ISSN 2156-0536

Cornell International Affairs Review

Volume IV | Issue 1 | Fall/Winter 2010

The Cornell International Affairs Review is a student-run organization aiming to provide an international, intergenerational, and interdisciplinary approach to foreign affairs. Founded in 2006, CIAR is proud to provide the Cornell community with a bi-annual review, bringing together views from students, professors, and policymakers on the current events shaping our world.

It is our firm belief that true knowledge stems not just from textbooks and lectures but from engaging with others. Thus, the CIAR strongly emphasizes cooperation and dialogue amongst all our members, both on Cornell's campus and beyond.

http://www.rso.cornell.edu/ciar

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President's Letter

Ever since 2006 when founded by a group of dedicated students, the Cornell International Affairs Review endeavors to raise the intellectual vibrancy of the Cornell campus by organizing numerous international affairs events on campus and with the publication of its bi-annual reviews.

The founders of the CIAR graduated last May 2010 and as the first president of the 'new generation' I am committed to CIAR's continued successful path as a beacon of international awareness in the Cornell campus. The CIAR promotes an international, interdisciplinary and inter-generational approach to foreign affairs.

It is our goal to approach our topics from an international perspective, engaging students and professors with international interests and background, thus providing different and rich perspectives to the deliberations. The CIAR biweekly meetings are a forum for engaging on current affairs and learning about the different points of views of a French, an American, an Ecuadorian, or an Indian!

This semester showed once more the admirable determination of Cornell students to provide our campus with panels raising awareness on major events. The CIAR began the semester with a panel on "Peace Postponed? Floods and their implication for Indo-Pakistan peace." Comprised of undergraduates, graduates and professors representing our intergenerational approach to foreign affairs, this panel was moderated by History professor, D. Ghosh.

Our effort to draw attention on Pakistan's natural disaster was furthered by the Hands for HEALTH Benefit Concert, which raised over $3,000 benefiting Health, Inc. and Save the Children. Our very own Vice-President, Robert Morrissey will be traveling to Ladakh, India to participate in the implementation of the funds donated.

Toward the end of the semester our attention shifted to Latin America, as we organized "Venezuela and the World: A Glance at Chavez's Foreign Policy" with Professor Kenneth Roberts providing enlightening remarks on Chavez's controversial political moves and the future of his presidency.

Throughout the semester we provided the members of the CIAR with numerous opportunities for working lunches and coffees with Cornell professors and visiting scholars, who all offered fascinating insights into their professions and their experiences from journalism to academia, diplomacy and NGOs, which furthered our inter-disciplinary approach to foreign affairs.

The CIAR is a recent organization and benefits from the energy and creativity of youth –our board is thrilled to present new initiatives that increase the foreign affairs discourse at Cornell, such as a Weekly Newsletter and the creation of a CIAR blog.

This Fall 2010 issue will be released during our bi-annual gala dinner, celebrating this semester of hard work. At this event, Cornell Government professor P. Katzenstein and Banker and EU Consultant E-F de Lencquesaing, will be sharing their thoughts on the "Post Crisis in a Globalized World: Financial regulation and Convergence in the European and US models."

CIAR continues to foster passionate discussion of world affairs through its intergenerational, international and inter-disciplinary approach. It is my hope that this endeavor will lead us to a greater understanding of the world and guide us to make it a better place.

Cecilia de Lencquesaing
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Editorial Letter

Recent midterm elections in the United States offered a public forum for debate and analysis of President Barack Obama's first two years in office. Actors from across the political spectrum weighed in on issues ranging from the domestic economy, to health care reform, to a broad swath of international concerns. Ultimately, the American electorate showed its dissatisfaction. At a critical juncture for US foreign policy, this semester's journal begins with an examination of President Obama's first two years.

Looking back, Professor Stephen Walt provides a critical assessment of Obama's foreign policy failures since taking office. Walt blames Obama's failures on both the difficult foreign policy agenda ahead of him, as well as the general inability of the American foreign policy establishment to make necessary strategic adjustments. Professor James Goldgeier provides a closer examination of Obama's policies in Afghanistan, while Cornell graduate Emmanuel Rizzi explores the Obama administration's policies towards China.

Looking into the history of the American foreign policy establishment, Cornell graduate Reid Pauly traces the evolving tradition of nuclear weapon non-use. His article concludes that the modern nuclear weapon tradition of non-use has roots in the early decisions and strategic considerations of policy makers like Paul Nitze.

Returning to the present day, Peter Gruskin examines the financial, moral, and bureaucratic efficacy of corporate contractors in the U.S. intelligence community. Gruskin considers arguments for and against the use of private citizens in intelligence gathering operations before making the case for reform.

The remaining three articles examine recent developments in different regions of the world. James Davis begins with the Niger Delta conflict in Africa, tracing its origins, history, and recent failed attempts to resolve the conflict. In Asia, Cornell undergraduate Dae-Gyeong Kim analyzes how different political groups in South Korea, influenced by their diverging views towards North Korea and the United States, have formulated different regional policy visions and long term goals for their country. Finally, turning to Europe, Yevgen Sautin's article discusses Victor Yanukovych's first year as President of Ukraine.

In fulfillment of CIAR's interdisciplinary mission, this semester's journal features articles ranging from contemporary to historical, humanitarian to policy-based, and that examine American and international concerns. This breadth provides a deeper understanding of a changing world. We invite you to join our contributors as they further that understanding.

Robert Morrissey
Cornell University
Arts and Sciences, 2012
Economics
Executive Vice President, CIAR

Dennis Shiraev
Cornell University
Arts and Sciences, 2012
College Scholar, Economics
Managing Editor, CIAR

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Doomed to Fail:
Barack Obama's Foreign Policy

Stephen Walt
Professor, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

Stephen M. Walt, professor of international affairs at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, spoke at Cornell on September 16, 2010, at the invitation of the Einaudi Center for International Studies. The following article, produced here with his permission, is an edited transcript of his talk. The board of the Cornell International Affairs Review thanks Professor Walt for his support to our mission.

Back when Barack Obama took office it was a cliché in the media to observe that he was facing the greatest challenge of any president since Franklin Roosevelt. The world economy faced the most serious crisis since the Great Depression, the American image in the world was at historic lows, and he also inherited a number of seemingly intractable foreign policy problems.

There is no question that Obama responded with a lot of activity, almost a dizzying amount. There was an ambitious economic recovery program, a major fiscal stimulus, the buying up of toxic banking assets, a bailout for auto companies and a time consuming effort at healthcare reform. But at the same time, there was a wide array of foreign policy initiatives. We reached out to Iran, hit the reset button with Russia, escalated the war in Afghanistan, and continued to draw down in Iraq. Obama gave a major address to the Muslim world in Cairo, personally attended the climate change summit in Copenhagen, brought forty-six leaders together in Washington for a nuclear security summit a few months ago, and convened new peace talks between Israeli and Palestinian leaders. Oh, and one more thing, he won the Nobel Peace Prize.

That's not bad in terms of activity, but the question is: what has he actually accomplished? To put it bluntly (and this is the main theme of my talk today) if you thought that Obama's election would produce a dramatic transformation in America's global position, you are going to be disappointed. There are not going to be any major foreign policy accomplishments during his first term, and there may well be some significant setbacks. Now that is partly because there are no easy items on his to-do list. But it is also because his foreign policy team, and the American foreign policy establishment more broadly, is increasingly incapable of making the sort of strategic adjustments that are now needed. In short, no matter how smart President Obama is, how good his instincts are, or how active he might be—and I think he's all three— his foreign policy is doomed to fail.

Let me start by saying a word or two about the problems Obama faced when he entered office. As you all know he entered at a time when the world economy was in its worst shape in decades. American citizens have lost eleven trillion dollars worth of wealth, at least on paper, in 2008. World trade declined in 2009 for the first time in twenty-five years. The world economy shrank in 2009 for the first time since the end of the Second World War. Now I would argue that he acted quickly, and for the most part successfully, to stave off an additional meltdown. It could have been worse. But one consequence of that is a budget deficit that hit 1.8 trillion dollars last year, or about thirteen percent of US GDP. Meanwhile, unemployment went over ten percent for the first time since 1983, and although you might argue that things are somewhat better now, nobody expects the American economy to stage a rapid or vigorous recovery anytime soon.

What does that mean? It means that Obama will be dealing with a sluggish economy for his entire first term—if he is lucky. And there are plenty of domestic issues that are not going to be easy or cheap to address. Plus, given the budget deficits that he is facing, Obama is going to have to start cutting budgets soon, and that includes defense and international affairs. This situation will inevitably put limits on what Obama will be able to do in foreign policy.

At the same time, the foreign policy agenda looked equally difficult. He inherited a costly and prolonged war in Iraq and a second war in Afghanistan, which, needless to say, was not going particularly well. He inherited a stagnant peace process in the Middle East, and an American image around the world at historically low levels. Finally, I would add that although the United States remains in some respects the strongest power on the globe by a considerable margin, I would argue that the overall balance of power is gradually shifting. States like China, India, Brazil and others are becoming more consequential, better able to protect their own interests, which means America's ability to impose its preferences on others is declining over time.

Given that situation, the obvious thing to try to do is to restore what Walter Lippman used to call solvency— to try and bring American commitments and obligations back into line with the available resources. How do you do that? You extricate yourself from some of your current burdens, you try to improve relations with some potential adversaries, so there are fewer problems to solve, and you try to get others to bear more of the burden. If any of you are looking for a historical analogy, you might think of Nixon and Kissinger. They took office in the midst of a ruinous war and a period of economic weakness, and they sought to reduce America's burdens without sacrificing core interests. So you had detenté with the Soviet Union, an opening to China, Vietnamization in Indochina, and the Nixon Doctrine, which tried to rely more on regional allies.

When he took office, it looked like Obama was trying something similar. He tried to reduce commitments where he could, get allies to do more where he could do that, and tried to improve relations with some current adversaries. I think, by the way, that President Obama knew from the very beginning that this would not be easy, and you can see that from how he put his foreign policy team together. I think he knew the first term was going to be difficult, that economic recovery would take time, that people were going to be hurting, and that there were no low-hanging fruits in foreign policy. The honeymoon was going to end and critics would be ready and waiting to pounce.

So what did he do? He put together a foreign policy team that was designed to insulate the administration from partisan political attacks. He kept Robert Gates as Secretary of Defense, first because he has proven to be a competent manager of a difficult

Obama reconnected with the Muslim world at Cairo in 2009

bureaucracy, but also because he is associated with the Republican party and the so-called "surge" in Iraq, which many see—incorrectly in my view—as a great success. And if you don't like the administration's defense policy, he can point out that he has the same Secretary of Defense that George W. Bush had, which makes it harder for Republicans to criticize him. Then he put a four star marine general as head of the National Security Council, which again makes it hard to complain that he is running some kind of left wing foreign policy.

To put it bluntly (and this is the main theme of my talk) if you thought that Obama's election would produce a dramatic transformation in America's global position, you are going to be disappointed.

Then he appointed Hillary Clinton to be Secretary of State, not because she was an experienced diplomat, and not because she had a wonderful unique foreign policy vision of her own, but because it unified the Democratic Party and it keeps her from giving speeches in the Senate about how much better things would be if only she'd become president. Bringing Hillary in also guaranteed that the rest of the foreign policy and national security team would be familiar Democratic stalwarts, many of them with experience from the Clinton administration. This is not a foreign policy team from MoveOn.org. These are solid liberal internationalists, one might even say liberal interventionists, who are very comfortable using American power and inclined to think that most foreign policy problems have solutions that are made in America. Virtually all of the top figures backed the Iraq war in 2003, and President Obama is a notable exception among top officials in his own administration.

So with all that as background, what has he actually done? Well I think he has made some important symbolic breaks with the Bush administration. But in terms of substance, there is less change than meets the eye, and nothing that looks like a breakthrough.

First, the symbolism. At his inaugural address, he spoke of "power growing with its prudent use," and said security emanates from "the justice of our cause, the force of our example, and the tempering qualities of humility and restraint." If you contrast that with President Bush's second inaugural speech, which was essentially an anthem to the mission of exporting freedom and democracy around the world, it's really quite striking, and the tone is very different. And it wasn't just speeches: he banned water boarding, he released the Bush era torture memos and condemned these practices openly, he spoke openly about the need for more far reaching arms control in his Prague speech, he extended his hand of friendship to the Muslim world in a speech in Turkey, followed that up with a major speech in Cairo, and made an explicit opening to Iran.

So there was a clear difference in tone and I think it had an immediate and tangible results. According to the Pew Global Attitudes Survey, Obama's election produced a sharp and for the most part enduring increase in the percentage of people around the world who now say they have a favorable image of the United States. It was an enormous bump in many parts of the world and it's lasted, until very recently. So in terms of style I think you have to give the administration credit.

But what about the substance? Take counterterrorism, for example. There is less change here than you might think. He said we would close the Guantanamo base within a year—we haven't. The administration has reaffirmed the policy of using military tribunals against suspected terrorists rather than the regular court system. They have retained the principle of preventing detention, meaning holding suspected terrorists indefinitely without trial. Since Obama took office, there have been over seventy-five drone strikes in Pakistan, this is fifty more than in the entire second term of the Bush administration, and in fact it represents seventy-five percent of all drone attacks that have occurred in Pakistan since 2004. And more recently he has even authorized the CIA to assassinate US citizens without trial. I refer here to the case of Anwar al-Awlaki, who is a radical cleric believed to be supporting terrorist groups in Yemen and is a US citizen. The CIA has now been authorized to go after him if they can find him, and kill him if possible. This would normally be considered capital punishment without due process, and we can debate whether or not that makes sense, but it certainly does not suggest a sharp departure from the Bush administration's practice. So again, big difference in terms of tone and style, less difference in terms of substance.

Let me now turn to some of the big items on his foreign policy agenda, starting with Iraq. During the campaign Obama pledged to withdraw from Iraq within 16 months. He then, after becoming president, agreed to a slower timetable after consulting with the Pentagon. But as you all know, a couple of weeks ago he announced an end to combat operations, and indeed American troop levels are down substantially. So you might say that this is one promise he has delivered on. Unfortunately it is also clear that an end of combat operations does not mean an end to the presence of American troops in Iraq, plus thousands of civilian contractors as well. Deep divisions remain in Iraqi society. There is still no central government in Iraq, some six months after their last election. The level of violence has been gradually increasing. The bottom line here is that Iraq is likely to remain violent and unstable for many years, and the United States is likely to be there in strength. My main point is that Iraq is still going to be an important item on the American foreign policy agenda, it will still be there at the end of his first term, and I would guess that it will still be there at the end of his second term, if he gets one. Most importantly, it will not be looking like a success story.

What about Afghanistan and Pakistan? During the presidential campaign he said he wanted to get out of Iraq so we could focus our attention on Central Asia. This was a clever way of looking strong on national security despite his earlier opposition to invading Iraq. So he added seventeen thousand more troops to Afghanistan in the spring of 2009, and after a lengthy review he agreed to send another thirty thousand last fall, who are pretty much all there now. I think a major breakthrough here is unlikely—it is far more likely that ultimately the United States is not going to win this particular war.

One the one hand, the administration has been trying to lower everyone's expectations, most notably Secretary Gates' comment back in the spring of 2009 that we're not trying to create some kind of Central Asian Valhalla. (By the way, he really meant Shangri-La, but you get the point.) But it is increasingly clear that the war is not going well. The literature on counterinsurgency tells us that success requires an effective local partner, yet it is increasingly clear that the Karzai government is corrupt, ineffective, and increasingly unpopular. The recent American offensive in Marjah did not produce conclusive results, and related offensive in the Kandahar province was repeatedly delayed and then the expectations for it have been lowered. President Karzai has said in recent months that he doesn't think the United States is likely to succeed, and that he's looking now to open negotiations with the Taliban. Our European allies are increasingly headed for the exits. A few weeks ago a run on the Central Bank of Kabul suggests that the entire Afghan financial order is shakier than we might have thought. The bottom line is that President Obama blundered when he decided to escalate this war.

I would also add that the rationale that has been given for the war—that we are there to deny Al-Qaeda a safe haven—remains unconvincing. First, Al-Qaeda already has other safe havens in Pakistan and Yemen,

and they may actually be better arenas to operate from than Afghanistan. Second, Al-Qaeda does not need safe havens to attack us. In the latest issue of the *New Yorker,* there is a long profile of Khaled Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, which shows that 9/11 was primarily planned not from Al-Qaeda's safe haven in Afghanistan, but from an apartment in Karachi, Pakistan, which tells us that Al Qaeda hardly needs an Afghan "safe haven" to attack us.

Furthermore, even if the Taliban were to win and to invite Al-Qaeda back into Afghanistan, and even if Al-Qaeda were to decide to do relocate there, they would not be able to organize large training bases any longer because we could see them and we could not hesitate to attack them. The bottom line here is that Al-Qaeda is not going to be a lot weaker if we succeed in Afghanistan, and it is not going to be a lot stronger if we fail or withdraw. And if that is so, then why are we fighting a counterinsurgency war designed to create a modern, centralized Western-style state, something that has never existed in Afghanistan and that Afghans by most accounts do not want? Also, remember that that war is now costing about one hundred billion dollars per year for a country whose entire GNP is about fourteen billion per year, which doesn't sound to me like a very smart piece of cost-benefit analysis.

But even if I'm wrong about all this, even if the United States does eventually succeed, it's not going to be anytime soon, and it's not going to be quick or easy. So Afghanistan is going to be on President Obama's desk for the rest of his first term, and I don't think it's going to look like a success story—it's going to continue to look like a political liability for him.

What about Iran? Here he made a symbolic move and a clear break with the Bush administration by saying that he wanted to talk to Iran without preconditions and hinting at greater flexibility. He also sent a televised message to the Iranian people, saying he wanted to improve relations. And I think they were hoping to get a break with the presidential elections a year ago; what they got of course is an Iranian government through a fraudulent election that was increasingly challenged and increasingly unable to respond positively to any American overtures, even if they wanted to. But more importantly, there is no sign that Iran is going to suspend nuclear enrichment, and I would remind everyone that the leaders of the dissident movement, including Mir-Hossein Mousavi, support Iran having its own nuclear enrichment capacity. Of course that's the one thing that the United States and most of its allies are saying that Iran cannot have. So even if the Green movement in Iran came to power, the issue of Iran's nuclear program would not go away. The Obama administration has been able to get greater international support for somewhat stiffer sanctions, but there are still no sanctions with real teeth in them. Russia and especially China will continue to drag their feet on this issue, because it is in China's interest for the United States and Iran to be at loggerheads for as long as possible.

President Obama meets with Chinese Primier Hu Jintao in China - defining the US-China relationship.

Finally, notice that the United States has not tried the one approach that actually might work, a deal where Iran is allowed to enrich uranium under NPT safeguards-provided it ratifies and implements the Additional Protocol of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and reiterates its decision not to weaponize. In exchange the United States would pledge not to overthrow the regime and not to support movements who are trying to overthrow the regime, something we have done in the past. I am not saying that this proposal would work—I'm not at all sure sure it would—but I think that's the only possible deal that might head off a latent Iranian nuclear capability. And my bottom line here is that there's not going to be a breakthrough, pressure for a harder line is going to increase, and you will still have prominent voices in the United States talking about the need to solve this problem through some form of a military action. This issue isn't going away either.

That brings me to the next item: Israel and Palestine. Obama started off by saying that he was going to push hard for a two-state solution in his first term, and in his Cairo speech in June 2009 he called for the creation of a viable Palestinian state. He said it was in "America's interest, the Palestinian interest, Israel's interest, and the world's interest." He said unequivocally that settlements must stop and that there should be no more natural growth. Now unfortunately the Cairo speech turns out to be the high water mark of this approach, and everything since then has been a humiliating retreat. When he called for a settlement freeze, AIPAC got 329 Congressmen and 76 Senators to sign a letter to Obama warning him not to put any pressure on Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu refused to agree, initially to even a temporary settlement freeze, said East Jerusalem is not up for discussion, and announced the construction of five hundred additional housing units in August 2009, along with a bunch of new apartments in East Jerusalem. The White House said this was regrettable, but took no other action.

To make matters worse, the administration also dismissed the Goldstone Report on war crimes during the Gaza War, even though the report condemned both Hamas and Israel. And the administration said virtually nothing when Israel attacked the Gaza flotilla in June. Instead, with elections coming up in November, Obama spent last summer burying the hatchet with Netanyahu, and telling everyone that relations were fine. And frankly this was done for domestic political reasons. Former US Ambassador to Israel Martin Indyk, who by the way used to be deputy director for research at AIPAC, told the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, "American Jews traditionally are pretty supportive of the Democratic Party, they voted overwhelmingly for Barack Obama, and they provide a good deal of funding for political campaigns. So the Jewish factor is always a critical factor for Democratic Candidates. I don't think it's telling any secrets that there are a lot of people who have been upset with President Obama, and I think the White House came to a real understanding that they have a real problem there, and they are going out of their way to show that they are friendly to Israel." Please note those are Martin Indyk's words, not my words, and there is nothing unusual about the behavior he was describing. Presidents routinely try to accommodate powerful interest groups in election years. This is business as usual in the American political system.

Instead of genuine progress, however, what we got was little more than a charade. The Palestinians are not going to accept anything less than a viable state on the West Bank, including a capital in East Jerusalem. Prime Minister Netanyahu has made it clear that the only two-state solution he might offer is a set of disconnected statelets with Israel in full control of their borders, water, and airspace. He has also said repeatedly that settlement building is going to continue in one form or another. And finally, it's clear the Obama administration is not going to put pressure on both sides. If Obama could not get Netanyahu to agree on any serious settlement freeze,

how could he ever persuade them to give the Palestinians a viable, territorially continuous state of their own including a capital in East Jerusalem?

The bottom line is that there isn't going to be a two state solution, and this problem is going to get worse during Obama's presidency. And the results of this situation are exactly what you would expect. The annual survey of Arab attitudes conducted by the University of Maryland released last month shows that Obama's approval rating in six Arab countries has gone from forty-five percent in 2009 to twenty percent today. Even more remarkable, seventy-seven percent of those surveyed said that Iran had a right to a nuclear program, and fifty-seven percent think the situation in the region would be better if Iran had nuclear weapons—which I consider remarkable. It also reported that the four most admired political figures in the survey were Prime Minister Erdogan of Turkey, Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran and Hassan Nasrallah of Hezbollah. By the way, all except Chavez are more popular than they were a year ago.

I think this is a tragedy for all concerned, as well as a serious problem for the United States. Obama and his team did not act like friends of Israel by caving in, because the likely result will be some form of one-state apartheid, followed by a Palestinian struggle for civil rights. This is precisely what former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel and the current defense minister Ehud Barak have both warned against. In 2007, Olmert said that "if the two-state solution failed, the Israel will face a South Africa style struggle for political rights. If that happened, he warned, then "the state of Israel is finished." Again that's Prime Minister Olmert talking, not me. Unfortunately, at this point it is hard to imagine this issue turning into a success story during Obama's first term.

