Why We Seek War

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Why We Seek War

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Introduction: We Seek War and Must Change

The United States is a nation which seeks war. We had better change or we may end up destroying ourselves and perhaps even the world.

It is preposterous but true that we do not see ourselves as a nation that seeks war. We see ourselves as a peace loving nation. I was born a few days after Hitler invaded Poland, which was nearly 65 years ago, and cannot remember a time when the idea that America is a peace loving country was not propaganda into us. It is constantly drummed into us by government, the media, and other shapers of public opinion. But since Hitler invaded Poland, we have fought World War II, the Korean War, the Viet Nam War, secret wars in Laos and Cambodia, the first Gulf War, the Afghanistan War, and the second Gulf War. We have invaded, bombed, or "quarantined," among other places, Panama, Grenada, Cuba, Haiti, Somalia, the Sudan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Serbia, and Libya. We have "declared" a world wide war on terrorists. We spend more on our military, some say, than all the rest of the world put together. In case this is an exaggerated estimate, it certainly is not an exaggeration to say that we spend more on our military than the next 21 highest spending countries put together, including China, Russia, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Israel.

Believing ourselves to be a peace loving people despite a record like this, we are a people in denial. If the United States were a man instead of a country, we would say he must be schizophrenic, or at minimum deeply mentally disturbed, to believe he is peace loving in the face of a record like this. It would be like a street thug who averages a serious fight a day truly believing that he is a mild guy. We would say he is in denial, or is schizophrenic, or is mentally disturbed to truly think he is a mild guy.

Among other reasons for the country being in denial is an idea spawned by World War II and prevalent ever since (notwithstanding that millions disagree in specific cases, like Viet Nam). We believe that we fight only in good causes. We believe we at all times fight only to do God's work, and that we therefore have to fight or democracy, freedom, and economic affluence will be lost. Since those who put us in war, and those who support them, always think, say, and propagandize that we are doing something necessary, something good, for democracy, freedom, and human affluence, we do not fight because we are a war loving or a militaristically inclined people. We fight so that humanity will make progress. Or so we believe.

The truth cannot be permitted to intrude, because it would destroy our self image. We therefore believe, and want to believe, what our politicians and media and opinion makers say about our country, rather than judging it by what it actually does. The latter judgment would be too psychologically destructive. We have to believe that we are a peace loving...
people who fight wars only because we have no choice at all. We are deluded in the same way as someone who thinks Al Capone was only a businessman who gave turkeys to the poor.

Can you just imagine what would happen to professional politicians or media people who dared speak the truth, who dared to say we are not a peace loving people, but a warlike and militaristic one? They would be run out of town faster than you can say Bill Maher lost his TV show for arguing that the 9/11 terrorists were not cowards. The politicians would be out of office, and media people would be out of jobs, in a trice. Their enemies and others who disagree with them would crucify them for speaking the truth, and scores of millions who cannot believe America can do anything bad would instantly and vociferously agree with the crucifixion. The Clinton and Bush II attack machines have made that perfectly clear. We are faced with a truth that dare not speak its name.

In a different age of transport and warfare, Abraham Lincoln said in 1838, long before the Civil War, that if all the armies of Europe, Asia, and Africa combined, commanded by a Bonaparte, were to land on our shores, they "could not by force, take a drink from the Ohio, or make a track on the Blue Ridge, in a trial of a thousand years." Only we could destroy ourselves, he said. "If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide." We are faced today with something that is in its own way similar to what Lincoln was talking about. It is Americans who think they are a peaceful people who fight wars all over the world only because they have to, only because they are doing God's work. Certainly much of the rest of the world—probably most of the rest of the world—does not see us as peace loving. Nor does much or most of the rest of the world see us as doing God's work: Viet Nam and Gulf II are sufficient proof of that. It is only we, not any enemy, who are going to end up crippling our own country through constant warfare if we do not get off the war-mongering kick we have been on for at least 100 years. It is only we who, by constantly fighting wars, can cause this country to rapidly go the way of Athens, Rome, 1871-1945 Germany, and the British Empire.

Those who constantly espouse war take the opposite position. They constantly say the nation will suffer eclipse or worse if we do not fight this war or that war or some other war, one war after another in fact. That is their position de facto, even though not expressed explicitly. They are wrong. It is constant war, not prolonged periods of peace, that is the road to ruin.

Paul Fussell thinks very highly of Robert Kotlowitz. Kotlowitz, says Fussell, wrote in his 1997 memoir that, when he joined the Army in 1943, he knew he was living in "a murderous century," one "probably without precedent." And in 1943, Kotlowitz literally could not know the half of it, not even a third or a quarter of it.

Starting with the beginning of the Great War in 1914, and perhaps one could say with the Russo Japanese War of the first years of the 20th century, the military combatants had two of the major instruments of military death in the 20th century, machine guns and high explosive artillery. By the beginning of World War II, they had added the tank and the bomber. By the end of the Second World War, there were atomic bombs too. Given the approximately 60 to 100 million (or more?) deaths caused by these weapons and their "colleagues" in modern armamentoriums, one would think people would have learned a lesson. And, in fact, some people had. The Germans and the Japanese had. It was in part to teach them this lesson that Roosevelt and Churchill had their forces use bombers to lay
waste the enemies' cities to the point where there were only the ashes of people and buildings where once there had been civilizations. It was not for nothing that Churchill, alluding to the vast resources of America, Britain, and China and to the overhanging threat of Russia when he addressed Congress on December 26, 1941, said of the Japanese militarists, "What kind of people do they think we are? Is it possible they do not realize that we shall never cease to persevere against them until they have been taught a lesson which they and the world will never forget?"

The Germans and Japanese were taught a lesson they never forgot. It was we the victors who forgot the very lesson that we taught them. Hubris is the child of complete and total victory, not of complete and total defeat. And always, even unto the day I write, there were what seemed to our leaders good reasons, powerful reasons, for fighting one war after another after 1945.

A desire to have all these reasons developed in one place was one of the stimuli for this issue of LTV. Yet, to develop "only" the reasons we have constantly fought wars after 1945 seemed incomplete. For this country has always loved and made war. This has certainly been true since the beginning of our imperial century in 1898, and, truth be told, it really begins with the first English colonists in the early 1600s. Even before 1898 we, initially with our British forbears and then alone, used military force against Indians (constantly for nearly 300 years), the French, the Spanish, the British themselves, North Africans, and the Mexicans. After 1898, but before 1945, one could add—without even counting our enemies in the two World Wars—the Filipinos, the Chinese, the Russians, and a host of Central and South Americans. One wonders, what is it in the American make-up that has caused us to constantly make war for nearly 400 years?

In order to fully develop this question, one would need assessments of the reasons for the Indian Wars, the wars of colonial days against France and Spain, the Revolution, the naval war of 1798, naval actions against the Barbary pirates, the war of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War, and all the wars from the Spanish-American War onward. We at LTV were unable to do this. The Massachusetts School of Law, which publishes LTV, is a small, relatively new institution, and one without the longstanding reputation of, say, a Harvard. These facts impose constraints of time, money, and the willingness of authors to set aside time to write. Within these constraints, we have done the best we can. Others will have to carry the ball forward if they are interested in the subject.

This issue of LTV does, however, have articles specifically dealing with our general proclivity for war, the Spanish-American War, World War II, Viet Nam, Grenada, the second Gulf War, and the war on terror. In addition, several of the articles on these wars, and on the effects of television and movies, discuss the reasons leading to American wars other than those I've just mentioned. It is a start. It would be nice if institutions with more money, people, and power were now to push the ball forward. But probably this is too much to hope.
There are a large number of reasons why we are a warlike people who fight war after war. Some of the reasons are affirmative causes. Others are only "negative" causes that allow the affirmative causes to prevail. I shall very briefly canvass some of the affirmative and negative causes that have existed since 1898, that have existed during America's imperial century. Some are well known, others rarely discussed. Most are mentioned in the articles that follow, and some are discussed extensively there.

- Let us begin by giving the devil his due. One reason we fight wars is a belief that we are spreading democracy and affluence to what Kipling called our "new-caught sullen peoples" and "lesser breeds without the Law." The claim that we are doing this runs from Cuba and the Philippines at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries to Gulf War II early in the 21st century. We have taken up the "white man's burden," as Kipling urged us to do in 1899, only two years after he played "Recessional" for the British Empire ("Far-called our navy melts away; On dune and headland sinks the fire: Lo all our pomp of yesterday/Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!").

One of our problems here, of course, is that quite often large numbers of the "lesser breeds without the Law" do not want us to be in or to take over their countries to impose our version of democracy and wealth. This has been true from the Filipinos at the turn of the 20th century (and American Indians before them), to Viet Nam, to Gulf War II. So we had to directly or indirectly cause the deaths of nearly a quarter million Filipinos and three million Viet Namese in order to do our version of the good. Of course, racist views held by Americans from the beginning of the settlement of North America have caused us to disregard the death of what we ultimately came to call "gooks" and what the British used to call Wogs. Indeed, racist views were themselves one of the causes of wars against the American Indians ("The only good Indian is a dead Indian," etc.).

- A reason that is related to allegedly spreading democracy and affluence is the claim that we must fight wars to stop tyranny, sometimes to stop it from engulfing the world. This claim arose in 1898, World War I, World War II, the Cold War, Korea, Viet Nam, and now the War On Terrorism.

There has been one time when this claim was inarguably true—World War II. With regard to World War II, we should overlook the fact that the seeds of this war, the seeds that made a second World War inevitable, were planted by our allies and ourselves in the Treaty of Versailles that was forced upon the Germans. That we had made a second war inevitable was, indeed, understood by perceptive observers of the time. But be that as it may, there can be no doubt that, in the conditions which existed by the 1940s, the Germans and Japanese had to be stopped or what Edward R. Murrow called a "long dark night of tyranny" would have settled permanently upon the world.

Aside from World War II—and perhaps Korea in the circumstances which existed in the early 1950s—the claim that we have had to do as we did to stop tyranny is subject to question. Whether a Cold War was necessary is a subject of historical dispute (although my personal view is that it was necessary because of Stalin). Viet Nam was a disaster. Gulf War I was fought for oil, not to stop tyranny (despite Bush I's lying efforts to portray it as a fight for freedom in Kuwait—which is at best an autocracy). Gulf War II and conceivably Afghanistan may well have led to an increase in the very terrorism and fundamentalist tyranny that they were supposed to diminish. Even our participation in World War I can be questioned—Woodrow Wilson followed policies that made ultimate involvement on the side of the allies likely for commercial reasons, and it is at least possible that the world
could have been better off had he used American commercial power to insist that the parties concede to a draw in 1915 or early 1916, before Europe was irretrievably ruined for more than a generation. (Only a decade before, I note, T.R. had used American prestige to broker a peace in the Russo Japanese war.)

- Colonial and non-colonial economic imperialism is a major reason we fight wars. In 1898 Americans realized that our capacity to produce had outrun the domestic market's capacity to consume. For a growing, healthy economy we needed overseas markets—and overseas coaling stations for the Navy which would protect our overseas trade. Nothing has really changed, except that today we call it globalization and defend it as bringing wealth to all when in fact it has worsened the dire poverty of many. Many, perhaps most, Americans are loathe to admit that we are an imperialist power, but it inarguably has been true since 1898. It is so clearly true, in fact, that the unwillingness to admit it may be both its most interesting feature and the tribute of hypocrisy which vice pay to virtue.

- Harry Truman said that the only thing new under the sun is the history you don't know. George Santayana said those who don't know history are condemned to repeat it. Another cause of our warmongering is that Americans do not know history and therefore find themselves repeating it. Let me give a few examples of this.

  The single most dramatic example in our history concerns the Philippine Insurrection and Viet Nam. During the Viet Nam war—and afterwards too—we professed to be amazed and horrified that American soldiers would commit atrocities. The name Calley was infamous because he and his men did what we thought Americans do not do. But we were completely ignorant of what had occurred during the Philippine Insurrection—which had occurred only 65 years previously and was no further in time from Viet Nam than Pearl Harbor is from today.

  Atrocities of all kinds by American soldiers were the order of the day in the Philippines, including mass murder of civilians, horrible tortures, and burning down villages (sometimes with the villagers inside their homes). Officers and soldiers were racists who desired to do unto the Filipinos what they had done unto the Indians, including killing them off.

  We should not have been surprised by what Americans did in Viet Nam—lots of Americans had done it before in the Philippines. But the people who tell us what to think apparently did not want us to know what happened in the Philippines, and it was not in the history books. If you know what horrible things your

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  men have done, after all, you may be less disposed to want to fight more guerrilla wars.

  The fictitious squeaky clean image of American fighting men has been a staple of World War II history, where it was vigorously propounded into the early 2000s by such popular authors as the late Stephen Ambrose. The historians don't tell us, as Paul Fussell recently did, that American soldiers often killed German prisoners (even if understandably). Nor do they tell us of the fantastic atrocities that were committed by our men in the Pacific—as by our enemies too, who were even far worse—as part of what became a mutually racist war there. To learn about this one has to read books like Eugene B. Sledge's classic memoir *With The Old Breed At Peleliu And Okinawa*.

  Nor do the historians tell us about the hor-
rendous nature of battle, which is described in books like Sledge's, or of some of the horrible mistakes of American commanders and men that cost innumerable thousands of American lives. How many Americans have ever even heard of the Hurtgen Forest, for example, or know that the savage fight for Peleliu may have been an unnecessary battle?

No, our historians, our politicians, our media, our shapers of opinion keep all this from the American people. These matters are not glorious, but our history must be portrayed as glorious. And, even worse, the more that people know of these matters, the less they will be enamored of war and willing to have the country fight wars at the proverbial drop of a hat.

There is another aspect of our history that Americans tend not to understand, even if they are sort of dimly aware of it. Our leaders sometimes tell us we must fight wars to change the nature of the societies we are invading. Gulf War II is the latest example of this, in a war that was supposed to change not just Iraq but other Muslim nations as well (Iran, Syria, etc.). But I know of only two circumstances where wars against and invasion of other countries, or even placing our troops in other countries with consent (as in South Viet Nam), has succeeded in completely changing the nature of a nation. The two examples of wholesale change are Germany and Japan in World War II. But to accomplish this change, we had to completely destroy the enemy—its cities, its military, its industry, everything. Only when a country has been for practical purposes obliterated will it change in a wholesale way because of American force. Even Germany itself did not change wholesale—if much at all—as the result of World War I. Its cities, its industry, its infrastructure and much of its army were still standing, even if its people were starving. Nor did the American South change after the Civil War, despite Sherman's supposedly devastating marches through Georgia and the Carolinas and the virtual destruction of Lee's army. No, it takes thoroughgoing destruction of nearly everything connected with a society before American force can cause it to change dramat-

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ically. The unwillingness to change—except after total destruction—was recently put thusly by Ian Buruma in a New York Times op-ed piece: "Still, history shows that the forceful imposition of even decent ideas in the claim of universalism tends to backfire—creating not converts but enemies who will do anything to defend their blood and soil."

Yet, in the still young 21st century we already have had an American government tell us we are going to dramatically change not just one country, but several, by fighting what was largely a war by proxy in Afghanistan and a war on the cheap in Iraq. As they say, gimme a break. Our leaders seem intent on proving Santayana right yet again.

- We are not only ignorant of American history, but ignorant as well of the history, culture, and customs of the people we fight. This leads to horrid mistakes, both in willingness to get involved in wars and in our conduct of them. Viet Nam is, of course, the most striking example of a case in which our abject ignorance of the other side initially sucked us
into, and then ever deeper into, a major mistake. Our complete ignorance of Muslim fundamentalism appears to likewise have caused us to court disaster in the Mideast.

