan consensus that Washington should maintain its position as the world's sole superpower. If neocons and their allies were to enter government, there would not be a radical substantive break from the Clinton administration. Kosovo also demonstrated, once again, the substantial agreement that existed amongst neocons over objectives—remaining the single pole of world power—but disagreement over methods when it came to approaching "peripheral" regions. In a European context, maintaining

unipolarity meant preserving the credibility of NATO and U.S. leadership in Europe, but there were differing perspectives on how Kosovo related to this and, if it did, how exactly the United States, through NATO, should intervene. Moreover, whatever conclusions Kristol and Kagan came to, they were unable to convince the Republican Party of the efficacy of their views.

CHAPTER 8

CHINA: THE LIMITS OF "UNIPOLARITY"

> The Cold War is over. The Soviet Union is gone, and the biggest challenge to American interests in the world today comes from Beijing.[1]

FROM ITS INCEPTION IN SEPTEMBER 1995 TO THE END OF 2000, *The Weekly Standard* published over three times as many editorials on China as it did on Iraq.[2] According to Robert Kagan, China posed the most serious long-term challenge to the unipolar global order and to Washington's position as guarantor of peace in East Asia. Beijing had "the clear aim of using its growing military power to enhance its influence abroad," he claimed, and its primary international purpose was to disperse the preponderant power of the United States.[3] The Heritage Foundation expressed concern about "China's drive to become a great military power" in Asia and viewed Beijing as "a looming threat," while CSP designated it "the next great adversary" and claimed that its worrisome regional power projection indicated its "aspir[ation] to superpower status."[4] As far as Frank Gaffney was concerned, the U.S.-China relationship was going "frankly, toward conflict." "In many ways," he argued, "this is a time not dissimilar to … the 1930s."[5]

In the cases of Serbia and Iraq, the neocons had put forward strategies designed to culminate in regime change; a realistic prospect given the relative weaknesses of the adversaries in those cases. However, the case of China forced the neocons to confront the limits of what they could achieve through military force, and starkly exposed the limits to the offensive posture they advocated: China was simply too powerful to contemplate using force against or for the neocons to posit the objective of regime change. Although it could not compete on a level footing with the United States, as a nuclear power with an army of 2.5 million (and

one billion more inhabitants than the United States), it was easily strong enough to neutralize the threat of regime change.[6] This reality forced even the most hawkish neoconservatives to abandon their offensive strategy of prevention and to openly revert to the Cold War paradigm of containment and deterrence and, in some cases, even elements of engagement, depending on Chinese behavior. In sum, the China case revealed, more clearly that any other, that even in a conventional sense the United States was not the single pole of world power, that Charles Krauthammer's dictum was a false premise, and that attempting to prevent the emergence of a rival power was futile and irrelevant because there already existed a country strong enough to act as a conventional counterweight to American power and thereby constrain U.S. freedom of action. This meant that any strategy advocated by the neoconservatives toward that country would have to be nonmilitary and defensive in nature.

Yet, despite the implicit recognition of limits on American power that endorsing containment entailed, there was no attempt to recalibrate the overall strategic objective of maintaining global "unipolarity" through adopting an offensive posture. The neocons called, at the same time, for the containment of China *and* for the preservation of America's unipolar status. However, the two objectives contradicted each other; America could not be the single pole of world power but be unable to exercise decisive influence in East Asia. Yet this contradiction remained; the neocons were never able to match their ultimate global objective with the strategic reality of Chinese power and America's reduced capabilities in East Asia. Although the neocons and their allies collectively devoted far less time to China than to issues in the Middle East (the *Standard*'s editorializing notwithstanding); it was a seminal case in terms of its impact upon their broader global objectives. In the pre-9/11 period, the false premise of unipolarism and its attendant strategy of preventive action was never more apparent than in the case of China.

CLINTON'S "ENGAGEMENT" AND THE NEOCONSERVATIVE RESPONSE

The Clinton administration's decision to opt for a policy of "engagement" with China had several manifestations, all of which were objectionable to the neoconservatives and their allies.[7] In particular, "engagement" meant granting Most Favored Nation (MFN) trading status to Beijing, thus facilitating its access to lucrative American markets by removing the prohibitively high tariffs of the Smoot-Hawley Act, and subsequently allowing China to run a trade surplus with the

United States. Sometimes engagement also meant turning a pragmatic blind eye to Chinese missile proliferation, such as in 1996 when Clinton waived sanctions on China for selling missiles to Pakistan. It meant abandoning the Cold War–era export controls on military hardware that had been embodied in the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM). It meant violating the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) on several occasions, including by stating more than once that Clinton opposed Taiwanese attempts to gain independence, did not support a "Two Chinas" policy, and would not support Taipei's admission to the UN. And more generally, engagement meant courting the Chinese leadership and demonstrating the administration's respect for China as a great power. This culminated in an exchange of official Presidential visits by Clinton and Chinese Premier, Jiang Zemin, in 1997.[8]

The critique of Clinton's engagement strategy was led by PNAC, CSP, and the Heritage Foundation. Despite the gravity of the challenge they claimed emanated from Beijing, overall these groups spent less time lobbying on the China issue than on Iraq or Kosovo. The Chinese security issues that preoccupied neoconservatives (trade, Taiwan, proliferation, strategic objectives) were ongoing and long-term; it was not a case that was likely to bring about bursts of intensive activity. Unlike Iraq, there was no perception of a sudden, opportune moment to exploit, no galvanizing event such as an inspections impasse. This was apparent in the fact that *The Weekly Standard*'s editorializing on China spanned five years in a consistent fashion, whereas six of the seven editorials on Iraq appeared in a one-year window (November 1997–November 1998).[9]

In addition, there was no prospect of military intervention in China. In lobbying for intervention in Kosovo and Iraq, the neocons and their supporters were not only advocating policies they believed in but were responding to the central foreign policy issues of the day; cases where Washington already was intervening, and cases that could exemplify the kind of offensive military strategy they advocated. Finally, Kagan, William Kristol, and David Brooks were attempting to sell a vision of America's role in the world. Despite their belief in a long-term strategic threat from China, the complex issues at stake in the U.S.-Chinese relationship were less conducive to selling that vision than "straightforward" cases of (hopefully victorious) military intervention. Kristol and Brooks' conception of "American greatness" did not turn on the nuances of trading relationships or on the limits to what America could achieve (exemplified most clearly in the case of China) but on the possibilities inherent in American power. As Kristol and Kagan had argued in their

1996 *Foreign Affairs* manifesto, what was required was a "broad sustaining foreign policy vision."[10]

OBJECTIVES: THE RETURN OF CONTAINMENT

The China debate was dominated by the concept of containment, with the possibility of commercial engagement depending on Chinese behavior. The majority of the neoconservatives and their allies shared this objective vis-à-vis China but differed on how to achieve it in practice, particularly in terms of what containment meant for the U.S.-China trading relationship. However, there were others—Heritage and Hudson in particular—who, while cognizant of the national security issues at stake, framed their strategy not as containment but as a form of engagement, albeit one that was much tougher on the Chinese than Clinton's engagement. Beyond rhetorical framing, though, there was very little substantive difference between containment and this putative "realistic engagement."[11]

As usual, Kagan and Kristol expounded the most hawkish alternative to the Clinton administration. In their 1996 *Foreign Affairs* article, the pair had audaciously called for the United States to develop "an overall strategy for containing, influencing, and *ultimately seeking to change the regime in Beijing*" (emphasis added).[12] Gradually, however, this ambitious objective was watered down. When Kagan first attempted to articulate a detailed alternative to the Clinton strategy in *The Weekly Standard*, he appeared more cognizant of geostrategic realities. Rather than denouncing the Clinton administration for lacking an approach designed to culminate in regime change, he complained that "we are not even supposed to use the word '*containment*' . . . lest we suggest to China that in some way we may consider them adversaries," and stated that dealing with an increasingly powerful and ambitious China would require "a strong and determined America willing to either *engage* or *contain* China, depending on Chinese behavior" (emphases added).[13]

The following year, however, Kagan argued that since the Chinese leadership would not be able to integrate into the American-led world order, Washington "should hold the line and instead work for political change in Beijing."[14] If this was not quite regime change, it amounted to a transformational strategy aimed at changing the behavior of the Chinese regime. This would be achieved through tough nonmilitary measures including denial of MFN status, strengthening U.S. deterrent capabilities in the region, avoiding trade with firms owned by the Chinese military, and implementing sanctions to counter Chinese nuclear proliferation. However, this transformational strategy was short-lived, and by 1998, Kagan and PNAC had dropped all talk of changing the regime and

settled for advocating straightforward containment of China's strategic ambitions and opposing Clinton's engagement, which it characterized as "outright appeasement."[15] In May 1999, Kristol and Kagan derided Clinton's strategy for "blindly seek[ing] to treat as a friend a government that thinks and behaves like an adversary"; but China's rise was not yet a cause for alarm, they claimed, because "[it] is still weak enough to be *contained*" (emphasis added).[16]

The contrast with Iraq and Kosovo—where they had scorned containment and defensive action—and with their purported global objective of hegemony, was striking. In their 1996 *Foreign Affairs* article, Kristol and Kagan had observed that the United States would be able to perpetuate its supposed hegemony because "the enormous disparity between U.S. military strength and that of any potential rival" would demonstrate that it was futile to compete with American power. In 1998, Kagan repeated these views in an article for *Foreign Policy*, arguing that the United States was an "empire" and multipolarism in the contemporary world was an illusion. Yet that same year, he was implicitly accepting the limits on what America could achieve with regard to China by embracing containment. It was an awkward fit with his views on America's position as the sole hegemon. While the global objective was to maintain America's unipolarity, the goal in East Asia—containment—seemed to contradict this. Implicit in Kristol and Kagan's adoption of the Cold War paradigm—although they never acknowledged it—was the fact that the United States was not the single pole of world power. In East Asia, it could not necessarily shape crises before they emerged (such as in the Taiwan Strait) despite U.S. military superiority because Chinese military power was strong enough to constrain U.S. freedom of action, prevent offensive military action, and preclude American regional hegemony. Although China could not necessarily triumph over the United States in the region in either an economic or a military sense, Beijing could nevertheless prevent Washington from achieving its own regional objectives. Implicitly recognizing Chinese power, Kristol, Kagan, and PNAC reverted to endorsing a strategy of containment; yet this did not moderate their explicit commitment to an incongruous and uncompromising "benevolent global hegemony."

It was not just Kristol and Kagan who embraced strategies reminiscent of the Cold War to deal with China. Zalmay Khalilzad, the principle drafter of the DPG—the plan to permit no rivals—also recognized the constraints that Chinese power placed on the United States. Khalilzad led a RAND study of 1999 (with six other authors including Abram Shulsky), which argued for a policy of so-called congagement with China, a mixture of containment and engagement.[17] Khalilzad's premise was slightly different

from Kagan's. Whereas Kagan believed that Beijing ultimately sought to build an alternative international system that followed Chinese rules, Khalilzad acknowledged the possibility that while advancing its military and economic bases, Beijing might become "acculturised" into accepting the existing international system that was aiding its development.[18] There was therefore a possibility that China could assimilate into the U.S.-led global order, although this was by no means guaranteed. Beijing could also become a hostile peer competitor.[19]

To prepare for both of these scenarios, Khalilzad's group advocated a mixture of both engagement, which would pay off should China become "acculturised," and containment, which was necessary to hedge against its emergence as a hostile peer competitor. Each element of the strategy could be emphasized and deemphasized as necessary in line with Chinese behavior. Yet although Khalilzad argued that, for now, China was "indisputably not a 'peer competitor' of the United States," his group nevertheless acknowledged that it was "not just another regional power" either.[20] Its military strength, although not comparable to that of the United States, presented "unique and more demanding planning and operational challenges to U.S. strategists contemplating a possible confrontation with China."[21] In short, he argued, it would be better to avoid military confrontation altogether in this case. China had nuclear weapons; a greater variety of surface-to-air missiles than any other possible Major Theatre War adversary; the People's Liberation Army was the largest in the world; and the sheer size of the country meant that a comprehensive air campaign would be long and drawn out, greatly reducing its impact.[22] In the short term, the best option was "congagement," and if China did become a hostile peer competitor in the long term, to revert to simple containment. The reality of Chinese power had forced Khalilzad to accept limits to the offensive posture and the preventive strategy he outlined in the DPG.