Last but not least, let me touch briefly on just a few other issues. Vice President Biden said that we needed to press the reset button with Russia. One could argue they have made some progress there. They did get a new arms control agreement, which will eventually reduce each side's arsenals by about thirty percent. But notice, it will take seven years to produce that thirty percent reduction, and both sides will have lots of overkill left, even seven years from now. But it is progress. He needs sixty-six votes to ratify this agreement and it's not clear he's going to get them. If I had to bet, I would say yes, but I wouldn't bet a lot. More importantly, if the Republicans win a few more seats in November, then additional progress on Obama's nuclear security agenda is bound to be difficult. We're certainly not going to get something more substantial like a comprehensive test ban treaty.

On climate change, he took office declaring strong support for an agreement to replace Kyoto, and he ended up going to Copenhagen for the climate change summit. But as most commentators predicted beforehand, the summit failed to achieve a meaningful agreement, all he got was a sort of face-saving voluntary agreement of little value. I don't really blame this on Obama because climate change might be in many ways the hardest political problem the international community has ever faced. But notice we are ending up in the same place: another item that he declared was an important priority where we are not making much progress. And the midterm elections are not going to make this issues any easier going forward.

Lastly, China. For most of the first year, relations with China were not that bad, but storm clouds are starting to appear with some frequency now. The Chinese have been letting their currency adjust at glacial speed despite considerable American presssure. The Chinese sandbagged Obama at the Copenhagen conference, forcing him to stand outside and wait for his meeting with the Chinese premier. They haven't been helping much on Iran. There have been some minor disputes over access to the internet and irritation over American arms sales to Taiwan. I would argue that the Chinese are secretly thrilled to see the United States bogged down in places like Iraq and Afghanistan and would love it if we were there forever.

But perhaps most significant of all, in recent months the Chinese have been increasingly assertive about declaring the South China Sea and other adjacent waters a vital security zone, and in effect beginning to challenge the American naval presence there. I think this is a harbinger of things to come and these recent frictions remind us that the Sino-American relationship is likely to get increasingly competitive if China's power continues to rise. I might add that this is all the more reason to rethink some of the policies that have made us less popular or have gotten us bogged down in other parts of the world. Now, President Obama may manage this fairly well in the short to medium term, but it is not likely to look like any major achievement or any major breakthrough either.

By this time I hope to have convinced you not to expect very much from the Obama administration when it comes to foreign policy. Before I wrap up, let me explain why I think we are having such trouble.

So even if Barack Obama understood that the United States needed a more restrained foreign policy, one that avoided international quagmires, relied more on regional allies, recognized that we are not very good at social engineering on a global scale, he would be hard pressed to find very many people in the foreign policy establishment to support him.

The first reason I already mentioned, there are no easy fixes here. On the contrary, this is actually a very difficult to-do list of thorny issues. That's not unusual, of course; if problems were easy to fix we might already have solved them.

The second reason is the imbalance of power between the United States and the rest of the world. For all of our current difficulties the United States is still very wealthy and very powerful. We have forces and commitments all over the world. We still play a central role in lots of existing security arrangements. This has two unfortunate effects. First, it is still hard for many American elites to believe that there are things we simply can't do if we just put our minds to it and try hard. Surely, we can defeat the Taliban and create some kind of stable order in Afghanistan. It is hard for Americans to believe that there are some things we just can't do. Second, trying to do less, say getting out of Afghanistan, is likely to have some negative short term consequences. It is therefore tempting for any president to try to muddle through, and to simply pass problems along to your successor.

There is also an imbalance of power here at home. After fifty plus years of cold war, fifty plus years of international activism, the foreign policy establishment in the United States is heavily weighted toward interventionism and especially towards the use of military power. The Republican Party is now heavily shaped by views of neoconservatives, and the Democratic Party is home to liberal interventionists. The latter are for the most part are just kinder, gentler neoconservatives; and the two groups agree far more than they differ. The major think tanks like the Council on Foreign Relations, The Carnegie Endowment, Brookings, AEI, etc., all in the business of identifying global problems and figuring out what the United States should do to fix them. These groups don't always agree on exactly what to do, but doing *less* is rarely, if ever, one of the choices they recommend. Add to that all of the smaller special interest groups who are trying to get the US government to do more on whatever their particular pet issue is, whether it is in Africa, or Latin America, or Asia or wherever. Then you've got public policy schools, like the Kennedy School where I teach. Our mission is training students to

go out and solve problems either at home or abroad; you might say that I'm now in the business of training international activists. And if you want a career in the foreign policy establishment, you don't want the United States doing less because that would mean fewer jobs out there.

And finally, I think the professional incentives in the foreign policy establishment increasingly incline its members to favor the use of force. Consider what the former president of the Council of Foreign Relations, Leslie Gelb, recently admitted in an article. He wrote that his own support for the Iraq War—and he did endorse the decision to invade—reflected what he called "an unfortunate tendency within the foreign policy community, namely the disposition and incentives to support wars to retain political and professional credibility." Gelb is saying that to be taken seriously in Washington, you have to show that you are tough and that you are in favor of a hawkish approach to things.

So even if Barack Obama understood that the United States needed a more restrained foreign policy, one that avoided international quagmires, relied more on regional allies, recognized that we are not very good at social engineering on a global scale, he would be hard pressed to find very many people in the foreign policy establishment to support him. It would be darn difficult to staff that particular administration. And that is of course why you are seeing the usual people in the usual jobs pursuing the usual policies we've tried in the past and achieving essentially the same results.

So if I were part of Obama's team—and you might have guessed I'm not likely to be—I'd be worried. He's heading into the second half of his first term with a sluggish economy. There's lots of good social science evidence that tells us the state of the economy will play a big role in the next round of elections, both the midterms in 2010 and but also the general election in 2012. There are not a lot of big foreign policy accomplishments for Obama to point to, and there are no easy problems he can capitalize on and claim credit for in the near term. So if I were a Republican Party leader, I'd be feeling kind of smug right now.

But no matter which party you belong to or favor this situation ought to worry you. It's not good when global problems fester, it's not good when the United States engages on issues and fails to make any progress, it's not good when we claim we're going to do something and then we visibly fail, because that undermines the sense that we know how to actually achieve things. It makes other countries even less inclined to listen to us in the future.

I take no pleasure in offering such a grim forecast. My wife and I put as much money as the law allowed into Obama's campaign; I voted for him with enthusiasm; and I was thrilled as my children and I sat watching his inauguration. My one consolation, and it may console some of you as well, is that it would have been even worse if the 2008 results had been different.

Which brings me to my very last point. Some of you may remember that President Obama quoted the Koran, the Torah and the Bible in his Cairo speech. Given his fondness for religious texts, I think it is appropriate for me to end with a biblical quotation too, and it sums up the task he now faces. This passage is from the Book of James chapter 2, verse 22: "A man is justified by works, and not by faith alone." Ultimately we are going to judge his foreign policy by what he *achieves*—by whether he ever earns that Nobel Peace Prize—and not just by his good intentions. As is probably clear, I am not particularly optimistic about his chances, but I would be delighted to be proven wrong.

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"Obama in Egypt." wikimedia commons. 8 Nov 2010. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Obama_in_Egypt,_P060409PS-0223.jpg

":Barack Obama and Hu Jintao participate in an official arrival ceremony the Great Hall of the People." wikimedia commons. 8 Nov 2010. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Barack_Obama_and_Hu_Jintao_participate_in_an_official_arrival_ceremony_the_Great_Hall_of_the_People.jpg

Obama and Afghanistan

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In his campaign for the American presidency, Barack Obama emphasized the "right war" in Afghanistan in order both to highlight the folly of the "wrong war" in Iraq and to establish that he was not against all wars – just "dumb" ones.[1] Al Qaeda's safe haven in Afghanistan prior to September 11, 2001 produced the plans and personnel that led to the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, argued Obama, the George W. Bush administration distracted itself from the job of eliminating al Qaeda by bungling its way into Iraq. Emboldened, the Taliban began to undermine the U.S.-backed Afghan government and sought to return to power, raising the specter of a renewed training ground for Islamic extremists. As president, Obama promised the American voters, he would devote the resources necessary to successfully prosecute the counterinsurgency campaign.

In his first months in office, Obama moved swiftly to fulfill his campaign pledges. He appointed the Democratic Party's star troubleshooter, Richard Holbrooke, as his special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. He ordered a strategy review to be completed in his first months in office. Even before the review was finished, Obama had announced a substantial increase in American troops for the conflict, amidst reports that the number would grow even further as the year wore on. And in the summer he inserted as commander of the U.S. forces in Afghanistan General Stanley McChrystal, whose Special Forces background would ensure a keen understanding of what was required to wage a successful counterinsurgency campaign.

Obama's determination to prosecute the war, however, ran into two serious problems during the summer of 2009. One was the failure of Afghan President Hamid Karzai to inspire confidence in the legitimacy of his government; the August elections involved massive voter fraud, making it more difficult to gain public support, either in Afghanistan or the United States, for the American military effort. The other was the skittishness of the Democratic Party; with an economy continuing to sour, leading members of Congress, such as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), made clear their desire to draw down the military effort, particularly as the number of American battle deaths continued to rise.

With the announcement that 30,000 additional American troops would head to Afghanistan in 2010 to reverse the momentum of the Taliban balanced against the declaration that those troops would begin coming home the following year, Obama's December 2009 West Point speech highlighted that the president had no good options in Afghanistan. He does not know whether American and allied forces can train Afghans in sufficient quality and quantity to take over responsibility for protecting the government, but he does not want an indefinite American presence.

While Obama's early rhetoric about the stakes involved in the conflict suggested that the United States needed to make an all-out effort, the December 2009 speech highlighted that the president was eager to emphasize that he could find a way out. The news at West Point was the exit date. The White House had leaked for weeks that the president was likely to order 30,000 more troops into battle. By beginning to talk about when he would start getting out, the president reflected the larger mood of the country. At the end of eight years and in the face of continued high unemployment, Americans were tired of hearing that they needed to be at war. At West Point, Obama began to change to narrative from his earlier commitment to a "war of necessity" to a story that would make clear that his election in 2008 meant that America would not be at war indefinitely. By reminding voters that all combat troops would leave Iraq by the end of 2011 and telling them that troops would begin to leave Afghanistan, Obama signaled that his reelection campaign in 2012 would trumpet his efforts to end America's wars, not intensify them.

A War of Necessity?

The distinctions Obama drew between Iraq and Afghanistan during the campaign in 2008 were vital to his candidacy, but they also contributed to the growing sense in 2009 that the Afghanistan war had now become "Obama's war." In the campaign, he scored points with the Democratic Party base by emphasizing his opposition to the Iraq war from the start (in contrast to his chief opponent for the nomination, New York Senator Hillary Clinton); he built his credentials with independents by arguing the need to transfer troops, resources, and attention away from Iraq to the war in Afghanistan. "Iraq is not the central front in the war on terrorism, and it never has been," wrote candidate Obama in a New York Times op-ed in July 2008. "As president, I would pursue a new strategy, and begin by providing at least two additional combat brigades to support our effort in Afghanistan. We need more troops, more helicopters, better intelligence-gathering and more nonmilitary assistance to accomplish the mission there."[2]

A week after the president took office, administration officials sent signals that the president sought to focus more American attention on the war, leaving development work to be done by European allies, and they made clear to Afghan President Hamid Karzai that they had no intention of tolerating his corruption. Narrowing the American emphasis, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates declared, "If we set ourselves the objective of creating some sort of Central Asian Valhalla over there, we will lose." Therefore, he added, "My own personal view is that our primary goal is to prevent Afghanistan from being used as a base for terrorists and extremists to attack the United States and our allies."[3]

Two months later, the administration released its strategy review for Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the president made clear that he was focused on one major objective. "I want the American people to understand," said Obama, "that we have a clear and focused goal: to disrupt, dismantle and defeat Al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent

President Obama addresses the outlook for American involvement in Afghanistan suring his December 2009 speech at West Point.

their return to either country in the future." Following his campaign rhetoric about the central front in the war on terror, the president declared, "Al Qaeda and its allies – the terrorists who planned and supported the 9/11 attacks – are in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Multiple intelligence estimates have warned that Al Qaeda is actively planning attacks on the United States homeland from its safe haven in Pakistan." Combating the threat, Obama said, was not simply a matter of finding Al Qaeda members and eliminating them. It also meant going after the Taliban, a task for which he had ordered 17,000 additional American combat troops: "[I]f the Afghan government falls to the Taliban – or allows Al Qaeda to go unchallenged – that country will again be a base for terrorists who want to kill as many of our people as they possibly can."[4]

The strategy paper recognized, however, that the counterinsurgency campaign would not be successful without focusing some attention on government capacity, economic development and indigenous security capabilities in both Pakistan and Afghanistan – i.e., nation building. In his March address, the president announced his support for a bill in Congress that would provide $1.5 billion yearly in assistance to go directly to the Pakistani people for 5 years. A further goal was to train Afghan army and police forces to create by the end of 2011 a 134,000 strong Afghan army and an 82,000 member police force (a number that many, including Holbrooke and McChrystal, deemed inadequate).

One major innovation of the new administration's approach was linking the fate of the two nations, thereby giving rise to the term "AfPak." As the White Paper put it, "The ability of extremists in Pakistan to undermine Afghanistan is proven, while insurgency in Afghanistan feeds instability in Pakistan." It also laid out what it called "realistic and achievable objectives." These included, however, "promoting a more capable, accountable, and effective government in Afghanistan," and "assisting efforts to enhance civilian control and stable constitutional government in Pakistan and a vibrant economy that provides opportunity for the people of Pakistan." The White Paper itself noted, "These are daunting tasks."[5]

A second new strategy element would be the effort to distinguish between those Taliban deemed "irreconcilable" and those viewed as willing to end their insurgency. The paper explicitly sought to get "non-ideologically committed insurgents to lay down their arms, reject Al Qaeda, and accept the Afghan Constitution." This element of the strategy reflected the perceived success in Iraq resulting from turning former insurgents into responsible participants of the developing new order.

At the end of the summer, Obama reiterated his thinking on the war in an address before the Veterans of Foreign Wars Convention in Phoenix: "[M]ilitary power alone will not win this war …[W]e also need diplomacy and development and good governance. And our new strategy has a clear mission and defined goals: to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda and its extremist allies." He added, "This is not a war of choice. This is a war of necessity."[6] Having said it was not a choice, he suggested that he was prepared to see it through to the end.

Ironically, the person chiefly responsible for bringing the terms "wars of choice" and "wars of necessity" into the American debate, Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations and author of a book comparing the two Iraq wars, suggested the president had it wrong. Surely, said Haass, the United States had to go after the Taliban initially to get at the source of the 9/11 attacks. But a war of necessity involved both "vital national interests" and a "lack of viable alternatives to the use of military force to protect those interests." Under those criteria, Afghanistan didn't count. If it were a war of necessity, Haass wrote, "it would justify any level of effort. It is not and does not."[7]

By laying down such a clear marker on the necessity of fighting the war, the president made it extremely difficult to do anything other than ramp up the American commitment. But the administration sent mixed signals as 2009 wore on. Obama did announce a troop increase after coming into office before his strategy

review was even complete. But his National Security Adviser James Jones caused a stir that summer when on a visit to Afghanistan, he made clear that asking for more troops so soon after Obama had ordered 21,000 troops to deploy (17,000 in a combat role, 4,000 to train Afghan forces) would cause the president to have a "Whiskey Tango Foxtrot" (What the f---?) moment.[8] According to sources close to the team advising McChrystal, as the new

One major innovation of the new administration's approach was linking the fate of the two nations, thereby giving rise to the term "AfPak."

commander was preparing his policy review for the president, Secretary Gates also made clear that asking for more troops was unwise.[9]

As summer gave way to fall in Obama's first year, the president was putting himself in an unenviable position, having declared that the war was one the United States had to win but not wanting to escalate the number of American troops any further. He had promised that Bush's "underresourced war" would now finally get the attention it deserved. But would it?

A New Commander and a New Strategy

As the Obama team prepared to assess its policy for the second time that year, General McChrystal's review of the situation and his recommendations going forward to fulfill the president's goals became the central focus of both supporters and critics of the war.

McChrystal had established two new objectives for a more successful counterinsurgency strategy after replacing Gen. David McKiernan as theater commander. One was to protect the population of Afghanistan; the new commander was concerned that ISAF spent too much time on troop protection and not enough on providing security for the population. The second was to reduce civilian casualties, whose rise had turned the Afghan population against the Western military effort (as well as cost support for the mission in Europe). McChrystal declared, "The point of security is to enable governance…. My metric is not the enemy killed, not ground taken: it's how much governance we've got."[10]

A list of the metrics that would be used to gauge success appeared online in mid-September.[11] It reiterated the basic goal laid out by the president in March: "to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat Al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future." But the document demonstrated the difficulty of merely disrupting terrorist networks rather than more ambitious governance goals. There were metrics clearly focused on measuring the strength of the insurgency – e.g., how much territory the insurgents held vs. that secured by American, coalition and Afghan government forces. But a number of the

American soldiers on patrol near the village of Kowtay, Khowst Province Afghanistan

metrics had to do with the effectiveness and popularity of the government in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Whereas goals such as increasing Pakistani counterinsurgency capabilities or strengthening Afghan national security forces are within reason, however, laying out metrics that include Pakistani public opinion of government performance and progress in that judicial system becoming free of military involvement would simply set the Obama administration up for never-ending nation building.[12]

McChrystal's initial assessment of the situation in Afghanistan was delivered to Washington on August 30, leaked to Bob Woodward of the *Washington Post* and published on September 21, creating a firestorm in the nation's capital. McChrystal suggested in his report that readers not focus on force or resource requirements; "The key takeaway from this assessment," he wrote, "is the urgent need for a significant change to our strategy and the way that we think and operate." He reiterated that the mission had to shift its emphasis from "seizing terrain or destroying insurgent forces" and focus on the Afghan population (a strategy that had led to increasing numbers of American casualties). He argued that the next year was critical for laying the ground for success; failure to gain the initiative would risk "an outcome where defeating the insurgency is no longer possible." Building up indigenous capabilities was essential, and McChrystal called for increasing the size of the Afghan army to 134,000 not by December 2011 as originally called for but by October 2010, with an eye toward then going up to 240,000.[13]

The leaking of the assessment highlighted differences within the administration and on Capitol Hill. Vice President Biden, who opposed the troop increases announced at the onset of the administration, was once again arguing against more troops and reconfiguring the strategy to focus on knocking out individual Taliban and Al Qaeda leaders from afar. Hillary Clinton, meanwhile, who supported the troop increase in the spring, continued to do so in the fall as did Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who supported his military commanders. While Obama's Democratic base made clear its opposition to more troops, Republicans such as John McCain urged Obama to stand tough.

The White House made clear, however, that it was rethinking a strategy that Obama had outlined in March and reiterated in August. Although it is hard to imagine anyone was surprised that President Hamid Karzai engaged in massive electoral fraud to stay in office, some in the administration were calling his growing illegitimacy a "game-changer." Combined with Congressional Democratic opposition, an increase in American casualties, and eroding public support, that election led officials in Washington to begin to redefine their strategy.[14]

The Obama Dilemma

As Obama's first year in office drew to a close, Afghanistan was fast becoming his most intractable and significant challenge as president. Politically, he was increasingly at odds with his Democratic Party base. If he hadn't agreed to military requests for more troops, he would have risked a tremendous civilian-military rift; since he did agree, he risked being compared to Lyndon Johnson in Vietnam.

In his campaign, Obama said he would end the "bad war" in Iraq and resource the "good war" in Afghanistan. He promised early in his presidency to focus not on unrealistic objectives but rather on eliminating the threat posed by Al Qaeda. Recognizing that Pakistan was as big a problem as Afghanistan (since Al Qaeda has largely left its camps there to take up residence across the border), he developed a strategy for thinking about these two countries in tandem. And he told the American public that the war was one of "necessity."

But by fall, he realized that he was being asked to send more troops to a conflict whose objectives had once again grown. To eliminate Al Qaeda and prevent the Taliban's return was not just about eliminating bad guys and retaking territory; it was, as it was in the Bush years, about winning hearts and minds. McChrystal argued that the United States had to show the population why it should support the American-led effort. That meant protecting Afghans, and helping Afghanistan create an effective government. It meant shoring up the government of Pakistan and rooting out corruption there or risk facing a

backlash from the population. But it doesn't take a realist to recognize how high a bar that is. Even if one isn't trying to build Switzerland in the heart of Central Asia, the prospects of a stable, effective central government emerging in the poorest country on earth even with significantly more numbers of American

General Stanley McChrystal, former Commander of the International Security Assistance force in Afghanistant, in a strategy meeting with American Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry and President Obama in December of 2009.

troops are slim at best.

In the midst of these dilemmas, Obama went to West Point on December 1, 2009 to lay out his strategy before the country, the allies, the Afghan people, and the world.[15] The speech was the culmination of a review process that had involved national security deliberations at the highest level over several months, leading to charges by former Vice President Dick Cheney and others that the president was "dithering." Obama insisted that in-depth discussion was necessary to come up with the right answers, and that seat-of-the-pants decision-making in the previous administration had generated many of the problems he inherited.

The president began his speech with his usual remarks: the war was legitimate, the Bush administration never provided sufficient resources, and the problem was growing worse. And then he delivered the results of his review: "As Commander-in-Chief, I have determined that it is in our vital national interest to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan. After 18 months, our troops will begin to come home." It was a surge, but one that came with a time limit. The Afghan government would know that America was going to do more to reverse the momentum the Taliban had built in recent months, but there would be no "blank checks" or open-ended commitments. President Karzai was on notice that he had a limited amount of time to shore up the capabilities of his government to take responsibility for security.

The president's announcement helped him with different constituencies. By providing General McChrystal with most of the troops he wanted, Obama avoided a rift with his military leaders. By announcing a time frame for beginning to bring troops home, he signaled to his Democratic Party base that he understood the country could not afford to let the war drag on indefinitely.

But the obvious contradictions in those core two sentences of the speech left him open to criticism from the left and right. For those in the Democratic Party who see the costs of the war as weighing down the American economy, the addition of 30,000

As Obama's first year in office drew to a close, Afghanistan was fast becoming his most intractable and significant challenge as president.

troops was unwelcome news. Meanwhile, many on the right believe that announcing a withdrawal date merely gives comfort to the Taliban that they can simply wait out the American presence.

The problem is not just political. The argument that the United States has a vital national interest requiring it to send more troops but that it can begin to bring some troops home in July 2011 is contradictory.

"I make this decision," said the president, "because I am convinced that our security is at stake in Afghanistan and Pakistan." If American security was at stake in December 2009, it will still be at stake in July 2011. The Karzai government is unlikely to be ready to begin standing on its own. The Taliban will continue its insurgency. If the war is still one of necessity, in which core interests are threatened, then the United States has to remain for as long as it takes. If America's vital interests are not sufficient to require an indefinite commitment, and if there are fewer than 100 Al Qaeda operatives in Afghanistan, why does the United States need 100,000 troops there?