Some years ago an article in LTV said that our ignorance of other countries was a serious problem. It further suggested that it might be a good idea if there were a think tank, possibly funded by government, whose job is to study, hold hearings on, and write reports (which could even be "dueling reports") on all areas of the world where it is even conceivable that America could become militarily engaged. That way there would be a reservoir of information and experts available to all when a problem arose with a particular country. The idea fell into the abyss which is the lot in America of nearly all ideas propounded by people who are not celebrities of one kind or another, are not major figures of one kind or another, but are only small people. But the idea still strikes me as a good one, either in the form previously suggested or, perhaps even better, by creating separate entities for each nation in the world. If the government doesn't undertake this, as it surely won't, then perhaps universities or other nongovernmental bodies should think about it. It would not be much of a burden for any one school if, say, about 180 universities were to band together to do this, with each school hosting one institute devoted to one country, and all the schools collectively hosting institutions that collectively deal with all countries.

- There is a cause of war that is related to American ignorance of history. It is one whose statement will sound bizarre and over the top at first reading. Yet it should not be summarily dismissed because, even though it may initially sound impossible and stupid, somehow or other it seems too often to be dead on true. (And, I note, several authors of books on the Bush II Administration have said it about that administration.)

The cause of war I have in mind is that quite often government is incompetent and its leaders stupid. How this happens is something of a wonderment. But I suppose the widespread incompetence of government occurs for several reasons.

There is no profit motive in government—a view about the cause of incompetence that lots of conservatives will likely agree with. There being no profit motive, those who make mistakes often escape punishment for their errors, and there is extensive sloth and lack of care, certainly at lower and medium levels where much of the real work is done and sometimes at the very highest levels too. ("Close enough for government work" is a famous aphorism.) Government is also bureaucratic to the nth degree. Decisions are thus based not on accuracy or truth, but on the lowest common denominator—Paul Wolfowitz has said, for example, that the alleged presence of weapons of mass destruction was put forward as the main justification for Gulf War II because it was the only justification that all the decisionmakers could agree on. Its accuracy was not the important point; rather its acceptability to all is what counted. And politicians, who run government, care little about truth, accuracy, honesty, or any of those other disposable attributes. They care far more about what can be spun, sold, and made to sound good, so that they will get votes.

Why government leaders are stupid is in some ways an even more puzzling question than why government is so often incompetent. After all, Robert McNamara is a genius. Lyndon Johnson was very smart even if venal. Richard Nixon was very smart even if evil. Henry Kissinger is very smart even if a thoroughly immoral human being, Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, Rice, and some others in the current administration seem to be quite smart. It is rare, at least at or near the top, that one finds someone whose background—including serial failure in business, where he repeatedly had
to be bailed out by Daddy’s rich friends or rich wannabe friends, and inarticulateness to the point of tonguetiedness despite an education at Andover, Yale, and Harvard—marks him as probably being rather unintelligent regardless of whether his grades in college were better than Al Gore’s and regardless of how crafty a politician he may have been after starting his electoral career at the level of governor because of who Daddy and Granddad were. *(The New York Times* does not use the word "unintelligent" or, heaven forfend, "dumb," or, even worse, "stupid" in this connection. It says "incurious," which is a longstanding code word for dumb, or "remarkably incurious," which is code for still worse.)

Because the people at the top usually are smart, it is hard to grasp why they become so stupid. I suppose it has something to do with the following reasons. They are forced into bureaucratic imperatives. They want to hold prestigious positions—to get along—so they go along. They have misplaced loyalty. They have little time to think. They are partisan. They may have an agenda, as Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Cheney, and probably Bush II did about Iraq. They quickly become used to spinning and to presenting things in a one-sided manner. They don’t want to risk loss of elections by doing what is right.

But whatever the reasons, if one is as one does, as in much of American society—if stupid is as stupid does—then they must be pronounced stupid because their policies so often are disastrous stupidities. And those disastrous policies are long continued, which is even stupider.

The bottom line here? As said, one reason America is a warmongering country is the incompetence of government and the stupidity of our leaders. (Incidentally, do you remember the Democrats’ phrase relating to the situation under first Bush in 1992—"It’s the economy, stupid"? (Emphasis added.))

- Another reason for war is our theory of causation. We follow the model of causation used by lawyers in arguing a case: "If X happens, then Y will happen, after Y happens, then Z will happen, after Z happens, then Z prime will happen. So we had better make sure X does not happen." Or, if we like X, Y, Z, and Z prime, then "we had better make sure that X does happen." That, as I say, is how lawyers argue cases. They generally do not—and this is crucial—they generally do not closely examine whether Y will happen if X occurs, whether Z will happen if X occurs, whether Z prime will happen if Z occurs. Rather, the happening of Y, Z, and Z prime are largely assumed; they are unthinkingly regarded as automatically happening. An example of this type of assumed causation in the field of law is that lawyers generally assume automatically, and argue vociferously, that people of every stripe will stop seeking the advice of lawyers, and/or will stop telling their lawyers the truth, if the attorneys’ precious attorney/client privilege is diminished or breached. That this proves to be largely nonsense with regard to most people is a rarely examined subject. (I will note here only one example of facts and/or reasons showing that the claim is nonsense. People did not stop seeking the advice of lawyers when, after decades of prevailing, tobacco companies' attorney/client privilege was breached by making available documents which showed gross misconduct and illegality and which resulted in tobacco companies having to pay hundreds of billions of dollars to settle lawsuits. In other words, the breaching of long
prevailing privilege did not cause the claimed effect of persuading people to stop seeking legal advice, notwithstanding the dramatic fact that the breaching of privilege led to the most gigantic monetary liability ever.)

The perceptive reader may have noticed that the lawyer's theory of causation which I have been describing is the same as the domino theory: if X, then Y, if Y, then Z, etc., etc. That is the theory we famously (or infamously) followed overtly in Viet Nam. If Viet Nam falls, then Laos and Thailand will follow, then other countries in Southeast Asia, and so on and so forth, until we are fighting the Commies in the streets of San Francisco. Well, it didn't happen.

Although the word "domino" was never used, that was the theory underlying our so-called "police action" in Korea: if the North Koreans took over South Korea there would be attacks by Communist armies hither and thither. Though again the word "domino" was not used, that was one of the theories underlying our military action in Kosovo (if today Kosovo, then tomorrow Macedonia). And, in reverse it is one of the major theories put forward to justify Gulf War II. That is, by changing the nature of the government of Iraq, we will cause a change in the nature of the governments of Iran, Syria, and other Muslim countries.

The self-evident problem with the lawyer's theory of causation, with the domino theory of causation, is that it is often wrong to assume that Y will occur if X occurs, that Z will occur if Y occurs, that Z prime will occur if Z occurs. At every step in the unexamined chain of automatically assumed causation, there are a host of additional, intervening factors that may cause the next step not to occur, just as people's need for legal advice caused them to keep going to lawyers despite the breaching of the attorney/client privilege in the tobacco cases, and just as various factors caused Thailand, for example, not to fall to the Communists just because South Viet Nam fell to them (let alone the Philippines or Japan or Hawaii falling to them). Sometimes, moreover, some of the additional, intervening factors are even caused by the very event which supposedly will cause the wrongly assumed consequence: sometimes, that is, X will give rise to new conditions that will militate against the occurrence of the wrongly but automatically assumed consequence of Z. Gulf War II may be presenting us with an example of the latter situation. Claimed to be justified because governmental change in Iraq will lead to democratic change in Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere, it may be that Gulf War II is having an opposite causative effect (or, at minimum, no causative effect) because, among other possible reasons, it has caused Muslims—the Arab "street," in particular—to hate our guts even more than they already did.

The bottom line on all this is that the lawyer's theory of causation, the domino theory of causation which leads us into war, with its unthinkingly and incorrectly assumed set of automatic consequences, is often wrong, is often—as McNamara has lately conceded about American leaders' views regarding Viet Nam—"terribly, terribly wrong."

There usually are, of course, some people who contemporaneously examine the likelihood of the assumed consequences and say that they probably will not occur in fact. But these people are not listened to (just as most of the legal profession refuses, self interestedly, to listen to those who say the feared consequences of diminishing the attorney/client privilege are generally unlikely to occur.) They may not be listened to because they are small people, who have no voice in this country. Or they are not listened to even though they are prominent figures. To overbear the latter, politicians, media, and opinion makers have but to utter a single word: Munich. This has been true for nearly 60 years. There can-
not, I gather, be any doubt that Munich was one of the factors leading to World War II. What is less often recognized is that it has also been the reason for a lot of other wars. This has its irony. Initially, Munich caused Britain to temporarily not fight a war that was ultimately unavoidable. In the last 50 some years, Munich has caused America to fight wars that were avoidable. There is a Munich syndrome, all right. But it has long been the opposite of what people think it is.

- Hubris is a reason why America fights wars. We are America. We can do anything. We have never lost a war—a statement that could be made before Viet Nam, so long as one was willing to ignore, as most did, that the South lost a war big time. It is hubris that caused us to think we would succeed in Viet Nam although the French had failed. After all, we had had to pull France's chestnuts out of the fire in two World Wars, and the "frogs" were nothing but military losers since 1870. It was racist hubris that caused us to think a bunch of little yellow men would never be able to withstand us in Nam. We did not consider that people of the same skin color had been deadly enemies when we fought the Japanese in World War II and the North Koreans and Chinese in Korea. It was hubris that caused people to think that today's Muslims, especially Arabs, can't fight when we twice made plans to fight Iraq. We had somehow forgotten what the Afghans had done to the British and Russians. Under Saddam of course, the incompetent Iraqi military proved our hubris warranted, although the post-war situation seems to have become a different kettle of fish entirely.

The hubris seems especially pronounced in American leaders, as opposed to lots of, though not all, everyday citizens. It is hubris that enables an American president to tell departing troops to bring back that coonskin, or to say, "Bring it on." Presidents, of course, never have to do the fighting or dying, nor do their children or the children of their political and social friends and colleagues. This is not the Civil War or World War II, after all. This is an era, rather, where American wars are pretty much fought only by the poor and the lower middle class, while Presidents who deliberately evaded combat blithely send them off to die and never send their own children or their colleagues' children off to die. This fact is regarded as impolite to discuss, so it is not often mentioned, or is only briefly mentioned and then quickly dropped.

And when it is mentioned, it is met by the response that a President must do his duty even if he never saw combat (or certainly did not see prolonged combat), as Wilson hadn't, as FDR hadn't, as Clinton hadn't. If a President cannot send men into combat because he has not himself been in combat (or she hasn't been one of these days), then he (or she) can't protect America, it is said. This response is, of course, a straw man set-up for purposes of attack, rhetoric, and spin. Nobody in his right mind would say a President can never send troops into battle when he hasn't been in battle himself. What can be said, however, is that hubris, and associated arrogance, carelessness, stupidity at the top, and war hawkishness seem to mark certain high governmental leaders who themselves were never in combat and do not know what combat means—and certainly were never in prolonged combat—even if they were in the service, which not all were. Examples include Johnson, McNamara, Nixon, Kissinger, Reagan, Clinton, Bush II, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz. (Apparently Johnson, as a Congressman, did get himself assigned to one or two Pacific bombing runs so that he could claim to have been in combat. But this is hardly the equivalent of being a Marine on Okinawa or Iwo Jima, or being an infantryman fighting from Normandy to Germany in Europe, or being a pilot in the Eighth or Fifteenth Air Forces, who flew 25 or 35 mis-
Lies, delusions, and politics are reasons that America gets into wars. That politics can be mentioned in the same breath as lies and delusions is an unfortunate but everyday fact.

There really can be no doubt that lies, delusions, and politics do provide an impetus towards war in this country. Little exposition of this is required. For lies, one need make only two illustrative statements. (i) There were two attacks on our destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin. And (unless the situation changes dramatically), (ii) we must fight Iraq because it has weapons of mass destruction. For delusions, one need think only of Viet Nam. And again, unless the situation changes dramatically, the claim that another war in Iraq would bring democracy to the Arab world. For politics, one again need think only of Nam, where Lyndon Johnson was politically desperate not to be the American President who "lost" Viet Nam. I rather suspect that history may show that Gulf II also was, in some ways and to some extent, politically motivated. There are already people who think that. But only the future opening of files, more memoirs, and historical interviews—that is, only history—will reveal the truth or lack of truth of this matter with more clarity.

A desire to maintain American power and influence at a preeminent, indeed ever increasing, level is a reason we fight wars. Getting into Viet Nam and Gulf II exemplify. This is, of course, very much tied in with hubris, as well as with more admirable ideas such as wanting to bring freedom and affluence to the world.

Harry Truman is widely thought to have been a great or near great president and man. And no doubt he was. But, together with Dean Acheson, he bequeathed the country a disastrous practice. In the Korean War he de facto changed the Constitution so that not the Congress, but the President, and he alone, makes the decision on war. From Korea, to the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, to the 2002 Congressional Resolution which said to Bush II before Gulf II that he alone should decide whether and whom to fight, the decision on war has been the President's in fact. This has been true even though the Constitution says the decision on war is for Congress, and the framers deliberately intended it to be for Congress because they felt, as has now come true, that the Executive is too prone to get into wars. The shifting of the power to decide on war has been a de facto Constitutional revolution.

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There are many reasons why Congress—and the federal courts which are supposed to uphold the Constitution—have gone along with this de facto constitutional revolution. The reasons are too extensive to fully discuss here. (If one is interested, they are thoroughly canvassed in regard to both Congress and the courts in a 2004 book written by me, published by University Press of America (www.univpress.com), entitled Misfits In America, and comprising the first volume of a trilogy called Thine Alabaster Cities Gleam). Rather, it must suffice here to elaborate only one of the several sets of reasons why Congress has gone along with the de facto revision of the Constitutional structure.

Congressmen and Congresswomen are almost always political cowards, and they care only about staying in office indefinitely (if not forever). They do not wish to cast a decisionmaking vote on war lest their individual decisions—whichever way they may come down—will cost them the next election. God forbid that they should lose the next election because they voted for or against war. They are far happier, they are very pleased, to
let the President make the decision and take the responsibility, while they only Monday morning quarterback in order to carp and complain after the fact if and when things do not go well.

Decent human beings could think it immoral to put one's own election to office ahead of the potential deaths of hundreds or thousands or tens of thousands of Americans and of thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands or even millions of some other nationality. But who said our congresspeople (or presidents) are moral human beings? Would moral human beings spin, lie, and deceive to be elected to office or to persuade people to adopt this or that policy? Yet this, plus raising unbelievable sums of money by a process that the Supreme Court turned into legalized (if deeply immoral) bribery, is the way people get into and stay in office in this country. We do not, after all, elect our leaders because they are very smart, very honest, deeply sympathetic, deeply empathetic persons of good judgment. We elect them for other reasons altogether. Their morality, and when it comes to elections, the morality of citizens as well, seems to extend, in the case of Republicans, only to reviling the fact that Bill Clinton participated in fellatio in the oval office and, in the case of Democrats, it does not even extend that far. (Which, I guess, makes Republicans more moral.)