Containment and its strategic corollary of deterrence were also in evidence with regard to the issue of Taiwan, a recurring flashpoint in U.S.-Chinese relations in the mid- to late-nineties. Since 1979, U.S. policy toward China and its supposed renegade province had been guided by the TRA, which encapsulated the concept of strategic ambiguity. Although the United States declined to officially recognize Taipei, thus satisfying one of Beijing's concerns, the TRA enshrined U.S. opposition to a forcible takeover of Taiwan by the Chinese. It guaranteed that Washington would supply arms to Taipei for defensive purposes, but deliberately declined to state whether the United States itself would come directly to Taipei's defense in the event of a Chinese invasion. The ensuing ambiguity of the U.S. position was designed to not only deter

the Chinese but also satisfy their desire to preclude external recognition of Taipei. For the most part, the TRA formed the basis for the subsequent relationship between the three countries.[23]

In 1996, CSP called on Clinton to replace strategic ambiguity and openly commit to the direct military defense of Taiwan. When the Taiwanese elections of March 1996 were preceded by provocative Chinese military exercises and missile tests, CSP called for a Presidential statement declaring that the United States would militarily defend Taiwan against any aggression from China; for the deployment of the Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Straits; the sale of "whatever quantity and quality of weapons are required to allow Taiwan to defend itself" against Beijing; and an end to the export of highly sensitive dual-use technology to China. (CSP had already called for the official recognition of Taiwan in 1994.) This would form part of a broader strategy of "strategic *containment* and tactical trade ambiguity" designed to counter China's "offensive military build-up" (emphasis added). Once again, the revitalization of the concept of containment was the key to a workable strategy on China. CSP's entreaties counted for little, however. In the event, Clinton sent two U.S. aircraft carriers to waters near Taiwan but declined to offer more explicit military guarantees.[24]

Tensions over Taiwan recurred in July 1999, when Taiwanese President, Lee Teng-hui, suggested that his country negotiate with China on the basis of "special state-to-state relations." Incensed by Taiwan's presumptuous notion that it could negotiate with the PRC as an equal, the Chinese leadership threatened to respond with force. The Clinton administration defused the situation by siding with Beijing, canceling a long-planned visit of an American technical team to Taiwan to discuss security matters, and intimating that scheduled U.S. arms sales to Taiwan would be postponed.[25] *The Weekly Standard* took exception. It had called instead for the Clinton administration to counter Chinese military threats by announcing openly that it would defend Taiwan against aggression from China, thereby deterring a Chinese invasion of Taiwan. The administration should embark upon "a firm policy of *deterrence* … to preserve the peace" by sending naval forces to the region (emphasis added). In doing so, the United States would "do away with the dangerous ambiguity" in the TRA and make American intentions clear. In what seemed like a classic Cold War formula, the *Standard* editorialized that "*deterring* the Chinese now is the best way to avoid a bigger crisis later. The less ambiguous U.S. actions are, the less chance there is that the Chinese will make a dangerous miscalculation" (emphasis added). The United States should therefore threaten to use force as a way to *deter* the Chinese.[26] In August 1999, one month after Lee Teng-hui's inflammatory comments,

PNAC and the Heritage Foundation released a joint statement supported by twenty-three signatories, reiterating the need for Washington to "make every effort to deter any form of Chinese intimidation" of Taiwan and to end strategic ambiguity by "declar[ing] unambiguously that it will come to Taiwan's defense in the event of an attack or blockade." The statement was supported by many of the usual signatories, including Elliott Abrams, William Bennett, John Bolton, Kagan, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Kristol, Lewis Libby, Richard Perle, James Woolsey, and Paul Wolfowitz. It was also signed by Heritage associates Edwin J. Feulner (the Heritage President), Edwin Meese III, and Midge Decter, as well as by Norman Podhoretz, Richard Armitage, and Casper Weinberger.[27]

Although there were some demurrals from the call to end strategic ambiguity—notably from Wolfowitz who argued that it should remain as official (although not necessarily unofficial) U.S. policy—this debate was less important than the fact that whether the United States adhered to the TRA or not, the result would still be a policy of deterrence.[28] Giving an explicit guarantee to defend Taiwan would still not result in an offensive military posture or in preventive action because when China was part of the equation, the only conceivable option was deterrence, whether it was achieved through strategic clarity or through ambiguity.

In any case, the statement released by PNAC and the Heritage Foundation had no impact. Not only did Clinton fail to give explicit guarantees to the Taiwanese, he tilted further in favor of Beijing. In 1995, Clinton had sent a private letter to Jiang Zemin in which he pledged that the United States would oppose efforts by Taiwan to gain independence, that it would not support "Two Chinas" or a separate Taiwan, and that it would not support Taiwanese membership of the U.N. In actively opposing, rather than merely not supporting, Taiwanese efforts to gain independence, Clinton appeared to be going further than what had been said in the past. The "Three No's" pledge was subsequently repeated by State Department spokesman, James Rubin, in October 1997, and by Clinton himself on a visit to Shanghai in June 1998.[29]

The promotion of containment and deterrence as the main objective toward China echoed the first generation of neoconservatives. What had distinguished the strategy of the Cold War neocons was its acceptance of the existence of a rival—the USSR—that constrained U.S. actions and therefore any global strategy had to be defensive. In contrast, the strategy of the second generation was premised on the demise of that countervailing superpower and the apparent removal of great power constraints, which facilitated an offensive and preventive strategy that would prevent the emergence of multipolarity. Yet in the case of China, strategic reality forced even the most hawkish neocons to fall back on

containment. Although China was far from being America's equal militarily or economically, it was strong enough to prevent the United States from exercising decisive influence in East Asia. Since Washington could not change the regime in China, minimizing its impact for as long as possible would have to suffice.

Although containment was the dominant objective, there were also elements within the neoconservative-led network that framed their approach more positively as a strategy of "tough" engagement. This approach was premised on the belief that it was possible to engage more fully on a commercial level without endangering national security. One could contain China militarily but engage economically. Although tough engagement sounded rather different to the containment of PNAC et al.—and its tone and presentation were indeed very different—in practice, the differences were less substantive than the rhetoric suggested, because the idea of discriminatory trade (by avoiding companies linked to the military, for example) was also a tactic advocated by some of the neoconservatives who favored straightforward containment.

Opinion at Heritage was divided: while several of its most prominent scholars supported the PNAC letter of August 1999 on Taiwan, the Foundation's widely disseminated Executive Memoranda, written mainly by staff member, Stephen J. Yates, struck a more positive tone, despite concerns about Chinese military power. Regarding MFN status, the Executive Memos posited that commercial considerations and national security concerns were not mutually exclusive issues. Washington should get "out of the MFN trap" and move toward "a meaningful engagement with China" as the best way to deal with human rights, national security, and trade. Revoking trade privileges would not improve human rights in China, Heritage argued. It would adversely affect American and Chinese businesses and workers as well as the economies of Hong Kong and Taiwan; it would not encourage China to adhere to international limitations on transfers of nuclear technology or WMD and, ultimately, MFN was not special treatment anyway.[30]

At Hudson, the veteran neoconservative, Constantine Menges, who had served in the Reagan administration, wrote the Institute's memos on China. Menges advocated "realistic engagement" with Beijing, as opposed to what he saw as Clinton's "unconditional engagement."[31] He also believed that a singular focus on containment was unnecessary, since commercial concerns would not damage the pursuit of national security as long as trade was restricted in specific areas related to military and technological advances. Thus an alternative approach toward the Chinese emerged, which sought to marry commercial and strategic considerations as well as a symbolic shift in tone. Stylistically, this was a major departure

from the perspective of PNAC. It was characterized chiefly by pragmatic commercial ambition, yet substantively it was not drastically different to the "tactical trade ambiguity" of CSP. And ultimately, whether the approach was designated "containment" or "engagement," all of the neocons sought to contain China's regional ambitions rather than to prevent its emergence as a rival.

METHODS: TO TRADE OR NOT TO TRADE?

Among those neocons who favored containment, the question of how much to trade with China was the main point of debate. Once again, there was agreement on an objective—containment—but a lack of consensus on how to go about achieving it. Of particular importance in this respect was Beijing's MFN status and the economic and, by extension, military benefits it accrued through low-tariff access to U.S. markets. Since it was virtually impossible to consider military action against China, any strategy would have to be nonmilitary. The question for the containment advocates was whether granting MFN would imperil national security or whether a more nuanced approach to trade could suffice.

Clinton had gifted his critics with an issue in this respect. On the campaign trail as a Presidential candidate, he had derided Bush's coddling of the dictators in Beijing in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square massacre and pledged that, unlike the incumbent, he would make China's MFN status (which required annual renewal) contingent upon improvements in the regime's human rights record. However, Clinton was also determined to elevate the role of economics in foreign policy. Once in office, he reversed course on China, delinking human rights and MFN status in 1994, thereby increasing trade with Beijing, losing any leverage the administration might have had over a regime with a dire human rights record and, according to his neoconservative critics, directly contributing to China's military buildup with which it sought to disperse U.S. power. The annual MFN issue could potentially be a way to further both human rights concerns, which were widespread in Congress too, and strategic considerations.[32]

Even after Clinton's delinking of human rights and MFN, the editors of *The Weekly Standard* continued to press the issue. David Tell, a Contributing Editor, pointed out in December 1996 that the United States was importing a third of China's exports—a twenty-fold increase since 1990—which allowed Beijing to "sustain the sadistic regime it imposes on its citizens, modernize its gigantic army, and expand its malign influence throughout Asia."[33] In its zeal to expand the international market economy and place trade at the heart of foreign policy, the

Clinton administration was losing sight of fundamental national security interests and following a policy of "engagement-no-matter-what."[34] Kagan disputed that trade with China would liberalize the political system: "Delightful as the idea of getting rich while doing good may seem to American businessmen, the truth is that unrestricted trade with China will only help the Chinese dictatorship" by allowing them to pursue regional hegemony and oppress their own citizens.[35]

The *Standard*'s editors also spoke out forcefully and repeatedly about the moral dubiousness of granting MFN status to China. (This was an occasion where security concerns and morality happened to coincide so the latter could be invoked without any damaging consequences for U.S. strategy.) Clinton was "shoveling the truth about the world's greatest tyranny under the rug" despite the leverage the United States possessed. Kagan called for the administration to lobby for a UN resolution demanding a review of China's human rights record, admittedly a "small step," but one that would signal that Clinton was interested in more than just "blind engagement."[36] The *Standard* also attacked Clinton for waiving sanctions against Beijing in May 1996 after it was discovered that China had secretly sold ring magnets, used to refine bomb-grade uranium, to a state-run nuclear weapons laboratory in Pakistan. After private assurances that this would not be repeated, Christopher announced that the administration had decided against sanctions. According to the *Standard,* this was "outright appeasement."[37] PNAC noted that Chinese proliferation had the effect of "reducing U.S. military supremacy and complicating the exercise of American leadership in key regions of the world." It was time to put national security ahead of commerce.[38]

PNAC and the *Standard* again represented the most hawkish response to the Clinton administration but, also as usual, Gaffney and CSP followed closely. CSP was the first of the neocon think tanks to call for withholding China's MFN status in 1990. Like Kagan and others, CSP recognized that the Chinese trade surplus with the United States meant that "we are underwriting the Chinese regime and its misbehavior."[39] As well as ending the unqualified approval of MFN status, CSP urged that export controls be reinstated after Clinton's 1994 liquidation of the COCOM and urged tough sanctions on China where necessary, such as after the discovery of China's nuclear proliferation to Pakistan and the Cox Report of 1999, which reported details of Chinese espionage within the United States and Beijing's acquisition of information about U.S. thermonuclear weapons and missile technology. (Cox, the Republican Representative from California, was on the CSP National Security Advisory Council and the recipient of its 1997 Keeper of the Flame award for his work on China.)[40]

Where CSP differed slightly from PNAC was that Gaffney was prepared to countenance granting MFN status sometimes because in order to maintain it as an effective economic lever, there had to be a realistic prospect that Beijing would be granted it. This amounted to "tactical trade ambiguity" and meant that CSP tentatively advocated granting MFN in 1996 but urged that it be denied in 1997. CSP took a more flexible, probably more effective, line on MFN than PNAC, although, like PNAC and the *Standard*, it opposed granting China Permanent Normal Trading Relations (PNTR) in 2000 as this relinquished all U.S. leverage.[41]

Michael Ledeen of the AEI took a similar position. While declining to explicitly endorse or reject MFN, Ledeen proposed strict rules governing U.S.-China trade: the Chinese should be denied access to U.S. scientific and manufacturing innovations, particularly at universities; visas for students from China should be slashed; American companies should be prevented from trading with Chinese military corporations; and access to U.S. markets should be "tied to increased freedom for the Chinese people." These measures would help the Chinese people (not to mention American multinationals) while avoiding enriching the Chinese regime, Ledeen claimed.[42]

From here it was not a huge leap to the Heritage and Hudson position on trade that supported their "realistic engagement." They too argued that the U.S. should seek separate, more targeted mechanisms to deal with human rights and national security concerns outside the MFN framework. Trade could be used as a lever but that did not necessarily mean denying MFN status. Instead, they endorsed other more nuanced measures, such as the China Sanctions and Human Rights Act, put forward by Senator Spencer Abraham (R-MI) in 1997. Abraham's bill was designed to permit MFN status but would call for sanctions against Chinese companies with ties to China's military; deny visas for human rights violators; cut off U.S. taxpayer subsidies for China; and increase funding for student, cultural, and legislative exchange programs as well as Radio Free Asia and NED programs in China. Similar conditions could be attached to China's World Trade Organization accession agreement, and the United States could undertake a campaign of public diplomacy to dissuade others—particularly Russia, France, the UK, and Israel—from arming China.[43] This would avoid the restrictions on U.S. freedom of action that came with imposing MFN. Hudson suggested insisting on reciprocal levels of trade and then conditioning any additional one-way trade on China freezing its nuclear buildup, ending WMD proliferation, and improving its human rights record.[44] From this perspective, there was little practical difference between the policies preferred by Heritage and those advocated by Ledeen and CSP. In practice, they amounted

to something very similar, except that Heritage and Hudson preferred to rhetorically emphasize the financial benefits of trading with China, whereas Ledeen and CSP stressed that it was not indiscriminate trade and contributed toward the containment of China.