It's clear from what is known about the 2009 deliberations that the president was looking for ways not to accede to the military's push for escalation and skeptical that counterinsurgency could succeed. Obama made clear to his advisers that he did not want an open-ended commitment and was trying to find an exit strategy. [16]

And while at the end of the 2009 review process, Obama spelled out his Afghanistan strategy in a six-page memo to his civilian and military advisers, he told them that they would meet in December 2010 to assess the results and decide on the nature of the withdrawal timetable. Those like Clinton and Gates who supported more troops have emphasized that the July 2011 date was going to be conditions-based and that nothing hasty would occur. Meanwhile, Vice President Biden made clear on several occasions that he believed troops would be leaving as quickly as they had gone in. Thus the same debate that occurred before the December 2009 speech was inevitably going to occur before the December 2010 decision. Obama felt boxed in by the military in 2009, and he will undoubtedly feel the same way at the end of 2010. After all, his new commander in Afghanistan, Gen. David Petraeus (who replaced McChrystal after the latter was fired over remarks he and his staff made in an interview with Rolling Stone magazine), pushed hard to get the troop increase in 2009 and will continue to oppose a precipitous withdrawal.

But Obama clearly wants to be seen as the president who ended the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan so that America can focus on its domestic problems. During his time in office, he has articulated the view that America's power is limited and its financial resources constrained. He will combat threats, not because he believes he can eliminate them but to make problems manageable. And he will do so by working closely with other nations and international institutions in order both to make America a more responsible power but also a less burdened one. He may have talked about a war of necessity in 2009, but he has signaled that what he truly believes is necessary is the withdrawal. The question is whether politically he can find a way to get out of the country he said was a necessity to be in.

Endnotes

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Containing the Atom:

Paul Nitze and the Tradition of Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons

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Immediately following the first and only uses of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, President Truman described nuclear stewardship as "an awful responsibility that has fallen to us."[i] The decision to use the bombs did clearly demonstrate the operational effectiveness of a new and awesome weapon, as the atomic bomb was generally accepted to have been critical in bringing about the Japanese surrender. Moreover, new weapon technologies have consistently been used in subsequent warfare throughout human history.[ii] Policy-makers in the post-1945 period, therefore, would have had to work energetically against that precedent if they sought to meet Truman's "responsibility" and establish a tradition of non-use of nuclear weapons. This paper will defend the proposition that this is exactly what key American policy-makers sought and accomplished.

In the narrative that follows, the key dates to be examined are between 1945 and 1950—a transformative period in American foreign affairs when Paul Nitze and other key US policy-makers were setting the stage for the Cold War.[iii] The key to this study is not in episodically assessing why the United States repeatedly stepped back from the brink of the nuclear abyss, but rather in seeking to discern the development of a tradition of policy considerations concluding in the practice of non-use.[v] This policy evolution is tracked through three key debates of the early Cold War: establishing the uniqueness of nuclear weapons, creating the hydrogen bomb, and the writing of NSC-68.

Scholars have proposed two key explanations for the widely unexpected legacy of atomic weapons: the tradition of non-use and the nuclear taboo. The taboo explanation stems from a constructivist appreciation of the role of ideas and social action in state behavior, while the tradition of non-use comes from an assessment of the material and reputational factors considered by rational and strategically-oriented policy-makers. Both of these explanations need to be taken into account when assessing the non-use of nuclear weapons. Overall, I argue in this paper that US nuclear policy, with the early support of policy-makers like Paul Nitze, developed in a way that allowed for the emergence of a tradition of non-use of nuclear weapons. Evolving practices in the early years of the Cold War contributed substantially to a strategic commitment that helped prevent the use of nuclear weapons and prepare the ground for later struggles against proliferation.

Introduction

On a rainy day in June 1982, two men sat on a log in the forest outside of Geneva, Switzerland. The topic of conversation was nothing less than the terms of a dramatic nuclear arms reduction pact between the United States and the Soviet Union. For weeks delegates from both nations had been butting heads at the negotiating table with little progress to show for it. Frustrated, and fearing the ultimate failure of this unusual opportunity to limit the scope of the furious Cold War nuclear arms race, these two delegates departed from the confines of their retreat center for what would come to be known as "the walk in the woods." Seated face-to-face on a fallen tree, the two men from opposite sides of an iron curtain hashed out the details of a compromise between East and West.[1]

Far from the White House and the Kremlin, Paul Nitze and Yuli Kvitszinsky's frank discussion on that afternoon demonstrated that the unlimited proliferation of nuclear arsenals was not predestined, and that individuals long associated with unflinching commitments to nuclear strength could now seriously envision a world without the existence of threatening nuclear arms. The biggest surprise was on the American side, as Paul Nitze, a fixture of the US defense establishment since World War II and the hawkish author of NSC-68, had come to believe in the idea of completely eliminating nuclear weapons. His apparent turnabout was so unexpected that it begs the question of whether the United States had ever really been serious about using the nuclear weapons in its vast stockpile.

The non-use of nuclear weapons since their first use in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 is surprising in itself.[2] Scholars have proposed two key explanations: the tradition of non-use and the nuclear taboo. The taboo explanation stems from a constructivist appreciation of the role of ideas and conceptions of identity in state behavior, while the tradition of non-use derives from an assessment over time of the material and reputational factors considered by rational and strategically-oriented policy-makers.

This paper poses two related questions about the initial development of US nuclear weapons policy in the years just after the end of the Second World War. First, did policy-makers show in their deliberations or actions doubts about the use of nuclear weapons which might help us to explain the emergence of a tradition of non-use of nuclear weapons? Second, given his enduring role as nuclear strategist, policy advisor, and finally radical skeptic, could Paul Nitze himself have helped establish such a tradition from the earliest days of the Cold War? I explore these questions in this paper and will argue that the answers are in both cases affirmative.

Both before and after he died, Paul Nitze was often characterized by historians as a hawkish and militaristic government bureaucrat whose paranoia of Soviet expansionism drove him to view the international system in absolute terms and therefore consistently to advocate a forceful and aggressive US policy line.[3] The common view is that he exacerbated the tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, deepening the Cold War and more than once drawing the two sides close to direct hostilities.[4] It typically reads too much into episodes at the brink of nuclear escalation and fails to consider the evolving, nuanced, and complex nature of strategic thinking in the deep background of decision-making. In contrast, this study seeks to discern the pattern of thought typified by Nitze that over time and across many presidential decisions solidified into a tradition of non-use, a tradition

Paul Henry Nitze

that does not make future use by the United States impossible but does raise the threshold of decision very high.[5] The most important progenitors of this tradition, presidents and their key advisors, can hardly be labeled idealists. They were not scientists or policy advocates far removed from the lines of battle. At the beginning of the nuclear era, at any rate, they were hardened realists, tempered by war and capable of ruthlessness. To illustrate the complicated mind-set at the core of the evolving tradition of non-use, this paper takes a fresh look at one particular policy-maker involved from the very beginning.

Paul Henry Nitze (1907 - 2004)

Paul Nitze was a difficult man, not easy to like. He was a calculating and deft advisor, but not the most profound strategist of his time. For many decades, however, he was trusted by hard-nosed decision-makers and feared by adversaries. The record suggests that he was also deeply aware of the moral and ethical implications of his famously hawkish military stance, and that he worked hard to prevent the use of nuclear weapons by either superpower during the Cold War. Not the only contributor to the development of the non-use tradition, he was nevertheless deeply involved at three key historical moments:

Paul Nitze was often characterized by historians as a hawkish and militaristic government bureaucrat

when the earliest decisions were made to treat atomic weapons as unique, when the decision was made to build the hydrogen bomb, and when the National Security Council agreed on the operational underpinnings of a policy to contain the expansion of the Soviet Union.

On October 28th, 1999, Paul H. Nitze wrote his last and most unexpected op-ed article for *The New York Times.* In it he stated clearly: "I see no compelling reason why we should not unilaterally get rid of our nuclear weapons."[6] Before his death in 2004, Nitze had reconciled his years of experience in nuclear policy-making with an argument for the complete denuclearization of the planet. How did he arrive at this conclusion, which, given his reputation as a foreign policy hawk, came as such a surprise?

As a young graduate of Harvard University, Nitze began his career on Wall Street.[7] Working for the prominent investment bank Dillon, Read, and Company, Nitze survived the Great Depression and built a network that would sustain him for the rest of his life. Disciplined, diligent, and confident almost to the point of arrogance, he had made his reputation as a savvy economist and moved to Washington DC in 1940 with James Forrestal, the president of Dillon, Read and future US Secretary of Defense.[8] He remained deeply engaged with policy from then until the administration of Ronald Reagan.[9]

Nitze first served as Vice Chairman of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey, which assessed the effectiveness of Allied bombing campaigns during the war. After a stay in Europe, he spent two months in Japan, becoming intimately familiar with the devastating carnage of the atomic bomb. In late November, 1945, he wrote home in a letter to his mother that his team had come to know "what happened to each ship, plane, shell, ton of coal, rodent, fly, open latrine, and house of prostitution during the course of the war."[10] Nitze's sentiments towards Japan appear to have been marked with ambiguity at the time. He recollects in his memoir that "Japan was the most beautiful country I had ever seen. Then we got to the ground and could see just how devastating the war had been for Japan. Whole cities had been burned to the ground by the air raids…"[11] Like most Americans, Nitze could not forget the tragedy of Pearl Harbor, and his memoir demonstrates this sentiment. "My own feelings were likewise confused," wrote Nitze, "I thought Japan was a marvelous country populated by the most hateful people on Earth."[12] Nonetheless, in another letter to his mother, dated October 18th, 1945, he wrote about an encounter he had with some locals:

> The Japs themselves are certainly an extraordinary people. The peasant class are simple, gay, graceful, and hardworking. While waiting for a guard to let us into an underground factory out in the hills, I gave some chocolate to a group of small children standing about. When we came out again they all had a few small chestnuts to give to me.[13]

Going to Japan humanized the enemy for Nitze, and his later thinking would reflect this experience.

As the USSBS team worked indefatigably to complete their project by Christmas 1945, Nitze began to develop his own opinion of atomic weapons. His final report for USSBS concluded that their use had not been decisive in bringing about the Japanese surrender. "Based on a detailed investigation of all of the facts, and supported by the testimony of the surviving Japanese leaders involved," wrote Nitze in the report, "it is the Survey's opinion that certainly prior to 31 December 1945, and in all probability prior to 1 November 1945, Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bombs had not been dropped, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated."[14] Above all, Nitze's conclusion rested on his assessment that the atomic bomb was not an "absolute weapon" and that Japan could have continued its war effort even after the bombings. In the end, the report was discredited within the US military, in what Nicholas Thompson characterizes as a series of friendly fire attacks by military branches staking budgetary claims in the fraught atmosphere of post-war reorganization.[15] Nitze, however, never repudiated the conclusions to which the USSBS team had come.

Just as the actual conception of nuclear weapons presented a new challenge to military routines, associated strategic thinking had to develop outside of conventional idealist-realist analytical frameworks. It was in just such an environment that Nitze first wrestled with the American burden of nuclear arms. His strategic views developed within a flexible and fluid framework of nuclear policy ideas that in part diverged from his generally hawkish stance. In short, he functioned within a grey area that provided him the intellectual leeway to side with the military establishment and promote nuclear armament, and at the same time work diligently to prevent the use of nuclear weapons by any nation. For example, Nitze famously argued for a policy of 'graduated deterrence' rather than 'massive retaliation.'[16] In a 1956 article in *Foreign Affairs,* entitled 'Atoms, Strategy, and Policy,' Nitze made the following recommendations for a policy governing the use of atomic weapons by United States:

> (a) We should endeavor to meet aggression and restore the situation without the use of atomic weapons wherever this is possible.
> (b) We should extend hostilities to other areas only if there is no other way effectively to restore the situation.
> (c) Even if it becomes necessary to engage the U.S.S.R. in atomic warfare, we should limit ourselves to military objectives, primarily to those which are necessary to achieve control of the air. We should not initiate the bombing of industrial or population centers.
> (d) We should attempt to build non-atomic elements of strength and to encourage our allies to do likewise so that the residual reliance which must be placed upon atomic weapons for our common security is reduced as far as may be feasible.[17]

These do not seem like the policy recommendations of a recalcitrant hawk. In fact, the implication of these recommendations is even more dovish than historians have generally acknowledged, for they all point to one long-term hope: non-use. Nitze's oral histories also reflect these sentiments, referring to his abhorrence of nuclear weapons on numerous occasions.[18] Accordingly, with others of a similar mindset he helped guide the United States through its formative nuclear years, allowing the practice of non-use of nuclear weapons to develop and eventually establish a recognizable tradition.

Establishing the Uniqueness of the Bomb

Within a fortnight of taking office in April 1945, Harry Truman was briefed by Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson on the atomic bomb.[19] During the briefing Stimson did not cut any corners in addressing the global significance of the new technology, and in the process he may well have traumatized President Truman. Stimson's presentation emphasized six main points. First, the United States would soon possess the technology to destroy an entire city with a single bomb.

Second, the US would not remain the sole possessor of the bomb in the future and that adversaries could use it to unleash devastating surprise attacks. Third, this new weapon might lead to the complete destruction of modern civilization. Fourth, international controls should be sought to limit the bomb's use. Fifth, the United States now had a moral responsibility to protect the civilized world from nuclear obliteration. Sixth, if the bomb was properly handled the US might be able to

President Truman initiates U.S. involvement in Korea in December 1950.

not only save civilization, but ensure the peace and stability of the world.[20] It seems that Truman made the subsequent decision actually to use the bombs on Japan in something of a haze of incomprehension, treating their use as rather a foregone conclusion. With the fierce Battle of Okinawa also fresh in the minds of American officials, the prospect of vast casualties resulting from an invasion of the Japanese mainland made use of the atomic bomb obviously appealing.[21] "Having found the bomb we used it," stated Truman flatly in a radio address on August 9th, 1945, after the bombing of Hiroshima.[22] Nevertheless, Truman did not forget Stimson's message in the weeks following the conclusion of the Pacific War, and he soon began to work in earnest to limit the acceptability of the atomic weapon.

To begin with, Truman himself accepted sole responsibility for authorizing any use of atomic force; in doing so, he established a powerful precedent for ultimate presidential control over the US nuclear machinery.[23] He also demanded that nuclear weapons be kept separate from conventional weapons in the US military arsenal.[24] On top of this separation of armaments, Truman pushed the formation of the Atomic Energy Commission through Congress in 1946 to place nuclear weapons and material under the control of civilian leadership. When the Atomic Energy Commission was created in 1946, custody of the atomic bomb was handed over from the Army to civilian oversight.[25] Truman, believing the bomb to be of unique importance, separated it from the traditional mechanisms of conventional weapons consideration. "The release of atomic energy," Truman would say at the time, "constitutes a new force too revolutionary to consider in the framework of old ideas."[26] This decision to place atomic bomb use under civilian control was contested by military leaders and the Secretary of Defense, James Forrestal, who continually requested military custody up to and even after the decision to establish the AEC.[27] By creating the civilian-led AEC, Truman effectively preempted military leadership in nuclear weapons policy-making, and established a bureaucratic check on military decision-making.

With his work on USSBS and then on the Marshall Plan, Nitze did not play a central role in the creation of the Atomic Energy Commission. Nonetheless, he was a witness to the early debates between military and civilian leaders and followed closely the changing conception of nuclear weapons in American foreign policy. That conception legitimized the work of civilian leaders overseeing nuclear materials and also laid the groundwork for civilian input on decisions about the use of atomic force. As a result, for example, civilians in the executive and legislative branches would later find it within their mandates to oppose the creation of a neutron bomb and ban peaceful nuclear explosions in the United States.[28] Had the field of atomic energy been developed early on within a framework of military decision-making, later civilian support of the practice of non-use may well have had less of an impact on policy.

The Hydrogen Bomb

Since 1943, at the dawn of the nuclear revolution, scientists had considered the feasibility of developing a fusion bomb.[29] According to historians Samuel Williamson and Steven Rearden, problems with uncertain theoretical probabilities, possible detrimental effects on the environment, and estimates of astronomical costs initially stood in the way of actually pursuing its development.[30] But on August 29th, 1949, something entirely unexpected occurred in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan—the Soviet Union tested its own bomb. It wasn't until six days later that an American B-29 flying north from Japan noticed that radiation levels in the air were too high to be normal.[31] So in the autumn of 1949 Washington DC was all abuzz about how to respond. The decision was soon made to unleash the power of the fusion reaction.

On November 19, 1949, President Truman ordered the formation of a special committee consisting of Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and David Lilienthal to advise him on the creation of fusion technology—it was called the Z Committee.[32] As it turned out, Acheson and Johnson delegated the task to their subordinates, and thus a sub-committee was formed of Paul Nitze from the State Department, Robert LeBaron from the Defense Department, and Lilienthal from the AEC.[33] Given that the AEC was strongly opposed to creating a hydrogen bomb, and the Defense Department was in favor, the swing vote landed squarely in the lap of Paul Nitze.[34] The committee discussed matters of feasibility, necessity, and above all the implications of a fusion bomb in light of the Soviet threat.

On December 19, 1949, Nitze penned a memo supportive of taking the next step.[35] He clarified that his recommendation was for continuing research to determine the feasibility of creating a fusion reaction, and not necessarily to construct a weapon should related experiments succeed.[36] The memo also contained a clear recommendation as to the necessity of a reexamination of US policy in the Cold War, preceded by a statement of belief that "emphasis by the US on the possible employment of weapons of mass destruction, in the event of a hot war, is detrimental to the position of the US in the Cold War."[37]

On the one hand, it seems as though Nitze wanted to avoid pushing the United States towards accepting the eventuality of nuclear use. On the other, he was advised by Secretary Acheson that "the NSC subcommittee probably should not direct its efforts toward the ultimate moral question at this time but should express as much fact and analysis as possible…"[38] In the same memo, dated December 3rd, 1949, Acheson also expressed his misgivings about nuclear use. Under Secretary of State James Webb later credited Acheson with saying, "Somewhere, we should make a review of what we have said about not using atomic weapons and about controls. At the same time, review what has been said by the military with respect to its plans to use the weapon."[39] Indeed, both Acheson and Nitze seemed especially concerned with ensuring that any steps toward weaponizing the fusion reaction should not be mistaken as an act of war or as a statement of readiness by the United States to use the weapon in battle. Ultimately, Nitze and his sub-committee came down in favor of the hydrogen bomb project. They gave it the green light but also insisted that it be accompanied by the complete reexamination of US foreign and security policy in light of the new weapon.[40] That task, as it turned out, would fall again onto Nitze's lap and culminate in his drafting of NSC-68.

Nitze appears to have viewed the super bomb the same way that President Truman eventually did—as constituting a

nuclear game of chicken, potentially blocking the path of international cooperation.[41] When the Z Committee met with President Truman on January 31st, 1950, after over three months of deliberation, the meeting was reported to have taken only seven minutes.[42] Truman asked only one question of the committee: "Can the Russians do it?"[43] In the end, the decision to forge ahead with nuclear experimentation was less aggressive than it was necessary. According to his biographer, David McCullough, Truman even took a moment to explain his thinking to David Lilienthal, who was the most distraught over the President's decision. During the January 31st meeting, Truman leaned over to the AEC Chairman and said "he had always believed the United States should never use 'these weapons,' that peace was 'our whole purpose.'"[44] Nitze didn't hear that remark, but the record of his thinking reflects similar sentiments. By extension of both Nitze and Truman's logic, building a hydrogen bomb seemed, paradoxically, the best way of actually avoiding the use of nuclear weapons. Nitze, who was concerned with eliminating incentives for surprise attack, desired the United States to always have a slight nuclear advantage over the Soviet Union, thereby encouraging a tense stability between the two powers.

Nitze appears to have viewed the super bomb the same way that President Truman eventually did—as constituting a nuclear game of chicken, potentially blocking the path of international cooperation.

NSC-68

History remembers Paul Nitze mainly as a hawkish cold warrior. For example, Andrew Bacevich notes that the "Nitze Doctrine offered a recipe for the permanent militarization of US policy."[45] That Doctrine was most explicitly framed in National Security Council Memorandum #68, drafted while he was director of the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department. Written in 1950 and declassified in 1975, NSC-68 relied heavily upon then-dominant perceptions of the threat from the Soviet Union and the ideological incompatibility of capitalism and communism. Nitze's own grim outlook on such matters prompted him to seek more military spending. In perhaps its most quoted sentence, NSC-68 laid down a policy of initiating "a substantial and rapid build-up of strength in the free world…to support a firm policy intended to check and roll back the Kremlin's drive for world domination."[46]

The document was meant to provide a holistic review of US foreign policy in light of recent developments, including the possibility of the hydrogen bomb and the Soviet possession of the atomic bomb. Although it omitted actual dollar amounts, NSC-68 called for a dramatic increase in military spending, which totaled $13 billion in 1951.[47] In fact, between $35 and $50 billion would be spent annually over the next few years.[48] The increased funding was meant to strengthen US military capabilities through and through, including both nuclear and conventional forces.

In short, NSC-68 militarized the US Cold War policy of containment. But it did something for the United States that has been largely overlooked. By increasing military spending on conventional and nuclear forces, the policy shift advocated in NSC-68 pushed the US off the course of complete reliance on nuclear weapons. Moreover, by committing the United States to investing in the policy of containment, it shifted the discussion away from the singular option of a first-strike against the Soviet Union, effectively moving policy away from the idea of a preventive nuclear war and opening the door to the intentional practice of not actually using nuclear weapons.

Between 1947 and 1949, preventive war against the Soviet Union was in fact seriously contemplated at the highest levels of the US government. Many strategic considerations lay in the background, ranging from the need to prevent the Soviet Union from obtaining an atomic bomb to hitting an existential enemy while the US was still in a position of strategic and military advantage. Given that military planning was rooted in a mentality of war-winning, planners often ascribed to the continuity school of nuclear weapons and incorporated the use of the bomb in tactical battle preparations. Between April and June 1946, four draft war plans were produced that included "prompt strategic air offensives" aimed at destroying "Soviet war-making capabilities."[49] While the US held a monopoly on atomic weapons, the bomb factored heavily in the perceived effectiveness of these proposed strikes. After 1949, moreover, the US war plans concentrated on a preemptive nuclear tactic of "blunting" the enemy's capability of delivering its ultimate weapon.[50]

National Security Archive photo of a detonated hydrogen bomb

As Scott Sagan points out, US military leaders pushed more for a preventive nuclear war than civilian leaders did.[51] Many famous Generals, including Kenney, LeMay, Power, Twining, White, and Vandenberg sympathized with preventive war doctrines.[52] In a September 1945 report on post-war military organization in the US, the Joint Chiefs of Staff was explicit in this regard: "When it becomes evident that forces of aggression are being arrayed against us by a potential enemy, we cannot afford, through any misguided and perilous idea of avoiding an aggressive attitude to permit the first blow to be struck against us."[53] Such an idea seems to have been of incredible importance to other policy-makers, who sought to avoid the use of atomic weapons. The evidence suggests that Nitze would have taken issue with this statement as well, but not merely because of its implications for nuclear use. Nitze would simply have rejected the notion that preventive war was required in order to avert a first-strike on the United States. On the contrary, he took a stance against preventive war in NSC-68, and worked through other means, like deterrence through denial, at eliminating the original incentives for a nuclear surprise attack. NSC-68 should be seen as a response to the generals. Its aim was to diminish the threat of nuclear war and to stop nuclear weapons from being used.