What can be done about all this? I know of no readily practicable solution. One possible solution, of course, for this evil and lots of other political problems besides, would be to have some form of proportional representation in elections to Congress and in the electoral college. This would enable decent people to form a political party with practical hopes of success and consequent ability to affect policy, specifically including any policy of constantly fighting wars. If the idea of proportional representation is even brought up, however, the professors, the pundits, and the politicians all leap to engage in a loud, smash-down, unthinking chorus of "it will destabilize the country," and "Italy and Israel are unstable countries and proportional representation is the reason," etc., etc. That there are powerful arguments against this knee jerk, smash down response is irrelevant to its proponents and cannot be put into play. (For these arguments, see Fixing Elections: The Failure of America's Winner Take All Politics, by Steven Hill (Routledge, 2002).) And, for sure, politicians will not vote to install a system, no matter how superior it may be, that might put them out of office. So we seem doomed to continue with a system in which decent people will find it very hard to form a successful new party—like the Republican party in 1854—and in which we are stuck with Presidents who make the decision on and often favor war, and with Congresspeople who are only too happy to abdicate unto the President their own Constitutional responsibility to decide the question.

- It seems to me that yet another cause of America's love for war is the political power of the South. From the code duello that caused southerners to fight at the drop of a hat, to the increasingly militarized Southern society and views which led to the Civil War, to the disproportionate number of Southerners following the profession of arms in the 20th century United States, to the vast number of military installations the South has sought and housed, to "Bring it on," Southerners have followed a tradition more violent and militaristic than any other section of the country. Ever since 1865, moreover, the relatively more violent South has been a one-party section—it was first the Democratic Solid South and then the solidly Republican South—and accordingly has exercised vastly disproportionate political power in this country. (Southern legislators in Congress, for example, stopped civil rights in its tracks for scores of years.) The famous, or infamous, red and blue map says it all—a can-
didate need win only the Solid South and relatively few other states to become President. It thus appears to me that the burgeoning of slavery, the Civil War, and then the 100-plus years of racist evil launched by the South in 1866 are not the only legacies of horror that the South has given this country. A strong contribution to militarism, and ready acceptance of, even desire for, war is another.

- Another cause is that not since the war of 1812 has our country been invaded. Nor do Americans know, much less remember, the destruction that befell places like New Jersey in the Revolution. Never in the 20th century,

and not even in the now 140-years-ago Civil War, with its 600,000 dead and Sherman's march through parts of the South, has America experienced the wholesale destruction of people and structures that (deservedly) befell Germany and Japan, the devastating losses of territory and men that befell France, the devastation and death of tens of millions that befell what was once the Soviet Union. Looked at in this light, it is small wonder that we are willing to fight wars at the drop of a hat, while these other countries—at least all but Russia—have usually been far more chary about doing so in the last half of the 20th century, and in the beginning of the 21st century, after their experiences in the first half of the 20th century.

- With horrible effects in the real world, which is not Hollywood's make believe world, the movie industry and television have glorified war, and in the last 15 years or so, television has turned it into a thrilling spectator sport. Unless one has read the literature, I suppose, it is hard to understand the extent to which American grunts went to Viet Nam thinking war was what was triumphally presented by John Wayne, the celluloid hero of Hollywood's World War II, who (like his fellow-but-less celluloid hero of Hollywood's World War II, Ronald Reagan) wanted no part of the real World War II. Most recently, of course, television has turned war into a thrilling spectator sport by lapping up the Pentagon's extraordinarily clever offer to "embed" reporters with the troops as our army went through Iraq. To embed the reporters, who are reporting continuously and in real time—and whose lives will depend for weeks or months on their "hosts"—is to ensure that the news media will become a ringside cheering section for the good guys and for the good guys' spectacular technological prowess. The Pentagon isn't stupid. Quite to the contrary. Nor did it fail to know the vast criticism which resulted when reporters were free to move about from unit to unit and place to place as in Viet Nam (and the Civil War). And in Gulf I, the Pentagon took tremendous heat because it would not let most reporters near the troops. So the Pentagon shrewdly offered embedding, the media sucked up this offer like a sponge, and the result, as it inevitably had to be, was a traveling cheerleading squad that turned war into a popular spectator sport while the cheerleading squad's bosses back home claimed that this was objective reporting. Gimme a break. And, by the way, anyone who made these entirely obvious points at the time would have been subjected to attacks that would, as George Humphrey (Eisenhower's Secretary of the Treasury) once said about inflation, curl your hair.

Television has turned war into a thrilling spectator sport by lapping up the Pentagon's extraordinarily clever offer to "embed" reporters with the troops as our army went through Iraq.
Yet another cause of war is that American leaders are never held to any criminal responsibility for their actions. We hanged Germans for war crimes and aggressive war. Ditto Japanese. We established principles which we claimed were universal. Milosevic and others are on trial. But no American leaders are held to criminal responsibility by America, no matter how dastardly their conduct. And we of course will not let any other country or body hold them to criminal responsibility for horrendous conduct. (Indeed, Bush II (with uncustomed foresight?) has refused to let America support and "participate" in the International Criminal Court lest Americans be triable for their actions.)

So, with no threat of overhanging criminal responsibility for horrific actions, American leaders directly or indirectly caused the deaths of tens of thousands of our own men and millions of Vietnamese after they already knew they had made what is probably the worst mistake in American history. Our top military men create free fire zones where civilians are killed on sight, and bomb and defoliate to the nth degree. More latterly, our leaders search for ways to justify a war which they otherwise cannot justify, settle on the lowest common denominator (alleged weapons of mass destruction), unleash a horrendous reign of terror from the skies, create a thus far thoroughly destabilized post-war society, and then, when all their other myths have been shown to be myths, retroactively justify the war by saying that we got rid of an admittedly horrible dictator, his equally horrible sons, and his entirely horrible government. And as they make this claim, it seems to occur to no one that nothing can be more dangerously productive of future wars than letting leaders retroactively justify a war on some after-the-fact basis once their proclaimed reasons for entering it have utterly failed to pan out. Why shouldn't warmongering leaders enter wars for any reason that suits them, however fallacious or despicable, if they know they can retroactively justify the war if any arguable basis later turns up—as some at least arguable basis always turns up—and they also know that they face no possibility of criminal responsibility regardless of how terrible their conduct? This situation is a Kissingerian dream. And salvation for Robert McNamara. Kill one person, or three people, or five people, and you will be put to death in a lot of American states—especially in George Bush the Second's Texas. Be a leader who kills scores of thousands or millions and nothing happens to you.

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There is a new doctrine—preventive war—which, if taken seriously, and acted upon, is almost certain to cause wars in the future. For the idea of fighting a preventive war is not only inherently a possible cause of war in itself, but also inherently implicates other causes of war. Based on our history, for example, and some would say based on our most recent history—Gulf II—and not just on "ancient" history like Viet Nam, one can readil y imagine incompetent governmental bodies and dumb leaders making terrible misassessments leading to preventive wars. One can imagine hubris and lack of knowledge of other people's history and culture contributing
to preventive wars, and lies, spin, and delusions being fed to the American public to justify such wars. One can readily imagine the lawyer's theory of causation, the domino theory, being used to justify preventive wars—it might be argued, for example, that we had better launch attacks against Iran or Syria today because a failure to do so will enable and cause them to sponsor terrorism against us and/or destabilize the Middle East tomorrow. Or we had better destroy North Korea because a failure to do so will enable and cause it to use atomic weapons against our allies tomorrow. And one can well imagine a supine Congress not wishing to take the responsibility for deciding for or against a preventive war, but instead simply letting the President fight one if he (or she) wants to.

When one takes the position elaborated here, the charge often thrown at him is that of pacifist. It is, of course, deeply perverse that to "accuse" someone of holding the belief that we should not kill other human beings—the belief constituting pacifism—is a "charge." But that's the way it is in America and, I suppose, elsewhere too.

This being so, I want to say that the idea elaborated here—that we favor war far too much and engage in military action far too freely—is certainly not pacifism. It is based not on a view that we must never kill anyone, but rather on the view that we too often choose to kill people—far too many people—and that we do so for insufficient reasons, with far too few good results and, too often, very bad results. Although it is an odd way to put the matter, the decision to fight a war is like tactical decisions within a war, and is like a lot of other decisions in life: you must pick your spots. You shouldn't be going around engaging in military actions all or much of the time. You should try, far more often than America has, to settle problems peacefully, and should ignore situations that ought to be ignored instead of being treated as *casus belli* (e.g., Viet Nam).

Far from being a pacifist, I think, as I've said, that the Second World War had to be fought. Indeed, I think it had to be fought savagely, with the maximum number of German and Japanese deaths. We *should* have bombed Germany and Japan to smithereens by conventional bombing, as we did, in order to teach them "a lesson which they and the world will never forget," as Churchill said. I think, as said in *Misfits In America* (mentioned above), that the only thing to regret about the battle of the Falaise Gap, where 10,000 retreating Germans were killed and 60,000 were wounded by air power and artillery as the German army retreated in France, was that we killed *only* 10,000 German soldiers instead of every one of them, and the only thing to regret about using the atomic bomb—whose use on Japan *saved* hundreds of thousands or, more likely, millions of lives—is that it was not developed early enough to be dropped on Germany first. Even if younger Americans cannot grasp the extent of or reasons for the hatred lots of older Americans have for the Germans and Japanese of World War II, the sentiments I have expressed about conventional bombing, the Falaise Gap, and the atom bomb are not the words of a pacifist, and the view expressed in this Introduction is not pacifism. The view expressed here, rather, is that we should be much slower to choose war, should be far more careful about choosing it, and should fight fewer wars.

**Addendum**

Well after finishing this Introduction, I saw a television panel whose comments put me in mind of additional reasons why America is a nation that seeks war. These additional reasons should not be left unmentioned:

- A psychological factor is the male desire to fight, destroy, and prevail over others.
This is very much a part of America, as of other countries, and, I would think, always has been. It exists for American men from the time that they are small boys.

- Another psychological factor is the individual's desire to be a part of something bigger than himself, something grand with promise, like bringing democracy to the world. Political leaders prey on this to persuade people to favor war.

- There is widespread gullibility and passivity among the public. This crucial factor enables political leaders to get away with policies that unnecessarily lead to war.

- Religious fundamentalism and its adherents are often violently inclined. This is as true of the religious fundamentalists of Western religions, at least one of whom presently holds high office in this country, as it is of Islamic fundamentalists.

- America is often, as it is today, a nation in the grip of almost uncontrolled nationalism. Relatedly, violence is a national civic religion in this country and, even more so, is a state religion here, perhaps the state religion here.
Most Americans see their nation as essentially peace-loving, a reluctant warrior that fights only when fanatical enemies force it to. But measured by its actions rather than its self-image, the United States is a warrior nation more than any other major modern power is. Since 1898, it has entered 10 conflicts most people recognize as wars, and only twice—in World War II and the recent Afghanistan war—directly in response to major attacks on its people or forces. In other cases, provocations—some delivered, some received, some grossly exaggerated (as with the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incidents)—preceded war, but the U.S. initiated full-scale action. Hundreds of other military actions have gone forward without the "war" moniker, especially in the Caribbean and Central America, and often at great cost, as with the blast that killed 241 Marines in Beirut in 1983 amid Lebanon's civil war and the 2003 occupation of Iraq after President George W. Bush declared the fighting over. And except in the world wars, America's foes have been vastly inferior militarily, economically, and in other ways—hardly bullies poised to take over the world, though often linked to such bullies in reality or in Americans' imagination. The reluctant warrior has been busy, able to overcome its reluctance.

Presidents often invoke that reluctance. As American intervention in Vietnam escalated, President Johnson insisted that "we seek no wider war"—presumably forced on him by the enemy. President Bush insisted that it was up to Saddam Hussein, not him, whether war occurred in 2003—a disingenuous stance, some observers complained, given his posture as determined leader, America's power, and his claim that events were moved by "the hand of a just and faithful God," in which case no one was in control. But that posture makes sense in one way: only by seeing themselves as reluctant warriors can Americans enjoy war's secret thrills and benefits.

All cultures are ambivalent about war, but each in its own way. Writing shortly after Pearl Harbor, anthropologist Margaret Mead captured how ambivalence plays out for Americans. They see aggressive action on their part "as response rather than as primary behavior," she explained. "The chip on the shoulder"—a phrase still heard in debates about war—"is the folk expression of this set of attitudes. In many parts of America small boys deliberately put chips on their shoulders and walk about daring anyone to knock the chips off." This boyish folkway exemplifies "a special American form of aggressiveness," one "so unsure of itself that it has to be proved." Mead wrote to explain how Japan's attack justified American entry—which she supported—into World War II. If alive in

2003, she would have seen the chip on Bush's shoulder, manifest in the no-fly zones over Iraq, the air strikes on Iraqi installations, the insistence that Hussein made the decisions, the blame laid on feckless allies, and the search for a suitable provocation to American action, though in the end none was forthcoming before initiation of full-scale American action in March. Bush's personality, or at least his public persona, also fits Mead's chip-on-the-shoulder model—there was a boyish quality to his cowboy rhetoric, to the stunt that had him fly a military plane onto the deck of the Abraham Lincoln and pose with real flyboys, and to his inability or refusal to acknowledge complexities in the world situation and the post-9/11 crisis.

Other measures underline America's warrior status: its overwhelming military power and the treasure poured into maintaining it. That power, first developed in the late 19th century in response to America's imperial ambitions, has been swollen and maintained as a shield against America's enemies, but it still serves imperial ambitions as well and long ago left any competing force in the shadows.

Americans also devote enormous imaginative energy to war. War defines how Americans see their history and how they organize its chronology. Most look back on World War II as the nation's finest hour. They define the nation's significance and greatness in terms of its wars—usually seen in positive terms, although less so with Korea and Vietnam. Many of our public spaces, memorials, and museums are defined by the nation's military past, with Washington D.C. a virtual theme park to war. Whether visitors' responses to those sites are celebratory, somber, or merely curious, they uphold the sense that war has defined America.

Few Americans love war in some blood-thirsty way. Even, perhaps especially, veterans of war have long offered somber or angry reflections on war, and few have seen a providential God at work in war—presidential God talk is largely for home-front consumption. But Americans yearn for what war presumably brings if not for war itself—the power and pride it may yield or the internal cohesion it presumably brings. Sometimes they search for those benefits not in war itself but in what William James identified a century ago as "the moral equivalent of war," trying to harness to other purposes the resources and unity that war entails. "We will fight our wars against poverty, ignorance, and injustice," Jimmy Carter announced at his inauguration, soon declaring his energy policy "the moral equivalent of war." But even in searching for an equivalent, Americans have revealed their indebtedness to war as a central category in their political imagination.

As Carter's words indicate, our politics have reflected that debt. In 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt, facing the Great Depression, promised "to wage a war against the emergency" with "the power that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe." President Johnson declared wars on so many things—poverty, disease, crime, the Communist Vietnamese—that it became hard to keep them straight. Nixon declared wars on cancer, "smut," and domestic "enemies," and every president from Reagan on has declared "war on drugs." Flush with success in the first Gulf War, President George H.W. Bush sought to analogize his domestic programs to the war against Iraq ("We can bring the same courage and sense of common purpose to the economy that we brought to Desert Storm"). Others—activists, lobbyists, members of Congress, key officials—have declared war on AIDS, breast cancer, trade deficits, abortion, smoking, illiteracy, and other problems. When not actually at war—sometimes even when we are—we are usually at war metaphorically.

Often that means "war" with each other—
those presumably responsible for a problem. The "war on drugs" became a war on "Everyone who uses drugs. Everyone who sells drugs. And everyone who looks the other way," announced President Bush in 1989. Foes of abortion liken it to the Holocaust and those who undergo or perform abortions to war criminals. As the wars on drugs and crime intensified, their difference from real war faded. By 2000, two million people were behind bars in the U.S.—an incarceration rate greater than Russia's and up to 10 times that of western Europe—filling America's prisoner-of-war camps in its wars with segments of its own population, including an extraordinary number of African Americans. A new criminal-industrial complex arose to soak up much of the money and personnel that had serviced a military-industrial complex scaled back in the post-Cold War years. Meanwhile, conflicts over gender, sexuality, race, and other matters were dubbed "culture wars," or as Pat Buchanan declared at the 1992 GOP convention, "war . . . for the soul of America." And the struggle over efforts to impeach Bill Clinton took on the attributes, and sometimes the specific language, of a constitutional "war," a higher-stakes version of what Robert Bork, after the defeat of his nomination to be Supreme Court justice, had called "the war to control the legal culture." For a people who abhor war, Americans use the word with remarkable promiscuity. One can regard the abhorrence as sincere while still seeing a displaced embrace of war at work.