Despite the general agreement in the neoconservative-led network that China was the most significant challenge to the preservation of American global preeminence, there was no firm consensus on how to deal with Beijing. What was certain was that, despite the supposed magnitude of the threat, regime change was simply not an option, and if military action was threatened, it would be in an attempt to deter war, rather than as part of an offensive strategy directed at the regime. Nonmilitary methods, such as coercive economic measures, could be used to further U.S. objectives vis-à-vis China, but the ends to which they would be put remained, to a certain extent, disputed. Should U.S. policy contain or "realistic[ally] engage," or should it be somewhere in between? Above all, it was the tone of the relationship with China that divided neoconservatives: should it uncompromisingly emphasize China as an adversary or should it stress what benefits might be accrued through a more pragmatic trade relationship? These issues remained unresolved. Even with a less aggressive objective (containment rather than regime change), there was disagreement over how to achieve it.

What was clear, however, was that in advancing a plan to permit no regional or global rivals, Krauthammer, Khalilzad, Kristol, and Kagan had all overstated the existing position of the United States and underestimated the power of a country like China to constrain U.S. freedom of action. The absence of a competing superpower had created the illusion of unipolarity; of the United States as the "single pole of world power" that could now prevent the emergence of future rivals.[45] However, it did not require another *super*power to neutralize the threat of preventive action or regime change. Though it could not compete as America's equal, China already constituted a regional pole strong enough to force the neoconservatives to revert to defensive Cold War paradigms to deal with it. The bipolar global structure of the Cold War period had given way, but in this case, the neoconservatives were still unable to move beyond a stratagem designed for that world.

That they never considered what this meant for their broader objective of "benevolent global hegemony" led to considerable strategic incoherence, for there was a permanent irreconcilable tension between the objective of "unipolarity" and the strategic reality that the United States was not a hegemonic power in either a political, military, or economic sense; not to mention the unconventional methods that could be employed to resist the imperatives of unipolarity.

For Kristol and Kagan, it was another case of short-term failure in terms of their attempt to shape Republican Party policy and affect the actions of the Clinton administration. In 2000, China was granted PNTR. As Kagan himself told the *Washington Post*, "You can't block business interests and free-trade ideology in the Republican Party short of war."[46] *The Weekly Standard* derided the Congressional vote as "Permanent Normal Appeasement."[47] However, the men behind the *Standard* and PNAC had decided that on this issue too, it was now time to focus on who might take over after Clinton left office. They were heartened by a statement made by one of the Republican Party candidates, George W. Bush, who had commented that he considered China to be a "strategic competitor" not a "strategic partner" as Clinton had put it, and wanted to "refocus America's policy in Asia on friends and allies."[48] As with Iraq and missile defense, the time had come to give up trying to influence the Clinton administration and to focus all efforts on the 2000 election.

CHAPTER 9

ELECTION 2000

> Little more than a decade ago, the Cold War thawed … But instead of seizing this moment, the Clinton/Gore administration has squandered it.
>
> George W. Bush, 3 August 2000

> [T]his nation must not retreat.
>
> George W. Bush, 15 February 2000[1]

IN 2003, WILLIAM KRISTOL REFLECTED THAT HE AND OTHERS at PNAC and the *Standard* had not had particularly high hopes for George W. Bush as a foreign policy president. He had supported Bush's opponent in the primaries, Senator John McCain (R-AZ), and was concerned about Bush soliciting advice from the Dean of Stanford University, Condoleezza Rice, who Kristol considered to be "a cautious realist."[2] However, Kristol's pessimism was misplaced. Contrary to the contemporary perception that Bush was inclined toward a more modest view of America's global role, the strategy sketched out by the Bush campaign, although by no means identical to the one put forward by Kristol, was very sympathetic to it.[3] This should not have been surprising since Bush's advisory team included many prominent neoconservatives and, in a more understated manner, even the "cautious realist," Rice, invoked an expansive definition of the national interest.

Despite their uneasiness with Bush's eventual selection as the Republican candidate, Kristol, Robert Kagan, and PNAC in particular, seized the opportunity presented by the 2000 Presidential election to once again promote their vision of a "neo-Reaganite" foreign policy. The election year witnessed another burst of activity from the neoconservative-led network: in addition to those working within the Bush campaign to shape his foreign policy, the election year saw the publication of three more major projects from PNAC and the Middle East Forum. Although

not in a directly coordinated fashion, both the neoconservative think tanks and the Bush campaign outlined an approach that drew on ideas that had been circulating among the neoconservative-led network for the past decade, and which prefigured many aspects of the strategy that Bush would pursue once he came to office and which were accentuated after September 2001.

THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES AND THE BUSH TEAM

Kristol's 1993 call for the creation of "a new governing conservatism" as a positive alternative to Clintonian liberalism, was an ongoing project and, for him, the most important thing was that the chosen candidate ran openly as a conservative and on true conservative principles. In March 2000, he stated again that "ideas do not speak for themselves. Someone must step forward who is capable of making the case for conservative principle [*sic*] as the animating force of a governing party."[4] In particular, the next President should distinguish himself by explaining why he would be a good Commander in Chief. As the world was becoming more dangerous, it was more important than ever to have a leader with the character, ability, and judgment to make life-or-death decisions about where to stake U.S. credibility and commit U.S. troops.[5] Most of all, Kristol wanted a candidate who would recognize that what mattered most in international politics was "the character of the regime"—a state-based approach that, on the one hand, reflected realist paradigms of international security but, on the other, stressed the internal nature of the regime. It was an approach that, in practice, would be defined by support for pro-American regimes.[6]

The Weekly Standard was more supportive of John McCain, until he was defeated in the primaries by Bush, who seemed more in tune with the neoconservative vision and who had given immediate and unflinching support the Kosovo campaign, even endorsing the use of ground troops.[7] In his principal foreign policy speech in March 1999, McCain described an American role in the world that was grounded in the assertive patriotism favored by Kristol, Kagan, and David Brooks. He also asserted the indivisibility of American values and security interests and called for a Reaganite policy of "rogue state rollback."[8] Shortly before McCain was defeated by Bush, Brooks and Kristol had lauded "The McCain Insurrection." Through appealing to the concepts of patriotism and citizenship, McCain had expounded a positive governing philosophy "in the service of American greatness." Bush, on the other hand, had "reverted to tired formulas … the most familiar conservative rhetoric."[9]

Bush, too, had supported the Kosovo campaign, but he had erred in waiting several weeks before making a definitive policy statement whereas McCain had immediately endorsed the military campaign and claimed that if ground troops were necessary to win, then the President should not rule them out.[10] Kristol's perception was that Bush was sympathetic to balance-of-power realism. He claimed that Bush had given speeches asserting that America was "overextended" and that it "d[idn't] need to spend much more on the military." Although there were "neo-Reaganites" among his advisors, Bush was also soliciting advice from "neo-isolationsists," Kristol claimed.[11] Observing the ideological split among Bush's advisors, Kagan commented at an AEI debate that it was unclear which way a Bush Presidency would go.[12] This was a common perception. *Time* magazine opined that while Al Gore was pushing a values-driven foreign policy, Bush would be, "at best, a reluctant interventionist." It pitted Gore's "crusading interventionism" against Bush's apparent "realism." Whereas Gore believed that the world required "active, consistent American leadership," Bush wanted to "stay at home," *Time* claimed. Kagan believed that it was only after September 2001 that Bush truly embraced a neoconservative worldview.[13] This perception of Bush may have been brought on by his open disavowal of nation-building and his commitment to withdrawing U.S. peacekeeping troops from Kosovo, but however it took hold, it was inaccurate. Bush and his advisors put forward a foreign-policy strategy that aimed to preserve America's position as the single pole of world power. In terms of implementation, it was by no means identical to the Kristol-Kagan strategy—for the most part the Bush team still espoused a deterrent posture—but it was nevertheless sympathetic to the vision championed by PNAC; not surprising given the individuals Bush had turned to for advice on foreign policy.

As governor of Texas, Bush was a self-confessed foreign policy neophyte. In Spring 1998, he was invited by George Shultz of Stanford University to discuss international affairs with a group of academics and former politicians including Martin Anderson, a scholar and former Advisor to Presidents Nixon and Reagan; economics professors, John Cogan and John Taylor; and Rice, then serving as the youngest ever Provost of Stanford University. Rice was a former Soviet specialist, who spoke fluent Russian and had been promoted by Brent Scowcroft to Director of Soviet and Eastern European Affairs on the NSC during the period of German reunification. Both Rice and her mentor Scowcroft had reputations as traditional realists.[14] In July 1998, as Bush was contemplating a run for the Presidential nomination, he invited Rice, Anderson, Dick Cheney, and Paul Wolfowitz to his home in Austin, Texas, for further discussions on foreign policy. The following month, Rice went alone

to the Bush family home in Kennebunkport, Maine. She had visited before to brief Bush's father while serving on the NSC but this time, she and the younger Bush discussed America's relations with the rest of the world while bonding over treadmill workouts, rowing machines, and their mutual love of baseball. Rice and Wolfowitz were subsequently appointed Bush's principal foreign policy advisors.[15] In early 1999, Bush formed a foreign policy campaign team comprised of Rice, Wolfowitz, Dov Zakheim, Richard Perle, Stephen Hadley, Robert Zoellick, Richard Armitage, and Robert Blackwill, who had worked alongside Rice on the NSC. Rice christened them "The Vulcans." Cheney increasingly worked alongside the Vulcans until he was chosen as Bush's running mate, although he was not an official member of the Wolfowitz-Rice campaign team.[16] A separate group was also established to focus specifically on missile defense, one of Bush's priorities, and the erstwhile head of the Rumsfeld Commission was the obvious choice to lead it. Anderson, Shultz, Rice, Wolfowitz, Hadley, and Perle all took part in the missile defense group. To counter accusations that he was not knowledgeable enough about the outside world to be America's Commander in Chief, Bush responded that as President, "I'll be surrounded by good, strong, capable, smart people who understand the mission of the United States is to lead the world to peace."[17] Perle commented during the campaign that Bush, like Reagan, was "a big picture person" who could get to the heart of the matter quickly and who instinctively understood the use of power. Even though he "didn't know very much," according to Perle, he still "had the confidence to ask questions that revealed he didn't know very much. … He was eager to learn."[18] Bush the candidate had gathered a mix of advisors, most of whom had been active within the neoconservative-led network during the Clinton years. Out of a total of twelve, only four (Rice, Blackwill, Shultz, and Anderson) had not been involved at some point with the think tanks and lobby groups led by the neocons. They were not, as Kristol had claimed, "neo-isolationists."

BUSH'S STRATEGIC AND IDEOLOGICAL VISION

Bush's two major foreign policy addresses—the Citadel speech in September 1999 and the Reagan library speech in November—provided the best contemporary signposts to his worldview and global strategy. A third source, an article written by Rice in early 2000, also shed light on the candidate's international vision. The Rice article, published in *Foreign Affairs*, has often been cited as evidence that Bush (not to mention Rice) was attracted in part to realism and that this was representative of the split in Bush's advisors.[19] To be sure, there was no unanimity

among his advisors; however, a close examination of her *Foreign Affairs* article indicates that, although Rice was not a Kaganite—she advocated deterrence rather than preemption—she had nonetheless already moved beyond the narrower interests of a realist outlook toward a worldview more sympathetic to unipolarism in substance and even slightly more akin to neoconservatism in its rhetorical style.