In his memoir Nitze states that, "one of our first concerns [in NSC-68] was the security of Europe."[54] This complements his recollection that he was most afraid of nuclear weapons deployment occurring over Berlin in 1948, not over Cuba in 1962 or any other Cold War crisis.[55] The idea of not backing the United States into a corner by relying on nuclear weapons had actually occurred to Nitze early on. In an October 11th, 1949 meeting of the Policy Planning Staff, Nitze asserted that the recent Soviet acquisition of atomic weapons would make "conventional armaments and their possession by the Western European nations, as well as ourselves, all the more important."[56]

In his oral history, Nitze claims that Truman supported NSC-68 all the way, but did not think that it was necessary to spend "all of that money."[57] Nitze made a great effort to try persuading Truman, but it was the Korean War that ultimately moved policy decisively along the NSC-68 line.[58] Shortly after the release of NSC-68, the United States considered using atomic weapons against both North Korea and China.[59]

On November 30th, 1950, President

Truman held a disastrous press conference on the situation in Korea. Upon being pressed by several reporters, Truman declared that the atomic bomb was under active consideration for use, and that military field commanders would be responsible for deciding whether to use it or not.[60] The statement was untrue, but negative reaction was immediate. Upon hearing of the President's public proclamation, British Prime Minister Clement Attlee flew to Washington to meet with Truman personally, imploring him not to use nuclear weapons in Korea. The whole incident was a public relations mess for the White House. Nonetheless, what is most interesting is that Truman must have known what he was saying was incorrect, since he was well aware of his own personal role in permitting the use of atomic weapons. It is possible that in that moment, Truman knew he needed to maintain a public position of strength with regard to the credibility of the American nuclear deterrent. In a way, Truman was forced into his unfortunate answer by acknowledging that he could not publicly declare that he was not considering the use of nuclear weapons in the Korean War. If he had made a statement about the sheer abhorrence of nuclear use and an American desire not to use nuclear weapons, then the credibility of the US nuclear deterrent would be diminished in the eyes of the Soviet Union. In this way, Truman perhaps inadvertently and certainly inelegantly gave voice to the spirit of NSC-68.

On November 4, 1950, Nitze wrote a memo to Secretary Acheson about considerations for the use of atomic weapons in Korea. He concluded that if a bomb were to be used for tactical purposes on only military targets, the civilian damage would be minimal and it could prove effective for the UN mission.[61] However, he urged against any such action. Given that the US military was in Korea under the auspices of the United Nations, be pointed out that using the bomb would have "world-wide repercussions" that could "leave us in a disadvantageous moral position."[62]

A few years later, Nitze also disapproved of the use of atomic weapons to defend the islands of Quemoy and Matsu off the coast of China.[63] After Eisenhower backed away from his original 1958 plan to use nuclear weapons, Nitze attended a meeting with Senator Bill Fulbright (D-AR), who turned to Nitze at one point and said, "You know, Paul, I wish the President had stayed with his decision to use the nuclear weapons." "Good God, Bill," replied Nitze, "you can't really be serious about that!"[64] As it turns out, Senator Fulbright was merely curious about what would have happened, but his inquisitiveness had struck a chord of disdain in Nitze. Around the same time, Nitze told Dean Acheson, then former Secretary of State, that it was an "asinine" idea to use nuclear weapons to defend Taiwan.[65]

In 1957, the Gaither Report explicitly rejected the policy of preventive war by the United States.[66] Nitze was a member of the Gaither Committee and supported its conclusions, conclusions that were consistent with his thinking for many years. He remained a conventional hawk, and while he never completely foreclosed the possibility of using the bomb but he felt that irresponsible nuclear stewardship was "immoral."[67] His policy recommendations in the early days of the nuclear era fell short of explicitly advocating non-use, but he also never tried to establish the conditions under which reliance on nuclear force would be acceptable. These subtle policy distinctions, rooted in a rational appreciation of materialist and reputational considerations, helped guide the United States down a path of non-use and construct the tradition as we can now perceive it.

Conclusions

An examination of nuclear policy decisions made by early post-war policy-makers suggests that decades of nuclear peace have not been the product of sheer good fortune. The case of Paul Nitze in particular demonstrates that even decidedly hawkish presidential advisors had nuanced and complex worldviews. By establishing the uniqueness of nuclear weapons in both military and civilian terms, the Truman administration not only provided credence to the view of nuclear weapons as radically discontinuous innovations, but also rejected decisively the idea that military planners should control them. In addition, the debate over the creation of the hydrogen bomb, while ending in a decision to develop fusion technologies, left an enduring legacy of careful deliberation and a strong tendency to consider the new arsenal as useful only for purposes of deterrence and not for actual deployment. Finally, linked to the hydrogen bomb decision and to this day commonly viewed as needlessly bellicose, NSC-68 supported a policy inclination not to use nuclear weapons, even in adverse strategic circumstances, and it helped delegitimize the idea of preventive nuclear war.

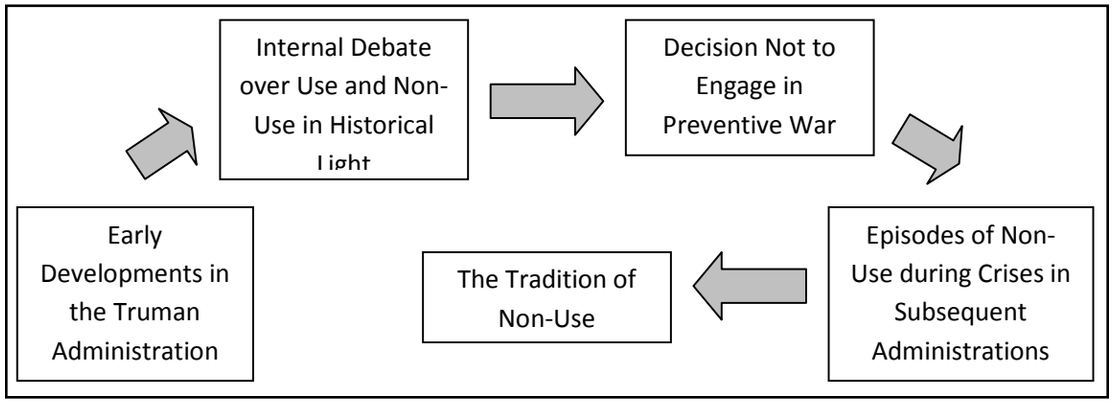
For policy-makers like Paul Nitze, it was possible to threaten nuclear retaliation and at the same time to erect a very high barrier to the use of nuclear weapons. Over time this complex position helped establish a tradition of non-use. Traditions can be overturned, of course, but once recognized, they raise the threshold for contrary decisions. In short, they constructed a routinized normative framework aimed at constraining, informing and guiding behavior. Future policy-makers are not entirely bound, but they are influenced. The weight of history lies heavily on their shoulders.

With regard to the possible use of nuclear weapons, we continue to live on unstable ground. A long-standing tradition of non-use that is arguably less constraining than a universal and unquestioned social taboo. The Obama administration has recently given voice to the difference in its attempt to advance the cause of nuclear non-proliferation.[68] The commitment not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear powers but to threaten to use them against those possessing such weapons is consistent with a long policy line. In short, the reasoning behind contemporary efforts to deal with threats from states like Iran and North Korea is not so different from that guiding US policy during the Cold War.[69]

As it stands today, the tradition of non-use of nuclear weapons remains unbroken, even as it is rendered more fragile by unique new challenges linked to the phenomenon of state-less terrorism. International codification in the form of a binding treaty or voluntary charter, however, may not be the best strategy for ensuring its extension or its longevity. As Thomas Schelling explains, writing down the tradition of non-use would transform it into "lawyers' business," with technical arguments ensuing over proper language and governing structures.[70] Attempting to nail down and solidify the norm-guided behavior of rational actors in this case could actually strip the tradition of some of its weight.

I have argued that hawkish US policy-makers like Paul Nitze played a key role in developing a tradition of non-use of nuclear weapons. This is not to belittle the

Figure: The Emergence of the Tradition of Non-Use



importance of doves like George Kennan, who energetically opposed the development of nuclear technologies, especially the hydrogen bomb in 1949.[71] Like others who helped shape the social context within which nuclear questions would later be answered, Kennan believed that reliance on nuclear weapons would make it "difficult if not impossible to do anything else [but use them] when the time [came] to make a decision."[72] A preemptive declaratory policy of no-first-use was therefore Kennan's own answer to the nuclear dilemma.[73] Nitze disagreed with that solution, and it is precisely this disagreement combined with his acquiescence in unspoken decisions not to use nuclear weapons that carried the day. For this reason, Nitze's story helps us understand the nuanced and complicated forces underpinning US nuclear strategy in the early Cold War era and gradually constituting an important tradition. The Figure below depicts The Figure below depicts my hypothesized causal chain.

By recognizing the unique nature of nuclear weapons, establishing proper controls over nuclear technology, and maintaining a robust conventional arsenal, pragmatic American policy-makers built the foundations of a tradition. Paul Nitze's 1982 walk in the woods actually began many decades earlier, and if he were alive today he would have no trouble recognizing the path taken by his

Endnotes

A NOTE ON SOURCES

Much of the evidence presented in this paper comes from primary sources. Full references are provided in a thesis on file in the Government Department, Cornell University. Most government documents from the early days of the Cold War have now been declassified and are available for public viewing. There are many more documents available than I have been able to include in this study, but I do draw my narrative and conclusions from a reasonable sampling.of official histories available in the Library of Congress, including memoirs of members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Harry Truman, Henry Stimson, James Forrestal, David Lilienthal, and Dean Acheson, as well as the papers of Robert Oppenheimer and Senator McMahon. Through the auspices of curator Daun Van Ee, I was also able to examine some of the official war plans of the United States from the late 1940s. Moreover, I relied on the Foreign Relations of the United States databases for declassified State Department documents from the time. During my research trips, I focused above all on State Department records and the official papers of Paul Nitze, which are housed in the Library of Congress' Manuscript Division. These papers consist of letters to officials and family members, personal copies of State Department memoranda, and meeting notes. Mostly declassified in 1989, the papers remain under the supervision of Paul Nitze's family, which granted my formal request for access.

i John Lewis Gaddis, et al, *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 21.

ii This is the continuity school understanding of weapons technology. For example, the introduction of rocks, sticks, bows and arrows, or firearms into the realm of warfare all represented advances in technology that since their arrival have become acceptable as tools of war. See Catherine Girrier, *The No-First-Use Issue in American Nuclear Weapons Policy 1945 – 1957* (Geneva: Institut Universitaire De Hautes Études Internationales, 1985), 4.

iii This relatively short time-frame may appear to be an unfair test of the theory of a nuclear taboo, since social taboos take time to develop. Nonetheless, if evidence for the emergence of a tradition of non-use can be found in this period, then the tradition may be presented as a more plausible explanation for the non-use of nuclear weapons than a taboo, especially since nuclear weapons were considered for use throughout the early years of the Cold War.

iv Although the actions of other nations like the Soviet Union could have also dramatically altered the history that we are studying, and are equally important in addressing the question of global nuclear peace, this is fundamentally a study of US policy decisions regarding the use of nuclear weapons, and only seeks to understand the establishment of an American tradition of non-use.

1 Nicholas Thompson, The Hawk and the Dove: Paul Nitze, George Kennan, and the History of the Cold War (New York: Henry Holt, 2009), 287.

2 Thomas Schelling, "An Astonishing Sixty Years: The Legacy of Hiroshima" Nobel Prize lecture, The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Stockholm, Sweden, December 8, 2005.

3 Steven Kull, Minds at War: Nuclear Reality and the Inner Conflicts of Defense Policymakers (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1988), 10; David Callahan, Dangerous Capabilities (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1990), 7.

4 Ibid.

5 Although the actions of other could have also dramatically altered the context of decision and are equally important in addressing the question of global nuclear peace, this study intentionally focuses only on the establishment of an American tradition of non-use.

6 Paul Nitze, "A Threat Mostly to Ourselves," The New York Times, October 28, 1999, Opinion section.

7 Thompson, Hawk and Dove, 23.

8 Ibid, 7.

9 Nitze was sent by President Reagan to negotiate for the United States at the Reykjavik Summit in 1986. During a closed-door session with Soviet negotiators, he dramatically and unexpectedly supported a proposition to completely eliminate long-range ballistic missiles on both sides of the iron curtain. With fewer than five minutes left in the meeting to discuss the proposition, little came of it. Nitze Memoir Interviews with Steven Rearden and Ann Smith, 1982-1988, Paul Henry Nitze Papers, box 120, folder 6, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

10 Letter from Paul Nitze to his mother, Late November, 1945, Paul Henry Nitze Papers, box 165, folder 5, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. Document reprinted in the appendix.

11 Nitze, Hiroshima to Glasnost, 38.

12 Ibid.

13 Letter from Paul Nitze to his mother, October 18, 1945, Paul Henry Nitze Papers, box 165, folder 5, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

14 Thompson, Hawk and Dove, 66.

15 Ibid.

16 Paul Nitze, "Atoms, Strategy, and Policy" Foreign Affairs 34, no. 2 (1956): 187.

17 Ibid, 196.

18 Nitze Memoir Interviews with Steven Rearden and Ann Smith, 1982-1988, Paul Henry Nitze Papers, box 120, folder 12, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

19 Gaddis, et al. Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb, 16.

20 Ibid.

21 Sean Malloy, Atomic Tragedy: Henry Stimson and the Decision to Use the Bomb Against Japan (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 99.

McCullough, Truman, 395.

22 McCullough, Truman, 554.

23 Ibid, 442.

24 Paul, The Tradition of Non-Use, 49.

25 Paul, The Tradition of Non-Use, 44.

26 McCullough, Truman, 472.

27 David McCullough, Truman (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 649.

28 Tannenwald, The Nuclear Taboo, 267.

29 Samuel R. Williamson and Steven L. Rearden, The Origins of US Nuclear Strategy, 1945 – 1953 (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 115.

30 Ibid.

31 Thompson, Hawk and Dove, 99.

32 McCullough, Truman, 757.

33 The actual delegates were Paul Nitze and R. Gordon Arneson (State Department), LeBaron (Defense), and Henry D. Smyth and Gordon Dean (AEC). Smyth and Dean were members of the AEC that represented Lilienthal when he was unable to attend meetings. LeBaron was the Secretary of Defense's chief advisor on atomic energy and Gordon Arneson was the Secretary of State's atomic energy advisor. See Nitze, Hiroshima to Glasnost, 90.

But Paul Nitze says that the real debates occurred between LeBaron, Lilienthal, and Nitze. See Nitze Memoir Interviews with Steven Rearden and Ann Smith, 1982-1988, Paul Henry Nitze Papers, box 118, folder 12, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

34 Ibid, 90.

35 US Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy, 1949* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1976), 610.

36 Ibid, 611.

37 Ibid.

38 US Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy, 1949* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1976), 599.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid, 91.

41 McGeorge Bundy, who was not in government at the time of the hydrogen bomb decision, wrote an article for the New York Review of Books on May 13, 1982 called "The Missed Chance to Stop the H-bomb." The article studied the decision-making process and mentions that Paul Nitze actually proposed that a de facto policy of no-first-use be considered by the administration. Referring to the policy recommendations, Bundy wrote: "…even Paul Nitze, in early 1950, thought that State Department should probably press the case for [this policy]. But this policy, which we would not call 'no-first-use,' was never proposed by anyone to Truman, and it vanished later that winter as the military pressed its insistent conviction that usable nuclear superiority was both indisputable and attainable." I have been unable to find any other evidence that corroborates this claim, but Bundy's observation in itself is telling of Paul Nitze's more complex policy ruminations and his less than hawkish character. See Nitze's copy of McGeorge Bundy article in New York Review of Books, May 13, 1982, Paul Henry Nitze Papers, box 19, folder 13, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. Document reprinted in the appendix.

42 McCullough, Truman, 762.

43 Ibid, 763.

44 McCullough, Truman, 763.

45 Andrew Bacevich, The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Co, 2008), 110.

46 Nitze, Hiroshima to Glasnost, 96.

47 US Department of State, "NSC-68" *Foreign Relations of the United States: National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy, 1950* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1976).

48 Ibid, 137.

49 Gentile, "Planning for Preventive War," Joint Force Quarterly, 69.

50 Ibid.

51 Scott Sagan and Kenneth Waltz, The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate (New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1995), 57.

52 Ibid, 59.

53 Ibid, 58.

54 Nitze, Hiroshima to Glasnost, 93.

55 Nitze Memoir Interviews with Steven Rearden and Ann Smith, 1982-1988, Paul Henry Nitze Papers, box 120, folder 12, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

56 US Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy, 1949* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1976), 402.

57 Nitze Memoir Interviews with Steven Rearden and Ann Smith, 1982-1988, Paul Henry Nitze Papers, box 118, folder 9, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

58 Nitze, Hiroshima to Glasnost, 106.

59 Nina Tannenwald believes that various State Department memoranda pointed to the "special horrifying status" of nuclear weapons in order to recommend non-use of the atomic bomb in Korea. "[The] analysis was clearly recommending that, for normative reasons, the bomb should not be treated as an ordinary weapon and that any decision to use it must meet a more demanding test." Tannenwald, The Nuclear Taboo, 120 – 121.

60 McCullough, Truman, 821.

61 US Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Korea, 1950* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1976), 1042.

62 Ibid.

63 The People's Republic of China did not test an atomic bomb until 1964.

64 Nitze Memoir Interviews with Steven Rearden and Ann Smith, 1982-1988, Paul Henry Nitze Papers, box 118, folder 9, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

65 Ibid. Thomas Schelling emphasizes the difference between threats and intentions. His work on strategic gaming led him to conclude that threats of nuclear use are usually not backed up by the actual intention of use. President Eisenhower's reconsideration of using nuclear weapons to defend Taiwan in 1958 is a good example of such a discrepancy between threat and intention. In discussion with author, January 18, 2010

66 Nitze's copy of the declassified Gaither Report of 1957, 1976, Paul Henry Nitze Papers, box 102, folder 6, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

67 Gaddis and Nitze, NSC-68 and the Soviet Threat Reconsidered, 175.

68 President Obama announced on April 5, 2010 that the United States would be changing its declaratory policy regarding the use of nuclear weapons. He has promised that in the future the United States would not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear powers, with the exception of states threatening to use other kinds of weapons of mass destruction or states not complying with international treaties on non-proliferation. See David Sanger and Peter Baker, "Obama Limits When US Would Use Nuclear Arms," The New York Times, April 6, 2010, front section.

69 Recent National Intelligence Estimates (NIE) suggest that the intelligence community sees Iran's leadership as deterrable, but as always there is room for debate. Anthony Cordesman, "Iran and the US: Key Issues from an American Perspective" Center for Strategic and International Studies, January 3, 2008.

70 Prof. Thomas Schelling (UMD), in discussion with author, January 18, 2010.

71 Thompson, Hawk and Dove, 106.

72 Williamson and Rearden, Origins of US Nuclear Strategy, 117.

73 Thompson, Hawk and Dove, 113.

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successors.

The Public Sphere's Private Intelligence

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Supporters of "green-badgers"—the nickname given to contractors working inside the American intelligence community—argue that after 9/11 the United States needed a more flexible labor pool of intelligence professionals to draw on, and so a large number of contractors was needed for the monumental task at hand. Since 2001, the surge in green-badgers has been proportionate to the security needs of the War on Terror, say supporters. With attacks abounding in the various theatres of war abroad and even domestically, the U.S. government needed a backup security force as well as support for high-technology products that only the private sector could provide. Many private citizens, some of whom had left the intelligence community years before, were already "cleared," and the political incentives were already in place to increase funding for non-governmental assistance to classified work. It was an opportunity to broaden the abilities of various agencies—technical and human in their needs—to make American defenses stronger.

More critical and theoretical arguments start with the rule of law. Consider Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memo A-76, which calls for the U.S. intelligence leadership to keep in its federal control all matters relating to "inherent government tasks."[1] Such core responsibilities, according to many experts, are the managing of the "overall direction" of intelligence policy at home and abroad and the implementation of counterintelligence work. Unfortunately, there is evidence that these two conditions have not been met, in the sense that American telecommunications companies were participants in the domestic wiretap program initiated by the George W. Bush administration, and because intelligence corporations CACI and Blackwater were involved in torture in Iraq at Abu Ghraib[2] and in Baghdad's Nisor Square[3] respectively. Such a position notes that even supporters of intelligence outsourcing have called for a slashing of their numbers by 10%, and that reform is obviously necessary on this core national security issue.

Naturally, both sides of the debate little agree when it comes to policy implementation, but one thing remains accepted by opponents and supporters of contractors in the U.S. intelligence community: intelligence outsourcing was not a new phenomenon after 9/11.[4] Regardless, it did accelerate at this time. Through at least as far back as the Vietnam War, through the Clinton administration, we can locate contractors in military and intelligence-related defense work. The Lockheed Company assisted in the manufacture of the U-2 spy plane in the 1950s and private contractors were thereafter used consistently in American military affairs during the Cold War. During the Clinton years, "outsourcing" and the "privatization of non-governmental functions" came to be known as terms specific to the

activities of the U.S. intelligence agencies. With a cut in the post-Cold War military budget of the United States came a corresponding lack that was "fully addressed" (by some accounts) by a highly-capitalized, high-tech business sector. Journalist Lynda Hurst writes in the *Toronto Star* that, "Outsourcing has been on the rise since the Cold War's end led to the downsizing of the world's huge standing armies".[5] After 9/11 a heap of funding was designated to the Defense Department and intelligence bureaucracies such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which was used to improve short-term organizational capacity, for example to catch up on the backlogs of messages to translate, and to complete other tasks that could be solved by a surge in manpower alone.