Our imaginative fascination with war has an insidious logic. If the "moral equivalent of war" is good, why settle only for the equivalent? Why not the real thing, war that will unify Americans against external enemies rather than pit them against each other? If war is the storehouse of American imagination and identity, should it not be restocked from time to time, lest we forget its treasures? To be sure, war brings rancor and conflict at home, as even World War II did, and lives lost and budgets bloated. But in time most Americans focus on the good that war yields or at least the heroism entailed in waging it. Doing so—making war the defining and ennobling American experience—provides a powerful if hidden incentive to go to war again.

Americans discount that incentive by focusing on the "chip-on-the-shoulder" ritual that Mead described and, in their partisan politics, by blaming presidents of opposing party identifications or policies for getting them into war. American political history is filled with inventive about how Wilson, Roosevelt, Truman, Johnson, the two Bushes, Clinton, and others maneuvered or blindly led the nation into war or, in the case of Nixon, connived to keep the nation at war. The invective is understandable, and sometimes perceptive, insofar as presidents often calculate the political advantages of going to war, or in LBJ's case, the disadvantages of not going to war, since he feared being charged with having "lost" South Vietnam.

Yet the familiar suspicion that presidents indulge in war-making for political gain fails to explain adequately the recurrent resort to war. As any president can readily see, over the past century war has badly served presidents'...
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long-term political interests, whatever momentary advantage it offered. War has contributed nothing to forestall the political downfall of every president who has seriously engaged in it, with the exception of FDR, who had the good fortune in political terms to die before World War II ended and to have presided over a war so gargantuan as to depart from the American norm. Wilson's Democrats went out of power after World War I, Truman's presidency suffered badly in the Korean War, Johnson's and Nixon's presidencies collapsed amid the Vietnam War, and the first Gulf War gave George Bush no lasting political traction, just as none accrued to Clinton's from the Kosovo War: in every case, the opposing political party retook the White House amid or after the war. If presidents have exercised "wag the dog" reflexes, they have done so at their own peril. The roots of American war-making go far beyond presidential calculation (or miscalculation). They lie in America's global ambitions and the threats that others pose, but also in a political culture which makes war the nation's primary imaginative framework.

How have Americans reconciled their self-image as pacific with their embrace of so much that pertains to war? Success in avoiding war's destruction has helped (the South didn't exhibit "war-mongering" tendencies until the late 20th century—long after direct experience). War has occurred far from their shores through ever-advancing technologies of antiseptic cleanliness, as least for Americans, and recently with welcome brevity. Even in World War II, the death by accident, disease, and combat of 400,000 American service personnel paled in comparison to what other major combatants experienced, and Roosevelt was intent on developing weapons like the atomic bomb that would minimize American losses. Resistance to such losses has been one way Americans express their reluctance to go to war—and their insistence that others bear its costs.

Did 9/11 overcome that resistance and provide Bush the traction to go to war against Iraq? Perhaps: the 9/11 attacks made many Americans want revenge or drastic measures to protect themselves. But resistance to American losses in war is so ingrained in our history that no wholesale change in it as a result of 9/11 should be assumed. Americans still want their wars quick, and for them, cheap. And death on their soil in the 9/11 attacks left some more aware of what war entails—a substantial number of survivors of 9/11 casualties provided persistent, if little-noticed, resistance to Bush Administration war-making.

The roots of that war-making are so deep in American political culture as to seem unchanging, but there is flux as well as continuity in this history—the resistance to further engagement in war that followed World War I and the Vietnam War, for example. Recent presidents' rhetoric may also herald a change. Breaking from his predecessors, Clinton rarely analogized his initiatives in social welfare, economic, and trade policies to war. More striking, given his different politics, George W. Bush also has avoided that rhetorical tradition—no injunctions from him to regard tax cuts, education initiatives, or "compassionate conservatism" as war-like crusades. Perhaps Bush has resisted that temptation because acting on it failed his father badly, because his wars produced ambiguous outcomes that provided him a shaky rhetorical platform, or because on-going war provides the real thing, rendering moot the need to analogize to it (which did not keep Johnson from doing so time and again during the Vietnam War). But perhaps, too, a venerable habit—tapping into the memory and example of war to justify other initiatives—was eroding. That habit has required big, triumphant wars to tap—hence World War II has been its biggest storehouse. However slowly, that war
keeps receding in national consciousness, and all the wars that followed have in varying degrees left a sour aftertaste. To analogize to the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the two Gulf Wars, the Afghan war, or the amorphous "war on terrorism" is a tough sell. The storehouse of national imagination that is war now features empty shelves and troublesome products. That the "war on terrorism" will re-stock it seems doubtful. ♦
Citizens, politicians, and public intellectuals engage today in continuing debate over America's role in the world. Those involved in contemporary exchanges often confound concepts of imperialism and empire, puzzling over the merits of "intervention." Such linguistic flashpoints and incendiary political decisions can be traced back more than 100 years to the first modern American intervention abroad: the Spanish-American War.  

The prospect of war with Spain generated controversy in America two years prior to hostilities. When Congress declared war on April 25, 1898, significant opposition arose and countered the general popularity of the war effort. Ideas about empire and international influence collided with ideas about race, nationhood, civilization, power, and progress. Acting internationally for the first time as a self-consciously modern, economic, military, and political power, the United States—policy-makers as well as its citizens and soldiers—grappled with the morality and wisdom of intervention abroad.

Introduction

In February 1895, in the remote village of Baire in eastern Cuba, peasants and farmers rose against their Spanish rulers. "Cuba Libre" was the cry of these revolutionists. Observers in Cuba, the United States, and Europe first saw this outburst as minor, another event in the succession of unremarkable small revolts during three centuries of colonial rule.

But the politicians in the United States who were pursuing a new vision of American expansion did not consider the disturbance inconsequential. And indeed, the revolt grew rapidly over the next 18 months, as bands of insurgents coalesced into an organized military force of over 50,000. Expansionist politicians in the United States advocated either an act of Congressional recognition of the rebellion or a direct military intervention. Those engaged with the Cuban "problem"—some saw a threat, others saw an opportunity—swelled late in 1896 after William McKinley became president. Many hawkish advisors to the new president—Henry Cabot Lodge,

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Elihu Root, John Hay, Theodore Roosevelt, for example—focused on Cuba as a logical place to begin a "large policy" of expansion.3

By November 1898, however, a formidable organization of anti-imperialists emerged. Strange bedfellows, they had in their midst such disparate personalities as Mark Twain and Andrew Carnegie, William James, and Samuel Gompers. The Anti-Imperialist League grew quickly and burst from the confines of Cambridge, Massachusetts onto the national scene. In a series of editorials and speeches, the anti-imperialists railed against the aggressive broadening of American expansion as an "undemocratic extension" of what they claimed was the thoroughly contradictory policy of "democratic imperialism." This controversy continued and amplified over time, although opponents of expansion were never able to gain the political traction to reverse the ultimate acquisition of Puerto Rico, the annexation of Hawaii, or American hegemony over Cuba.

Eventually the small revolt that began in a remote part of southeastern Cuba indirectly influenced the world. The Cuba Libre cause quickly found support in rural and urban Cuba. Along with subsequent harsh actions by the Spanish against revolutionaries and inhabitants alike, the "just cause" of throwing off colonial chains inflamed the American press and thereby changed American public opinion.

Publicity, political expediencies, and new ideas about empire pivoted on dramatic events—such as the sinking of the USS Maine in Havana harbor—and culminated in an American military and naval clash with Spain. Simultaneously, arguments advanced for a "just war" served as an ideological spur to vigorous debate. Ultimately, though, the imperialists carried the day with the high drama and romantic exploits of Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Rider charge at San Juan Hill and Commodore Dewey's stunning naval victory at Manila. Conflict with Spain and its aftermath proved to be crucial testing points for and against American intervention abroad.

Then, as now, Americans had to rethink the answers to crucial questions. How does action within and by other nations affect the freedom and autonomy of the United States? What is a just war? When should America act in its own "national interest" or in the causes of other peoples? Who controls the potentially slippery definition (and hazardous protection) of domestic and international "best interests" in terms of commerce, property, ideology, and liberty? In what ways should journalists cover and express opinions about foreign conflict? Is it possible to administer distant territories democratically, particularly if those dependencies did not ask to be administered?

Does the historical evidence show the Spanish-American War as the aggressive imperial precedent of current United States actions in Iraq and Afghanistan? Does American intervention from the 1890s forward become the foundation for a tradition of benevolent intent and progressive outcomes? At this intersection of past and present-day ideas and actions lies the point at which historical analysis offers insights. Accordingly, consider the crucial determinants pressing upon those politicians and citizens who pushed for, and against, war with Spain a century ago.

Nailing Jelly to a Wall

War with Spain came for many reasons. Some were discernible at the time, others were indistinct, and many remain obscure. Tracing the precise relationship between the ideological motivations of the war and the actions of those for and against the conflict is like nailing jelly to a wall.

The immediate historical-intellectual context of the 1890s is crucial to understanding the milieu out of which America and Spain went to war. Historians and political scientists
often depict the period from 1895 to 1898 as creating the "road to war" or conducting an "experiment in empire." Yet merely focusing on that three-year period neglects nearly a century of historical precedent.

American interest in Cuba stretches back to the first days of our republic and into the colonial past. Thomas Jefferson once hoped to purchase Cuba to add to the massive acquisition of adjoining lands under the Louisiana Purchase. John Quincy Adams summed up a similar intent in 1823—the same year that James Monroe issued the Monroe Doctrine—saying that Cuba was subject to a "gravitation" that would bring it, like an apple falling from a tree, inevitably into union with the Union States. Writing to James Monroe in 1823, Jefferson remarked, "[Cuba's] addition to our confederacy is exactly what is wanting to round out our power as a nation to the point of its utmost interest."

Security concerns and political calculus combined with ideas such as Jefferson's about economic influence. Whenever Americans bothered to consider Spain's hold on an island so close to the American mainland, they shuddered or covetously looked toward the horizon. Slaveholding elites vacillated. Some Southerners tried at various times to acquire Cuba to gain a powerful extension of that "peculiar institution" of slavery. Others contrarily attempted to isolate Cuban agriculture by creating stiff tariffs to diffuse the influence of Cuban products (in particular, sugar) on American markets.

The possible purchase of Cuba, understood in terms of the national economic best interest, had been at least a tacit goal of foreign policy since the time of Jefferson. By 1848, President James Polk proposed to purchase Cuba for $100 million. In 1854 President Franklin Pierce sweetened the offer to the Spanish by raising it to $130 million.

The Ostend Manifesto of 1854, signed by three American diplomats who recommended that President Pierce's Administration seize or purchase Cuba, succinctly demonstrates America's composite apprehensions about Cuba's presence 90 miles from the Florida coast. "The Union can never enjoy repose," the authors of the Manifesto wrote, "nor possess reliable security, as long as Cuba is not embraced within its boundaries." After a meeting in Ostend, Belgium, American representatives attempted to purchase the island or considered simply taking it by force. However, once these details were leaked to the public, the talks broke down, and the Manifesto became untenable.

Fears that the Union could not "enjoy repose" with a Spanish colony so close were borne out during the Civil War. Many Confederate nationalists conceived of their new republic as eventually encompassing Cuba, parts of the Caribbean, and moving farther into Mexico. Union officials feared that European or other Latin American nations might assist the Confederacy or allow the use of their ports for running the Union blockade. Yet others argued that the route to an Isthmian canal would be controlled by the waters of Cuba, making access and authority all the more pressing in time of war.

When the Civil War and the first stages of Reconstruction claimed national attention, Cuba, the Caribbean, and Latin America dropped out of most foreign policy debates. Then, in 1867, Secretary of State William H. Seward negotiated a treaty with Nicaragua for exclusive rights to build a canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific at a later date. Seward also annexed the Midway Islands west of Hawaii. Overall, he hoped to open clear commercial routes in Latin America and across the Pacific to China, Japan, and Korea. In his most well known act, also in 1867, he arranged for the purchase of Alaska from Russia for $7.5 million. Now seen as brilliant, at the time this move was thoroughly contested as "Seward's folly." In addition, Seward
intended to negotiate the purchase of Cuba, but the uproar over his "folly," coupled with a renewed isolationist bent in Congress, led to successful opposition to additional expansion.4

This ambivalence was based upon a long-standing Jeffersonian idea: to guarantee Cuba's "independence against all the world except Spain . . . would be nearly as valuable to us as if it were our own." In this vein de facto American power and waning Spanish imperial influence meant that only a minimum of force was necessary to keep Cuba on the straight and narrow. The underlying influence of American economic and political power over nearby nations and foreign colonies in Latin America began as early as the end of the 18th century.

Yet having just thrown off the bonds of colonial status, the young nation's chief architects of democracy could not help but cast their eyes upon Cuba and see the manifest injustice of colonialism as well as the prevailing possibilities of expansion. By 1844 when John O'Sullivan coined the term "manifest destiny," there could be little doubt that proximity and destiny were intrinsically related. By the mid-1890s, long-standing sentiments about the pursuit of possession of Cuba were advanced by events on the island. The revolution provided an opening. Competition for new markets, the development of rapid telegraphic communication, and press coverage of events abroad, acted alongside other forces. One was the newly popularized "scientific social Darwinian" understanding of race posited by English philosopher Herbert Spencer and his American followers, such as John Fiske. This perspective posited the triumphs of "Anglo-Saxonism" as evidenced by the imperial sway of Great Britain and the territorial growth of the United States to assert a dual racial and civilizational basis for global hierarchy.

According to the depictions of many social Darwinists, Latin America was a region composed primarily of inferior "dark" peoples, suitable for subjugation or tutelage. Alternately, however, some anti-imperialists invoked this same racist perspective for opposite means: to dissuade annexationists of potentially inferior citizens or subjects, in keeping with the title of great social Darwinist sociologist William Graham Sumner's post-war book, The Conquest of the United States by Spain. In the main, however, ideas about race, expansion, and civilization created an environment conducive to expansion. Possession of Cuba became more than continuing fodder for ambling conversation and ambivalent diplomacy. It became the "humanitarian" and self-interested imperative for the emergent global power, the United States.

Black, White, Yellow . . . and Poor

In the midst of one of the worst economic depressions in American history—from the panic of 1893 through 1897—the United States contemplated intervening in Latin America. Public support for intervention arose largely from the rising popularity of sensational accounts supplied by William Randolph Hearst's New York Journal, Joseph Pulitzer's New York World, and their affiliated newspapers across the nation. These papers redefined how Americans came to read about and perceive foreign affairs. The appeal of "yellow journalism"—given this title because of a character in one of the World's comic strips, the "yellow kid"—was widespread.

Even America's illiterate masses, by many studies accounting for as much as 90 percent of the American public in 1900, could understand the color cartoons and graphic pictures of major events being pushed by the new presses. Lavishly colored and detailed, many of the popular political cartoons of the era reveal underlying American racist impressions of Latin Americans as "dark," or at best feminized and in need of liberation, such as
William Allan Rogers' "Cuba Libre!" With the advent of undersea telegraph lines, "breaking news"—about daring revolutionaries, debauched innocents, and dishonorable Spanish oppressors—brought all the more persuasive stories and images to bear on public opinion.