After identifying Russia and China as the United States' most likely next great adversaries and warning of the dangers posed by "rogue states," Rice explicitly echoed the Defense Planning Guidance, calling for the United States to

> meet decisively the emergence of any hostile military power in the Asia Pacific region, the Middle East, the Persian Gulf and Europe—areas in which not only our interests but those of our key allies are at stake.[20]

Where Rice differed most from the DPG was in her belief that this dominance could and should be accomplished through deterrence. This put her out of step with neoconservative ideas about offensive action but in step with the Bush campaign. Most notable of all was Rice's statement of support for the intervention in Kosovo for the same reasons that the neoconservatives and their allies had lobbied for it: "some small scale conflicts clearly have an impact upon American strategic interests," she wrote, and Kosovo qualified in this respect because it was "in the backyard of America's most important strategic alliance: Nato."[21] This took Rice beyond Krauthammer and closer to Kagan in the potential importance she ascribed to peripheral conflicts. Like the neocons, Rice agreed that there were no tangible vital interests at stake in Kosovo but that there were equally important intangible interests at stake: protecting American credibility even in a peripheral region and accounting for the security interests of European allies. Although there was a humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo, too, the case for intervention would have been "more tenuous" in the absence of a strategic rationale, she claimed. This summed up Rice's attitude to humanitarian intervention. Without a strategic imperative, U.S. intervention should be "exceedingly rare."[22]

Yet despite her virtual disavowal of humanitarian intervention, Rice still paradoxically invoked moral ideals as an integral part of U.S. foreign policy—thus creating the same tension between power and ideals that was inherent in neoconservative thinking. Again eschewing her former realist credentials, she now rejected "those who would draw a sharp line between power politics and a principled foreign policy based on values" such as human rights and the promotion of democracy. The notion that "you are either a realist or devoted to norms and values" was "a disaster

for American foreign policy," Rice stated, because in fact America's pursuit of its national interest would simultaneously create the conditions that promoted freedom, markets, and peace. In effect, Rice was arguing that interests—broadly defined—and moral ideals converged and that pursuing them was "America's special role". Rice concluded that the U.S. national interest was now defined as "a desire to foster the spread of freedom, prosperity and peace." This was a theme she repeated in her speech to the Republican Party conference in August 2000, in which she reflected upon "America's unique opportunity to lead the forward march of freedom."[23] To be sure, Rice did not ground her vision of the national interest in assertive patriotism, as Brooks and Kristol had done. Foreign policy was not framed as an explicit means to national renewal, although she claimed that it fulfilled a uniquely American role. Neither did Rice endorse preventive action. Yet, her article had clearly moved beyond "cautious realism," as Kristol had described her views, and put her in tune with the other Vulcans, thus setting up an important element of convergence with neoconservatives.

Rice's *Foreign Affairs* article was not the only occasion that the Bush team would be accused of expounding a doctrine too close to realism. Bush's first major speech on foreign policy, at the Citadel, the military college of South Carolina, in September 1999, was not well received by neoconservatives outside the Bush campaign.[24] It was at the Citadel that Bush came out most forcefully against peacekeeping and nation building. America would not retreat from the world, he stated, but it should be "selective in the use of [its] military" and encourage European allies to take over peacekeeping duties in Bosnia and Kosovo. In future there would be no "open-ended deployments or unclear missions," an echo of his advisors' discontent with the Clinton administration. It was also an indication of Bush's view of the purpose of the U.S. military. He stated repeatedly during the campaign that the role of the armed forces was "to fight and win war and therefore prevent war from happening in the first place," a refutation of peacekeeping as well as an endorsement of deterrence.[25] Bush concluded by calling for America to display "the modesty of true strength [and] the humility of real greatness." The word "humility" was cited by Kristol as evidence that Bush favored scaling back America's global commitments.[26] In the context of a speech that focused on the limits rather than on the reach of American power, it seemed to make sense. However, the comment also corresponded with claims made by Bush and his advisors that interests—defined as global primacy—and moral ideals converged: "True strength" could be "modest" and a "great" nation could be "humble" if it projected its power in accordance with its values. The subsequent focus on humility and modesty elided the fact

that those words were referring to *strength* and *greatness*.[27] According to Bush, the convergence of interests and ideals meant that American power was always "tempered by American character," and so it was possible to exercise power "without swagger … without bluster"—but it would be exercised, just not in the form of nation-building or peacekeeping.

On the whole, the Citadel speech dwelt upon the limits that Bush would place on American activism rather than on the reach of U.S. power. In their abstract discussions of "benevolent global hegemony," Kristol and Kagan preferred to concentrate on selling an expansive vision, not on the limits of power even though in reality they did not propose indiscriminate interventionism. The Citadel speech did not sell a grand vision. It was an address specifically about the role of the military that rejected peacekeeping and nation-building and, as a result, implied to some that a Bush presidency would be more cautious in using military power. This interpretation contradicted Bush's support for the use of force in Kosovo but, nevertheless, the perception lingered that, for George W. Bush, being "humble" might mean scaling back.

This seemed to be confirmed in the second Presidential debate when Bush again referred to the need for humility. Yet while invoking this quality, Bush was also explicitly endorsing interventionism:

> If we're an arrogant nation, they'll resent us. If we're a humble nation, but strong, *they'll welcome us*. And it's—our nation stands alone right now in the world in terms of power, and that's why we have to be humble. And yet *project strength* in a way that promotes freedom (emphasis added).[28]

His comments echoed Kristol and Kagan's 1996 assertion that American power was "welcome[d] … and prefer[red]" by most other countries because of its essential benevolence.[29] Bush envisaged that America would continue to project power; the key was doing it in such a way that it would not be rejected. (What might happen in that circumstance was not considered.)

The very same phrase about modest strength and humble greatness was used again by Bush in his second major speech on foreign policy, which this time received a rapturous reception from *The Weekly Standard.* Whereas the Citadel speech had focused on the perceived limits on American power, the Reagan Library speech focused on its reach. Neither speech contradicted the other, however; they were two sides of the same coin, acknowledging America's dominance but making clear that there were circumstances that did not warrant expending American resources, such as peacekeeping operations.

Bush chose to give the speech at the Reagan Library in California so as to associate himself with the former President.[30] According to Kristol, the speech was written by "friends of ours" and, indeed, it was a quintessentially neoconservative speech, infused throughout with visionary, quasi-religious rhetoric eulogizing America's special role as the guarantor of freedom and global peace and prosperity. Foreshadowing the argument that Rice would make in her *Foreign Affairs* article and reflecting neoconservative claims, Bush denounced those who "have tried to pose a choice between American ideals and American interests." "The choice is false," he stated, not only because it was America's decision to promote both simultaneously but because it was the nation's unique destiny to do so. When free markets, free trade, peace, and democracy advanced, America would gain most. This exceptional character and role translated into "a distinctly American internationalism" that embodied both interests and values.[31] Bush rejected the foreign policy "drift" of the Clinton years and called for a new strategy incorporating

> Idealism, without illusions. Confidence, without conceit. Realism, in the service of American ideals.

But Bush's "realism" did not mean a strategy devoted to balances of power or withdrawing from America's dominant position because "the vacuum left by [our] retreat would invite challenges to our power." With the focus of the speech on Europe and Eurasia, he asserted that in practical terms his strategy meant preventing any other power from dominating these regions; sustaining alliances that projected U.S. influence, such as NATO; containing China, although engaging in trade with it; and promoting democratic reform in Russia through mutually beneficial nonmilitary measures such as commercial ties. This, he claimed, would be a foreign policy that reflected the American character: "the modesty of true *strength* [and] the humility of real *greatness*" (emphasis added).

On behalf of the *Standard*'s editors, Kristol and Kagan—the most vocal neoconservatives who were not signed up as Bush advisors—lauded the speech.[32] Unlike the Citadel speech, it offered a vision. Despite Bush's use of the words "humble" and "modest," Kristol and Kagan considered the speech to be "the strongest and clearest articulation of a policy of American global leadership since the end of the Cold War"—better than anything McCain, who was still in the running, had put forward. It was not just the policies Bush favored that were pleasing either; it was also his recognition that such a global role was "an essential part of American national greatness." Now Bush, like McCain, could genuinely claim to be in the tradition of Teddy Roosevelt and Reagan, and whichever candidate

the GOP chose, it would be someone who represented a rejection of Buchananite isolationism. "This is good for the Republican Party," they commented, and "it's also good for America."[33]

BUSH'S POLICIES

If the main debate among neocons and their supporters in the nineties had been how to preserve the unipolar moment rather than whether to do so, the most contentious aspect of Bush's foreign policy would be *how* he intended to execute his "distinctly American internationalism." Speaking at an AEI Transition to Governing debate in his capacity as one of Bush's advisors, Zoellick commented that Bush wanted "to set a structure, as people did fifty years ago, to promote America's interests and values in the future."[34] The foreign policy plank of the GOP Platform called for "a restoration of respected American leadership" and the promotion of "peace through strength."[35] However, where PNAC called for this to be achieved through an offensive strategy, Bush—as seen in the Rice article—officially advocated deterrence as the default posture, although his positions on Iraq and Kosovo would call into question the extent to which he would adhere to this under all circumstances. The chief means of pursuing this would be through deploying a full national missile defense system at the earliest date to deter attacks from rogue states, terrorist groups, and other adversaries seeking WMD. Zoellick said that the type of situation Bush was concerned about was "a repeat of 1990–91 where this time Iraq has nuclear weapons and missiles to deliver them."[36] Kagan praised Bush's "bold" NMD plan, claiming that it would have a transforming effect on the international environment "in terms of our own power and our ability to maintain primacy" (although ultimately Kagan still preferred to view NMD as part of an offensive global strategy).[37]

Bush made other firm commitments that resonated with neoconservative ideas. He openly opposed the U.S. involvement in Somalia and Haiti and believed the Clinton administration was right to resist further involvement in Rwanda.[38] Bush defined his criteria for military intervention in terms of security interests, thus acknowledging that, in practice, ideals alone were not sufficient to compel intervention. "If I think it's in our nation's strategic interest, I'll commit troops," Bush announced during the second Presidential debate. "It needs to be in our vital interest, the mission needs to be clear and the exit strategy obvious."[39] This directly contradicted Kristol and Kagan's belief that the Clinton administration should not have set a fixed timetable for removal of U.S. troops from the Balkans, but it echoed Wolfowitz and Feith's concerns about sending

peacekeepers there in the first place. It also resembled the Powell and Weinberger doctrines, which prioritized strategic interests and exit strategies and mostly eschewed humanitarian interventions, which were more likely to have less determinate objectives. And, like the ideas put forward by the neoconservatives and their supporters, it eschewed "exporting democracy" as the strategic touchstone.[40]

Bush was also firmly committed to giving complete support to Israel, rather than the peace process. This was an inversion of the Oslo logic that reflected the strategy in the Clean Break paper. Though the Republican Platform did not completely disavow the Oslo accords, it made it clear that "our commitment to the security of Israel is an overriding moral and strategic concern." Speaking at the AEI as a representative of the Bush team, Perle stated that "[Bush's] commitment to the security of Israel is not contingent upon Israeli concessions in some American administration concept of what the peace process should produce."[41] On China and Taiwan, Bush's position reflected a compromise between the PNAC position and Wolfowitz' more moderate view. Beijing was a "strategic competitor" not a "strategic partner," as Clinton had designated it, but Bush favored PNTR because "entrepreneurship is freedom" and would be mutually beneficial.[42] On Taiwan, Bush took the view that the Taiwan Relations Act should be enforced as a deterrent measure, an objective that united him with neocons both inside and outside his campaign.[43]

Beyond these concrete priorities and commitments, there were other indications of what a Bush foreign policy might entail. Although there was no particular emphasis on Iraq, it was clear that regime change was the ideal objective. On this, the GOP Platform was unequivocal:

> A new Republican administration will patiently rebuild an international coalition opposed to Saddam Hussein and committed to joint action. … We support the full implementation of the Iraq Liberation Act, which should be regarded as a starting point in a comprehensive plan for the removal of Saddam Hussein and the restoration of international inspections in collaboration with his successor. Republicans recognize that peace and stability in the Persian Gulf is impossible as long as Saddam Hussein rules Iraq.[44]

Finding a credible pretext to remove Saddam might prove more difficult but the aspiration was clearly stated since the Iraq Liberation Act would be only "a starting point." Arming the opposition would be one aspect of Iraq policy but the Platform implied that a Republican administration would be prepared to go beyond this and intervene more directly. When pressed on this point by Kagan at the AEI Transition to Governing debate, Perle refused to comment on exactly what further measures a Bush

administration might take, countering that it was an inappropriate level of detail at that stage and that although Bush was committed to supporting the opposition, "it's impossible to describe second and third and fourth moves" if their offensive were to fail.[45] Bush himself admitted in the presidential debates that he would like to remove Saddam although he declined giving further details. Although Cheney had opposed removing Saddam in 1991, he too expressed concern that the sanctions had started to fray, that there were no inspections, that the United States no longer knew what was going on in Iraq, and acknowledged that there might be circumstances under which regime change would have to be considered.[46]

Although Bush's global strategy would rest for the most part on deterrence, his support for full implementation of the ILA and possibly more indicated an openness to a more proactive strategy where necessary. Deterrence might be the default position, but unofficially it seemed that Bush might be inclined towards pursuing regime change when it was in the interests of maintaining American preeminence. This perception was bolstered by Bush's position on Kosovo. He expressed support for the NATO action in Serbia on the grounds that it had successfully catalyzed Milosevic's fall. "An unchecked Milosevic would harm Nato," Bush claimed and he gave credit to the Clinton administration for using force. Like Rice, he supported the Kosovo campaign for essentially the same reasons as PNAC: because of the challenge Milosevic presented to the credibility of NATO.[47]

It was not just these policies that resonated with the neoconservative vision. The style and presentation of the Republican Platform resembled the rhetorical posture of PNAC. Like the Reagan Library speech, it was infused with a grandiose and quintessentially neoconservative invocation of freedom, including candid references to promoting democracy on the grounds that "America is safest … when more and more countries join the United States in an emerging fellowship of freedom."[48] Yet once again, the rhetoric was an abstraction that was contradicted by some of the actual policies espoused in the very same document. Despite the rhetorical embrace of freedom, Republicans would make sure that, with no strings attached, the United States would "restore its underlying good and cooperative relations with the oil exporting nations, most importantly Saudi Arabia." Interests won the day in Latin America, too: despite the leftist Hugo Chavez's Presidential election victories in 1998 and 2000 (both endorsed by the Carter Center), the Platform announced that Venezuela was one of several Latin American countries where "democracy is faltering or under serious attack." What exactly this meant was not stated, but in the case of Venezuela, by coincidence or design, the charge corresponded with the inauguration of Chavez's so-called

Bolivarian revolution, in which the Venezuelan leader used the country's oil wealth to openly challenge the American-led economic order, pursue socialistic reforms at home and court Fidel Castro abroad. (Chavez would subsequently be dubbed part of a Latin American "axis of evil" in 2002 by Constantine Menges of the Hudson Institute, while Gaffney claimed that Chavez symbolized "the re-emergence of totalitarianism in Latin America.")[49] Once again there was no acknowledgement of cases where the imperatives of primacy conflicted with moral ideals. In the case of Saudi Arabia, the contradiction was simply ignored; in the case of Chavez, the Republicans attempted to resolve the tension by painting the popularly elected leader as undemocratic.