This paper takes the position that in the "post-9/11 age" contractors can almost be considered necessary, but that they should not become a *powerful majority* of labor within intelligence agencies. Unfortunately, instances abound of the numerical majority of non-governmental actors; in fact, this is the case in multiple U.S. intelligence agencies. It can be argued that whereas contractors were once utilized because of their cost effectiveness[6] and access to technology and management structure that the government lacked, they are today utilized because their presence is ingrained culturally, functionally, and in agency budgets. At a time of public calls to reduce the defense budget from various congressional members,[7] it is pertinent to assess the value of contractors against the main criteria they were originally rationalized upon: cost savings and a general notion of corporate efficiency. Indeed, a "fully loaded" contractor is estimated to cost the government about $250,000 per year, compared to a governmental employee, which figures at about half that (approximately $126,000).[8]

There is also a legal-moral debate that examines whether contractors are "incentivized" to act outside of governmental spheres, in cases which may be illegal, unauthorized, or simply inappropriate according to the criteria mentioned in OMB circular A-76. Such a view explains that contractors are legally prohibited from carrying out tasks which relate to the government's "inherent" responsibilities,

The Central Intelligence Agency's lobby seal.

which are the direction of policy and counter-intelligence collection, among others. Some critics have questioned the notion that the U.S. government regulates contractors at all. Contractors have their own management and profit structures, and are short-term focused to the mission at hand, but not always to the long-term interest of the government's plans. Private companies do not always follow the rule of law—abroad or at home—since immunity is sometimes given and contracts renewed, even after so-called "product failures." In this sense, there is a market failure that the government must address.

This paper therefore argues that the Congress and Executive must regulate more heavily the hiring practices and budgetary expenditures of the 16 intelligence agencies within the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) management umbrella, if effective reform is to occur. While corporate actors should be recognized as vital to the mission at hand, intelligence contractors should not be an overbearing presence in the military command structure, collecting frontline human intelligence or running espionage or counterintelligence affairs. This is counterproductive to national security and budgetary considerations—a claim that this article will now address.

A Brief Look at the History of Public-Private Intelligence Efforts

Partnering with corporations to win wars and maintain stability is not a new task for Western governments. This phenomenon stretches back to the days of the British Empire, which used the East India Company to maintain British dominance in South Asia and beyond. The phenomenon of contracting core military responsibilities, however, is more recent. Some analysts place the beginning of U.S. engagement with this technique at the end of World War Two. In 1953, AT&T and the Defense Department were jointly planning a Distant Early Warning ("DEW") Line along the coast of Northern Alaska and Canada.[9] By 1955, the first U-2A airplane, the original prototype of today's U-2 spy-plane, took flight.[10] This aircraft was designed by Kelly Johnson and the Lockheed Skunk Works Company in complete secrecy under an agreement with the U.S. government that was concluded in 1943.[11]

American companies continued to be involved in the business of national defense throughout the Vietnam War, producing battlefield weapons and servicing a limited number of communications needs. Technology advanced in this period and often, as a result of the Cold War, the federal government did not always have the start up capital or expertise that the private sector could offer. When the Vietnam War ended, the period of economic deregulation popularized by President Ronald Reagan began. Although this contributed in theory to the acceptance of contractors of all sorts, it was not until after the fall of the Soviet Union that the CIA was able to become so heavily privatized. Industry lobbyist Stan Soloway tells outsourcing expert Tim Shorrock in his 2008 book *Spies For Hire* that "very little privatization took place in the Reagan administration and none under [George H. W.] Bush."[12] This was somewhat

A "fully loaded" contractor is estimated to cost the government about $250,000 per year, compared to a governmental employee, which figures at about half that (approximately $126,000).

a consequence of the dissolving f the global chess set-up that the U.S. was used to navigating throughout the Cold War.

As a result, intelligence agencies had a mission somewhat undefined. Vice President Al Gore, along with powerful blocks in both houses of Congress, supported a notion of "reinventing government" in the early 1990's, and those running the CIA and other agencies took this as a cue to expand the use of contractors outside the traditional information technology sphere.[13] Former CIA Middle East expert and author Bob Baer reports that after 1997, "practically all [CIA] training…[was] done by contractors".[14] Much debate at this time focused on the financial and management efficiency and cost-savings of private labor; there was less discussion of the inherent, immediate need for private intelligence professionals, as was the case after 9/11.

By the beginning of the 2001 Afghanistan War, the atmosphere was such that the intelligence agencies had plenty of tasks and funding given to them by a generally supportive Congress. Almost immediately after 9/11, the CIA was charged with recruiting and training the linguists that were in great shortage. The most pressing goal was to fill the void: this could be accomplished by reaching out to retired military and intelligence professionals who had critical knowledge for the War on Terror.[15] Although direction on

intelligence reform came from the Executive, 9/11 Commission, and Congress, it was the direct responsibility of the individual agency leader to staff his or her team. Because of the supply and demand for higher-paying and patriotic jobs in-theater, the financial incentives lined up, and in the process many new companies were established and many more bought and reconsolidated.

In Iraq, contractors worked side by side intelligence personnel to interrogate prisoners,[16] "track and investigate" Iraqis,[17] map the territory for military battle plans,[18] arrest and detain civilians and combatants, as well as provide basic support services to intelligence agencies in everyday operations. These practices have been useful to the extent that the agencies were not able to meet the demand for labor and technology previous to the contracts being signed. However, it is now argued by many industry observers that both defense and civilian intelligence agencies have become too dependent on contractors, who are taking away labor from the governmental sector where it was traditionally to be found. This thematic is one that the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) has recognized as inherently problematic due to the lack of new recruits staying within the public sector. The DNI went so far as to complain in a 2006 public report that:

"Confronted by arbitrary staffing ceilings and uncertain funding, components are left with no choice but to use contractors for work that may be borderline 'inherently governmental' – only to find that to do that work, those same contractors recruit our own employees, already cleared and trained at government expense, and then 'lease' them back to us at considerably greater expense."[19]

The penning of such a forceful statement highlights the magnitude of the problem, as seen from within the government's intelligence command.

A Look at the Agencies

Although there were consolidations of private intelligence businesses in the late 1990s, it was not until the Bush years that intelligence reform led to the consolidation of significant bureaucratic power in the ODNI. But privately, competing forces were at work too. The intelligence community spent $18 billion per year on contractors in 1998, but by 2003 that number had more than doubled to $43.5 billion.[20] Today, each agency has its own proportion of contracted work. In the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), for example, it's around 35%[21]—a low figure compared to the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), where it is estimated to be as high as 90%.[22]

U.S. Army soldiers conduct a test near Kabul, Afghanistan in December 2007.

At the Central Intelligence Agency, the problem is distinct, as questions of operational security and source-control come into play when pondering the human intelligence (HUMINT) work of contractors. The CIA's Directorate of Operations (DO) has been over-stressed since the end of the Cold War because of the budgetary cuts of the 1990s and severe manpower shortages after 9/11. Today, many fear that the majority of the agency's employees are for-profit actors and that these people may not have the long-term goal of public institution-building incorporated into their business plans. Some watchdogs believe that the government should hold a majority of labor (and power) and frown upon the reality that in the National Clandestine Service—the CIA's directorate that deals with human intelligence collection—the percentage of contractors is above 50%.[23]

Here is a conflict of interest which needs to be addressed by not only a reduction in contractors, but by the strengthening of CIA management. "The [CIA's] directorate is losing '25 or 30 chiefs of station'—the top CIA representative in a country or major city—'or their equivalent' at headquarters, every six months," reports former intelligence official Sam Faddis.[24] For those with an opinion similar to Faddis', the problem of 21st century management runs parallel to the problem of outsourcing. Recently, former CIA Director Michael Hayden, in looking to take a new "middle approach," agreed to cut 10% of his agency's contractors.[25]

At the DIA, the percentage of private-sector "staff" is 51%, just barely a majority.[26] In 2007, the DIA Director wrote a letter to the *Washington Post* claiming that his agency "does not outsource analysis…government managers are fully in charge of this process."[27] It is possible that this is completely true; but if so, his agency is among the exceptions to the rule. In general, contractors do perform core analysis work, and in the majority of intelligence agencies.

At DIA, contractors such as Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH) focus on technology assistance for programs such as measurement and signature intelligence—the latest sub-field of intelligence collection called MASINT.[28] MASINT heavily overlaps with the work of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), a Defense Department agency that contracts *almost all* of its work. In both the DIA and NRO, geographic and political mapping technology is extremely important. It is a tradecraft in which private corporations sometimes have superior technology—or even the only technology to do the job. Contractors therefore find their way into the work of the DIA, and operate parallel structures of incentives and management, alongside the U.S. military's command and control system.

At the National Security Agency (NSA), complaints of contractors are primarily centered on telecommunications companies, which joined in the domestic wiretap program after 9/11. Companies working for the NSA often focus on signals intelligence (SIGINT) collection abroad and data-mining domestically,[29] among other controversial topics. Concerns of privacy, American public opinion, and electoral politics enter the fray in discussions about the use of contractors in the NSA's global surveillance work. Liberal Democrats and human rights groups have called for reform measures such as Executive branch repudiation of the so-called "warrantless wiretap program," which began during the Bush administration. Proponents of this view reference the rule of law in the guise of OMB memo A-76, which codifies concern about privatizing "inherently Governmental" tasks relating to intelligence work. NYU Law Professor Simon Chesterman notes that, "The executive has adopted various guidelines seeking to elaborate a definition. The 1983 version of the OMB circular stated that 'Certain functions are inherently Governmental in nature, being so intimately related to the public interest as to mandate performance only by Federal employees.'"[30]

Further criticism of NSA practices has often included a case study in Michael McConnell, who went from being head of NSA to a top executive at Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH), and then back into government as the nation's Director of National Intelligence in 2007.[31] Critics point to the involvement of BAH in the NSA's Total Information Awareness data-mining program[32] as well as the failure of the "Goundbreaker" project, which ran over budget and produced questionable results.[33] Supporters counter that without certain private-sector abilities, the NSA would be rendered substantially weaker.

Today, the NSA contracts out work on secret encryption, a field that has been at the forefront of advances in private-sector technologies since the 1990s. In 2000, the

NSA experienced a system-wide computer blackout "that shut down the agency's global listening and surveillance system for more than two days, reducing the contents of the president's Daily Briefing by more than 30 percent." As a result of the pressure that ensued, "during the waning days of the Clinton era, the highly secretive agency…opened its doors to contractors."[34]

It is now argued by many industry observers that both defense and civilian intelligence agencies have become too dependent on contractors, who are taking away labor from the governmental sector where it was traditionally to be found.

As mentioned, the NRO is highly intertwined with the NSA and DIA. Their job involves using and coordinating advanced technology products, military satellites, and 3-D battlefield mapping technology, often in conjunction with the relatively new National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA). Lately, the NGA has been working with Lockheed Martin on a contract called "GeoScout," a project to develop a ground-based infrastructure which blends data from classified and unclassified military satellites. Like the NSA's Trailblazer project before it, the GeoScout public-private partnership has been criticized for going over budget and ceding too much power to corporations.[35] For better or worse, these NGA partnerships have evolved out of a post-Cold War necessity; and their upswing can be traced parallel to that of NSA contractors, as the two agencies have been so closely aligned in their Pentagon responsibilities.

"[T]he real engineering breakthroughs [in the NRO] did not occur within the government program offices; they occurred at the contractor facilities", writes Dennis Fitzgerald in an archived commentary on the CIA website. Today, that breakthrough in technology collection has been augmented by a near complete reliance on outside manufacturers. The NRO is emblematic of other agencies in that it is not experiencing a capital dearth, but is nonetheless short on organizational capital. Intelligence analyst Robert Kohler, commenting on the divide between the CIA and NRO, reports that: "Now, contracting officers, the financial oversight staff, and the Community Management Staff are the major power brokers in most of the NRO program offices, instead of the program managers."[36]

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The Nationalization Debate

Hopefully there is a middle ground compromise which both deregulators and regulators can accept in the spirit of political compromise: reconsideration of the role of contractors in interrogation and in-field operations. To this end, the Obama administration should reexamine the domestic wiretap legislation to determine its efficacy and also the role of telecommunications companies. Is investing in them the most efficient use of federal funds? Should they continue the work that immunity had to be granted for in the first place—work that was perhaps illegal? Or could the government start incubating technologies for future use, more by itself and less via private capital, and in the process build its capacities? Any changes may necessitate a massive structural change, foisted upon the DNI and agency directors by the Executive. At least, this is how it will probably be framed. While opponents may not complain of "nationalization" per say, they may highlight the government's "ineptitude" and undue "interference" with the efficiency of the market—charges that critics of intelligence contractors will have to answer.

There have been numerous reports the Presidential Daily Briefing is shaped by companies operating from within the ODNI, such as Lockheed, Raytheon, Booz Allen Hamilton and SAIC, and that they have the ability to affect policy making at the highest of levels, given their prowess and proximity.[38] Indeed, the ODNI revealed in May 2007 that 70% of the intelligence budget goes to outside contractors.[39] Unfortunately, to address problems with contractors—which are not always separate from problems with governmental employees—it is necessary to affect change in the management structures and budgets of multiple intelligence agencies that are overseen by the ODNI, Congress, and the media. This is no doubt difficult. However, with a recent interest by Henry Waxman's House Oversight Committee, and a public outcry over the atrocities at Abu Grahib (committed by the military command and contractors alike), many consider the political atmosphere ripe for consensus on intelligence reform which addresses governmental and military contractors. Full "nationalization" may not be required, but some heavy hitting may be inevitable.

Still, it is easy to be pessimistic about the weakening of U.S. intelligence capacities, by saying that it is too difficult to hire, manage, and maintain new federal recruits. Cleared persons have too many incentives to leave for private sector jobs after just a few years in government service. In a sense, this dynamic becomes cyclical and therefore further bureaucratically ingrained: the "revolving door" phenomenon kicks in and the government serves as a de facto training force for private sector labor, a situation that the ODNI has complained about.[40]

While instances of security breaches by contractors are generally believed to be minimal, the presence of green-badgers nonetheless remains a "bureaucratic security threat" in the sense that the government is becoming increasingly dependent on the private sector for the core functions of government—a backward situation, according to the "inherently governmental" clause which prohibits some outsourcing. This problem not only runs against the spirit of the law but also leads to a weakening of the nation's defense mechanisms. Pro-free market politicians and the spirit of libertarianism (which upheld many of the privatization reforms of the past 30 years) are responsible for transferring many critical governmental functions into the private sector; but ironically, even such conservatives believe that the government's most legitimate venture is in national defense. Conservatives should thus be natural allies in this intelligence reform effort.

Conclusion

It is difficult to tell if the domestic intelligence program, or "black sites" staffed by contractors abroad, will continue under Obama, given the telecommunication industry's immunity bestowed by Congress and the President's campaign pledges. Nevertheless, it is possible for the Executive and Legislative branches to regulate the use of contractors so that they are primarily a back-up force: available at a moments notice, and working on critical support tasks, but not interfering in the daily command and control of the federal government's core intelligence mission: to collect, analyze, and store secret information.

Certainly President Obama has

numerous challenges ahead, many of which revolve around the intelligence question. Undoubtedly interwoven into the intelligence community's activities in the War on Terror is the issue of corporate contractors. One can argue, for better or worse, their monetary and battle effectiveness. But one cannot claim they are not a majority force, in many respects and in many agencies.

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Getting It Right : Searching for the Elusive Solution in the Niger Delta

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The Niger Delta conflict is one created and exacerbated by the oil and natural gas riches of the region. Great hydrocarbon wealth has been extracted over the past decades, yet Delta residents continue to live in underdeveloped and polluted circumstances. This situation has fueled widespread, and often violent, conflict within the region. While the Nigerian government has made attempts to resolve the conflict, most recently with the 2009 amnesty program, these attempts have repeatedly failed. This essay will discuss these failures, as well as present a set of initiatives for the Delta that, together, represent a possible path for regional rejuvenation.

The June 2009 amnesty program for Niger Delta militants offered by former Nigerian President Musa Yar'Adua represented an opportunity to stabilize the region for constructive conflict resolution negotiations. It was not the first time, however, that an amnesty initiative had been put forward to resolve the violence in the region. Yet it did seem to be an offer backed with solid proposals for the necessary disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the region's militants. Despite this the program was not able to assuage regional violence, largely due to the lack of attention to the peculiar type of conflict in the Delta. Thus, in order to fully appreciate the task of conflict resolution there, it is important to look at past attempts at conflict resolution as well as ideas for the future. In the coming years, the Delta may yet be stabilized and transformed into a region suitable for economic, social and political development.

Environmental Conflict

In order to fully understand how best to address the possibility of future widespread violence in the Delta, it is important to first recognize the particulars of the conflict facing the Nigerian government. Simply, the conflict is one created and exacerbated by the oil and natural gas riches of the region. Hydrocarbon resources are the engines for Nigeria's economy, as oil provides 95 percent of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings and 80 percent of the government's budgetary revenues. Yet the vast majority of the Delta's 30 million residents live with only the negative effects of oil and natural gas production; the environment and its degradation are daily features of life for many. This, in turn, has fueled decades of cyclical conflict that continues to devastate the region.

The petroleum industry is, globally, a dirty industry. Nigeria is no exception. Owing to the wealth of oil and natural gas under their feet, the Delta constitutes some of the "richest real estate" on the African continent.[1] Yet despite this wealth, the region has degenerated into a "severely impaired coastal ecosystem" suffering from "damage from oil operations [that] is chronic and cumulative."[2] The pollution from petrochemical exploration, extraction and refining poses a constant threat to those whose livelihoods have not yet been disrupted. Rural residents live with "no real development, no roads, no electricity, no running water and no telephones" while only scraping by economically.[3] Historically, Delta residents have engaged in farming and fishing as principal sources of household income, livelihoods for which a healthy and productive

environment are critical. As the environment continues to be polluted, the traditional means of economic activity in the region continue to dwindle; there are few, if any, opportunities in their place.[4] Compensation, clean-up and monitoring practices – whether public or private – continue to be lackluster and hardly effective.

Thus, economic discrimination – including the marginalization of poverty, the creation of national sacrifice areas and a high level of international dependence – has become a pervasive aspect of life for Delta residents.[5] In response to their common challenges, communities have bonded with "considerable coordination" in order to strengthen the "quality, intensity and extent

The vast majority of the Delta's 30 million residents live with only the negative effects of oil and natural gas.

of articulation, aggregation and expression of demands… for equity and justice."[6] In the Delta, as in other regions of Africa, this organization has culminated in the growth of a nascent civil society that seeks to address the claims of Delta residents against both the Nigerian government and multinational oil companies operating in the region.[7] Many of these groups are peaceful organizations seeking redress through legitimate channels. Others, however, act through violence and function in a world of gross illegality that further intensifies the conflict.

The Nigerian government is severely handicapped in addressing the demands of these groups. The country is a fragmented collection of over 250 ethnic groups, with each holding "certain basic political orientations" as well as an "unwillingness to alter" those orientations.[8] Public attitudes and political culture are vehemently localized; history, language, culture, religion and political values stem from communal rather than national experience. Coupled with the country's history of military rule, the situation is one where Abuja views political pluralism as a "weapon of potential destruction" rather than a force for good.[9] The Nigerian state remains fundamentally weak and thus continues to be unable to adequately perform for its citizens, particularly for those in the Delta region.

In the Delta the government has successively failed to execute its duties, evident in a 2002 decision from the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights that found Nigeria to have violated its responsibilities as a government on multiple levels.[10] Corruption is a pervasive problem, and much of the government's transparency issues are directly related to oil and natural gas activities.[11] The Delta continues to lack "adequate social services, viable employment opportunities, or economic growth and development," while oil funds continue to be diverted, wasted, or both.[12] By law, 13% percent of oil revenues are to be transferred to the oil producing states, yet residents of the Delta see few improvements in their socio-economic situation. Far from being effectively appropriated, the financial wealth simply "seems to disappear."[13]

Past Government Efforts

Despite their geographic separation from the problem, Nigerian officials have consistently been faced with pressure to resolve the Delta conflict. The past efforts of a confounding series of panels, reports and commissions have overwhelmingly sought to address the root causes of conflict in the region and facilitate a situation in which substantive conflict prevention can take place. Two specific reports – the 2001 Ogomudia Report of the Special Security Committee on Oil Producing Areas and the 2004 Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan – are expressive of both the government's historical focus on trying to resolve the Delta conflict and its glaring inability to do so.

As the security situation in the Niger Delta began to deteriorate at the turn of the century, the Special Security Committee on Oil Producing Areas was set up so that the Nigerian government could, in the words of the panel, "beam a search light on the oil producing areas in the quest for a solution" to the region's deteriorating situation.[14] The resulting Ogomudia Report, released in 2001, comprehensively presented a proposed series of graduated steps with a heavy emphasis on ownership of problems by all involved. Yet it accomplished no tangible gains in the region; the political will in Abuja was simply not present at the time.

The 2004 Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan was a second major attempt by the Nigerian government to address the situation in the Delta. Put forward by the Niger Development Commission, the plan was based on a careful examination of the day-to-day needs of Delta residents. The report sought a comprehensive "package of cross-sectoral, mutually supportive measures" that would effectively address the Niger Delta's challenges while taking full advantage of the region's opportunities.[15] The plan rightly focused on wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction and value re-orientation, facilitated by an expansion of the private sector, the introduction of governance reforms and the development of a social development charter. Recognizing that previous reports were nothing but hollow political acts, the plan offered a specific funding schedule through 2020 and outlined the contributions needed from government and the private sector. It had, however, little effect in reaching its goals.

Both the 2001 report and the 2004 plan expressed the government's belief that the resolution of the underlying causes of conflict in the region – socio-economic marginalization, lack of adequate services and infrastructure, and governance issues – could act as a viable conflict prevention mechanism for the Delta. Yet only surface attempts at preventing conflict were achieved. The lack of progress can be attributed to the fact that the litany of reports, plans and committees have not adequately addressed the issue of militarism in the region. Without first addressing militarism, there can be little hope that proposed economic and political initiatives would be able to take root and develop into solutions.

Militarism is the violent culmination of "popular responses to economic mismanagement, economic marginalization and crime waves," which have historically

Women washing their clothes and collecting drinking water along the Niger

been "prolific and controversial."[16] This is particularly true in regards to the emergence of youth-led, identity-based social groups. Social movements are a powerful force within the region, and the primary antagonists in the Delta are those whose leadership is dominated by militia and paramilitary members. As the environmental crisis destroyed the economic prospects of many young Delta residents, the ranks of these social groups swelled with youth seeking both recourse for grievances and group solidarity. Since these groups are responsible for the majority of violence and illegal activities in the region, any conflict prevention efforts must address their allure to Delta residents.

In order to address this fundamental obstacle to development in the region, in June 2009 then-President Yar'Adua announced a policy of amnesty for any and all Delta militants, to last from August 4, 2009, until October 4, 2009.[17] The offer of amnesty, and the subsequent plan for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the militants, was widely accepted within the

Delta. A daily food allowance, monthly stipend, the promise of professional education and training, and the personal involvement of the president all contributed to the appeal of the amnesty proposal.[18] What should have been cause for celebration, however, was instead darkened by the memory of the historical failings of the government to follow through on its promises and obligations.