In late 1895, as the revolution pressed forward in Cuba, the American press seized on events there as a news item and pushed increasingly sensational accounts of the war in Cuba upon their audience in the United States. Melodramatic tales of conflict, injustice, and rebellion sold papers. The Hearst and Pulitzer papers seized this moment to illuminate the cause of the new insurrectos, documenting their heroic efforts at freedom. Correspondents who had little first-hand information frequently wrote these accounts. As the scholar Charles Brown explained, these correspondents were often confused about their roles as reporters, fictionalizers, advocates, or even participants in the war. Minimal accountability and more journalistic autonomy leads many to describe this period as the "golden age" of the foreign reporter. Brown argued that for "the opportunity of individual enterprise with almost no hindrance from military leaders or interference by editors back home, there was nothing like the Spanish-American War."

Yet the stimulus of the press alone did not cause the war. Scholarship on the jingoistic press shows that the American public was stirred up by an array of influences. As historian John Offner asserted, "had there been no sensational press . . . , the American public nevertheless would have learned about the terrible conditions in Cuba . . . [and] would have wanted Spain to leave." The Cuba Libre uprisings of 1895 and yellow press accounts of Spanish General Valeriano "Butcher" Weyler's atrocities—stories facilitated by the new technology for transmitting news—captured the American popular attention. No earlier foreign policy events had done so in American history.

It's the Economy, Folks

Economic interests, however, and the threat to American property in Cuba (roughly $50 million in private assets invested in Cuba) were the centralizing force for the rationale for going to war with Spain. Interestingly, however, most Northeastern banking and industrial elites did not favor war until just before the American declaration in April 1898; instead, they looked for less volatile solutions to more pressing economic concerns. Depression from 1893 to 1897 pushed the nation, then emerging in fits and starts from massive industrial growth, to a seeming economic standstill. This was symbolized emphatically in the popular mind in the form of a series of awful, bloody labor conflicts, such as the Homestead strike of 1892 and the Pullman strikes of 1894. The nation's political and financial elites looked for stability. Observers such as Brooks Adams surveyed Latin America and the elusive China market with an eye toward solving what was then perceived as the "glut thesis" of overproduction.

The "glut" of production, however, was not always seen as the primary problem or the best explanation of the tribulations of industrialization. The cartoonist Thomas Nast simply called the theory "bunk." Nast's biting humor represented a typical working-class critique of fat cat robber barons and immoral industrial practices. Nast's image sarcastically painted the blessed golden fingers of overproduction and cheap products somehow strangling the nation.

For American workers and producers, the mid-1890s economic crisis was no laughing matter. A glut in production, which was seen as the underside of massive corporate growth, had stalled industry. Caused by surplus production and improvements in productivity that stemmed back to the late 1870s, most observers thought overseas sales could rectify
the problem. Therefore, recovery could be achieved by much deeper market penetration of proximate areas—Latin America and even Asia. Tapping foreign markets was a goal agreed upon by both management and labor.

Some in the labor community, of course, did not see the central problem as one of overproduction per se. Eugene Debs, for instance, looked at the immense profits of robber barons, new trusts, and the emerging vertically and horizontally integrated corporations—all coming at a time of national economic catastrophe—as symptomatic of the oppression of labor and the dangers of unregulated modern industrial capitalism. Labor leaders therefore called for worker unity, strikes such as those Debs led against Pullman. They wanted more government regulation and more tightly managed production. They called for an end to the chronic under-compensation of workers by ensuring greater oversight and fair collective bargaining.

Beyond big labor's unrest, other remarkable developments of the era were the Populist revolt, a burgeoning progressive reform movement, new scientific ideas about race, evolution, and society, and a rebirth of nativist sentiments concomitant with new waves of immigration. The last clashes with Native-Americans culminated at Wounded Knee in 1890. Frederick Jackson Turner observed in 1893 that the end of continental manifest destiny came with the closing of the frontier. Against this backdrop of upheaval and transformation, the Spanish-American War was a dramatic transition.

Urban Centers, Industry, and the Preconditions for Intervention
One historian observed this transition as a shift from isolated rural "island communities" characteristic of the 19th century to an increasingly interdependent, interconnected urban nation. In 1880 the American population was largely rural, but by 1920 the majority of the population was concentrated in cities. Enmeshed in these social changes of movement from farms to urban areas and into factory labor was the staggering pace of economic change following the Civil War.

Statistics tell this story. Total exports grew four-fold over one generation from $281 million in 1865 to 1.2 billion in 1898, while imports increased three-fold from $239 million to $616 million. In terms of production, wheat production rose by 256%, corn by 222%, sugar by 460%, coal by 800%, and steel rails by 523% from 1865 to 1898. Growth was significant even in new enterprises, such as crude petroleum production, which rose from three million barrels in 1865 to more than 55 million in 1898.5

Building on this newfound domestic economic strength, protectionist economic policy flared long-simmering embers of animosity over Cuba in the mid-1890s. Fighting to protect local sugar producers predominantly in the American South, the Congress exacerbated poor conditions in Cuba by passing the Wilson-Gorman Tariff of 1894. This American tariff put restrictions on sugar imports to the United States and severely hurt the economy of Cuba. In Cuba, angry nationalist insurrectos, crying out "Cuba Libre," revolted against the ruling Spanish colonial regime in Cuba's eastern region in 1895 because of the damage wrought by American tariffs.

Foreign Policy Rethought
These dizzying economic changes intersected with political and intellectual changes. Taken together these multiple layers of social transformation have led many historians to conclude the time was ripe for the nation to shift from an "old" to a "new" foreign policy. Like the economic transformation, this political transition was activist—to expand, to find new markets, to protect old ones, to use the new Navy, to establish national masculinity,
and to tutor "our little brown brothers" in the
development of democracy through colonial
apprenticeship.

Historians disagree, however, on the ques-
tion of the relative "newness" of the move-
ment toward a more aggressive foreign policy
and the acquisition of overseas lands. We can
peer into the ideology of the time by examin-
ing the incongruously prescriptive introduc-
tion to Theodore Roosevelt and Senator
Henry Cabot Lodge's co-authored 1895 book,
*Hero Tales from American History*. They
wrote, "As a civilized people we desire peace,
but the only peace worth having is obtained
by instant readiness to fight when wronged—
not by unwillingness or inability to fight at all.
Intelligent foresight in preparation and known
capacity to stand well in battle are the surest
safeguards against war." Furthermore,
Roosevelt and Lodge set the stage of a "just
war" doctrine that fused domestic natural
rights, a humanitarian mission, and an imperi-
alist agenda to resist the foreign "levy" of
Spain and avert continued colonial injustices.
"No citizen of a free state should wrong any
man," they continued, "...but it is not enough
merely to refrain from infringing on the rights
of others; he must also be able and willing to
stand up for his own rights and those of his
country against all comers, and he must be
ready at any time to do his full share in resist-
ing either malice domestic or foreign levy." Roo-
sevelt and Lodge's developing ideas about
America's international obligations help to
explain why ideas about imperial action
emerged in the mid-1890s.

The origins of the war with Spain and sub-
sequent territorial acquisitions at the turn of
the century were less a break with the old than
the widening of a new path already in view.
None of this was sudden. But it became dra-
matically obvious in 1898 that the process of
"modernization" had changed domestic social
and economic life. It also had irrevocably
altered America's international calculus.

### Moving Reluctantly Toward War Under McKinley

When William McKinley succeeded Grover
Cleveland as President in 1897, the uproar
over Cuba persisted. In June 1897, McKinley
issued an ultimatum to the Spanish govern-
ment to immediately end the "uncivilized and
inhumane conduct." A new administration in
Madrid offered a few concessions and
recalled General Weyler. It also issued a sus-
pension of the *reconcentrado* camp policy of
placing Cubans into concentration camps and
outlined possible steps toward Cuban autono-
y. While these reluctant diplomatic moves
initiated a brief hiatus in the tension, several
unpredicted events escalated the conflict.

On February 9, 1898, William Randolph
Hearst's *New York Journal* secured and pub-
lished a confidential letter from the Spanish
minister in Washington D.C., Enrique Dupuy
de Lôme, to a senior Spanish politician tour-
ing Cuba. Screaming the headline—"Worst
Insult to the United States in History!"—the
*Journal* published what came to be known as
the infamous "de Lôme letter," which blasted
President McKinley as "weak." de Lôme's pri-
vate critique created significant public waves.
He called the President a "bidder for the admi-
ration of the crowd," "a would-be politician," and
doubted that the U.S. would intervene in
Cuba. Further, the letter implied that Spanish
reform efforts in Cuba were appeasement, not
carried out in good faith.

With public trust between the nations wan-
ing, another chance event a mere six days
later undermined what remained of
McKinley's hopes for a diplomatic resolution
to the Cuban crisis. In late January, America
had dispatched the *USS Maine* on a mission to
Cuba. The ship was to wait, ready to rescue
American citizens who might be endangered
by any conflict in Cuba. Interesting, while the
*Maine* was being outfitted a few weeks before
the ill-fated mission and before the publica-
tion of the de Lôme letter, Roosevelt com-
mented in a private letter that he did not think war with Spain would come in the near future. "I wish there was a chance that the Maine was going to be used against some foreign power; by preference Germany—but I am not particular, and I'd take even Spain if nothing better is offered."

**Remember the Maine**

On February 15, 1898, the USS Maine mysteriously blew up, killing 266 sailors and officers out of a crew of 354. Roosevelt and a cast of expansionist hawks immediately saw their opportunity. Until the explosion of the Maine, this pro-war, expansionist group had been a minority and certainly had not been focused on war with Spain. War with Germany, as Roosevelt noted, would also have been "preferable," not so much for expansion but as a means of invigorating the nation and confronting a potential European military and economic threat. Not so after the Maine. Immediately the American press led a rising national tide of outrage, blaming a Spanish "bomb or torpedo" and declaring boldly: "Remember the Maine! To Hell with Spain!"

A mere day after the Maine sank, Roosevelt cautiously noted to Secretary Long about the improbability of the coincidence in timing the ship's arrival and its destruction, "by an accident such as had never happened." However, writing to a friend, Roosevelt leapt to the conclusion that "the Maine was sunk by an act of dirty treachery on the part of the Spaniards I believe."

Ten days after the Maine exploded in Havana harbor, on Friday, February 25, Secretary of the Navy John D. Long departed work early and issued explicit instructions to his exuberant Assistant Secretary of the Navy—Theodore Roosevelt—not to do anything rash while he was out of the office. Those who know Washington politics realize that Fridays are often infamous in the capital. When secretaries of departments take a long weekend, undersecretaries and deputies exercise authority. Sometimes, they overstep their bounds or are purported to have done so. A myth propounded by Henry Cabot Lodge in his official history of the Spanish-American conflict—and echoed in Theodore Roosevelt's autobiography—reinforced one such case and emphasized the magnitude of Roosevelt's mandates of February 25, 1898.

Roosevelt cabled Commodore Dewey, then commander of the American Asiatic squadron, based in Japan: "secret and confidential. Order the squadron except Monocacy to Hongkong. Keep full of coal. In the event of declaration of war with Spain, your duty will be to see that the Spanish squadron does not leave the Asiatic coast, and then offensive operations in Philippine Islands. Keep Olympia until further orders." While Lieutenant William Kimball's naval war plans of 1896 laid out this basic scheme for a preemptive bottling up of the Spanish Pacific fleet at Manila or near the Philippines, Roosevelt's orders reinforced the standing policy and helped create a myth of Roosevelt as the force behind both the Cuba and Philippine wartime successes. In reality, the telegram urged Dewey to prepare, yet only in a limited way (such as painting for wartime operations) because the Navy had already been put on alert.

President McKinley continued to seek compromise with Spain through diplomatic channels after the Maine incident. The official naval report established that an external mine was the most probable cause of the explosion. Although the report did not explicitly declare Spanish sabotage as the cause of the explosion, it left readers to draw their own conclusions. Most Americans concluded that Spain was to blame.

On April 11, 1898, President McKinley sent his war address to Congress and asked for the allotment of men, material, and personal negotiating authority. His speech was read to
a packed Congress. After listing the litany of diplomatic efforts to reach a peaceful solution and the Spanish affronts to the Cuban people, McKinley's address concluded that American intervention had become necessary. He called for an end to the war "in the name of humanity, in the name of civilization, in behalf of endangered American interests which give us the right and the duty to speak and to act." "The war in Cuba," he declared emphatically, "must stop." However, McKinley did not ask for a war declaration per se. Instead he proposed that Congress "authorize and empower the President to take measures to secure a full and final termination to the hostilities . . ."

Thereafter the New York Journal reported, "The whole country thrills with the war fever." A bellicose Congress debated entering the conflict immediately and disputed possible recognition of the rebels, whom some did not necessarily view as potential allies. On April 19, by a close vote of 42 to 35 in the Senate and a decisive margin of 310 to 6 in the House, Congress passed the joint resolution recognizing the Cuban people and demanding Spanish political and military withdrawal from the island.

In less than a week, by April 25, Spain and America declared war. It was to be the shortest declared war in American history. Yet to assure the world (and some dissenting anti-imperialists at home) that the U.S. was fighting only for the good of Cuba and not for colonial gain, Congress passed the Teller Amendment, which restricted America's ability to acquire the island by promising to make Cuba independent after the war was over.

Imperial Just War?
That this was a "just war" is part cliché, part oxymoron. Yet, then as now, "justice" is one of the most powerful rationales for conflict between nations, peoples, and faiths. In 1898, a "just war" was precisely what an increasingly strong yet perhaps not "manly enough" nation needed, according to some expansionists.

Theodore Roosevelt, along with Henry Cabot Lodge, Brooks Adams, Elihu Root, Alfred Thayer Mahan, John Hay, and a number of others, believed that war could be good for the nation. As historian Mathew Frye Jacobsen recently observed in Barbarian Virtues, at the heart of American thinking at the turn of the 19th to the 20th centuries was a conflicted understanding of barbarism, virtue, and progress, with national self-doubt. American "civilization," a progressive force for good, required an embrace of what Theodore Roosevelt termed "barbarian virtues" to avoid the "over-sentimentality, over-softness, in fact washiness and mushiness [that] are the great dangers of this age and of this people."

Imperialism, humanitarianism, and an emerging "just war" doctrine converged as the rationales for war. Yet this seemingly amorphous notion of an imperial, humane, and "just war" is best understood for what it was not purported to be at the time. President McKinley stated in 1899, "No imperial designs lurk in the American mind . . . they are alien." Indeed, only one of the proponents of the so-called "large policy" of expansion ever referred to himself as an advocate of imperialism or empire: Alfred Thayer Mahan. He advocated sea power and was an unabashed expansionist, who defined imperialist control of new territories as a national goal. He said what most thought: territorial acquisitions in the "American sphere" ensured continued economic, political, and military development, naval power, and prestige on the global stage.

War, Victory, and Expansion
Once declared, the United States fought the war on a number of fronts, from the port of Manila in the Pacific to Havana in the Caribbean. With the commencement of hostil-
ities, on the orders of Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt, Commodore Dewey immediately attacked Manila harbor in the Philippines. On May 1, Dewey destroyed the decrepit (partially rotten, according to many accounts) Spanish fleet at Manila. After Dewey's resounding victory America prepared for a large-scale invasion of the Philippines and slowly mustered troops to assault Cuba. Marines and small regular army units also invaded Guam and Puerto Rico.