Was Bush a neocon then? In his rhetorical style, many of the policies he espoused and, indeed, the tensions in them between interests and ideals, he was certainly close to them. Bush drew heavily from the ideas of the neoconservative-led network; this is hardly surprising considering whom he had chosen to advise him on foreign policy and his admission that he required guidance from them. Kristol later commented that some of Bush's subsequent appointments as President "suggested at least an openness to a neo-Reaganite point of view," but Bush had embraced many aspects of Kristol's worldview, even in the campaign stage.[50] There was an important substantive difference too, however, between Bush and some of the other unipolarists. Where the Defense Planning Guidance had called for preventive action, Bush called for America to maintain its dominant position primarily through deterrence. For the most part, the Cold War paradigm would suffice. Yet Bush's support for the Kosovo intervention and his aspirations for Iraq indicated an openness to more offensive action if and when it was required. On balance, then, Bush was very sympathetic to the neoconservative perspective and the unipolarist project but, for the most ardent interventionists, he still fell short.

NEOCONSERVATIVES IN ELECTION YEAR

The extent of this convergence was not recognized by neoconservatives at the time, however. Just as they had done in 1996, neoconservative-led think tanks and lobby groups made a concerted effort to inform election-year debate with major new projects, which continued to explain and develop neoconservative ideas in new ways. PNAC was most active in this respect, publishing what would be a canonical edited volume of essays about U.S. global strategy by some of the most esteemed neoconservatives as well as a long study of U.S. military posture for the twenty-first century. Daniel Pipes's Middle East Forum also released a

lengthy report by the specially convened Lebanon Study Group, which proposed new ways to alter the power dynamics of the Middle East in America's favor.

The PNAC volume, edited by Kagan and Kristol, was titled *Present Dangers: Crisis and Opportunity in American Foreign and Defense Policy*. It was published by Encounter Books of San Francisco, the publishing house of the Bradley Foundation. The objective of the publication was to "challenge America to make sure that foreign affairs, a sleeping issue for the last eight years, gets a wake-up call in election year 2000."[51] With chapters on Iraq, Iran, Russia, China, North Korea, Europe and Nato, Israel, morality in foreign policy and more, as well as contributors including Wolfowitz, Perle, Kristol, Kagan, Elliott Abrams, Jeffrey Gedmin, and William Schneider, the book was the most authoritative and comprehensive exposition of neoconservative foreign policy in a single volume to date.

In some cases, it confirmed existing predispositions. Perle tellingly wrote that "as a last resort … we should build up our own ground forces in the region" to assist Iraqi exiles should an anti-Saddam offensive fail, indicating that he also would support the use of ground troops against Saddam.[52] In other cases, more restrained policies were proposed. In the case of North Korea, Nicholas Eberstadt counseled that the United States should work toward containing the regime by refusing to negotiate with Pyongyang and cutting off subsidies but no further action was necessary since the regime was likely to implode eventually anyway.[53]

A more moderate strategy was also offered in the case of Iran. Reuel Marc Gerecht, a former CIA Middle East specialist who later worked for PNAC, advocated that the United States "remain essentially a bystander" as the Iranian regime fell into decline, because apart from increasing funding for Radio Liberty, publicizing Tehran's human rights abuses, and issuing more visa for Iranians to come the United States, there was simply very little effective action Washington could take.[54] Throughout the Clinton years the neocons had written few articles devoted exclusively to Iran. Unlike in Iraq, there was simply no opportunity or pretext to argue for the use of military force against Tehran. Neither was there an influential Iranian lobby group in Washington, comparable to the INC, which had provided the initial plan for regime change. Moreover, the election in 1997 of the reformist Prime Minister, Mohammed Khatami, put more moderate forces in the ascendancy in Tehran anyway and led to some limited progress in U.S.-Iranian relations, which made the possibility of military action even more unlikely and out-of-touch with reality. Gerecht's ideas seemed to reflect this.[55]

The relative moderation on the issues of Iran and North Korea was uncharacteristic for a publication emanating from PNAC but it indicated

that despite the importance that the neocons and their allies ascribed to regime change in certain cases and in spite of their belief in American unipolarity, they still recognized that there was a hierarchy of security interests (with Iraq being the most important) and that for one reason or another it was not always possible, or even necessary, to use military force. The 2000 PNAC volume demonstrated that, rhetoric notwithstanding, the neocons were not devoid of all pragmatism and that they believed the United States could remain the single pole of world power without pursuing regime change in an indiscriminate fashion.

In their contribution to the volume, Kristol and Kagan acknowledged "the need for judgment and prudence," a change of tone for them. Although they maintained the same broad strategic outlook, this time their essay seemed chastened by past criticism of them for being so abstract and seemingly indiscriminate in applying American power.[56] For the first time as *co*authors, they stated explicitly that there were some limits to what America could accomplish, even if it moved beyond a deterrent posture. "No doctrine of foreign policy can do away with the need for judgment and prudence," they acknowledged. Deciding when, where, and how to intervene was "an art, not a science," and it required a measurement of power, principles, and perceptions "which cannot be quantified." In practical terms, this gave them room to maneuver when it came to areas where only values rather than interests were threatened and where there were multiple competing cases for military intervention. Nevertheless, this should not prevent the United States from maintaining its position by shaping the international environment to its own advantage. This meant adopting an expansive definition of the national interest: "[T]he United States . . . [sh]ould conceive of itself as at once a European power; an Asian power; a Middle Eastern power and, of course, a Western Hemispheric power." This meant sometimes intervening "even when we cannot prove that a narrowly construed 'vital interest' of the United States is at stake"—in other words when the stakes were intangible. It also meant being more inclined to weigh in before crises erupted rather than after. Ultimately, they argued,

> [t]he question . . . is not whether the United States should intervene everywhere or nowhere. The decision Americans need to make is whether the United States should generally lean forward, as it were, or sit back.[57]

This was primarily a question of methods rather than ends: should the United States "lean forward" and embrace preventive action, or "sit back" and rely on deterrence to maintain its position.

Wolfowitz echoed these sentiments in his own contribution to the PNAC volume, arguing that foreign policy was all about "discrimination, the application of judgment and the balancing of competing claims." Although he reiterated his belief that a realistic foreign policy would incorporate moral ideals, Wolfowitz also warned, "We should be wary of a policy that devotes equal effort to promoting democracy everywhere, regardless of the particular circumstances." One issue that needed to be taken into account was "the question of the importance of a country for U.S. interests."[58]

Although "leaning forward" as Kristol and Kagan urged, meant embracing a strategy with regime change as "a central component," even on this issue they were more modest than usual, acknowledging that in practical terms, tactics would vary from case to case, that military force was not always a desirable or practical option, that the United States would not dispatch troops to every regime it found odious, and that it could not expect rapid transformations in every rogue state or hostile power. The underlying rationale was still to seek "not coexistence but transformation" but the case of Iraq was not representative of how they would handle every regime they sought to change.[59] This new calibration culminated in their pragmatic declaration in a *Standard* editorial that the next President should pursue a strategy that prioritized "regime-*improvement* and regime change" (emphasis added).[60] In other words, there might be occasions when improving a regime rather than changing it would have to suffice.

Yet for Kristol and Kagan this recognition of limits did not mean that America was not "unipolar." To the contrary, they affirmed elsewhere their belief that unipolarity still existed in 2000 and that *the* priority for the next President would be to determine "whether today's 'unipolar moment,' to use columnist Charles Krauthammer's phrase … will be extended."[61] Yet even Kristol and Kagan had to acknowledge that America's supposed unipolarity did not mean being able to pursue regime change relentlessly or accomplish all objectives everywhere at once. Unipolarity did not mean omnipotence, they acknowledged; but they still believed that America was strong enough to preserve and extend its position unilaterally where necessary. Any constraints that did exist were in no way comparable to the Cold War and were not so inhibiting as to preclude an offensive posture where necessary, even if this was sometimes dedicated to regime improvement rather than change.

Editing a 400-page volume in an election year was not enough for Kristol and Kagan, however. In addition to *Present Dangers*, they also oversaw the publication of a lengthy PNAC report on America's military posture, titled *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources*

for a New Century. Chaired by Gary Schmitt and Donald Kagan, the report represented the views of PNAC but was compiled after contributions from twenty-five other participants including Eliot Cohen, Stephen Cambone (George W. Bush's future Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence), Thomas Donnelly of PNAC, Frederick Kagan (brother of Robert), Mark Lagon (then of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, later a PNAC director), Lewis Libby (who had worked on the DPG), Abram Shulsky, Wolfowitz, and Zakheim.[62]

The study was explicitly designed to build upon the defense strategy outlined in the DPG.[63] The report would outline a grand strategy "to maintain American military pre-eminence, to secure American geopolitical leadership and to preserve the American peace".[64] Among its principal recommendations were that defense spending be increased to a minimum of 3.5 percent–3.8 percent of the GNP, adding $15–20 billion to annual defense expenditure. This would give the U.S. military the capability to fight and win two simultaneous major regional conflicts—the formula first conceived by Colin Powell in the early nineties—whilst also performing "constabulary" duties associated with shaping the security environment in other critical regions. In fact, the report envisaged the restoration of the military's personnel strength to the levels anticipated in the Base Force; in other words, PNAC was defending and advocating the force levels put forward by Powell in 1991.

The United States would also deploy missile defenses and maintain nuclear strategic superiority over Russia, China, and all emerging challengers. In general there should be a repositioning of U.S. forces southwards and eastwards to respond to the strategic realities of the twenty-first century.[65] However, there would be no change in forces in the Middle East. In particular, the report stated that while the unresolved conflict with Saddam "provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the regime of Saddam Hussein."[66] Similarly, Korean unification might call for the reduction of US forces on the peninsula but "the changes would really reflect a *change* in their mission … not the *termination* of their mission" (emphasis in original).[67] In other words, America's global military presence should not be contingent on the existence of identifiable threats; even without them it should remain as a demonstration of American commitment in order to prevent instability and preclude future challenges.

In addition, the report argued that the United States needed to exploit the revolution in military affairs by undertaking a vast modernization program to preserve U.S. military preeminence. However, "absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor," this transformation would be costly, time-consuming, and

jeopardized by domestic constraints.[68] Just as the neoconservatives and their allies knew what they wanted to do in Iraq, the contributors to the PNAC report knew how they wanted to modernize the military and revolutionize warfare; the question was whether there would ever be conditions that were politically expedient to pursuing these policies.

The final major attempt to spark debate in election year came from the Middle East Forum (MEF), which took up the issue of Syrian dominance of Lebanon and its implications for the US position in the Middle East. In 1976, a year after Lebanon's civil war began, the Syrians had been invited into the country by the Lebanese Christians as protection against the rise of Islamic extremism among Lebanese Muslims. Initially welcomed as allies by the country's Christians, the Syrians outstayed their welcome. When the civil war ended in 1990, the Syrian military declined to leave and subsequently dominated all aspects of political decision-making in Beirut. Moreover, Damascus' refusal to recognize Israel and its proliferation of WMD led the Clinton administration to label it a "rogue state."[69]

The Lebanon Study Group (LSG) was chaired by Daniel Pipes and Ziad Abdelnour, an investment banker and president of the United States Committee for a Free Lebanon. The group brought together thirty-three statesmen, diplomats, legislators, military officers, scholars, and business leaders to analyze the situation in Lebanon and "recommend assertive measures in the interests of the United States, Lebanon, and the Middle East at large."[70] Among its members were Abrams, Paula Dobriansky, Feith, Gaffney, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Perle, Michael Rubin of WINEP, and David Wurmser of the AEI.

For these members of the group, the report's themes concurred with the broader strategic approach to the region shared by the neocons and their allies. That strategy by now consisted of three interrelated aspects that were valuable and worthwhile in their own right but which together, it was hoped, would lead to a major pro-American regional realignment. The first two elements, concerning Iraq and Israel, had dominated neoconservative discourse on the Middle East during the Clinton years. In this report, however, the focus was on the third aspect—challenging the regime in Syria.