Unsurprisingly, the amnesty program was derailed by allegations of corruption regarding the handling of funds meant for former militants. A key militant group in the region, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), declared the ceasefire over in January 2010, less than six months after the amnesty program was implemented. In March 2010, MEND went further, claiming responsibility for two bombs exploding adjacent to a government building in the city of Warri. The group succinctly stated its position with the announcement that the "deceit of endless dialogue and conferences will no longer be tolerated."[19] Abuja had again failed, further eroding faith in government and leading to a renewal of violence.

The Way Forward

In the Delta, it will be especially important to take into consideration the stakes each side holds in the conflict, the attitudes of each side toward the other, and the tactics that each side uses to attain its goals.[20] Firstly, in moving forward, each side will make gains at certain times. Thus, it will be important to transition viewpoints away from zero-sum attitudes, so that all conflict participants will realize that development and regional stabilization are for their overall benefit. Secondly, by shifting the attitudes of the parties from "conflictual to accommodative," each will be able to better understand the other's viewpoints and thus arrive at a more comprehensive and mutually beneficial solution.[21] Finally, recognizing the importance of tactics in achieving goals will allow each side to understand the best overall methods to achieve mutual goals in the new positive-sum, accommodative environment.

The first issue that must be addressed is the basic socio-economic needs and grievances of

A Nigerian rebel fighter in Northern Nigeria

Delta residents. Economic development, save that required for oil and natural gas operations, is almost non-existent and those living in the area continue to lack access to clean drinking water, electricity and basic social services such as schools and health clinics.[22] Unemployment and the perception of hopelessness in the region push "a huge number" of regional residents to "roam the streets feeling alienated and powerless" while making "youth activism, militancy and rebelliousness a common phenomenon."[23]

Socio-economic and political marginalization represents a significant "trigger cause" for conflict "by deepening and expanding the feeling of relative deprivation among the people, and making the tool and means for confrontation… readily available."[24] While militias and other "modes of collective youth action" grow from the "top-down modes of governance and bottom-up responses to disorder," the level of socio-economic marginalization in the region also represents a significant causal factor.[25] By giving disenchanted youth education, access to basic services and economic opportunity, there would be a significantly lower appeal for opportunistic activities such as kidnapping, oil bunkering and the pursuit of general violence. A lack of consideration for economic empowerment of the youth population is a grave mistake; youth will soon be young adults, and without legitimate opportunities they will be young adults easily recruited into a new generation of militancy.

Related to this point is an emphasis on graduated development in the Delta. Since resolving the basic issues will likely be a series of long-term initiatives, special emphasis on short-term projects with immediate results should be pursued as 'good faith' measures. This would not only jump-start regional development, but would also galvanize popular support among residents who would see quick results that positively impact their everyday lives. Yet although short-term projects can facilitate popular support by providing residents with an immediate tangible impact, these must be successively built on by later projects.

The 2001 Ogomudia Report and the 2004 Master Plan discussed above have an appreciation for this fact. Each incorporates a tiered development process that, in addition to allowing the cost of development to be extended over time, would allow authorities to periodically reevaluate circumstances and adjust development plans accordingly. In the Delta, this is an especially important aspect of development because environmental, political and communal circumstances can rapidly change the situation in which development is taking place. Graduated development allows officials to refocus resources and attention as time goes on, since what was planned in the past may not be relevant, necessary, or desirable in the present.

A third initiative for the region is the prevention of environmental problems to the greatest possible extent. The costs to the regional population from petrochemical activities are two-fold. There is the immediate cost to well-being from environmental problems such as oil spills, gas flaring and the general toxicity of pollution. Yet there are also the long-term costs of diminished economic capacity as degraded rivers, lands and air hamper the ability of residents to earn a traditional living. By maintaining a high level of ecological awareness and protection there would likely be fewer bitter feelings, less economic marginalization and less reason for residents to turn to violence.

A fourth initiative, directly related to the above emphasis on environmental protection, is the need to hold oil corporations operating in the Delta accountable for their actions and policies. In the past, conversations about the proper role of oil corporations in the regions have been regarded as "polemical" with the corporations maintaining that "corporate social responsibility cannot replace effective governance."[26] Yet corporate policies and procedures are vitally important in the region, since it is the corporation that is doing the drilling. Corporate responsibility should be comprehensively practiced to ensure that past failures are not repeated. Due to the importance of the region for corporate revenues, the first step should be to recognize the importance of development initiatives to regional stability.[27]

Oil corporations wmust recognize that they are, by their very presence, an integral

Without first addressing militarism, there can be little hope that proposed economic and political initiatives would be able to take root and develop into solutions.

part of the Delta community. By investing a portion of corporate revenue back into the region, corporations would be able to reduce the impetus for violent action from those who feel cheated. Development initiatives supported by oil corporations should be substantive and avoid frequent mistake of degenerating into "some sort of PR exercise" that serves the corporate public image at the expense of the region.[28] There must also

be a commitment by the oil corporations to effectively control the use of force. Allegations of excessive bloodshed in the Delta by private security firms in corporate employ, as well as by government forces, serve to further inflame emotions and contribute to the desire to take violent action for revenge and retribution. Finally, there must be a commitment by the oil corporations to maintain a high level of environmental responsibility. This includes ensuring that oil facilities are properly maintained and that prompt action to address overall ecological clean-up is taken when problems do occur.

A fifth initiative for the region must be the promotion of an effectively organized civil society. A cohesive civil society movement – whether professional associations, non-governmental organizations, grassroots movements or communal groups – must be maintained to help ordinary residents gain a voice in the regional development process. A statement succinctly summarizing the characteristics of civil society in the Delta, and in Africa generally, deserves to be quoted in its entirety:

"In Africa, civil society activities have been characterized by popular mobilization, social protests, opposition, advocacy and criticisms in favor of reform, change, accountability, control of state excesses and abuses, and have contributed immensely to regime and policy changes, democratization, increased liberalization and observance of civil rights."[29]

In many ways civil society is already a positive force for change in the region, owing to the region's transformation into a "broad, participatory, highly mobilized and coordinated platform" on which groups can act.[30] Indeed, community development associations, communal and ethnic groups, youth organizations, environmental groups and civil rights groups have "blossomed" in the last decade.[31] These groups represent the cornucopia of "regional, ethnic and… localized responses" to the "fear of domination and marginalization" they face on a daily basis.[32] Civil society groups must also be matched with global partners and supporters, given adequate resources and be allowed to continue their work on behalf of Delta residents.

A sixth initiative should be the inclusion of a variety of global actors in the Delta regeneration project. The international community – whether governments, individuals, civil society groups or international and regional organizations – can play an important role in providing funds for development, supporting local communities and maintaining a degree of pressure on the Nigerian government and oil corporations to keep promises and maintain transparency. This international support is especially critical in the wake of the 2009 amnesty program, in which external third-party support mediation, negotiations and peace implementation were viewed as necessary to effectively maintain the program's integrity. The international community has a clear stake in the comprehensive resolution of the Niger Delta conflict, and any short-term costs of support would surely be outweighed by the long-term benefits.

The final initiative, and one of the most critical, is the creation of an effective and accountable governance regime that encompasses the local, state and national levels. The lack of good governance in the region is a principal conflict accelerator, and resolving this problem would offer enormous benefits on multiple levels. Indeed, many of the initiatives outlined in this paper and in official Nigerian documents are impossible to be implemented effectively without first fundamentally addressing the governance issue.

In Nigeria, as in many other African states, the government still struggles with the legacies of its colonial past. There continues to be "no convergence in thoughts, objectives, and actions between the rulers… and the ruled."[33] This fact, combined with the socio-economic and political marginalization of the region, creates a situation in which many residents perceive an acute degree of isolation from the political process. This is a critical issue that must be addressed for two reasons. Firstly, the disconnection between government at all levels and Delta residents creates a situation ripe for violent action, as residents will increasingly turn to violence and militancy rather than legitimate grievance channels. Secondly, residents will be more likely to view government programs and initiatives with suspicion, decreasing the likelihood that they will view themselves as stakeholders in the area's development.

Steps must be taken to address the lack of a "genuine" political process in the region,[34] the general disenchantment of residents with government at all levels, the problems of corruption and lack of transparency and government's seeming inability or unwillingness to provide basic goods and services to the region. Yet, like the other initiatives, these programs must be successively built on to continually address the issue of governance. Without doing so, the government risks an intense and emotional re-escalation of violent conflict.

Conclusion

Three lessons can be taken away that should influence future decisions concerning solutions to the Niger Delta conflict. First, there is a need for comprehensive conflict prevention measures that include programs, policies, and initiatives focused on addressing the multi-faceted nature of the area's problems. There is no single solution from one actor, but rather a collection of solutions from many actors. Second, it is not enough to simply build roads and open schools. Rather, conflict prevention should be approached holistically while putting the focus on "human-centered values and norms of peace, social justice, and freedom."[35] By focusing on a wide variety of socio-economic, political, governance, security, and environmental issues, the disparate root causes of unrest can be addressed and resolved. Finally, there must a creative approach to conflict prevention in the region. If one recognizes that the region is a complex and quickly changing environment, interested parties can understand the value of creative and compromising approaches for conflict prevention in the Niger Delta.

Endnotes

Welch, Claude E, "The Ogoni and Self-Determination: Increasing Violence in Nigeria." The Journal of Modern African Studies 33.4 (1995): 635-49. 636.

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3 Whittington, James. Nigeria's Oil Wealth Shuns the Needy. BBC News, 28 Dec. 2001. Web. 5 Oct. 2009 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/1732196.stm>.

4 Opportunities in this context are multi-dimensional, encompassing education, work, and subsistence.

5 The research of Günther Baechler on environmentally caused conflicts is invaluable in this situation.

6 Ikelegbe, Augustine, "Civil Society, Oil, and Conflict in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria: Ramifications of Civil Society for a Regional Resource Struggle." The Journal of Modern African Studies 39.3 (2001): 437-69. 438. Ikelegbe notes that this was certainly not the case in the 1970s and 1980s when distinct communities "disparately and un-co-ordinately articulated grievances to the [oil companies]" with little cohesion or purposeful focus.

7 Ikelegbe, Augustine, "Civil Society, Oil, and Conflict in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria: Ramifications of Civil Society for a Regional Resource Struggle." The Journal of Modern African Studies 39.3 (2001): 437-69. 440.

8 Anyanwu, K C, "The Basis of Political Instability in Nigeria." Journal of Black Studies 13.1 (1982): 101-17. 105. This ethnic fragmentation goes far in explaining Nigeria's inability to create a stable, nationally oriented polity. Anyanwu goes on to explain that the identification of citizens with ethnicity, rather than nation, makes the country's politics "a highly emotional and violent affair."

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10 The Commission put forward one of the most negative views of the ineffectiveness of the Nigerian state in 2002. Nigeria was found to have failed to respect, protect, promote, and fulfill rights enshrined to all Africans under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. There rights were: the right to enjoy Charter-guaranteed rights and freedoms without discrimination, the right to life, the right to property, the right to health, the right to housing, the right to food, the right of peoples to freely dispose of their wealth and natural resources, and the right to a "general satisfactory environment favorable… to development." See: Decision Regarding Communication 155/96 (Social and Economic Rights

Action Center/Center for Economic and Social Rights v. Nigeria), Case No. ACHPR/COMM/A044/1. <http://www.umn.edu/humanrts/africa/comcases/allcases.html>.

11 Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Nigeria 121st out of 180 countries, with a score of 2.7 out of 10, while its citizens hold a confidence range of only 2.3 to 3.0 out of 10 in the government. See: Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2008. Transparency International, 2008. <http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi>.

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Bobo's Along the River. Niger..JPG." Wikimedia Commons. Web. 13 Nov. 2010. < http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/3e/Bobo's_along_the_river_the_Niger.jpg

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The Same Bed:

Articulating a Continuity Thesis in US-China Policy

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This analysis of U.S.-China relations was motivated by what I perceived to be misplaced "controversy" over Obama's China visit in autumn 2009 and his subsequent policy initiatives, which despite all of the public scorn are really no different from those of previous administrations. The paper singles out a rarely-articulated coherent logic in the history of U.S. foreign policy towards China, one that I argue can also predict U.S. policy in the present and future.

Introduction

In a controversial and popularly cited 1999 *Foreign Affairs* article, Gerald Segal posed the question "Does China matter?" in response to growing international attention regarding China's economic miracle over the preceding decade. Segal's answer, "the Middle Kingdom is a middle power - China matters far less than it and most of the West think, and it is high time the West began treating it as such"[1] resonates considerably less today; since then, both China and opinion regarding it have advanced significantly, giving rise to new fears and perceptions of U.S. foreign policy. In 2007, the *Financial Times* boldly suggested that "the era of American global dominance is coming to a close" and may be overtaken by China in about twenty years.[2] Alarm over conciliatory policies in this newly perceived context is commonplace and unsurprising, as exemplified by the sharp criticism of Obama's China policy in the wake of his state visit to Beijing last month. His critics in Congress, non-governmental organizations and the general public bemoan that a hard line on China, rather than the open-handed approach of the Obama presidency and his compromising character, would fashion a tougher and ultimately safer stance on China for national security and prosperity.

However, this common narrative belies the complex realities of the Sino-American relationship. It unfortunately makes up in popular appeal, by indulging in a public fearful of its national decline, what it lacks in a sound understanding of past and present U.S. political relations with China and the Far East. Despite journalistic and scholarly claims to the contrary over the years, current U.S. foreign policy regarding China follows in a long pedigree of bilateral relations that have, over the last two decades especially, formed and severely constrained the range of policy options available in the present day. The realities and complexities of this relationship effectively limit the influence that any one ideology or personality in power may have. In spite of the rhetoric of U.S. leaders and the much-publicised occasional "crises" that have marked the tumultuous nature of Sino-American diplomacy, this study argues that U.S. foreign policy towards China has not only exhibited remarkable continuity since and during the Cold War, but will continue to be unremarkably predictable in coming years. Rather, the perceived multiplicity of policy options is a misperception arising from the traditional and systemic conflict between Congress and the Executive over China policy.

US-China Bilateral Relations: The Traditional Macro-History

In traditional terms, the story of U.S. foreign policy towards the People's Republic of China (PRC) is divided into two distinct periods – the Cold War and the period since the Cold

War – with the latter exhibiting constant shifts in policy orientation both between and within presidential administrations.

The détente with China orchestrated by Nixon and Kissinger in the 1972 Shanghai Communiqué opened nearly two decades of bilateral relations based on mutual strategic imperatives under a Cold War setting. By that time, after the discovery of Soviet troops in Cuba and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, U.S. – Soviet détente had ended and Washington was ever less sanguine about it reemerging. As the Soviet Union came to appear more ominous, China grew more valuable to the United States as a strategic ally. "It was clear," notes Robert S. Ross, "that the United States now sought a 'stable marriage' so as to better contend with Soviet U.S. policy."[3] During this time, the U.S. and China cooperated strategically against their common enemy, and refrained from quarrelling over Taiwan as a result. The issue of human rights was likewise intertwined with strategic objectives, agrees Ming Wan, a Chinese historian: "Human rights in China was rarely mentioned by the government, the media or human rights NGOs in the United States throughout the 1970s and only incrementally in the 1980s…China was a 'human rights exception' even when the United States pursued an articulated global human rights policy."[4]

From the perspective of U.S. foreign policy, the evidence amply supports this characterisation. China became increasingly opposed to U.S. arms sales to Taiwan after 1979 and instigated a round of negotiations that, as a characteristic and high-profile example, does well to reveal the nature of the U.S.-China relationship at the opening of the 1980s. When Washington attempted to moderate Beijing's stand by balancing arms sales to Taiwan with arms sales to the PRC, Chinese leaders refused to buy U.S. arms and threatened further hostile action.[5] The resulting 1982 Communiqué was a result of aggressive Chinese negotiation; although it did not promulgate a specific end to arms sales, it did bring China much closer to its ultimate goal by placing heavy restrictions on Washington's arms policy. "The negotiating process," observes Ross, "revealed… Washington's fear that China would carry out its threat, thereby undermining the strategic relationship with China."[6] It was very much in Washington's interest, both at the outset of China's "opening" and towards the end of the Cold War, to play down the importance of the contentions including Taiwan and human rights, and push for Sino-American cooperation.

But since the end of the Cold War, Sino-American relations have operated within a drastically altered international context requiring an equally distinct bilateral relationship. In the pivotal year of 1989, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the brutal suppression of the Tiananmen protests dealt a dual blow to the U.S.-China rapport within the United States. Throughout the Cold War, the Chinese had stood, for America, at the forefront of reform in the communist world – "daring, innovative, and increasingly capitalist."[7] That it now stood at the turn of the decade as a lingering bastion of communism seen anew as corrupt and backwards in the wake of the Tiananmen massacre led to a profound disillusionment as the public turned away from China.[8] The uneasy relationship in the early 1990s was accordingly characterised by Chinese distrust and American toughness, with central disputes over the trade imbalance, nuclear proliferation, and human rights.

The conventional view, which is certainly validated to a significant extent, is that the United States found itself freed from self-restraint to criticise China over issues and controversies it had hitherto quelled. American grievances focussed on the huge US trade deficit as a result of the impenetrability of the Chinese market, its intellectual property infringements and deceptive foreign labelling, as well as the PRC's sales of ballistic missiles to Syria, Pakistan and Iran. Criticism was most forceful in the aftermath of the Tiananmen protests in regards to religious tolerance in Tibet, as well as the upcoming transfer of Hong Kong to the PRC. China, on the other hand, insisted on the sovereignty of its nation with respect to internal matters, and argued the hypocrisy of U.S. criticism in regards to its arms policies, as the U.S. remained the world's largest arms merchant.

Of course, there were important agreements and compromises between the two countries during this time. Most famously, U.S. President Bill Clinton decided to "delink" the renewal of China's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status from human rights, as part of his administration's mid-term adoption of the "Comprehensive Engagement" policy. Towards the end of his term, U.S. President Bill Clinton also initiated the negotiations that would shortly thereafter lead to China's lauded accession to the World Trade Organisation. These "engagement" accomplishments and concessions towards the PRC, however, remain in the shadow of the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, as well as the initial hard-line policy that Clinton campaigned under with regards to confronting China.

Despite the advancement of the bilateral relationship, encyclopaedic accounts (which are useful for their professional impartiality and macro-positioning) of the 1990s U.S.-China relationship relegate them with respect to the squabbles and altercations that defined the uneasiness of the decade. "In the absence of the strategic imperative that the Cold War had supplied, such disagreements loomed larger and could not be resolved with the ambiguous compromises of earlier years,"[9] the Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Relations points out in its entry on China. The picture of U.S. China policy in the decade following the Cold War thus becomes one of no recognisable pattern, alternating between containment and engagement, censure and praise, toughness and compromise, and even armed confrontation and peace. As a result of the tumultuous highs and lows of U.S. foreign policy towards China in the 1990s, the dominant appraisal becomes one of uncertainty. Indeed, for its closing statement, the encyclopaedia asserts that "as the end of the twentieth century approached, Sino-American relations once again only could be characterized as troubled and uncertain, weaker than at any time since rapprochement began."[10]

Confronting and Refining the Traditional Narrative

This is not a mistaken narrative; it is a simplistic one. It serves as a useful base from which to understand the evolution of U.S. foreign policy and the various approaches that have been tried by the George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush presidencies since the end of the Cold War. Indeed, this paper neither refutes this account of the history of American China policy nor asserts that the current administration views it as such. However, it does contend that to take it for granted, as is often the case during foreign policy debate in the U.S., will inevitably lead to a misperception of current policy and perhaps influence the pursuit of unsound policy (or, as seems to be the case, undue critique of sound policy).

The problem arises from the framing of the post-Cold War relationship as one in which the United States could finally pursue a policy guided by the full scope of its national interest. In this sense, it tends to see negotiation with China not as part of a pattern of rational strategy implementation, but rather as periodic concessions eroding what would otherwise promote U.S. interests more fully. However, beneath much of the rhetoric and public policy debates, U.S. presidents since the Cold War have rarely acted as suggested by their aggressive policy outlines. Patient and calculated negotiation with the PRC has, in fact, been the norm.

Consider the actual policies of the last three presidencies. Although both Clinton and Bush campaigned under a tough China policy, both presidents quickly found

it necessary to conduct an abrupt about-face in policy as a result of the realities of the bilateral relationship. George H. W. Bush, for his part, although inaugurated during the Cold War, continued to be relatively accommodating towards China past 1989. During his presidency he maintained his support for unconditional MFN status and favoured a policy of engagement with China. Perhaps most relevantly, he tempered the U.S. government's censure and sanctions following the Tiananmen massacre by secretly dispatching the emissaries Brent Scowcroft and Lawrence Eagleburger to China in order to assure the PRC that the U.S. was still keenly interested in maintaining good relations. Unsurprisingly, the eventual discovery of the mission led to a public uproar; in doing so, however, Bush continued in the tradition of his Cold War predecessors and set the precedent for overall warm relations with China in the post-Cold War period.

Clinton

President Bill Clinton campaigned for his presidency under a decidedly aggressive China policy, in fact placing himself in direct opposition to Bush. In 1992, Clinton condemned his predecessor's China policy as too soft and vowed to get tough with China if elected to the White House. One year later, he announced his momentous decision to issue an ultimatum for the PRC to change its human rights practise in 12 months or face suspension of its MFN status.[11]

Yet, in 1994, Clinton reversed course, preaching instead a revised policy of "comprehensive engagement", to the bafflement and suspicion of both American and Chinese onlookers. Nevertheless, he appeared committed throughout the rest of his presidency to the new policy. Chinese President Jiang Zemin soon visited the White house for the first time in Clinton's presidency, and the U.S. president reciprocated by touring China in 1998. Notable negotiations of Clinton's China policy include drawing the terms for China's admission to the WTO, even while the administration wanted to reduce the nation's trade deficit with China. He likewise issued permanent normal trade relation status to the PRC. As previously mentioned, these advancements accompanied Clinton's

Presidents Jiang Zemin of China and Bill Clinton of the U.S. on September 11, 1999.

abandonment of the annual renewal of China's MFN status as a contingency of China's human rights record, which had been a strong coercive incentive for reform within the PRC. Although economists and businesses were pleased, the policy infuriated a portion of the U.S. public, Congress, and activist organisations.