Under the leadership of General William R. Shafter, the American ground effort in Cuba was far from organized. Theodore Roosevelt's plaintive and numerous letters to members of the administration—and friends like "Dear Cabot" [Lodge]—detail Shafter's "ineptitude," reveal various organizational and command flaws, and also demonstrate how poorly Roosevelt actually understood the big picture of the war strategy. Nonetheless, with heroics from the famous Rough Riders and other units, the conclusion of the war was never in doubt. American forces defeated the Spanish with little difficulty. On December 10, 1898, after on-going discussions since the cessation of hostilities on October 1, the Treaty of Paris was signed, and the war was over. In the end, American troops helped to liberate Cuba, and acquired Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines.

Congress forced the Platt Amendment into the Cuban Constitution. It gave the United States a permanent military base on the island at Guantanamo, proscribed sovereign treaty-making with foreign nations, and most important, permitted a "right of intervention" in Cuban affairs to protect property and restore order, a right which could not be revoked or abridged. Secretary of War Elihu Root observed injudiciously that these provisions signified "the extreme limit of [American] indulgence in the matter of the independence of Cuba."

Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines all became American protectorates. Their people, as the ruling on the Insular Cases by the Supreme Court found, did not have full rights as American citizens. Significant judicial scrutiny on the issue initiated a reckoning with a new political status for those within an American territorial "orbit," who were not enslaved or imprisoned, yet who could not share full citizenship. Congress questioned the Puerto Ricans' "fitness for government" and opted for the vague wording of the Paris Peace treaty, namely that the "civil rights and political status of the territories [was] hereby ceded . . . shall be determined by the Congress." Some of the people in these new colonies were upset, since they expected they would be liberated just as Cuba had been. Under the Foraker Act of 1900, a new middle-citizenship status was created, that of "citizen of Puerto Rico." It was not until the Jones Act of 1917 reversed this quasi-citizenship for Puerto Ricans that the issue of a political voice in Washington and American civil rights at home on the island became more reality than ephemeral democratic dream.

In addition to annexing Hawaii in 1898 and conquering Puerto Rico and Cuba, by the end of 1899 the McKinley administration also acquired the Pacific islands of Guam, Wake Island, and Tutuila (American Samoa). But events in the Philippines galvanized anti-imperialists. Military and naval successes on land and at sea, along with rapid annexation, did not necessarily lead to either swift or democratic outcomes. When the United States annexed the Philippine Islands in January 1899, peace did not come as expected by the Filipino revolutionaries and citizens. Filipino nationalists declared independence, turned against their former allies, and instigated a campaign against American forces perceived as occupiers, not liberators.

By November 1899, the charismatic revolutionary Emilio Aguinaldo called for "war without quarter to the false Americans who
have deceived us." Turning to guerilla tactics, the insurgents experienced startling success. In response American troops deemed total warfare the best strategy. Villages were burned, civilians were murdered, prisoners were tortured, and citizens were herded into infamous "zones" and forced to live in select cities.

Aguinaldo was captured in March 1901, and organized opposition began to dissipate. General Adna Chafee and his "Injun' fighting strategy," heralded by Theodore Roosevelt, were reinforced by the capture of the rebel leader. Fully quelling the rebellion, however, took more than three years. From 1899 to 1902, almost 5,000 Americans died, about twice the losses during the entire Spanish-American War. Close to 130,000 Americans served in the Philippine campaign at a cost in excess of $160 million. For the Filipinos, the best estimate is that as many as 20,000 armed combatants perished. Historians disagree over aggregate civilian losses, including those to the secondary effects of war (e.g. famine, disease). Yet even conservative estimates of civilian casualties are startling—ranging from 50,000 to 200,000. So astonishing were the losses and so inflammatory were the tales of atrocities (on both sides) that by January 1902, public pressure forced the Senate to form a committee to investigate the conduct of the war and prepare for possible war crimes trials.

On July 4, 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt issued a Peace Proclamation in which he stated that the Islands had been pacified. Roosevelt thereby officially concluded America's first significant undeclared war abroad, and the beleaguered Philippines were added as an "unincorporated" territory to the list of relatively stable American protectorates abroad. It was not until July 4, 1946, that the United States granted the Philippines their independence.

Splendid? Little?

"It has been a splendid little war, begun with the highest motives, carried on with magnificent intelligence and spirit, favored by that fortune which loves the brave," remarked Secretary of State John Hay, writing to his friend Theodore Roosevelt in 1898. Hay's gallant depiction of the war is also profoundly misleading.

To John Hay the Spanish-American War heralded the continued triumph of American civilization over both older European powers in decline and the barbarous nations and peoples who required civilizing guidance. Hay foresaw the acquisitions in the Atlantic and the Pacific as a springboard to new markets, coaling stations and operational bases for the new Navy, and a new frontier for national expansion. Manifest destiny, he argued, was inevitable. After a century of trying to push, prod, or purchase Cuba, expelling Spain simply underscored the manifest nature of this process of expansion.

Nothing about this war was "little" except its duration from the declaration on April 25, 1898, to the peace on December 10, 1898. The conflict was a massive undertaking for a nation that had never mustered the Army and Navy for overseas war and territorial conquest. An ensemble of people taking actions and expressing ideas, changing public opinion, and protecting private interest all had to be deployed to make war and clinch subsequent territorial control.

The war also was not "splendid." With roughly 400 battle casualties, the conflict appeared to Hay as minimal in terms of combat losses. In scope, however, the war covered two oceans and thousands of miles. In manpower, from a pre-war army strength of roughly 25,000, more than 200,000 Americans were put into arms or otherwise served roles in equipping, planning, transporting, and fighting the conflict by October 1, 1898 (when the Paris Peace Conference first
convened). The Navy performed notably well, in particular by briskly dispatching the Spanish fleet at Manila Bay and at Santiago de Cuba. But the inefficiency of the American Army was manifest. Roosevelt's Rough Riders were part of a number of indiscriminate charges up well-fortified hills, taking the San Juan heights with daring panache but ignoring high risks. At times, more than half of American combat forces were besieged and rendered unable to fight not by enemy forces but by tropical diseases.

Most Americans at the time agreed that this first major war-time commitment of troops abroad outside the continent was a moment of great significance, a "splendid" moment for the nation. While Congress gave the Paris Peace Treaty a difficult time, passing it by a margin of only 57 to 27 in the Senate in February 1899, the nation as a whole was ebullient about the triumphs. Henry Adams surveyed the national press and the temper of the man on the street, with a dour comment: "I find America so cheerful, and so full of swagger and self-satisfaction, that I hardly know it." Why was this? What changed a nation previously wrought with labor conflict, political dissension, and a recent economic depression? Adams believed it was attributable to the rapid victory and to "McKinley's prosperity."

Costs and Gains
The Spanish referred to their loss as "el desastre" (the disaster). More than 200,000 troops had failed to subdue the Cuban revolutionaries. Three years of fighting cost on the order of 50,000 Spanish soldiers and sailors their lives, bankrupted the state treasury, and all but destroyed the nation's waning international status. In contrast, the U.S. lost only 400 in combat and 2,900 in total casualties. This prompted one critic in the Cortes, Count de Almenas, to ask not-all-that-rhetorically, "Why have these incompetent generals not been shot?" In the eyes of the world, while the United States was ascendant, Spanish losses and dishonor outmatched even American victories. After the Paris Peace Conference concluded, the London Times dismissed Spain as a world power, opining on December 12, 1898, that Spain's "prestige as a fighting-power, by land or seas, has disappeared."

The war was replete with symbolic power and consequences that Hay could not foresee in 1898. Acquiring widespread and longstanding access to overseas territories took on an internal logic of its own. Over time these areas were far from temporary extensions of influence but became integral to the self-definition of American informal and formal control. Together the state of Hawaii, annexed during the imperial war fever of 1898, and the territory of Puerto Rico, acquired rapidly by U.S. forces who fought a small garrison of Spanish, stand as a legacy of the permanence of this "aberration" of American territorial expansion.

Nonetheless Hay was right to be contented with the ease of victory and outcome of the conflict. By 1900, the nation had acquired significant lands and could exert new degrees of military and commercial control in the Caribbean and Pacific. Preparedness, as well as the "large policy," had been vindicated. The United States proved itself a formidable industrial and military power.

After the War: Mahan's View and Presidential Judgments
Alfred Thayer Mahan quickly took up his pen to write Lessons of the War with Spain, published in 1899. "The short brilliant moments of triumph in war are the sign and seal of the long hours of obscure preparations," he remarked, "of which target practice is but one item."

Yet America's land and sea successes, and the benefits of advance naval preparation in particular, by no means preordained victory.
In fact, many German and English naval officers and politicians had predicted an inconclusive end to the war coupled with the swift and humiliating defeat of the new American navy by the established, "seasoned" Spanish fleet and skilled admiralty. Europeans were aghast at how rapidly the Spanish lost the conflict. While Lodge and Hay might have dreamed of this course of events, it had not been forecast by any of the proponents of intervention. Even President McKinley was taken aback by the acquisition of the seemingly remote Philippines, which he claimed he could not have located on a map before the conflict began.

Following Dewey's success, McKinley saw opportunity and aimed for flexibility. He asserted the goal of elastic acquisition in a private memorandum, stating that, "while we are conducting war and until its conclusion we must keep all we get. When the war is over we must keep what we want."

However, new problems came with the prolonged post-war rebellion and tales of savage actions in the Philippines. As Carl Schurz and other anti-imperialists had predicted, the possibility of annexation inspired zealous armed resistance. Roosevelt ignored these predications and argued for resolve. Allowing the Philippines, like French Algiers or English India to become free would result in a "hideous calamity to all mankind."

Roosevelt wrote, "We must treat them with absolute justice, but we must treat them also with firmness and courage. They must be made to realize that justice does not proceed from a sense of weakness on our parts, that we are the masters. . . . The insurrection in the Philippines must be stamped out as mercifully as possible; but it must be stamped out."

Lessons and Legacy: Intervention Then, Intervention Now

Very little of what nations and presidents "want" remains the same after more than a century. Certain consistencies, however, do endure. Political formulations inform the logic of intervention today in much the same fashion as the thinking that led America to war in 1898.

At the intersection of ideas, historical circumstance, and action is the gray zone where beliefs shape policy. Just as when Hay wrote to Roosevelt that the Spanish-American war had been "splendid" and "little," today's pundits and politicians pass immediate judgment about long-term implications. This may be a mistake, as it was for John Hay. We simply cannot take at face value the analysis of those writing during or just after a conflict ends. To do so would be to agree uncritically with Hay or Lodge that violent conflict with Spain was inevitable or just.

Historians and the authors of textbooks, on the other hand, utilize hindsight. They may err by looking for direct sequences of events. They often single out the formative role of yellow journalism, the development of critical ideas about race, or naval power, or economic policy, or imperial outreach, as the causal influences most responsible for the Spanish-American War. What about the "chance" events, unforeseen and even pivotal, as diplomacy failed and war became reality?10

Upon scrutiny, claims about a direct causal "road to war" from 1895 to 1898 do not hold up. At the time of the Spanish-American War, many thinkers whom we believe to have been formative (e.g. Herbert Spencer and John Fiske, Alfred Thayer Mahan, even Josiah Strong), advocating a mixture of potent ideas about race and social Darwinism, navalism, and expansion, were not widely read, or at least were not read on the subject of the war and intervention before 1898.11 In fact, a host of policy-makers sought to purchase Cuba since the Early Republic period, and as late as the Cleveland presidencies and early in the first McKinley administration. Avoiding outright conflict had been a White House priori-
Surveying cartoons such as those of Thomas Nast, examining the editorials of E.L. Godkin, or perusing contemporary correspondence and political debates, reveals that much of what can be made to appear to be successive stages on a path to war were not considered—by those very same contemporaries—to be clearly leading in any such direction. Even at the "late" date of January 1898, with the sending of the Maine to Havana, Theodore Roosevelt, that staunch expansionist himself, preferred a war with Germany and did not think Spain could be compelled to fight.

Causal emphases vary from the political to the ideological and the social. However, the process of traveling toward the war frequently has been phrased in the form of a question of when—not if—there would be a conflict. There should be no doubt, of course, that the impulse for war did slowly increase from the outbreak of the revolt in Cuba in 1895 to the American declaration of war in 1898. Yet the events proceeded more or less cumulatively and in the contingent manner we have examined here.

Confrontation therefore appears to have been highly likely, if not inevitable, in most historical accounts of the origins and outcomes of the Spanish-American War. For instance, in From Wealth to Power, Fareed Zacharia wrote, "What is puzzling about the Spanish-American War of 1898 is not why it happened, but why it was so long in coming."

A few notable examples of a similar rhetorical phraseology are Arthur Schlesinger, Sr.'s "the Cuban question," in his Rise of Modern America, the "unsettled question [of Cuba]" from Henry Cabot Lodge's The War with Spain (the first history of the conflict), and the "Cuban crisis" according to William Appleman Williams.12

In contrast, I argue that at the dawn of the 20th century, something qualitatively new happened. The crisis may have been a long time coming, but it was far from predetermined. "If we are to be a really great people," wrote Theodore Roosevelt in 1899 in a piece linking his previous ideas to the continued occupation of the Philippines, "we must strive in good faith to play a great part in the world."13 New priorities presaged events to come. Recognizing new economic and military realities, a group of prominent politicians and thinkers—led by Lodge, Hay, Root, Mahan, Roosevelt, Brooks Adams, and Josiah Strong, among others—saw a need for

Confrontation... appears to have been highly likely, if not inevitable, in most historical accounts of the origins and outcomes of the Spanish-American War.

America to become more interventionist. National interest, a sense of providential, manifest, and racial duty, and international justice merged in many of these arguments to make a forceful case that the nation should intervene in Cuba and boldly fight a war against Spain in both the Caribbean and the Pacific.

This shift in outlook was profound from the 1890s through the first decade of the 20th century. Even today we continue to think about the world in much the same way that Americans first did as the nation contemplated war with Spain. Now it is flatly accepted that in some form America should and does play a powerful role in international affairs (pacifist, unilateralist, internationalist, or otherwise).

Within the greater trend toward an expansive worldview, several crucial moments stand out: the Cuban revolution and its significant successes between 1895 and 1898, the election of William McKinley, the rising power of "large policy" proponents, the de
Lôme letter, the sinking of the *USS Maine*, and the formative influence of the yellow press. These crucial moments and developments helped to shape the choices and debates that ultimately led the nation to war.

Recently Michael Ignatieff, director of the Carr Center at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, argued that there are long-standing consistencies in American intervention abroad. In the context of the American presence in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Liberia, Ignatieff declared, "whatever the ostensible rationales—saving lives, repelling aggressors, establishing democracy—increased American power and influence are the most important reasons why interventions happen." For the Spanish-American War, Ignatieff is right, yet in a limited way. The other "ostensible" humanitarian and democratic rationales are not trivial and cannot be dismissed.

In the case of the Spanish-American War, the nation embarked simultaneously on a benign, if sometimes naïve, humanitarian-democratic intervention and on an imperial project of expansion. Conflict was spurred by chance events. Yet intervention was also crassly expansionistic and imperial, which in many ways was the most dire and direct consequence of intervention. Cuban revolutionaries, as historian Louis Perez demonstrated, posed a significant threat to those in the United States who wanted to keep Cuba on a short leash. Therefore intervention prevented the installation of a truly independent government in Cuba and Puerto Rico, another goal of the "large policy" advocates, and stalled the autonomy of the Philippines.