The Clean Break paper had already called for "weakening, containing and even rolling back Syria," whilst Wurmser had subsequently asserted that U.S. policy should be informed by "the crumbling nature of Baathism" in both Syria and Iraq.[71] In 1998, Perle described Syria as "a weak pathetic troublemaker" and argued that "the longer [it] is left in its current state of general isolation the better." Israel should not negotiate with the allegedly decaying regime in Damascus, Perle advised, and the United States should not be encouraging Syrian entry into the

international community "where it doesn't belong under its current leadership."[72] Abrams believed that a free Lebanon should be unequivocally asserted as an American interest and made part of American calculations in dealing with Syria.[73] While not calling outright for regime change in Damascus, Krauthammer stated that the United States should try to change Syrian behavior by treating it "like the rogue state it is … and be subject to the same economic and diplomatic quarantine that its fellow terrorist brethren—North Korea, Cuba, Libya, Iran, Iraq, and Sudan—have all earned from the United States."[74] Going even further, Pipes argued that it was only when Syrian leader, Hafez al-Assad, worried about becoming the target of military confrontation that he might end his support for Hezbollah.[75]

The report of the Lebanon Study Group posited that to advance regional objectives, U.S. foreign policy should "reflect a commitment to affecting profound change in Lebanon." It targeted both the Lebanese regime and its sponsors in Damascus, but advocated mainly nonmilitary measures designed to coerce the Syrian regime on a long-term basis. These included a statement of policy from Washington calling for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon; the diversion of U.S. aid to Lebanon to the country's NGOs; using the prospect of aid as a carrot to change Syrian behavior; encouraging Israel to negotiate directly with Lebanon; taking Congressional action against Damascus, such as sanctions; and, if necessary, freezing diplomatic relations completely. If such measures proved ineffective, then military force might be considered, but only as a last resort. Regime change in both Lebanon and Syria was not a short-term objective but something to work towards in the long term. The report outlined a proactive strategy that favored making change happen rather than reacting to it, but it advocated nonmilitary methods. To be sure, change in Damascus would also ideally be husbanded indirectly by military action in Iraq, but the LSG favored avoiding the use of further military force directly against either the Lebanese or the Syrians. Once again, this demonstrated an understanding that military force might not be the first option in all cases.

* * *

Four years after the 2000 election, Kagan was asked by journalist George Packer how his ideas had traveled from the pages of *Commentary* into the Bush administration in January 2001. Kagan's reply was that they had not. Bush had never been a neoconservative until after 9/11: "September 11 is the turning point," he claimed, "Not anything else. This is not what Bush was on September 10."[76] Whether Kagan had been paying insufficient

attention to the Bush campaign or whether he sought to deflect attention from the neoconservatives in the messy aftermath of the Iraq War, his comment did not cohere with the views expressed by the Bush team (including some of Kagan's closest intellectual allies) and the Republican Party during the Presidential campaign. On this occasion, the neoconservative-led network had exerted decisive influence over the next President. He would reward over twenty of them with jobs in his administration (although not the two most important activists, Kristol and Kagan).[77]

Bush and his advisors who would take up positions in his administration in early 2001 did so with the objective of preserving America's position as the single pole of world power. Kagan was correct in claiming that his network had "ke[pt] alive a certain way of looking at foreign policy," even though there was not a complete consensus on how to achieve its ambitious objective.[78] Nevertheless, the election year activity both inside and outside of the Bush campaign succeeded in terms of the mobilization of a network that successfully triumphed over realist thinkers with narrower interests.

However, it did not bring resolution to the contradictions in neoconservative thought between power and ideals or rhetoric and strategic reality. If anything, they solidified further and became entrenched in the Bush campaign as well. Although there were signs of some relative moderation—a rare open acknowledgement from both Kristol and Kagan that "judgment and prudence" were still required—this did not amount to a reassessment of either the fundamental premise of unipolarity and its imperatives or the obsolescence of a strategy that focused almost exclusively on state-based and military affairs. In fact with the renewed emphasis on Syria and Lebanon, the belief in states as the only international actors worth engaging (or challenging) was solidified further. In addition, PNAC reiterated its belief that the unipolar moment still existed, despite eight years of apparent neglect under Clinton. As elements of the network—both neocons and their unipolarist allies—entered office in 2001, its objective was clear: U.S. foreign policy would now be guided as far as possible by the imperatives of maintaining and extending the unipolar moment.

Yet having a desired objective was one thing; having the opportunity to pursue it was another. Unipolarism was not an inevitable trajectory and there were still some disagreements over how to achieve it in practice. Ultimately, its fate would depend upon Presidential leadership, bureaucratic advice and struggles, public and Congressional opinion, and external events. Fortunately for the unipolarists, they were in a strong position, with representatives at the top tier of government (Cheney and Rumsfeld), over twenty appointees in total, and a President sympathetic to their vision. If events turned in their favor, they would certainly know how to take advantage of them.

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Conclusion

The Unipolarists in Power

In 2004, William Kristol reflected on the efforts of the neoconservatives and their allies over the previous decade:

> None of this work had much immediate impact in the late 1990s. What was accomplished, in a relatively short period of time, was to bring back to life a certain strain of foreign-policy inspired by Harry Truman, Henry "Scoop" Jackson, and Ronald Reagan. The strain of thought … was taken seriously in late 1990s foreign policy circles in Washington. But it was a minority strain even amongst Republicans and conservatives, as exemplified by neoconservative support for US intervention in the Balkans.[1]

With the important exception of NMD, Kristol was largely right: there were few significant short term achievements for the neoconservative-led network during the Clinton years. The network had always had three principal objectives: to affect change in the short term, to marginalize realism and a supposed isolationism within the Republican Party and the nation at large, and to develop an alternative strategy that could be pursued if a return to government materialized. In two out of three respects, the network achieved only limited success: apart from on NMD (and the precedent it set for intelligence analysis before the Iraq War), it did not manage to affect significant change in the Clinton administration's policies and it did not manage to isolate realism within the Republican Party, as demonstrated by the GOP stance on Kosovo.

However, on the long term issue of building a strategy for unipolarity, the outcome was far more successful. The neocons and their unipolarist allies may have been a "minority strain" within the Republican establishment, but they had the sympathy of the new President and many of

them entered government in the early months of 2001. Incoherencies, tensions, and omissions in their strategy notwithstanding, what they did have was a set of priorities (Iraq, NMD, and Israel, in particular) that they hoped to pursue if and when they returned to office. Above all, these policies were to be directed toward the maintenance of America's supposed unipolarity.

To be sure, neoconservatives such as Wolfowitz, Feith, and Perle occupied only second tier and consultative positions in the new administration; but two of their key intellectual allies—namely Cheney and Rumsfeld—who shared the neocons' commitment to the pursuit of American unipolarity had cabinet positions and wielded enormous influence within the new administration. The ideas that had percolated in the neoconservative-led network during the nineties—with significant help from Rumsfeld on missile defense and Cheney as the originator of the DPG—now had vocal advocates at the highest level, not to mention the continuation of lobbying from outside the administration. Although some of the most vocal neoconservative activists, such as Kristol and Kagan, remained on the outside, the unipolarist coalition that they had led during the Clinton years now found itself in a position of some considerable influence in the new administration. Ten of their PNAC founding signatories worked for or as consultants to the Bush administration (including the Vice President and Secretary of Defense), while others, such as Gaffney, continued their work outside the administration. What sealed the influence of those on the inside was a conservative President whose deliberate leadership style was—in his own words—to surround himself "[with] good, strong, capable, smart people" and whose gut instincts seemed consistently closer to theirs than to his choice for Secretary of State, Colin Powell. Without such a President, their influence might well have been far less profound.

Having a goal should not be confused with having the opportunity to pursue it, but there were hints in Bush's pre-9/11 policy deliberations that the administration wanted to pursue policies conducive to the maintenance of unipolarity; policies that the neoconservative-led network had lobbied for while out of power. Early on in his administration, Bush made his position on Israel and Palestine clear. Publicly, he took a step back from the conflict and gave the Sharon government a virtual free hand to suppress the second Palestinian intifada. There was no prospect of Bush reviving Clinton's failed efforts to rescue the Oslo process at the Taba talks in January 2001. Privately, Bush made his position clear: "We're going to correct the imbalances of the previous administration on the Mideast conflict. We're going to tilt it back to Israel."[2] This was a policy that would culminate in Bush's June 2002 call for the

Palestinians to reject Yasser Arafat and "elect new and different" leaders if they wanted American support for a Palestinian state.

NMD was also high on the administration's agenda in the pre-9/11 period. On 1 May 2001, Bush spoke at the National Defense University and announced that it was time to "move beyond the constraints of the 30-year old A[nti] B[allistic] M[issle] Treaty." There were many potential adversaries in the world, such as Saddam Hussein, who sought weapons of mass destruction to intimidate their neighbors and "to keep the United States … from helping friends and allies in strategic parts of the world." In other words, possession of WMD might check U.S. freedom of action. A strategy of deterrence was no longer sufficient; America needed new concepts "that rel[ied] on both offensive and defensive forces."[3] (Condoleezza Rice was scheduled to give another major speech about NMD on 11 September, though it was canceled after the terrorist attacks.[4]) The proclivity for offensive action was also reflected in Rumsfeld's military planning initiatives. In June, he presented the Guidance and Terms of Reference for the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), which called for the active "exten[sion] [of] the conditions favorable to peace and the U.S. geo-strategic position far into the future" and for preserving US global leadership and freedom of action. In his accompanying testimony to Congress, Rumsfeld asked: "What checks and balances are there on Saddam Hussein and Kim Jong Il? … We cannot rely on them being deterred."[5]

The ensuing QDR report, which was released three weeks after 9/11, was revised to include gestures toward the problem of terrorism, but remained predominantly a reflection of the Defense Department's pre-9/11 thinking. In particular, it encapsulated Rumsfeld's ideas about planning for uncertainty—or for the "unknowns"—and moving toward more offensive action. Future military planning had to be based on the fact that in the post–Cold War world, there was "a great deal of uncertainty about the potential sources of military threats, the conduct of war in the future, and the form that threats and attacks against the Nation will take." As such, the United States should move toward a "capabilities-based approach" rather than a "threat-based approach;" in other words, it should focus on developing its capabilities so that it could defeat any and every potential adversary imaginable, rather than focusing on a single enemy.[6] This would ensure that the United States remained strong enough to preclude the rise of any rival, wherever it might come from. It was a strategy that targeted no one in particular but could potentially be directed against anyone. This would also have the advantage of countering challengers who relied on surprise and deception strategies—the problems Rumsfeld and others had sought to tackle in the 1998 missile

defense commission through the use of hypothesis-based analysis. The capabilities-based approach would be complemented by a move towards "forward deterrence" and an "offensive nuclear posture," which would be outlined in greater detail in the 2002 Nuclear Posture Review.[7] Such a strategy might also mean changing regimes:

> US forces must maintain the capability … to impose the will of the United States and its coalition partners on any adversaries, including states or non-state entities. Such a decisive defeat could include changing the regime of an adversary state or occupation of foreign territory until U.S. strategic objectives are met.[8]

The ultimate purpose of this distinctly echoed the objectives expressed in the DPG. The United States would ultimately seek to "dissuade other countries from initiating future military competitions" and to "preclude[e] hostile domination of critical areas, particularly Europe, Northeast Asia, the East Asian littoral and the Middle East and Southwest Asia."[9] In essence, the QDR called for the United States to maintain its dominance in every region of the world through preventive action if necessary; the objective that the neoconservatives and their unipolarist allies had been calling for since 1992. Thus, the move towards pre-emptive—or more accurately preventive—action pre-dated 9/11, though that event catalyzed its emergence as a "doctrine."[10]

The aspirations of the neoconservative-led network were reflected before 9/11 in other ways as well. Although Iraq was not the most immediate priority for Bush upon assuming office, it was certainly on his administration's agenda, and there were signs of a tougher approach based on policy deliberations and personnel. The Pentagon appointed Randy Scheunemann as its Iraq transition coordinator. Scheunemann was the author of the 1998 Iraq Liberation Act, a future director of PNAC, and in 2002 was the founder of the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq. (The Iraq transition coordinator's post was filled by the State Department during the Clinton administration.)[11] At the first meeting of the NSC on 30 January 2001, Iraq was the first item on the agenda. Rumsfeld, who had publically declared his support for regime change with PNAC in 1998, hypothesized: "Imagine what the region would look like without Saddam and with a regime that is aligned with U.S. interests. It would change everything in the region and beyond. It would demonstrate what U.S. policy is all about."[12] On February 6, Bush announced that the United States would resume funding opposition efforts inside Iraq for the first time since the Iraqi army overran the rebels' main base in 1996.[13] Plans were also made for some rebels to receive limited military training

in Texas in March. "This is important because this is the first time we are receiving lethal training with the United States government funding," said Francis Brooke, Ahmed Chalabi's Washington aide.[14] Ten days later, the administration undertook the most extensive bombing of Iraqi positions since December 1998.[15]

There was no clear-cut consensus on how to deal with Iraq at this stage, however. An interagency group on Iraq was established by the administration and led by Richard Haass, director of Policy Planning at the State Department, which suggested supporting what was effectively Chalabi's plan: US support for an uprising by Iraqi rebels and exiles. This was considered from late April to the end of July in deputies' meetings of high-ranking CIA officials; Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage; Wolfowitz and Cheney's national security adviser, Libby; and in the Principals Committee of Rice, Cheney, Powell, and George Tenet, the CIA chief.[16] Wolfowitz, pressing the activist agenda, proposed the bombing of dams to recreate the marshlands in Iraq and, with his assistant, Khalilzad, drafted further proposals for the arming and training of insurgents: the strategy they had supported since the late nineties. Rumsfeld, however, was skeptical of the utility of further covert action in Iraq and called instead for the bolstering of the no-fly zones. Thus, while "A Liberation Strategy" was completed on 1 August, no specific recommendations were put to the President.[17] What it did indicate, though, was that regime change in Iraq was under discussion before 9/11, albeit not as the administration's top priority—which some neocons outside the administration were unhappy about. PNAC's Reuel Marc Gerecht asked if the United States was really serious about toppling Saddam and claimed that "the Bush Administration has continued and actually surpassed its predecessor's display of timidity in the Middle East".[18]

None of this constitutes definitive proof that the Bush administration would have invaded Iraq and elevated the concept of preventive war even without 9/11. What these early deliberations do show, though, is that key individuals who had been associated with the neoconservative-led network, and were now serving in top-tier and second-tier positions in the Bush administration, took into government with them many of the views that they had expressed during the Clinton years. They had a set of aspirations, which informed their thinking and, in the case of the QDR, formed the basis of actual military planning before 9/11 occurred.