The 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, which escalated dangerously to a show of arms between the two powers after the U.S. granted then-Taiwanese President Lee Teng-Hui an entry visa, stands as the most confrontational moment in Sino-Soviet relations since the Cold War. Notably, the conflict occurred over Taiwan, where U.S. leaders have traditionally been most aggressive. Even more important, however, is the response that the crisis elicited from Clinton's administration. Although Ross makes clear that Clinton's bold move to "allow Taiwan's most senior leader to enter the United States reversed more than twenty-five years of U.S. diplomatic precedent,"[12] the president's subsequent actions convey an urgent desire to mend relations, much as President Bush had displayed in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square protests. During a tour in China in 1998, Clinton not only coined China a "strategic partner", but also stated the "Three No's" to Taiwan: that America would not support Taiwanese independence, two Chinas, or Taiwanese membership in the United Nations. Moreover, it appears that all subsequent Taiwanese presidents have been only been issued visas for layovers as they are passing through the United States on their way to Latin America.[13]

Nearly all of Clinton's policy enactments under his engagement strategy, largely regarded today as fundamental progress in bilateral relations and China's constructive emergence, elicited controversy at the time. To downplay the criticism he received by hard-liners who felt betrayed by his change of strategy, Clinton's rhetoric stressed the generally prevailing notion that increased economic integration and interdependency would eventually lead to demands for political reform within China.

Bush

President George W. Bush assumed office in the same manner as Clinton eight years earlier. Regarding Chinese expansionary interests as a threat to U.S. hegemony, he negated the unifying effects of Clinton's words during his 1998 China tour by stating that China was not America's strategic partner, but instead a "strategic competitor." As Andrei Davydov broadly summarises, "Vice President Cheney, Defense Minister Donald Rumsfeld, and their departments believed that a policy, if not of deterrence, at least of active constraint should be carried out regarding China, which presumed expanding America's military presence in Asia, increasing political and military assistance to Taiwan, strengthening political relations with countries allied and friendly with the U.S., and treating China as a potential strategic adversary."[14] In line with this reorientation in foreign policy, the president's harshest statement was delivered on 25 April during an impromptu interview on ABC's Good Morning America, where he affirmed for the first time in U.S. history that if Taiwan were attacked, the U.S. would do "whatever it took"[15] to defend the island. In so doing, the president was effectively declaring that the U.S. was abandoning the "indeterminate strategy"[16] it had pursued for decades regarding a possible attack on Taiwan. Bush retracted his statement later that afternoon during an interview with CNN, subtly returning to the status quo position of Clinton's presidency. The message to the PRC, however, remained unsettling. The Bush administration complemented its aggressive military tone with various diplomatic affronts, including an invitation to the Dalai Lama.

Chi Wang, author of *George W. Bush and China*, reveals that "apart from being confrontational, Bush's China policy also appeared contradictory" – for instance, by announcing major shifts in China policy only to retract the statements, on several occasions.[17] The contradictory nature of President Bush's foreign policy serves to underscore the naivety of a new administration as yet unfamiliar with the history of the bilateral relationship. As Wang makes clear in her investigative work,

Vice President Cheney, Defense Minister Donald Rumsfeld and their departments believed that a policy...at least of active constraint, should be carried out regarding China, which presumed...treating China as a potential strategic adversary.

one explanation is that the Bush administration contained "no senior-level officials with any significant amount of China experience."[18] Although it is difficult to tell at what point in the Bush presidency the administration would have softened its tone towards the PRC, the terrorist attacks of September eleventh, 2001 provided a premature impetus for a complete reorientation of China policy.

Recognising the need for China's cooperation in combating international

terrorism and the nuclear threat in North Korea, the Bush administration rapidly resumed a cooperative tone and frequent visits in order to emphasise the two nations' common ground. The resulting China policy over the ensuing seven years followed, as a result, from this sentiment and from prior administrations' approach. Proposing a "constructive, cooperative, and candid"[19] relationship with the PRC, Bush made an unprecedented two visits to China within a half-year after September 11, 2001. A third summit meeting took place at the Bush family ranch in Texas in 2002, signifying the highest frequency of meetings between the top leaders of the U.S. and China in history.[20] In June 2004, the White House pressured the Pentagon to cancel Major-General John Allen's visit to Taiwan. That December, as Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao was visiting the U.S., Bush issued a statement about Taiwan's ambitions for independence by saying, "The comment and actions made by the leader of Taiwan indicate that he may be willing to make decisions unilaterally to change the status quo, which we oppose."[21] Regarding the issue, Wang writes that "while the previous U.S. administration had very deliberately taken no position on the matter of sovereignty over Taiwan, Dennis Wilder, a senior Bush aide, said during his trip with the president to the April 2007 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit that 'Membership in the United Nations requires statehood. Taiwan is not at this point a state in the international community.'"[22]

While making these concessions, the Bush administration simultaneously continued the Clinton initiative to bolster its forces in the Pacific, particularly in order to respond quickly to any threat made on Taiwan. Besides expanding the number of aircraft carriers, battleships, and missile submarines in the Western Pacific, the Bush administration also fostered closer military ties with Taiwan by facilitating communication and training. Such military preparedness in the region is vital to Washington's interests, as it had been under the last two administrations.

The China policy of President Bush, then, despite its initial confrontational stance and aggressive tone, followed from that of Presidents Clinton and his father before him. Cooperation and engagement with the PRC was seen as a vital diplomatic necessity, all the while ensuring the independence of Taiwan from an undue Chinese attack.

Whence the Misperception? US Congress, the Executive, and China Policy

In his influential 2000 work *Same Bed, Different Dreams*, David M. Lampton asserts that "one key to the productive management of the relationship between the United States and China is effective and secure political leadership in both nations. To that end, individuals are of enormous consequence."[23] If that were the case, however, the different priorities, ideologies, and personalities of all recent U.S. presidents would have yielded foreign policies distinct from one another in ways that the actual evidence does not support, and in fact actively contradicts. Writing at the end of George W. Bush's term – and with the advantage of 8 years' hindsight not afforded Lampton - Wang supported this view: "While the composition of the Bush administration's second-term cabinet combines continuity with change, those with backgrounds in Sino-U.S. relations and those without, and strong, controversial public figures with relative unknowns, the China-U.S. relationship does not seem so different form what it was by the end of the Clinton administration"[24] Indeed, despite the significant disparities among the three presidencies, their generally unanimous adoption of strategic partnership with respect to the PRC signals that other, systemic and entrenched forces are at work.

What, then, may explain the vehement and often controversial policy debate within the U.S. government and the wide range of discussion regarding China policy when the outcome is generally predictable? What factors continue to mischaracterise U.S. China policy as a "rollercoaster,"[25] and cause indignation over supposed "concessions"? Perhaps the most viable explanation for the dearth of an established continuity theory finds expression in the traditionally antagonistic positions of Congress and the Executive in forming China policy. Particularly illustrative of this dynamic are the differences in opinion between the two branches during George W. Bush's rapprochement with the PRC following his initially hostile relationship. While the Executive's priority was to highlight the importance of cooperation with the PRC, Congress was awash in bills proposed to counter one threat or another posed by the PRC; according to The Economist of April 7, 2007, almost a dozen anti-China bills had already been introduced in the U.S. Congress since the beginning of that year. Washington and Beijing engaged in tit-for-tat bans on imports of foodstuffs and other goods. Newspapers and policy journals were saturated with articles predicting a serious crisis in bilateral relations. China's rising influence in Asia, its rapid program of military modernization, its aggressive search for secure energy supplies, its periodic saber-rattling toward Taiwan, and its refusal, or inability, to clarify ultimate intentions encouraged understandable fears about the security of American interests.[26]

Although Vice President Dick Cheney eventually "took up the theme previously articulated"[27] questioning the motives behind China's growing military reach at the time and thus played a role in fuelling anti-Chinese sentiment, the difference in intensity between Executive and Congressional condemnation is striking.

Indeed, as Hathaway notes, veteran Washington Asia-watcher Chris Nelson has observed that "every president since the 1970s has had a dual China problem: managing ties with Beijing while simultaneously countering congressional calls for a tougher policy toward the PRC."[28] The reason for such a surprising ideological cleavage between the two branches, Hathaway proposes, is that China policy does not divide along either partisan or ideological lines. Because one party in the American two-party system is always "out", "that party can usually be counted upon to be pushing for a harder line on China."[29]

This dynamic, however, is as old as U.S.-PRC relations themselves. When the Carter White House transferred recognition of China from Taipei to Beijing, Congress "balked."[30] In response, it passed the Taiwan Relations Act - affirming and obliging U.S. preparedness to defend the national security of Taiwan. Lee Teng-Hui's conflict-ridden visit to the United States was the result of Congressional granting of a visa, to which Clinton eventually (and surprisingly) agreed. In fact, the decision "challenged Clinton administration public policy statements and private reassurances to Chinese leaders that such a visit was contrary to U.S. policy toward Taiwan."[31] In yet another instance, immediately before Clinton's visit to China during which he professed the Three No's in concession to Beijing, the Senate voted 92 to 0 and the House 411 to 0 in resolutions intended to remind the president of the Taiwan Relations Act.[32]

Despite the significant disparities among the three presidencies, their generally unanimous adoption of strategic partnership with respect to the PRC signals that other, systemic and entrenched forces are at work.

Other explanations could include the powerful influence of special interest groups – for instance, Hollywood pushing for copyright infringement legislation, or North Carolina textile workers demanding a halt to cheap Chinese imports. Their influence comes from the considerable ability of such interest groups to wield power within the American political system in comparison to other nations. Furthermore, this paper posits

a last reason for the perceived volatility in U.S. foreign policy regarding China; that of a marked lack of historical awareness on the part of American legislators and incoming presidents in regards to the complexities of Sino-American bilateral relations. Inherent in this study is the hope that in understanding the history of engagement with the PRC, U.S. foreign policy will stand to gain from reduced opposition and increased soundness of policy prescriptions.

Conclusion

This study seeks to firmly establish a continuity theory in regards to U.S. foreign policy towards China that can tie together the policies of the last four U.S. presidents as the continuation of a single actual policy. In an even grander and innovative[33] scope, it strives toward an equally sustained continuity in this policy of engagement stretching back to Nixon's and Kissinger's opening of diplomatic relations with the PRC in 1972. Instances such as Reagan's granting of political asylum to the

Though administrations have changed, Sino-American policy has remained constant.

Chinese tennis player Hu Na in 1983[34] (before the resumption of annual summits with the Soviet Union in 1985 signalled a lessening dependence on Beijing); as well as the 1982 joint communiqué pledging the U.S. not to exceed the 1979 amount[35] of military aid to Taiwan[36]; up to and including George H. W. Bush's 1989 secret dispatching of diplomats to Beijing in the Tiananmen aftermath, establish a credible record of engagement with the PRC during the Cold War.

Such a historical record matters in policy debate because it has a great effect on actual diplomacy crafted and pursued by incumbent presidential administrations. In his initial articulation of China policy upon entering office, Obama does indeed present a shift in policy with regards to the last two presidents. However, as should be clear by now, this shift signals little else than a bit more honesty on the part of an incoming president. Sharp criticism in the wake of Obama's first expressions of his policy following his visit to China–even in sophisticated discourse–unfortunately reflects a traditional understanding of the bilateral relationship with the Cold War that falls short of explaining the full scope of Sino-American relations and, especially, its U.S. policy. *The New York Times* reports that "in the United States, Obama's coining of the phrase 'strategic reassurance' has been attacked by conservative commentators, who argue that any reassurance that the United States provides to China would be an acknowledgment of a decline in American power."[37] Moreoever, in an op-ed article in *The Washington Post*, the analysts Robert Kagan and Dan Blumenthal argued that the policy had echoes of Europe "ceding the Western Hemisphere to American hegemony"[38] a century ago. "Lingering behind this concept is an assumption of America's inevitable decline," they wrote.

As the policies of George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George H. W. Bush make exceedingly clear, the sort of engagement and negotiations being pursued by Obama are not only not new; they are sound from the perspective of U.S. presidential administrations for well over two decades and will continue to set the tradition for the bilateral relationship in the future. While the U.S. will remain highly critical of China's human rights abuses and be militarily ready for a conflict over Taiwan, it will mute its harshest language and actions in order to ensure a peaceful coexistence between the two and an avoidance of conflict in the Far East that, as far into the future as we can see, is mutually regarded as a sort of renewed concept of "mutually assured destruction." In stark contrast to the Soviet Union of the 1950s and 1960s, however, China faces not just the U.S.; it faces a Western-centred system that is open, integrated, and rule-based, with wide and deep political foundations.

As Wang revealingly points out, on the eve of the 2004 U.S. presidential election, "Yan Xuetong, director of Tsinghua University's Institute for International Studies, commented that 'whoever wins the election, there's no need to worry because they will adopt the same policy, especially on the Taiwan issue…If there is some change, it will be superficial."[39] Much the same could be said of the 2008 campaign, the 2012 campaign, and the following two or three. Beyond that, an emerged China may very well be playing a diplomatic game different from the one it has hitherto pursued, which will require a different set of diplomatic responses from the United States.

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The Politics of Asian Regionalism in Korea:
Identity Politics and Its Implications for U.S.-ROK Relations

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Drawing from the concept of national identity in the Constructivist School of International Relations, this paper sheds light on the interaction between identity politics and pan-Asian regionalist vision in South Korea today by examining how competing political groups – the progressives, leftists and conservatives – have formulated differing regional policies and long-term goals. After showing that each group's distinctive identities toward North Korea and the United States have influenced the formation of controversies over regionalist visions, this paper suggests that successful future community building in Asia hinges upon the creative resolution of a multilateral blueprint with existing bilateralisms in the region, and most importantly upon closer policy coordination between South Korea and the United States.

Introduction

Extensive research has analyzed an intriguing yet still inconspicuous trend in today's international politics: Asian regional integration. In observing the tendency, it is worth noting the historical fact that pan-Asian visions have repeatedly surfaced onto the world stage in various forms and contexts. From the Japanese imperial ambitions clothed with the pan-Asian slogan of a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" in the mid-twentieth century, have developed their own geopolitical visions, through the discourse of "Asian values"[1] as underlying cultural contributors to the developmental miracles of East Asian nations in the '80s and '90s, and finally to the current manifestations of what some already began to term as "a new pan-Asianism,"[2] intellectuals and politicians of Asia from nearly the entire ideological spectrum. Korea has been no exception; as Gi-Wook Shin argues, since Korea's "incorporation into the modern world system in the late nineteenth century,"[3] various forms of Asianist visions have emerged and declined. Contemporary South Korean politics also manifest distinctive visions and policies regarding the future of Asia and Korea's geopolitical strategies. Excepting the former Roh regime's idea of Korea as the "regional balancer of Asia," the issue of regional policies has seldom been subject to the intense politicization[4] typical of Korean politics, which is divided along ideological lines. The close examination of news editorials, party platforms and governmental policies, nevertheless reveals that each of the conservatives, progressives, and leftists[5] in South Korea has formulated their respective regional vision. Those differing visions and policy lines reflect the gaps between each political faction's strategic views on major regional actors such as China, North Korea and the U.S. South Korea's geographic location amidst stronger neighbors as well as its unique situation of peninsular division and strategic alliance with the U.S. has compelled its citizens to define their national identity in terms of their country's relationships with the U.S., North Korea and more recently, China. Scholars have used the term "identity politics" or "politics of identity"[6] to refer to the continuing contestation of national identity in South Korea, in which groups of different political beliefs strive to advance their own perceptions of those major neighbors as the legitimate visions of national identity. The objectives of this paper are: (1) to highlight how South Korean identity politics are reflected in the Asian policy platforms of the progressives, leftists and conservatives, and (2) to review the implications of findings for U.S.-ROK relations. As a necessary preliminary to these topics, however, we begin by discussing previous scholarly discourses on identity politics, and some broad manifestations of this idea in South Korea.

Identity Politics and South Korea

National identity as a concept has attracted a significant amount of attention from both social sciences and humanities. This includes the recent scholarship in the Constructivist school of international relations,[7] a few social scientists' ambitious project to establish identity as a variable, sociologists' use of the concept in their politico-historical discourses,[8] and the critical assessment of national identity and culture as a problematic concept from the perspective of cultural studies,[9] to name but a few. Most importantly, the Constructivist school has emphasized the importance of analyzing the role of state identity and interests in the formation of actual foreign policies. The common understanding of the concept of state identity has been that it involves a state's perception of other states. Peter Katzenstein explains that "in constructivist analyses of state behavior and the relations between states, ideational factors and processes are expected to be important for tracing whether collective actors are likely to construct or diffuse enmity or amity between self and other."[10] It has also been pointed out that state identities, that is, perceptions of other states, vary across the differing political positions or ideologies within a society. Thomas Berger argues that "different subgroups within a given society… may hold very different conceptions of state identity and state interest."[11] Identity politics ensue when those political subgroups within a society compete over the legitimization of particular perceptions of other states in trying to justify their viewpoints in the name of national interest.

In the case of South Korea, national politics has to a large extent been marked by the struggles between the holders of different perspectives toward the United States and towards North Korea, two important others, often resulting in emotional confrontations. According to J.J. Suh at Johns Hopkins, there are basically "two conflicting identities" within South Korean politics: "the alliance identity that sees the United States as a friendly provider and the nationalist identity that pits Korean identity against the United States."[12] The "alliance identity" of the conservatives has been described as going hand in hand with their staunch stance toward the North Korean regime. The "nationalist identity" of the progressives and the leftists, on the other hand, has been affiliated with their moderate or sympathetic stance toward the North. Gi-Wook Shin, quoting Suh's remarks, also argues in his book on U.S.-Korea relations that both North Korea and the U.S. have become two significant others against which Koreans shape their sense of national identity and that both progressives and conservatives "seek to define their vision for national identity with reference to" the two nations.[13] In short, different perceptions of the U.S. and North Korea, and the diverse state identities affected thereby, have competed with each other in South Korea. It will be shown in the next part of this paper that such identity politics in South Korea has shaped or at least influenced the

South Korea's geographic location amidst stronger neighbors as well as its unique situation of peninsular division and strategic alliance with the U.S. has compelled its citizens to define their national identity in terms of their country's relationships with the U.S., North Korea and more recently, China.

formation of controversies over different Asian policies and visions among the progressives, leftists and conservatives.

The Progressives:

The Regional Balancer Thesis

When candidate Roh Moo Hyun won the 2003 presidential election amidst rising anti-American sentiments in South Korea, the Roh government and its Uri party (now divided into the Democratic Party and the Participation Party) were perceived by the U.S. policymakers as "implacably anti-American" and pro-North Korean.[14] Conservative commentators in South Korea as well continuously condemn the nationalist identity of the Roh regime, and acrimonious politics of identity overwhelmed the nation during the entire ruling period of the progressive powers. When president Roh proclaimed his vision of South Korea to be a "balancer of Northeast Asia" in the forthcoming "era of Northeast Asia," followed by explanatory documents from the administrative office of the National Security Council and the Presidential Commission on Policy Planning,[15] such geopolitical conceptions were considered to have been motivated by the nationalist identity vis-à-vis the U.S.-ROK alliance and North Korea. The governmental documents stated that the Roh regime's regional visions were not in contradiction with the alliance and denied the existence of any hidden intention to bandwagon with the rising regional power, China. The documents instead argue that South Korea's assumption of a proactive role as a balancer—coordinating regional policies within the U.S.-China-Japan triangle—would be in line with the U.S. policy stance to establish a cooperative order with China. The underlying idea is that South Korea could prevent the possibility of diplomatic as well as military conflicts among the powerful regional actors in their hegemonic rivalries. It was also claimed that the regional visions are not necessarily concerned with the issue of North-

Korea occupies a critical position between China and Japan.

South relations and that the denuclearization of the North is to be achieved through multilateral frameworks such as the Six-Party talks.

Despite the efforts of the Roh government to convince Korean conservatives and the Bush administration that its regionalist ideas were in fact in accordance with the interests of the U.S., U.S. policymakers, the media and many in academia bombarded the progressive resident of the Blue House with harsh criticisms. Most of all, conservative Korean news media that were already at the front line of denouncing progressive governmental policies turned their gunpoint to the regional balancer thesis. For instance, a 2005 editorial of Chosun Ilbo, one of the prominent conservative newspapers in South Korea, viewed the idea of "Northeast Asian balancer" as markedly contradictory to the U.S.-ROK alliance: "the idea of Northeast Asian balancer sounds as if South Korea could jump onto the side of China to succeed as a balancer. Is that even possible? Moreover, if South Korea jumps onto the left side, what would happen to the other side? I mean, what about the U.S.-ROK alliance?"[16]

Scholars based in the U.S. also commented on the Roh government's proposition as a premature, if not totally improper, vision driven by nationalist identity. Shin argued that the progressives' new version of Asianism embodied their revisionist stance toward the U.S.-ROK alliance and general discontent with the Bush administration's foreign policies. In his 2006 work he wrote, "the current version of Korean Asianism," advocated by progressive scholars serving the Roh government, "seeks to distance Korea from American hegemony and to grant it a more appropriate role as a hub in the region."[17] Again in his 2007 book, the regionalist vision was seen as a reflection of "Koreans' discontent with American policy … [as] its proponents are unhappy with what they perceive as the one-sided and unequal nature of the U.S.-South Korea alliance."[18] He also observes the pro-North Korean identity of the progressives behind the slogan of the Northeast Asian era;
"Its [Asianism's] proponents argue that U.S.-led globalization unfairly excludes
North Korea and that a new strategy of national survival must incorporate the North. A report by the Presidential Commission on Policy Planning defines this recent Asianism as "a new perspective of history and worldview" with the ultimate goal of forming an "Asian Union" that would include the North."[19]

Another sociologist and Northeast Asia expert Gilbert Rozman, in his short yet brilliant article on the South Korean national identity, has also analyzed the balancer thesis as "indicative of…unguarded romanticism", without realistic calculations of the regional balance of power. He suggests that the regionalist vision failed to gain a shared national vision, provoking internal identity conflicts between the progressives and conservatives. Instead, the government should have focused on assuming a more modest and realistic role as a "facilitator at moments when interests [of regional powers] overlap."[20]

The Roh regime's vision of South Korea as a regional balancer, and its flowery slogan of the "era of Northeast Asia" led to the first major politicization of pan-Asian thought in the nation since 1945. While the explanatory documents highlighted the underlying intention to be in line with the existing alliance system and U.S. interests in Asia, the regionalist imagination was dismissed as premature at best. Against the backdrop of antagonistic domestic politics and continuous regional policy disharmony with the Bush administration, president Roh's independent conception of regional power realignment ended up fueling identity politics and lasted only a few months.

The Leftists:

Party Platforms and Discourses

Many leftists in South Korea who inherited the anti-American minjung (people's) movement of the 1980s became fascinated with the seemingly anti-American and economically progressive stances of the 2002 Presidential candidate Roh Moo Hyun, whose surprising victory discommoded conservatives and the hawkish Bush administration and gave unprecedented hopes to the leftists. The latter's disenchantments, however, arrived quickly when the government pushed for the dispatch of South Korean troops to Iraq and for the commencement of FTA negotiations with the U.S. Their sense of betrayal toward the progressive president appeared inevitable given the Korean leftists' strong anti-American and progressive economic visions, which can also be seen in its regional policy lines. Supported mainly by labor unionists, activists, and intellectuals, the leftists in South Korea have regarded the U.S.-led Neoliberalism and American hegemony as the main culprit of economic inequality and the North Korean crises. Envisioning a new regional power alignment, therefore, which was necessary for the leftists, aimed both to achieve reunification as a way to free the peninsula from what they considered unequal U.S.-Korea relations, and to establish a pan-Asian new economic system that addresses the unfettered economic liberalism led by the U.S.