From the conclusion of the Spanish-American War until the coming of the Great Depression, the United States sent troops to Latin American countries roughly 32 times, once a year on average. In addition to the Monroe Doctrine, the nation deployed the Roosevelt Corollary in 1904 and thereafter to justify intervention on the basis that the United States, a "civilized nation," had the right to stop "chronic wrongdoing" and "exercise an international police power" throughout the Western Hemisphere.

In one year—only three months of direct conflict—the United States acquired Puerto Rico, the Philippines, part of the Samoan archipelago, annexed the Hawaiian Islands, and sustained authority over the island of Cuba. From Andrew Carnegie to Mark Twain, many perceived these events as the nadir of American democratic principles—the imposition of domination over alien peoples without their consent. Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge perceived limited American hegemony over these regions as beneficial to the areas themselves. More important, action extended American political and military might to advance economic interests around the globe.

**Conclusion**

Speaking to the Home Market Club in Boston in 1899, President McKinley forcefully articulated the aims of American involvement abroad. "No imperial designs lurk in the American mind. They are alien to American sentiment, thought, and purpose. Our price-less principles undergo no change under a tropic sun. They go with the flag." McKinley continued by asking his audience a series of rhetorical questions which establish a parallel to present-day humanitarian-inspired arguments for intervention abroad. "If we can benefit these remote peoples, who will object? If in the years of the future, they are established in government under law and liberty, who will regret our perils and sacrifices?" He concluded, "... always cost and sacrifice, but always after them the fruition of liberty, education, and civilization."

Carl Schurz, one of the most outspoken anti-imperialists and a founding member of the Boston Anti-Imperialist League in 1898,
argued against McKinley’s logic. Schurz unveiled his vision of a domestic doctrine that emphasized American citizens at home and the principles of democracy and self-determination abroad. “I deny that our duties we owe to the Cubans and the Porto [sic] Ricans, and the Filipinos, and the Tagals of the Asiatic islands absolve us from the duties to the 75 millions of our own people, and to their posterity,” declared Schurz at an 1899 convocation at the University of Chicago. “I deny that they oblige us to destroy the moral credit of our own republic by turning this loudly heralded war of liberation and humanity into a land-grabbing game and an act of criminal aggression. . . . Their independence, therefore, would be the natural and rightful outcome.”

The late 19th century American conceptualization of the need for the United States to play an influential role in the hemisphere and throughout the world brought a fresh case for the idea of intervention. To make the case, a modern American “just war” doctrine originated with the Spanish-American War. That war, fought as a conscious choice, created an enlarged U.S. profile in world affairs.

The United States moved “from a position of comparative freedom from entanglements into the position of what is commonly called a world power,” reflected McKinley’s Assistant Secretary of State John Bassett Moore. “Where formerly we had only commercial interests, we now have territorial and political interests as well.” Moore understood all too well what this meant. We would be well advised to keep his words in mind today. Interventions have unintended consequences. ◆

Endnotes

1 One important point of definition must be addressed immediately in any piece of scholarship that deals with this topic. The common shorthand for the conflict—the “Spanish-American War”—is inaccurately descriptive. Cuban insurrecitos had been fighting for independence consistently since 1895 and had been in a state of partial rebellion on-and-off since the first half of the 19th century, thus they should be included as full participants in the terminology to describe the conflict. At this level alone, the term “Spanish-American War” evidences the American-centric bias of much of the historiography on the topic, a point well explored by recent scholars. For an excellent discussion of this problem and the historiography of the War of 1898, see Louis Perez Jr.’s The War of 1898: the United States and Cuba in History and Historiography (Chapel Hill, 1998). A proper if inefficient term might be the Spanish-Cuban-American-Philippine War, which itself could be expanded to include further national nomenclature. However such a phrase is awkward and long. Others argue for the advantages of breadth yet lack of descriptiveness such as might be conveyed by the “War of 1898.” With this duly noted, for the purposes of brevity and clarity, I have chosen to use the standard, albeit admittedly flawed descriptive phrase, “Spanish-American War.”

2 A note on the timing of the declarations of war: there was a period of complex political jousting in month of April 1898. As late as March 20th and 28th, President McKinley sent messages to Spain seeking peace through acquiescence to American demands: paying an indemnity for the sinking of the Maine, a promise to close and never reopen “reconcentration” camps, a truce with the rebels, an agreement to negotiate for eventual Cuban independence, and accepting American mediation if necessary. By the beginning of April, Spain seemingly surrendered to each of these demands in at least a limited form, except for American mediation. With pressure mounting, public outcry from the Hearst and Pulitzer press, and an increasing sense of distrust of Spanish concessions, President McKinley addressed Congress on April 11, 1898. In this speech McKinley listed a series of grievances against Spain that had occurred over the course of the three-year insurrection and made a tempered case for war. Congress began vigorous debate and included the Teller Amendment as part of the war declaration, in which America declared that it would “leave the government and control of the island [Cuba] to its people” and disclaimed “any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over” Cuba. Thus, on April 21st Spain severed diplomatic ties with the U.S. The following day, April 22nd, American ships began a blockade of Cuba. On April 24th Spain formally declared war. Congress then declared war on April 25th retroactive to April 21st (when Congress claimed that a state of war first existed). Actual combat was slow in coming—Commodore

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Dewey did not arrive in Manila until April 30th. Significant American engagement in ground combat did not commence until June 21, when the main portion of the American invasion (17,000 men) landed at Daiquiri in southeastern Cuba.

3 See diplomat Warren Zimmermann's recent book on the topic of "how five Americans made their country a world power." Zimmermann, First Great Triumph (New York, 2002). Zimmermann provides an excellent account of the five major proponents (Hay, Lodge, Roosevelt, Mahan, and Root) and the "large policy" of expansion.

4 The effort to annex Santo Domingo in 1870 for $1.5 million was thwarted by Congress. Seward's replacement in the Grant administration, Hamilton Fish, similarly hoped to achieve the annexation of Cuba and to gain wider access to Latin America. Fish sought to expand negotiation and open a discussion of the purchase of Cuba in 1875 during a tense diplomatic crisis concerning indemnity for the seizure, trial, and execution of the ship Virginius and its crew by a Spanish gunboat in Cuban waters. Once again, minimal public concern and staunch Congressional opposition blocked greater expansion.


6 Roosevelt's thinking was logical. At the time, Germany appeared to be a greater threat than the waning Spanish, who were not aggressively seeking new markets or expanding their military presence on the global stage. Germany, on the other hand, was actively involved in the Pacific, seeking new Asian markets, and was significantly expanding her naval capabilities.

7 Two later investigations after passions had calmed a bit came to different conclusions about the causes of the sinking of the Maine. In 1976 Admiral H.G. Rickover published a definitive assessment, How the Battleship Maine Was Destroyed (Annapolis, MD, 1995). He revised previous conclusions and definitively showed that the Maine likely sank due to "an accident which occurred inside the ship." In all probability it was an "internally initiated" spontaneous combustion of the coal supply due to poor ventilation in the boiler system. Rickover's research put the issue to rest, and his conclusions represent the current consensus opinion on the cause of the sinking of the Maine.

8 On the Philippine War, see Brian McAllister Linn's recent Philippine War, 1899-1902 (2002); on the continuing struggle and imperial impulse, see Stanley Karnow, In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines (1990). Most of these relatively sparsely populated and remote islands deemed "unincorporated" were placed under the administration of American naval officers and accountable to the Department of the Navy.

9 John Hay to Theodore Roosevelt, Roosevelt Correspondence, July 27, 1898.

10 Similar logic appears in many contemporary arguments. A long line of transgressions combined with a new foreign policy doctrine or changed external threat status thus determines a course of intervention. It is likely that future historians, political scientists, or other scholars will find more contingency and chance in how the nation embarked on a course of intervention in 2002 as they have for American action in 1898 and at other times in the past.


12 For a brief overview of historical interpretations of the war, see Thomas G. Patterson, United States Intervention in Cuba, 1898: Interpretations of the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War, 29:3 The History Teacher 341-361 (May, 1996).


15 Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley From March 1, 1897 to May 30, 1900 193 (Doubleday & McClure, 1900).

16 Carl Schurz, American Imperialism: The Convocation Address Delivered on the Occasion of the 27th Convocation of the University of Chicago, January 4th, 1899 30-32 (Dana Estes & Co).
Some observers of the Spanish-American War have labeled it a matter of American imperialism. Others have used Teddy Roosevelt's involvement and the letter from John M. Hay to Roosevelt describing the war as a "splendid little war" as evidence that members of the McKinley administration used war to advance their imperialistic goals. Neither explanation is wholly accurate, nor do they sufficiently reflect the complex circumstances surrounding the war. America was experiencing tremendous physical and economic growth in the 1800s, we had a keen sensitivity to foreign—especially Spanish—influence in the Caribbean, we needed access to foreign markets to come out of the 1893-97 depression, and social Darwinism was alive and well. This paper will summarize those issues, add a different perspective to the imperialism arguments and describe the events which precipitated the war. The conclusion is that the Spanish-American War of 1898 was a natural outgrowth of the physical, social, and economic changes taking place in America.

Climate in America in 1898

U.S. Interests in the Caribbean

The Spanish-American War was a Caribbean War. Some have been distracted from that reality by the dramatic victory of Admiral Dewey over the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay and the subsequent and costly Philippine Insurrection following the U.S. refusal to grant the islands independence after the war. The controversy over what to do with the Philippines and the anti-U.S. insurrection were results of the war, not the causes.

U.S. sensitivities to foreign colonies in the Caribbean can be traced to British use of those islands as bases during the Revolutionary War. Friction specifically with Spain developed fully during the First Seminole War in 1817-1818. President Monroe authorized General Andrew Jackson to deal with the problem of cross-border raids from Florida to Georgia after numerous attempts to get the Spanish to control the bandits failed. Jackson overthrew the Spanish Governor in Florida, wiped out the bases of the bandits, and the eventual result was the ceding of Florida to the United States in the 1819 Adams-Onis Treaty.

President Monroe formally pronounced U.S. policy toward the Americas and the Caribbean in his seventh annual address to Congress on December 2, 1823. The text of what became the "Monroe Doctrine" describes how the imposition of European colonies in the Americas is incompatible with the U.S. system of government. It described our opposition to any Spanish attempt to

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reclaim lost colonies and pledged our support to those newly independent countries.

Friction between Spain and America flared up again in 1873 during the first Cuban Revolution of 1868-1878. A U.S.-flagged vessel, the *Virginian*, was seized by Spain for carrying arms to Cuban revolutionaries. "The Spanish summarily executed the officers and crew of this vessel, most of whom were Americans, and the two countries almost went to war . . ."²

The second Cuban Revolution began with José Martín's establishment of the Cuban Revolutionary Party in the U.S. in 1892. In 1895, Martín issued the call to arms and the active struggle began again. The Spanish response was to create relocation camps throughout the island and concentrate the population in them in hopes of reducing popular support to the rebels. Spanish efforts to suppress the revolution and the poor conditions in the camps were widely criticized in the U.S. press dominated by the Pulitzer and Hearst media empires. Hearst was adamantly in favor of U.S. intervention. As a result of popular sympathy for the Cuban revolution against Spain, both houses of Congress passed resolutions of support for Cuban independence.

In addition to the anti-Spain sentiment, there was the not inconsiderable issue of 50 million dollars of American investment in Cuban sugar, tobacco, and iron by 1898.

Another aspect of the U.S. interest in the Caribbean was the proposed canal across the Central American Isthmus. Ferdinand de Lesseps, the French builder of the Suez Canal, started work on a canal across Panama in 1882. The attempt failed, and the canal company was eventually sold to the U.S. in 1902. U.S. involvement in the canal effort began with the Menocal Survey of Nicaragua in 1887. Congress chartered the Maritime Canal Commission in 1889, and work began on the Nicaragua canal site. The economic crisis of 1893 halted work, but in 1897 Congress appointed another commission which again recommended the Nicaragua site for the canal.³

As early as 1890 and then again in 1893, the famous and influential Navy officer, Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan described the economic and military importance of the canal. He also described the danger of foreign powers being located in the Caribbean because of the threat to the eastward terminus of the canal.⁴

The American position against European colonies in the Americas, popular support for the Cuban revolutionaries, historical friction with Spain and the strategic importance of the proposed canal all coalesced to make the Caribbean a region of vital interest to the United States of 1898.

**U.S. Growth and Global Interests**

In the last decade of the 19th century, America was grappling with physical, population, and economic growth issues. Since 1845 when the term "Manifest Destiny" was first used, America had rapidly expanded South and West and by 1890 there were 45 states:

- The U.S. annexed Texas in 1845.
- The Oregon Treaty with Great Britain in 1846 ceded what is now Washington and Oregon.
- Mexico ceded the American Southwest in 1848 after the Mexican-American War.
- The Gadsden Purchase in 1853 filled out the southern border of Arizona and New Mexico.
- The U.S. purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867.
- The first Transcontinental Railroad was completed in 1869, facilitating settlement of the new states and territories.
- Hawaii became a U.S. protectorate in
America had now completed its continental "Manifest Destiny" so why wasn't that enough? Two important factors emerged to spur interest in territory beyond North America.

The first was economic. President McKinley was elected in 1896 to lead us out of the depression which began with the silver panic of 1893.

During 1893 nearly 15,000 companies failed, 500 banks went into receivership, and nearly 30 percent of the country's rail system was financially insolvent. For the next 3 years, the United States went into a deep depression.5

Republicans believed a key to the recovery and sustained economic prosperity was generation of exports. America was well on its way to being the world's leader in steel production and needed markets. Likewise with food: America produced more than it could consume. The American approach at that time was open overseas markets combined with high domestic tariffs. The emerging "open door policy" toward China pronounced in 1900 is an example of that approach.

Conversely, Europeans practiced the alternative of developing favored status with their colonies. Although never colonized, the China example is again useful because both Britain (Opium Wars) and Japan (Sino-Japanese war of 1895) fought wars with the Chinese in the 19th century to coerce the Chinese into allowing them to keep favorable status in Chinese markets. When the U.S. decided to keep the Philippines after the Spanish-American War, it was our only foray into the European-style use of a "colony" for economic purposes.

An important corollary to the desire for territories and markets was the need for permanent coaling stations for steam-powered ships. As Mahan described it, a successful export economy required 1) production, 2) shipping or lines of communication, and 3) markets. Mahan was mainly focused on justifying the building of a world-class Navy and the corresponding overseas bases to support it. Nevertheless, his economic analysis and his arguments for a Navy to protect the envisioned export economy were both accurate and well received by policy makers. The acquisition of Hawaii, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the 100-year lease on Guantanamo Bay in Cuba in 1898, as well as the acquisition of Wake Island and American Samoa in 1899, were all part of that eventual strategy.

The second contributor to the expansion of U.S. influence on a global scale was Social Darwinism. Darwin's 1871 book *The Descent of Man* had been interpreted in Britain and America to mean that Anglo-Saxons and their culture were especially well suited to lead our "little brown brothers" into Christianity and modernity. By 1889, the Chicago Bible institute was founded for the specific purpose of training missionaries for overseas service. The theme of advancing Christianity is present in the writings of Mahan and McKinley.6

As an illustration of the power of the argument, President McKinley and other Republicans fought off the anti-imperialists in the 1898 mid-term election by saying we were obligated to keep the Philippines because they were incapable of governing themselves. Many in Congress, administration, and business also believed that the raw materials and export market that the Philippines represented would help sustain the economic rebound, but that line of thinking was not the public face of the administration. It is difficult to say which factor was the deciding one for keeping the Philippines after the war, but the case was sold to the public based on our duty to provide them a stable government.7

A last aspect to overseas expansion was America's longing to become a world power.
[I]n an era of national pride stimulated by [post civil war] reunification and observances of the centenary of the revolution, the American people felt eager to express their sense of the greatness of their country by showing that the country could excel in anything the other great nations might do. When the other powers embarked upon a new round of colony-building competition overseas, the U.S. grew tempted to join the game.8

Perspective on the Arguments that America was Imperialistic

The Roosevelt Factor

At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, Teddy Roosevelt was the Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Mr. Roosevelt had no problem making policy when Secretary Long was out of the office, and he did in fact order the Asia fleet to engage the Spanish fleet in the Philippines. Remembering that in that era, the Secretary of the Navy directed fleet strategy, the only thing unusual about the order is that it came from Mr. Roosevelt instead of Secretary Long. Today such an order would go from the Secretary of Defense via the Joint Staff to the Unified Commander of that theater. Some have used this order to say that the McKinley administration was imperialist and looking for an opportunity to capture the Philippines.