9/11, however, was instrumental in terms of the implementation and expansion of some of these policies. Preventive action, which had been conceived of as a means to preserve and extend the unipolar moment, was presented post-9/11 as a strategy to defeat terrorists who could not be deterred because they were willing to die. Even Perle remarked

that the document which encapsulated this—Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy—bore a striking resemblance to the Defense Planning Guidance.[19]

Neocons and their allies both inside and outside the administration began to opportunistically link Islamist terrorism to Saddam Hussein's Iraq. An invasion of Iraq was quickly recast as an integral part of a "war on terror," despite the fact that terrorism had received virtually no attention from the neocons during the Clinton years. On 20 September 2001, PNAC sent another letter, this time to President Bush, stating that, "even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the [9/11] attack, any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq."[20] In contrast, there was no mention of terrorism in any of the previous letters on Iraq. This letter presented what its signatories claimed was "the minimum necessary if this war is to be fought effectively and brought to a successful conclusion." Notably the "minimum" steps did not include the promotion of democracy in Iraq or anywhere else.

The PNAC view was also clearly shared by key members of the Bush administration, who had been active within the network during the nineties and saw the events of September 11 as a gateway to something more than just the destruction of the Taliban. Just five hours after the attacks on New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania, Donald Rumsfeld called for "Best info fast. Judge whether good enough to hit S[addam] H[ussein] at same time. Not only O[sama] B[in] L[aden] … Go massive. Sweep it all up. Things related and not."[21] National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, called together the senior staff of the NSC and asked them to think about "how do you capitalize on these opportunities?"[22] In April 2002, she described the post-9/11 world as "a period not just of grave danger, but of enormous opportunity … a period akin to 1945 to 1947."[23] In his memoirs, Douglas Feith, the third highest official in the Pentagon, recalled that for the Bush administration, "identifying the perpetrators was not the same as deciding how to define the enemy."[24] Two days after the attacks, Feith noted, "the President, Rice and Rumsfeld were already discussing the war as an effort against not only al Qaida but the terrorists' network broadly conceived, including state sponsors of terrorism."[25]

The administration's immediate response to 9/11 is now well known. Whereas it had struggled to define its Iraq policy before 9/11, now regime change came to the fore with 9/11 providing the pretext. September 12 saw a collective cabinet decision that while the first round of the "war on terror" would be in Afghanistan, the second round would be in Iraq.[26] By 13 September, Rumsfeld had asked for scenarios for an assault upon Iraq and for a specific contingency plan to seize and hold the southern Iraqi

oilfields, complementing and moving beyond a plan for an attack by 10,000 insurgents supported by U.S. airpower; although after extensive debate the NSC rejected the proposal, tabled by Wolfowitz, to hit Iraq immediately.[27] In broader strategic terms, the attacks were interpreted in such a way as to support the administration's existing move toward offensive action. The QDR stated that "the attack on the United States … will require us to move forward more rapidly in these directions, even while we are engaged in the war against terrorism."[28]

Feith and Abram Shulsky also played a vital role in furnishing the intelligence to justify the invasion of Iraq. Reflecting the lessons learned from the 1976 Team B experiment and the 1998 Rumsfeld Commission (and, in Shulsky's case, his study of Leo Strauss[29]), the two neocons established a small intelligence office in the Pentagon that would challenge the CIA's intelligence on Iraq's alleged links to al Qaeda. The Policy Counter-Terrorism Evaluation Group was set up in the days after 9/11 in order to find evidence that might link Saddam Hussein to Al Qaeda. In 2002 the group was expanded into the Office of Special Plans (OSP), which was answerable to Wolfowitz. The analysis produced by the OSP was characterized by its reliance on hypothesis-based analysis. The OSP began with the premise that Saddam Hussein *did* have links to Al Qaeda and cherry-picked information that might support that hypothesis, whilst ignoring anything that could disprove it.[30] The existence of an ideologically committed intelligence unit that told senior officials what they wanted to hear created intense pressure on the CIA to reconsider its own analyses, with the Vice President making an unprecedented personal visit to Langley to talk to analysts about the alleged Iraq–Al Qaeda link. In 2002, Feith's office produced a report documenting the supposed connections. After it was leaked to *The Weekly Standard*, Cheney publically defended the OSP report as "the best source of information" available on the Saddam–Al Qaeda link, despite it being rejected by the CIA.[31] Nevertheless, the existence of the OSP created intense pressure for the CIA to toe the line and by October 2002, the Intelligence Community had managed to construct a National Intelligence Estimate that the administration could present to the public as the rationale for war.[32]

Yet although the neoconservatives and their sympathizers succeeded in selling an invasion of Iraq, as well as a more offensive military strategy there were still serious strategic and methodological tensions and inconsistencies in the unipolarist project. The focus on Iraq facilitated unity amongst neocons inside and outside the Bush administration; but there were other tensions that Iraq could not resolve. The false premise of 'unipolarity' failed to account for other states that, although not competing superpowers, could nevertheless prevent the exercise of unipolar power and preventive action

on a regional or global basis—a complication faced by the Bush administration with regard to both China and North Korea.[33]

The failure to acknowledge unconventional forms of resistance was writ large in the aftermath of the Iraq War, as was the neoconservatives' glib but deadly contention that American power would be simply "welcome[ed] … and prefer[red]" wherever it was applied.[34] Ultimately, the pursuit of unipolarity was futile; as a concept, it was too simplistic to encompass the different levels—military, economic, and transnational—on which international relations functioned. At the heart of the unipolarist project was a rejection of the Cold War strategic paradigm of containment and deterrence. These strategies were outdated, the neocons claimed, because they were premised upon the existence of a competing superpower. However, the "roll back" of an anti-American regime in Baghdad became a case of containment: containment of forces that the invasion unwittingly unleashed, containment of a new terrorism, of the new Al Qaeda franchise, and containment of sectarian rivalries that simmer through Iraq and beyond. While there has been no further attack (at the time of writing) on the United States itself, the number of terrorist attacks worldwide has increased dramatically. From 2003–2007, there was a 35 percent rise in the number of jihadist attacks outside Iraq and Afghanistan. Including the attacks in those two countries, the increase was 607 percent.[35]

Moreover, no amount of rhetorical posturing could alter the imperatives of "unipolar" power. The idealistic rhetoric that some of the neocons used created a widespread impression that they were firmly in the Wilsonian tradition and that democratization was paramount for them. But this rhetoric was deceptive and grossly disproportionate to the actual place of moral ideals in practice, which was as a tertiary concern that might be pursued through non-military means if and when this did not conflict with strategic imperatives. For the neocons, military intervention was to be determined on the basis of the strategic imperatives of unipolarity. In other words, it was power, not moral ideals, that was the bottom line. If moral issues happened also to be at stake, they might be invoked, but their existence was merely incidental since they were not the prism through which emerging threats were identified.

In 2002, Charles Krauthammer wrote an article for *The National Interest* reviewing his 1990 "unipolar moment" thesis in the light of developments over the previous decade.[36] In it he endorsed all that he had written in 1990 and claimed that "those denying unipolarity can do so only by applying a ridiculous standard: that America be able to achieve all its goals everywhere all by itself. This is not a standard for unipolarity but for divinity." However, it was Krauthammer who was applying the

unrealistic standard, for it was he who claimed that unipolarity meant dominating and exercising decisive influence in every region of the world. Nevertheless, his optimism about his thesis was undiminished: "When I first proposed the unipolar model in 1990, I suggested that we should accept both its burdens and opportunities … unipolarity could last thirty or forty years. That seemed bold at the time. Today, it seems rather modest. The unipolar moment has become the unipolar era."

Yet, just four years later, Krauthammer announced that the United States was "past the apogee" of unipolarity. Although he had been right from 1991 onwards, the unipolar moment had peaked in 2005, the year that would be remembered as the apogee of American power.[37] In 2005, the first Iraqi election took place as did the so-called Cedar Revolution in Lebanon (inspired by the invasion of Iraq, Krauthammer claimed, as did many others). In 2006, however, the "new direction" in Lebanon collapsed; Hamas was elected in the Palestinian territories; Israel failed to win decisively against Hezbollah in Lebanon and the bombing of the golden dome of the Askariya Shrine in Samarra sparked a sectarian bloodbath in Iraq.

Robert Kagan also started to lose faith in America's preeminence. In 2007, he began to write about a new world; one in which America was no longer the unipolar power but in which a nineteenth-century great power competition had returned. It was, Kagan claimed, "the return of history and the end of dreams." America was still the only superpower, he argued, but it now had to now operate in a world of many other great powers, with Russia, China, Japan, India, Pakistan, and the EU being its most immediate rivals.[38] Kagan had recognized what Fareed Zakaria called "the rise of the rest."[39]

For Krauthammer, however, America's relative demise was not the result of its own misconstrued actions or the emergence of other powers. Rather "the root problem is the Iraqis and their own political culture … What we have done in Iraq is given them a republic, but they appear unable to keep it" with deleterious consequences for the US position in the region and, by extension, for the entire unipolarist project. Despite his determination to exonerate the United States, there was a clear recognition now that the projection of power was not a one-way process, as the insurgency in Iraq had demonstrated. Krauthammer also identified "a regional alliance against us" in the Middle East (Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, Hamas, and Moqtada al Sadr's movement), which received tacit backing from Russia and China. Regardless of the merits of the analysis, its significance lay in Krauthammer's acknowledgement that lesser powers (and even greater ones) might constrain the United States and prevent the exercise of unipolarity.

Yet even though one of its chief architects has declared the unipolar moment—and, by definition, neoconservative foreign policy—in decline, this is unlikely to herald a revolution in U.S. foreign policy objectives from either practitioners or the foreign policy elite, for neoconservatism was neither radical nor revolutionary in either its methods or its objectives. It constituted merely an accentuation of existing rhetorical devices and strategic trends. What is likely to endure is the continuing pursuit of global preponderance but in a less aggressive fashion and without the ideological overlay of the neoconservatives. America may be "past the apogee" but this is unlikely to affect the aspiration to global pre-eminence. The Bush era—and the Republican control of Congress—ended in early 2009 after a sweeping election victory for Barack Obama and the Democratic Party. Yet, historically, the difference between the Republicans and the Democrats on foreign policy matters has been minimal. Since 1989 there has been a virtually unchallenged bipartisan consensus that the United States should remain the world's sole superpower, and differences between the two parties on issues from Iraq to Nato were more stylistic than substantive. Obama's instinct has always been to govern from the center; to appeal to as many Republicans as possible rather than to outline an alternative that might be considered partisan.[40] Nor did Obama's first major foreign policy appointments suggest radical change: the National Security Advisor General James Jones, was head of U.S. European Command under Bush; the Republican Secretary of Defense Robert Gates was invited to stay on after Bush left office; and Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State, voted in favor of the Iraq War and is known as a staunch supporter of the US-Israeli relationship.[41]

Although the Democratic administration rejected the term "war on terror" in favor of the more anodyne Overseas Contingency Operations, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan soon became Obama's wars. To the chagrin of some in his own party, Obama extended the timetable for U.S. combat troops to withdraw from Iraq to August 2010, with 50,000 soldiers remaining until the end of 2011.[42] With the so-called "Af-Pak" theater moving center stage, Obama opted to escalate military operations in Afghanistan with 30,000 extra troops to fight the Taliban with a goal—though not a fixed timetable—of starting to withdraw forces from the country in July 2011.[43] In Pakistan, drone attacks were increased in the north western tribal region, while Special Operations Forces were involved in targeting the suspected al Qaeda operatives of Yemen and Somalia.[44] In escalating aspects of the war on terror, Obama accepted the Bush administration's definition of the nature of the threat and the way in which it could be defeated. The notion that terrorists cannot be deterred opens up space for preventive action regardless of which party

is in the White House. And while Obama may decide that an eventual "peace with honor" in Iraq and Afghanistan is the best way to protect US credibility, this is unlikely to affect ongoing operations in other regions and unlikely to signify a retreat from the aspiration to global power status but rather an end to operations that have become costly liabilities and damaging to U.S. global standing. In the end, the objectives of U.S. foreign policy are unlikely to change radically with a Democrat in the White House. What this ultimately confirms is that the policies advocated by the neoconservatives and their unipolarist allies were firmly within the mainstream historical tradition of American foreign relations and differed only in degrees from others within that mainstream tradition.