The current party platform of the New Progressive Party clearly reflects such regional visions (Appendix 1). Regarding the U.S.-ROK alliance as "based upon the American imperial domination strategy" and South Korea "taken as a hostage to the neoliberal capitalism," the

platform states that a new peace system called "the Northeast Asian Multilateral Security Cooperation System" is to be established so that "the U.S. army stationed in South Korea is to be withdrawn." Unification is the means and ends of the new peace system, bringing "the improvement of people's lives in both South and North Korea." The platform also calls for the solidarity and alliance of "the democratic progressive factions" of each Asian nation, to establish "sustainable economic systems" as an alternative to "bilateral free trade agreements that force structural adjustments."

Besides party platforms, leftist intellectuals have formulated corresponding discourses on regional politics. An academic article by a professor at Sung Kong Hoe University, known for its large pool of faculty members with progressive and leftist leanings, argues that

Currently there is no consensus among South Korean leaders over what kind of long-term geopolitical strategy the nation should adopt to help construct a stable and prosperous order that corresponds to the mutual interests of major regional actors, including the U.S.

"It is not even possible to imagine a new Asia without taking actions together
against the formidable capacity of the U.S. in ruling over and lining up the entire Asia-Pacific. The reason why we speak of Asia is that if Asian countries do not form solidarity, they really cannot survive…In this regard we have to learn from the symbiotic solidarity of Latin America which stabs a dagger right into the center of American hegemony."[21]

The chance of any leftist party candidate's ascendancy to the Blue House and of an actual materialization of such regional visions, however, remains quite low unless the leftists come to form a coalition with the Democratic Party against the dominant conservative camps and overcome their lasting stagnation after the internal division and corruption scandals. Yet, the volatile political terrain of the nation vulnerable to events that could trigger intense politicization and mass reactions leaves open the possibility of resurging anti-American sentiments which could at anytime be linked to new geopolitical imaginations.

The Conservatives:

President Lee's Pragmatism

Compared to the leftists and progressives, South Korean conservatives rarely promote a pan-Asian vision that satisfies their desire for strong bilateral relations with the U.S. and relatively antagonistic sentiments towards the North. Most of all, it seems the conservatives have not yet heeded much attention to resolving the tension between the existing U.S.-led bilateral alliance system in the region and a prospective multilateral structure necessary for regional community building.[22] Some news editorials' comments on regionalist visions, such as the East Asian Community, present hawkish stances toward North Korea but not any serious discussion on the compatibility of regionalism with bilateralism. For instance, a 2009 editorial of Chosun Ilbo titled "For the East Asian Community not to be in vain",[23] argues that the denuclearization of North Korea is a prerequisite to the idea of an East Asian Community proclaimed by Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama to be materialized. Meanwhile, the Asian policies of the current conservative government under Lee Myung Bak have been saved from the acrimonious identity politics that overwhelmed his predecessor's vision of Korea as a regional balancer. Most of all, the conservatives' focus has been on economic regional agendas instead of on subtle geopolitical strategies that might elicit identity conflicts and misperceptions. The rhetoric of "the hub of Asia," for instance, which the Roh government frequently employed, reappears in the New Asian Policy (Appendix 2) only within the context of envisioning an expansion of bilateral FTAs in Asia. Regional economic issues such as free trade, IT technology, cultural markets, coordinated responses to financial crises and climate change, comprise the major portions of the policy. Such relative absence of identity-driven geostrategic visions among the conservatives could be understood in President Lee's promotion of pragmatism in diplomatic, as well as domestic policies.

At the Asia Economic Community Forum held in November 2009 in South Korea, as a short response to my question about the difference between the Asian policies of the Roh and Lee governments, Grand National Party congressman Won Hee-Ryong remarked as follows;

"The essential difference between the current government and the Roh government is that the Roh government then referred to South Korea as a balancer of Northeast Asia and this concept of balancer attracted a lot of attention, fueling a controversy on whether this idea means a digression from the U.S.-ROK alliance. However, there is barely a difference in terms of actual policies. This (The Lee) government, however, approaches Asian policies more carefully and pragmatically."[24]

"Pragmatism" was one of the key slogans of President Lee during his presidential election campaign in 2007. Promoting the image of the candidate as a non-ideological businessman (he is the former CEO of Hyundai), Lee's election strategy aimed at appealing to a South Korean public who was already tired of acrimonious identity politics during the progressives' ruling period. He promised to pursue domestic and foreign policies with realistic and pragmatic professionalism. The U.S. policymakers and academia welcomed the inauguration of the conservative government as they believed President Lee would take a more cooperative and cautious course of diplomatic relations with the U.S., and would not engage in unnecessary gestures that might fuel divisive politics of identity. The Lee government's regional vision, manifested in the New Asian Policy centered upon economic agendas, has accordingly been saved from any controversy, and the progressives and leftists have focused their energies almost exclusively on attacking domestic policies such as the Grand Korean Waterway project and inter-Korean relations.

Conclusion:

Implications for U.S.-ROK Relations

Currently there is no consensus among South Korean leaders over what kind of long-term geopolitical strategy the nation should adopt to help construct a stable and prosperous order that corresponds to the mutual interests of major regional actors, including the U.S. The progressives' promotion of a pan-Asian slogan that manifested South Korea's heightened expectation to assume a more proactive role as a regional balancer failed to garner a unified voice internally and delivered confusing messages across the Pacific that the longtime ally desires to bandwagon with the new regional power, China. Most of all, the progressive Roh regime's failed regionalist proposition and the intense identity politics it fueled suggest that what South Korea needs at this time is a "compromise [among political elites] highlighting elements of identity that serve urgent goals"[25], that include stabilizing the inter-Korean relations and promoting a peaceful regional order. Such a compromise must start with recognizing the significance of continued policy coordination between the ROK and the US to deal with North Korea and its Asian neighbors. A survey result indicates that Asian elites in general prefer U.S. support for and involvement in the long-term vision of an Asian community and corresponding regional institution building,[26] reflecting widespread concerns that an exclusive regional order might end up intensifying a rivalry structure between regional hegemons. In the face of escalating peninsular uncertainties amid the recent military ship sinking and the North's own internal succession politics, South Korean

leaders are realizing again the importance of working closely with the U.S. on crucial regional agendas.

For the progressives and leftists, it should be noted that a successful national strategy on regional politics rests upon a shared vision and coordination with the nation's trustworthy allies. The conservatives, on the other hand, need to start spending their time and political resources on drawing a long-term vision that could promise pan-regional as well as peninsular stability. Most importantly, for a regional community to be materialized in Asia, where the U.S.-led bilateral structure has guaranteed a balance of power, a creative resolution of a multilateral blueprint with existing bilateralisms must be pursued. The ideal path toward such a resolution would consist in facilitating the mutual interests of regional actors. The U.S. policymakers also need to recognize and encourage South Korea's capacity to assume such a crucial role. As Rozman argues, South Korea is well qualified for a status "as the facilitator of regionalism in Northeast Asia that could reconcile serious differences in an area

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The Blue Counterrevolution

The First Year of President Viktor Yanukovych

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The initial 100 days of Viktor Yanukovych's presidency appeared to be a complete departure from the Yushchenko presidency. While publicly reiterating his commitment to integration with the European Union and supporting transparency, freedom of the press, and democracy, Yanukovich has also seemingly positioned Ukraine firmly under Russia's orbit. Viktor Yanukovich's authoritarian tendencies combined with a sudden tilt towards Russia have galvanized the divided opposition, which has accused Yanukovich of outright treason. Amid all the fears of being a puppet of the Kremlin, Yanukovych has already voiced opposition to the most audacious Russian projects for greater partnership, and relations with Russia are bound to cool off once the initial honeymoon comes to an end. Furthermore, Yanukovich has not abandoned Ukraine's ties to the United States and the E.U., for he needs their support if he is to succeed in fixing Ukraine's economy and remain on equal footing with Russia.

Viktor Yanukovych's first year as President of Ukraine has been tantamount to a counterrevolution. His initial actions have been almost complete departures from the policies of his predecessor, Viktor Yushchenko, who led the Orange Revolution in 2004. Yanukovych has effectively ignored his campaign pledges of fixing the economy, raising quality of life and taming corruption, but instead has focused on building a strong partnership with Russia. The sudden reversal of course has caught the West off-guard seeing as most have predicted Yanukovych to be considerably less pro-Russian since his loss in 2004.[1] Even though Yanukovych has lost little time in moving closer towards Russia, he has already rebuked several of the more ambitious Russian efforts to bring Ukraine into its orbit. In fact, it is highly unlikely that warm relations with Russia will persist throughout his first term. Tensions have already mounted over the energy agreements between the two countries—agreements that are at the heart of Russo-Ukrainian relations.

The refusal of Yanukovych and his Prime Minister, Mykola Azarov, to merge the Ukrainian owned Naftogaz with Russian owned Gazprom show that Western fears of Russian envelopment are mostly unfounded. Indeed, international attention solely on Ukrainian foreign policy has resulted in many losing focus on the broader aims of Viktor Yanukovych. With each passing month it becomes clearer that Viktor Yanukovych is not a second Dmitry Medvedev out to do Vladimir Putin's bidding; he is becoming ever more like Alexander Lukashenka, the President of Belarus widely dubbed "the last dictator in Europe." It is a telling sign of Yanukovych's intentions that the Constitutional Court has ruled that the hallmark reform legislation of the Orange Revolution-the curbing of presidential powers- is unconstitutional. [2]

Domestic Policies: Glory to the Party of Regions![3]

Viktor Yanukovych and his Donetsk team are acutely aware of their rather limited political capital; Yanukovych won the election with a razor thin margin and has the support of only a minority of the Ukrainian population. In addition, his party had to violate the constitution to form a governing coalition in the Parliament.[4] An executive administration standing on a shaky foundation in a country prone to frequent upheaval in the legislative branch has little prospect for success. Hence, Yanukovych's team has wasted little time in strengthening the Party of Regions' (the President's party) grasp of power in regional and municipal governments while attacking the already fractured opposition. A slew of legal changes made it more difficult for opposition parties to unite and register for the recent fall regional elections.[5] In addition, NGOs and the press have felt crackdowns. The staunchly pro-Western Channel 5 has lost its broadcasting rights while the pro-Yanukovych Inter channel has seen its media share balloon.[6] More portentous are the reports of opposition politicians being investigated by the Ukrainian security services and threatened with prosecution.[7] Due to the sensational nature of Ukrainian politics, it is hard to determine if there is any evidence to these claims. While it may be unlikely that the self-proclaimed leader of the opposition, Yulia Tymoshenko, is in any danger of a politically motivated arrest, several business rivals of Yanukovych's team have faced pressure from the SBU, the Ukrainian successor organization to the KGB. [8]

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Yanukovych's detractors enjoy poking fun at his frequent gaffes, and portray him as a man of limited mental abilities, going as far as to label him a "vegetable."[9] He may not know how to spell the word professor (he wrote in "proffesor" for his occupation on an election qualifying form)[10], but he has succeeded where none have previously, by taming a traditionally rambunctious political milieu. Ukraine's nineteen years of independence have been defined by constantly reoccurring protests and snap elections, as one coalition after another ceased to function.[11] It is a testament to the success of the Party of Regions that the opposition has been relegated to publicity stunts like the one seen during the ratification of the Kharkiv agreement. [12] The opposition is powerless to stop legislation in the parliament, called the *Verkhovna Rada,* because the ruling coalition has unconstitutionally poached individual members of parliament to swell its ranks[13]; thus enabling it to bypass opposition parliamentary delaying tactics. Moreover, the Party of Regions has made gains in the regional elections held on October 31st, further cementing its hold on power.

Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych

Considerable emphasis has been put on the upcoming Euro 2012 soccer tournament. The right to cohost the tournament with Poland was considered a major Viktory for Viktor Yushchenko in 2007 when the decision was announced. Since then, Ukraine has faced questions regarding the readiness of the country to host the tournament.[14] Fears mounted that the bid would be given instead to either Hungry or Germany[15], and in response Yanukovych pledged to ensure that the tournament will go as planned. To that end, Ukraine has witnessed unprecedented improvements to its airports, roads and hotels, many of which have not seen major improvements since the collapse of the Soviet Union.[16] The tournament serves the

dual purpose of uniting the entire populace while giving Yanukovych the opportunity to further showcase his accomplishments both in the domestic and the foreign arena.

The Euro 2012 is the most visible example of Yanukovych's aim to portray

Viktor Yanukovych meets with Russian President Validimir Putin .

himself as a tough, can-do modernizer who is also of the people. His 60th birthday was honored by a major TV station with a sixty minute sycophantic tribute that resembled the minor cults of personalities that have emerged in Central Asian states.[17] Such publicity campaigns seek to hide the fact that Yanukovych is a man deeply fearful for his life; he lives in a heavily guarded compound outside the city, traveling daily in a long cortege of bulletproof cars that hold up traffic for hours. [18] He has also surrounded himself with loyal Donetsk cronies that are given exclusive rights to all the government contracts, such as the Euro 2012 tenders. The head of the SBU, Valerii Khoroshkovskiy, is married to the chief shareholder of the *Inter* media conglomerate mentioned earlier and is also a key player in UkrTransGas— a murky third party at the heart of the European natural gas market.[19] Yanukovych and his team are using the presidential office as a means to place themselves and their oligarch backers at the top of the Ukrainian economy.

Although he has secured the political front, Yanukovych's Achilles's heel is the economy. Running under the auspices of being the pro-business candidate, Yanukovych needs to turn around the economy if he is to remain in power. Ukraine's economy contracted by 15.1 percent last year and was on the verge of a default. Most of the steel and heavy machinery industries that make up the bulk of the Ukrainian industry are uncompetitive and rely on subsidized gas prices. The gas deal with Russia should somewhat help prop up the industries, but it also places caps on the amount of gas that can be bought at discounted rates; after 30 billion cubic meters the price returns to market levels. [20] The energy agreement also does not shield the average consumer; utility rates increased by 50% over the summer, in part to satisfy criteria for the $15 billion dollar IMF loan. Azarov has publicly stated that he wished to negotiate an additional agreement with Russia to lower the consumer price but such an agreement would entail the merger of Gazprom and Naftogaz, something that Yanukovych has so far opposed. [21]

For all the talk of economic reform and combating corruption, Yanukovych has offered few ideas on how to make good on his promise to improve the standard of living. He is heavily reliant on the support of oligarchs, whose primary interests are access to subsidized natural gas for heavy industries and easy credit. So crucial is the access to easy credit for the likes of Roman Akhmetov and Dmytro Firtash that the oligarchs voiced their displeasure at Yanukovych for failing to secure a loan from Russia and called on him to get one from the IMF. [22] The IMF loan comes with conditions that are already hurting the average Ukrainian, but Yanukovych is not about to alienate his chief source of support.[23] The example underscores his chief weakness: Yanukovych can go about limiting press freedoms and cementing his grip on power only if the economy performs well enough to placate the weary populace. If the economic situation does not improve, his heavy-handed tactics will not keep the opposition at bay indefinitely.

Relations with Russia: A Brotherly Union! [24]

As stated earlier, repairing relations with Russia has been at the cornerstone of Ukrainian foreign policy since Yanukovych assumed office as president. Yanukovych's first action as president and his most significant to date was the Kharkiv agreement[25]. Under the deal, Ukraine would receive a discount on gas prices in exchange for the right to use Crimea as a base for the Russian Black Sea Fleet until at least 2042. The agreement was reached virtually overnight and hastily ratified in the Rada amid fistfights on the floor, smoke grenades, the egging of the Rada speaker and the draping of a huge Ukrainian flag over the seats of the opposition; giving the entire proceeding a very phantasmagorical feel.[26] Since then the two countries have embarked on a dizzying spree of signing ceremonies and mutual pledges in almost every imaginable sphere. There are talks of unifying the aerospace[27] and naval industries[28] to make them more competitive on the world market; cooperation on nuclear energy[29]; the writing of a joint history textbook[30], a prospect far more controversial than one might think; there is speculation that the various Orthodox churches in Ukraine will unify under the Moscow patriarch[31]; there are even rumors circulating that a secret agreement over the fate of neighboring Moldova was signed earlier this year. [32] For all the pomp and circumstance and public reaffirmations of "brotherly" bonds, there has been no real push to make any of the aforementioned plans a reality. If the later rumor is almost certainly nothing more than an opposition fabrication to stir up fear, even the supposedly serious proposals of an aeronautical consortium have stalled.

Viktor Yanukovych needs cheap Russian gas to prop up the country's economy and the industries of his oligarch supporters, he also needs good relations with Russia to keep his pro-Russian electorate happy. The later goal can be achieved with domestic policies such as institutionalizing Russian as a second official language[33], or removing the Yushchenko era changes to the school curriculum that glorified Nazi collaborators as Ukrainian freedom fighters. In turn, this means that Yanukovych has no personal need for greater integration with Russia. Any sort of economic, social or especially political, integration would threaten his autonomy and interests. This can be seen by his adamant refusal for a merger between Gazprom and Naftogaz. [34]

All of this points to a relationship that will not stand the test of time. In fact, there are signs that the honeymoon period is already over. Ukrainian oligarchs are disappointed with the terms of the gas agreement and there are calls for a renegotiation on the price. So far Vladimir Putin has stated that Russia has already paid 'too high a price' for the Russian Black Sea Fleet and has given Ukraine generous gas subsidies.[35] Russia wishes to acquire Naftogaz or at the very least secure the transit infrastructure in Ukraine. Yanukovych has

Victor Yanukovych needs cheap Russian gas to prop up the country's economy and the industries of his oligarch supporters, he also needs good relations with Russia to keep his pro-Russian electorate happy.

called against such an acquisition and is only willing to entertain talks of a merger based on equal terms.[36] Ukraine is also seeking direct ownership of natural gas mining sites along with investment for infrastructure improvement.[37] In particular, Yanukovych is seeking Western assistance in modernizing the country's gas infrastructure, something Moscow opposes.

Ukraine has made no effort to move forward on talks of consolidating the naval or aeronautical industries and even talks

of nuclear energy cooperation have so far yielded scant results.[38] All three industries were to form consortiums that were to improve the competitiveness of the respected firms on the world market. Ukraine is willing to sign an aeronautical consortium only on terms that benefit its Antonov factory and that would allow Ukraine to get cheaper parts from Russia; it is not actually interested in forming a new jointly owned corporation. It is even less open to any sort of naval building agreement. With nuclear energy cooperation there has been more progress since it is under the general umbrella of crucial energy talks: Russia is to build a new plant in Ukraine to process uranium in exchange for becoming the sole provider of nuclear fuel for Ukrainian reactors.[39] The later point has been a bone of contention and it is unclear at this time if the talks will bear fruit.

In terms of broader geopolitical alignment, the decision to continue to sell arms to Georgia[40] and the agreement to ship Venezuelan oil to Belarus[41], clearly show that Yanukovych does not plan on being a puppet of the Kremlin. Ukraine has so far refused to recognize either South Ossetia or Abkhazia[42] and has publicly reiterated that it has no intentions of joining the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)[43]. Ukraine has also voiced concerns regarding Russia's plans of building the South Stream gas pipeline that would bypass Ukraine and reduce its transit clout.[44] Heretofore, Vladimir Putin's visits to Yanukovych's Ukraine have been occasions of great pomp and circumstance and have resulted in ambitious albeit platitudinous agreements; it is a telling sign that his last visit amounted to little more than a signing of previously reached agreements in a much more subdued atmosphere.[45]

Relations with the West: **Onwards to a Bright Future!**[46]

Despite Viktor Yanukovych's pro-Russian stance, prospects for cooperation between the E.U. the United States and Ukraine has not significantly deteriorated from the Yushchenko administration. With the prominent exception of NATO membership, which will almost certainly not occur in the foreseeable future, much of the rhetoric of the Yushchenko administration has carried over to the new administration. Simply put, Ukraine needs the west. Ukrainian energy infrastructure, including natural gas pipelines, is in dire need of modernization and repairs. Since any assistance from Moscow would come under the condition of greater control of the Ukrainian energy sector, the Ukrainian government has publicly called for western investment in the natural gas infrastructure.[47] The prospect of E.U. involvement in energy infrastructure modernization greatly angers Moscow, which wishes to further its control over the transit system.[48] Cooperation on this matter will serve as a check on Russian influence while simultaneously allowing the E.U. to prod Yanukovych on domestic matters if it so chooses.

Yanukovych has said that, "Ukraine's future is in Europe," and officially E.U. membership remains the ultimate goal for Ukraine.[49] The Ukrainian foreign ministry has lobbied hard albeit with little success, for an abolishment of visa regulations with the E.U. or at the very least an ease in the regulations. [50] Ukraine is also actively seeking an Associate Member status within the E.U.[51] For all the talk of integrating Ukraine with Europe, Viktor Yushchenko had actually done fairly little to that end. Ukraine has recently signed a free trade agreement with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and was eager to accept the latest IMF loan to avoid approaching the Russians for financial assistance. While Yanukovych himself may have little interest or incentive in joining the E.U., he understands that the vast majority of his people have an inexorable yearning to become a member state.[52] Ukrainians believe E.U. membership would improve the economy, reduce corruption, reintegrate Ukraine with Europe, and improve its security and prestige.[53] Hence, Yanukovych has to at least pay lip service to those sentiments and continue to be seen as supportive of integration.

In an obvious effort to reach out, Yanukovych gave up the remaining Ukrainian highly enriched uranium during his visit to the United States[54] and has allowed military exercises to be held with NATO. The later move was sharply criticized in the Russian press and is evidence that Yanukovych intends to keep his options open.[55] The Yanukovych administration has shown willingness to challenge E.U. member states on policy differences as can be seen by their efforts to halt Romanian economic encroachment along the Danube delta.[56] Under the previous administration, the Ukrainian government had an obsequious policy of not challenging E.U. member states on anything.[57] While the Yanukovych administration may not share liberal democratic values, it is nevertheless willing to work with the west in order to balance out Russia.

Conclusions:

Viktor Yanukovych has made a remarkable comeback since his defeat in 2004. Helped in part by the global financial crisis and the endless gridlock (a gridlock that he often engineered) that had come to define Ukrainian politics after 2004, Yanukovych was able to rebrand himself as a strong leader who knew how to effectively manage the Ukrainian economy while respecting a balance between the west and Russia. Yanukovych has so far spent little time improving the economy and has moved Ukraine much closer to Russia than anticipated. Ominously, he has focused

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Contributors

The Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, International Student Programming Board, Student Assembly Finance Commission, Cornell Institute for European Studies, Department of Government, The Lenquesaing Family, The Pedraza Family, Craig Yunker, Susan Kalus

We thank our contributors for their support.