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Notes

Introduction

1. Robert Kagan to George Packer. Cited in Packer's *The Assassin's Gate: America In Iraq* (Faber and Faber, London, 2006): 38.
2. Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke, *America Alone: The Neoconservatives and the Global Order* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004): 9.
3. Critiques of the war on terror and its origins include Gary Dorrien, *Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana* (Routledge, New York and London, 2004); Francis Fukuyama, *After the Neocons: America At the Crossroads* (Profile Books, London, 2006); Ira Chernus, *Monsters to Destroy: The Neoconservative War on Terror and Sin* (Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, CO and London, 2006); and Jacob Heilbrunn, *They Knew They Were Right: The Rise of the Neocons* (Doubleday, New York, 2008).
4. A report of the PNAC, *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century*, September 2000: 76. URL: http://www.newamericancentury.org/RebuildingAmericasDefenses.pdf (15 January 2009).
5. On the first generation on Cold War neoconservatives, which has been covered far more extensively than the second, see Gary Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind: Politics, Culture and the War of Ideology* (Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1993); Peter Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives: The Men Who Are Changing America's Politics* (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1979); Murray Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution: Jewish Intellectuals and the Shaping of Public Policy* (Cambridge University Press, New York, 2005); Murray Friedman ed. *Commentary in American Life* (Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 2005); Mark Gerson, *The Neoconservative Vision: From the Cold War to the Culture Wars* (Madison Books, Lanham MD; New York; Oxford, 1997); and Maria Ryan, "Neoconservative Intellectuals and the Limitations of Governing: The Reagan Administration and the Demise of the Cold War," *Comparative American Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 4, December 2006: 409–20.
6. Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No.1, Winter 1990/91: 23–33.

7. These regions were codified in the 1992 Defense Planning Guidance document, written by Paul Wolfowitz, Libby, and Zalmay Khalilzad. See extensive excerpts in "Excerpts from Pentagon's Plan: 'Prevent the Re-Emergence of a New Rival,'" *New York Times* (henceforth *NYT*), 8 March 1992.
8. See note 5.
9. For example, although Halper and Clarke's *America Alone* includes one chapter on the neocons in the 1990s, seven of its ten chapters are about the Bush administration. Ira Chernus' *Monsters to Destroy* has only one chapter out of fourteen on the Clinton years. Dorrien's *Imperial Designs* has two out of six, while Fukuyama's *After the Neocons* has less than half a chapter (in a book of seven chapters) on the neocons' development in the 1990s specifically. The tendency has been to focus more on the Bush administration than the origins of its policies in the Clinton years.
10. Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke have labeled the neocons "liberal imperialists" who "elevat[e] human rights to centre stage" and are on "a democratic crusade." One of the determining criteria for intervention is to "challeng[e] the evildoers who defy American values." *America Alone*: 18, 19, 22, 76, 80, 101. Gary Dorrien states that most neocons were "democratic globalists who believe in creating and/or imposing pro-American democracies throughout the world." Gary Dorrien, *Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana* (Routledge, New York and London, 2004): 5–6. Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay designate them "democratic imperialists" in *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy* (Brookings Institution Press, Washington D.C., 2003): 15. For similar comments, see G. John Ikenberry, "The End of the Neoconservative Moment," *Survival*, Vol. 46, No. 1, Spring 2004: 7, 10; Jacob Heilbrunn, "The Neoconservative Journey" in Peter Berkowitz ed. *Varieties of Conservatism in America,* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California 2004): 105, 109, 124, 126; Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, 2004): 63–64, 68; Steven Hurst "Myths of Neoconservatism: George W. Bush's 'Neoconservative' Foreign Policy Revisited," *International Politics*, Vol. 42, No. 1, March 2005: 81; Mario Del Pero, "'A Balance of Power That Favors Freedom': The Historical and Ideological Roots of the Neoconservative Persuasion," European University Institute Working Paper, RSCAS No. 2005/22, http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/WP-Texts/05_22.pdf (11 December 2009). Oliver Kamm and Douglas Murray both conflate neoconservatism with liberal interventionism. See Douglas Murray *Neoconservatism: Why We Need It* (Social Affairs Unit, London, 2005): 79–82, 146 and Oliver Kamm, *Anti-Totalitarianism: The Left-Wing Case For a Neoconservative Foreign Policy* (Social Affairs Unit, London, 2005): 23, 69, 102, 106, 107–10.
11. Paul Berman, *Terror and Liberalism* (W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 2004). Thomas Cushman ed. *A Matter of Principle: Humanitarian Arguments for War in Iraq* (University of California Press, Berkeley,

Los Angeles, London, 2005). The prowar writings of Christopher Hitchens are collected in Simon Cottee and Thomas Cushman eds. *Christopher Hitchens and His Critics: Terror, Iraq and the Left* (New York University Press, New York, 2008). Michael Ignatieff, *The Lesser Evil: Political Ethics in an Age of Terror* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2004).

12. On Muravchik's tepid attitude to humanitarian interventions, see for example, Joshua Muravchik, "Beyond Self-Defense," *Commentary*, Vol. 96 (3) December 1993: 22. For his 2003 claim, see Joshua Muravchik, "The Neoconservative Cabal," in Irwin Stelzer, ed., *The Neocon Reader* (Grove Press, New York, 2004): 254–55.
13. Fukuyama, *After the Neocons*: 43. For Fukuyama's original lack of support for intervention in Bosnia, see Abrams et al. "Letters from Readers: 'Global Activism'," *Commentary*, December 1994: 8.
14. See also Max Boot, "Myths about Neoconservatism," *Foreign Policy*, January/February 2004: 20–28; Adam Wolfson, "Conservatives and Neoconservatives," in Stelzer ed. *Neocon Reader*: 226–27; Irwin Stelzer, "Neoconservatives and Their Critics," in ibid.: 8–13; Robert Kagan "How the U.S. distorts its self-image," *Financial Times*, 5 December 2006. See Charles Krauthammer's 2006 claim that the United States needed to "chang[e] the internal structure of Arab regimes" in his speech to the Foreign Policy Research Institute, "Past the Apogee: America Under Pressure," 14 November 2006, http://www.fpri.org/enotes/20061213.krauthammer.pastapogee.html (15 January 2009). Lawrence F. Kaplan and William Kristol, *The War Over Iraq: Saddam's Tyranny and America's Mission* (Encounter Books, San Francisco, 2003).
15. William Kristol and Robert Kagan, "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 75, No. 4, July/August 1996: 29–32.
16. Joshua Muravchik, *The Imperative of American Leadership: A Challenge to Neo-Isolationism* (AEI Press, Washington D.C., 1996): 163.
17. Frank Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century: U.S. Foreign Policy Since 1900* (University of Chicago, Chicago and London, 1999). See also Lloyd E. Ambrosius, "Woodrow Wilson and George W. Bush: Historical Comparisons of Ends and Means in Their Foreign Policies," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 30, No. 3, June 2006): 509–43.
18. Gary Dorrien points to this convergence but argues that the neocons are also motivated by something extra: the additional desire to promote democracy by military force. See Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*: 5–6.
19. Bruce Kuklick, *Blind Oracles: Intellectuals and War from Kennan to Kissinger* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2006): 44.
20. Anne Norton, *Leo Strauss and the Politics of American Empire* (Yale University Press, New Haven; London, 2004); Kenneth Weinstein, "Philosophic Roots, the Role of Leo Strauss and the War in Iraq," in Stelzer ed. *Neocon Reader*: 203–12; Douglas Murray, *Neoconservatism: Why We Need It* (Social Affairs Unit, London, 2005): 25–35, 52.

21. Gilles Kepel argues that the neoconservative project has only two objectives: to protect oil supplies and to protect Israeli security. Kepel, *War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West* (Harvard, Belknapp Press, 2006): 63.
22. See Melvyn P. Leffler, "9/11 and American Foreign Policy" *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 29, No. 3, June 2005: 395–413; Anna Kasten Nelson, "Continuity and Change in an Age of Unlimited Power," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 29, No. 3, June 2005: 437–39.
23. Stephen M. Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Response to U.S. Primacy* (W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., New York, 2005); Joseph Nye *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (PublicAffairs, New York, 2004); Joseph Nye *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2003); Richard Crockatt, *America Embattled: September 11, Anti-Americanism and the Global Order* (Routledge, London and New York, 2003): 108–35.
24. Those arguing that it was a radical break include: Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*: 7, 9, 10, 139; G. John Ikenberry, "The End of the Neoconservative Moment" *Survival*, Vol. 46, No. 1, Spring 2004: 7, 10; John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security and the American Experience* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, 2004): 90; Douglas T. Stuart, "The neoconservatives as a continuation and an aberration in American Foreign Policy," in Sergio Fabbrini ed. *The United States Contested: American Unilateralism and European Discontent* (Routledge, Oxon and New York, 2006): 54–68.
25. Andrew J. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London, 2002) especially pp. 198–224.
26. This is the next sentence from the Kagan quote that prefaces this introduction. See note 1.

CHAPTER 1

1. Gary Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*: *Politics, Culture and the War of Ideology,* (Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1993): 200–01.
2. Jeane Kirkpatrick, "Dictatorships & Double Standards," *Commentary* November *1979: 34–45*. Norman Podhoretz also wrote about this, though in less detail, in "Making the World Safe for Communism," *Commentary*, April 1976: 31–41. On meeting with Yakovlev, see Dorrien, *Neoconservative Mind*: 200–01.
3. Dorrien, *Neoconservative Mind*: 200–01.
4. Nathan Glazer, "A Time for Modesty," in Owen Harries (ed.), *America's Purpose*: *New Visions of U.S. Foreign Policy* (ICS Press, San Francisco, 1991): 135, 137. Berger cited in Dorrien, *Neoconservative Mind*: 319–20. Jeane Kirkpatrick, "A Normal Country in a Normal Time," in Harries, Owen (ed.), *America's Purpose*: 155–63.

5. On the defensive strategy of the first generation, see Maria Ryan, "Neoconservative Intellectuals and the Limitations of Governing: The Reagan Administration and the Demise of the Cold War," *Comparative American Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 4, December 2006: 409–20.
6. Gary Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*: *Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana* (Routledge, New York and London, 2004): 38–43, 92–101.
7. On this see Hal Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad: America's Search for Purpose in the Post–Cold War World* (The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 2008).
8. Interview with Richard Perle, PBS, *Think Tank With Ben Wattenberg*, http://www.pbs.org/thinktank/transcript1017.html (29 January 2010). Francis Fukuyama, *After the Neocons: America at the Crossroads* (Profile Books, London, 2006): 31–36. Robert G. Kaufman, *Henry M. Jackson: A Life in Politics* (University of Washington Press, Washington, D.C., 2000).
9. Kaufman, *Henry M. Jackson*: 352, 387.
10. Biography of Robert Kagan, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/experts/index.cfm?fa=expert_view&expert_id=16 (20 December 2009).
11. Biography of Richard Perle, http://www.aei.org/scholar/49 (20 December 2009). Biography of Joshua Muravchik, http://www.sais-jhu.edu/faculty/directory/bios/m/muravchik.htm (31 January 2010). Biography of Elliott Abrams, http://www.eppc.org/scholars/scholarID.58/scholar.asp (31 January 2010). Biography of Frank J. Gaffney, http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/1231.xml (31 January 2010). For Kagan, see note 11.
12. Biography of Charles Krauthammer, http://www.postwritersgroup.com/krauthammer.htm (31 January 2010).
13. See note 1 in Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment Revisited—United States World Dominance," *The National Interest*, Winter 2002: 5–17.
14. Krauthammer, "Unipolar Moment": 23–25.
15. Christopher Layne, "From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Summer 1997): 86–124. On realism and global strategy, see Michael J. Mazarr, "George W. Bush, Idealist," *International Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (2003): 503–22.
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CHAPTER 2

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CHAPTER 3

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CHAPTER 4

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CHAPTER 8

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CHAPTER 9

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Director for Iran and Iraq in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, David Wurmser, Middle East Advisor to Dick Cheney and David Frum, Assistant to the President for Economic Speechwriting. Frum was also the originator of the phrase "axis of evil."

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