There is another explanation. In 1898, the U.S. Navy, members of the McKinley administration (such as Roosevelt) and other prominent Americans, such as Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, were influenced by the writings and speeches of Mahan. (Mahan was even invited to the post-war peace talks.) Although Mahan advocated acquiring the Philippines as early as 1890, the American preference for acquiring access was to bargain for it, not fight for it. The regular attempts to purchase portions of the Danish West Indies and the ongoing negotiations with Germany and Britain over Samoa are examples. More important than Mahan's writings on access to naval bases were his writings on fleet engagements. Destruction of the enemy fleet was the first and most important function of a Navy. Therefore, the attack on the Spanish fleet in Manila can be viewed as sound Mahanian strategy—going after the enemy fleet wherever it may be.

In this case it was in Manila Bay. Dewey's fleet had been staged in Hong Kong since 1887 to monitor the Spanish fleet, and there had even been a Navy war game which led to a contingency plan of attacking the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay. Aggressively going after the Spanish fleet in Manila before it could be reinforced was a good strategic decision, independent of any desire for keeping the Philippines as a colony. Even after the defeat of the Spanish Fleet on May 1, the McKinley administration had no intention of retaining the Philippines. As late as May 11, 1898, "President William McKinley and his cabinet approved a State Department memorandum calling for the Spanish cession of a suitable coaling station ... The Philippines were to remain a Spanish possession."9 The administration did a complete flip the following month.

Another Roosevelt connection to the war was his receipt of a personal letter from John M. Hay, who served as Ambassador to Great Britain and Secretary of State under McKinley. In that letter Hay described the Spanish-American War as a "splendid little war." That correspondence has been used to suggest that the McKinley administration wanted a war.

The paragraphs above are not intended to suggest that Roosevelt was not pro-war. He was more than willing to use the military element of national power when he later became President in September 1901 following
McKinley's assassination. Rather, they are intended to argue that the events leading up to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898 cannot persuasively be ascribed solely to Roosevelt's influence.

_Rapid U.S. Expansion During and Immediately After the War_

During and immediately following the Spanish-American War, the U.S. aggressively acquired territories in the Caribbean and Pacific. The acquisitions of Hawaii, The Philippines, Guam, Wake Island and Puerto Rico have been cited as proof that America had imperialistic motives for entering the war. Using the territorial results of the war to prove the McKinley administration's motives for going to war is not persuasive logic. In each case there are less sinister circumstances.

In the case of Hawaii, administrations had submitted annexation treaties to Congress in 1867 (at the same time we annexed Midway Island), in 1893 after the overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani, and again in 1897. The rapid approval of the annexation was certainly facilitated by the war, but the longstanding desire to acquire Hawaii had little to do with the start of the Spanish-American War. As previously mentioned, it was part of the Mahanian strategy to establish advance naval bases and coaling stations in the Pacific.

Wake Island was annexed as a cable station, not a colony. Guam and Puerto Rico were the spoils, not the designs of the war. Again, the decision to keep the Philippines was made after the defeat of the Spanish fleet, not before.

_What Really Caused the War?_

The U.S. had practiced a "vigorous foreign policy" and expansionism since the Harrison administration from 1889-93. Examples include reciprocal tariff agreements with Latin American countries and the behind the scenes support of the overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani. Although the Cleveland administration which replaced Harrison disapproved of the annexation of Hawaii, it was active in Latin American affairs, most notably the Venezuelan boundary dispute with British Guiana. When McKinley was nominated in 1896, the Republican platform included "acquisition of Hawaii and part of the Danish West Indies, approved construction of a canal across Central America and naval expansion, expressed sympathy for revolutionaries in Cuba and Armenians suffering at the hands of the Turks . . ."10 McKinley's wing of the Republican party in 1896 was known for its advocacy of "neo-mercantilism," or the penetration of foreign markets through treaty or purchase arrangements. The sum of these policies and actions can be called "Global Manifest Destiny." As described in the first part of the paper, that was the backdrop, not the cause of the War.11

The actual cause of the war was American popular support for the Cuban revolutionaries, whipped up by the Pulitzer and Hearst newspaper empires. Both newspapers described the conditions in the relocation camps and advocated American involvement. Remember that both houses of Congress had supported the revolutionaries as early as 1886 but McKinley tried to work with the Spanish to create a peaceful transition to Cuban independence.

The straws that broke the camel's back came in February 1898. On February 7, William Randolph Hearst published a stolen private letter from Enrique Dupuy de Lôme, Spanish Minister to the U.S. It was written to a friend in Havana. In it he described the President, among other things, as "weak." That insult was followed on the 15th by the sinking of the Maine, killing 266 Americans in Havana harbor.

On March 29, McKinley issued the Spanish an ultimatum to get out of Cuba. On April 11, he asked Congress for authority to intervene.
Congress adopted a joint resolution of war with a proviso that the U.S. get out of Cuba as soon as hostilities were over. McKinley signed it on April 19, and war was declared.

The combination of the 1890s interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine, economic requirements for foreign markets, and desires to export our social and religious values all pulled President McKinley toward war with Spain, which he had at first sought to avoid. For the first year of his administration, McKinley even attempted to convince the Spanish to transition Cuba to some form of self-government as a way of avoiding war. This was a case where popular support for Cuban revolutionaries and two high profile incidents led to a multi-theater war. The Congress and the country were clearly behind the war. America's action definitely was opportunistic and expansionist, and to some extent was also imperialistic and pro-war, but it wasn't wholly the latter. 

Endnotes


7 DeGregorio, supra n. 6, at 362.


9 Miller, supra n. 2, at 23.

10 DeGregorio, supra n. 6, at 360.

Realities and Myths as to Why America Entered the Second

By G. Kurt Piehler

Good historians often stress the complexity of events and the diversity of forces shaping the past. Ambiguity, paradox, and criticism often characterize the best of historical writing. In contrast, American public memory, especially when focusing on war, can often radically simplify past events and portray good and evil in stark terms. Except for Vietnam, Americans have seldom remembered the fierce debates that surrounded our entry into war.

Yet we pay a high price for the gap between history and memory, especially when we seek to derive widely accepted “lessons” from the past. Popular memory can be quite selective, and it is striking what is forgotten. In the case of the Second World War, American popular memory has dramatically forgotten or simplified the enormous debates that occurred in the 1930s and early 1940s over whether Americans should enter this conflict, although historians have written extensively about these divisions. There also is a sharp divergence in how Americans remember our enemies from this conflict and why we fought them.

Historians are notoriously bad at predicting the future, but it is increasingly clear the Second World War will leave an enduring mark on the collective national memory. On Memorial Day 2004, a national memorial to the veterans of the Second World War will be dedicated on the Mall in Washington. It will join another memorial to the Second World War, the U.S. Holocaust Museum, that became in the 1990s the most visited museum in the nation’s capital.

Memory can be a fickle thing, especially when it comes to remembrance. Although the veterans of the First World War built scores of monuments, few Americans can recall such battles as Belleau Wood, Chateau-Thierry, and the Meuse-Argonne Forest. Even fewer citizens of the Republic remember the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, or the Philippine Insurrection. The 50th anniversary of the Korean War produced relatively few memoirs, books, documentaries, memorials, and major public commemorations. Compared with either the Second World War or American involvement in the Vietnam War, Korea remains to many Americans the forgotten war.

In 1987, when I began work on my dissertation examining how Americans remembered past wars, it surprised me how few memorials existed to the Second World War. In sharp contrast, by the late 1980s, there existed scores of memorials to the Vietnam War, most notably the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Mall in Washington, D.C. In my book, Remembering War the American Way, I made

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the case that often the more controversial, costly, and divisive the war, the more interest there is in building memorials. For example, the three conflicts that have witnessed the most extensive wave of monument building have not surprisingly been the Civil War, World War I, and the Vietnam War.¹

Only in the 1990s has there been a concerted effort to commission and build a national memorial in Washington, D.C. to the Second World War. In part, this movement has sparked a recognition by many veterans of the "Great Generation" and reminded their children that their days are numbered, and they must preserve the memory of their service for future generations. This pattern of remembrance in some ways mirrors that of the American Revolutionary War. Only in the 1820s and 1830s as the ranks of the Revolutionary veterans started to shrink dramatically did Americans begin to commemorate this struggle with monuments.

There are controversies surrounding the memory of the Second World War. In 1995, the Smithsonian Institute was forced to pull an exhibit focusing on the Enola Gay and the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Since the 1970s, there has been a fierce debate in many quarters over whether the United States could have done more to prevent the Holocaust. Despite these and other controversies, few have challenged the basic premise that America's entrance into the Second World War was necessary and morally justifiable. Moreover, the Second World War became the benchmark for many Cold Warriors in shaping how the United States should wage war. Frustrated with the limited wars of the Cold War era, many suggested we need to use the Second World War model of total victory.

The Second World War still holds lessons for contemporary Americans and leaders. In 2002, President George Bush borrowed from the lexicon of the Second World War and maintained in his State of the Union address that the United States faces a new "Axis of Evil" and must meet the threat to American security posed by Iraq, Iran, and North Korea.

Memory can be selective even for those who witnessed the past. In 1994, when I started interviewing World War II veterans for an oral history project sponsored by the Rutgers College Class of 1942 and Rutgers University, I was surprised by how many veterans of the Second World War started their discussions of this conflict with Pearl Harbor. Unless prompted, few recalled the debates over neutrality legislation of the 1930s, Lend Lease, the 1940 draft, and the decision to engage in undeclared naval warfare in 1941. Even fewer recalled how long it took for the United States to enter this conflict. Japanese aggression against China began in 1931 with the conquest of Manchuria. Germany invaded Poland in September 1939; it took the United States over two years before finally going to war against the Axis Powers.

The coming of war with Germany is even more hazy for many Americans, especially given the fact that Germany never directly attacked American soil before declaring war on the United States a few days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Recently, when I gave a lecture about the Second World War to several elementary school classes in rural Tennessee, most of these students had seen Schindler's List—to my surprise—and argued that the Holocaust was a central reason for why we entered this war. In my lectures to these students, I explained that halting German genocide against European Jewry
was at best a secondary reason why the United States entered World War II.

In examining the coming of the Second World War, I will show how the gap between history and memory is most pronounced over the coming of the war with Japan and the nature of this conflict. For historians, the approach of war in the Pacific is more than simple Japanese treachery and ruthless aggression. Many historians make a strong argument that war with Japan in 1941 could have been prevented and was not inevitable. Moreover, since the 1950s, a number of scholars have stressed that there remained fundamental differences between the Japanese imperial regime and Nazi Germany. In part, they maintain the decision of the Japanese to sign the Tripartite Pact with Germany in 1940 was a fateful step on the road to war. If Japan had not aligned itself with Germany or occupied Indochina, relations between the United States and Japan might not have deteriorated to the point of armed conflict.

At times, the clash between public memory and historians, even "revisionist historians" can be overplayed. It is difficult to find a respectable scholar in the academy who would defend the Nazi regime or the brutal war crimes perpetrated by the Japanese military against American servicemen/women and Asian civilians. Moreover, there have been few scholars who have embraced the anti-interventionist position regarding the Second World War. Shortly after the Second World War ended, two unrepentant isolationists and historians, Charles Beard and Charles Tansill, wrote accounts on the coming of this conflict which condemned President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his administration for leading the country into war. More recently, Bruce M. Russett argued in *No Clear And Present Danger: A Skeptical View of the U.S. Entry into World War II* (1972) that American national security interests in 1941 were not threatened by either Nazi Germany or Imperial Japan. In his view, it was a mistake for the United States to abandon neutrality after 1939, and he even questioned whether there was a strong moral imperative to intervene in this conflict. But the anti-interventionist school is at best a minor school of thought.

Most historians accept the premise that the United States should have entered this conflict. For them the questions center around Franklin D. Roosevelt's leadership, the nature of public opinion, and the diplomacy of forging the Grand Alliance prior to Pearl Harbor. There has also been some excellent scholarship regarding the American anti-interventionist movement. The best of historical writing offers a nuanced and complicated account of one of the most decisive periods in United States history, in which Americans grappled with questions over war and peace in the starkest possible terms.

Was it inevitable for the United States to enter the war against Germany? There is a widespread consensus that President Franklin D. Roosevelt played a decisive role in American intervention into World War II, but there are differences in interpretation. Robert Dallek portrays FDR as a committed internationalist who very early developed a strong antipathy toward the Nazi regime but stressed how his range of actions was often limited by public opinion that remained averse to risking involvement in another European land war. In contrast, Robert Divine depicts Roosevelt as initially embracing isolationism and who only began to change his views in the late 1930s when the threat posed by the Nazi regime became apparent to him.

Specialists in diplomatic and military history of the era show that Roosevelt and the United States faced difficult choices in this period. Although the United States in 1939 was a major naval power, it possessed only a small land army and had an inferior air force compared to the European powers. Fortunately, two oceans protected the United States
and allowed the Roosevelt Administration time to mobilize the American economy for war and to begin a military buildup. After the fall of France, when it became clear to Roosevelt that Britain could survive only with American support, the question facing his administration was a stark one: should the United States provide aid to Great Britain even if it risked war with Germany and diverted resources that would otherwise go to building up the American military? After the Soviet Union was invaded, should the United States extend the same assistance to this Communist power? Would aid to Britain and the Soviet Union be sufficient to defeat Hitler?

In considering the origins of American involvement, there remained strong factors that could have persuaded Roosevelt not to go to war. Politically, there remained substantial risks.

The First World War had been a profoundly disillusioning experience for Americans. One of the most enduring legacies of this disillusionment would be the still widely read literature of Ernest Hemingway and other members of the Lost Generation. There existed a small but influential peace movement that argued for disarmament and strongly opposed intervention in another foreign war. During the interwar period, a wave of historical revisionism had made a strong case that the United States entered the war in 1917 not to preserve democracy, but to rescue Wall Street bankers and munitions makers who supplied the Allied cause. The Nye Congressional hearing, focusing on American intervention into the First World War, helped create support for a series of neutrality acts in the 1930s that basically sought to prevent American involvement in another world war. The idea was to ban Americans from sailing on belligerent ships in wartime in order to prevent incidents that could inflame public opinion and lead to war, and prevent American arms merchants from selling to nations at war in order to ensure that we did not become tied to a belligerent power.

Roosevelt and a good many Americans disliked the Nazi regime even before the invasion of Poland. After war broke out, Roosevelt sought modification of neutrality legislation to allow the British and French to purchase supplies from the United States on a "cash and carry" basis. But the United States' involvement in the Second World War might have been minimal had it not been for the fall of France. The sudden and stunning collapse of this major military power in June 1940 changed the strategic balance. It opened up the real possibility that Britain too would be conquered.

In the summer of 1940, Roosevelt made the fateful decision to provide substantial assistance to England in its struggle against Nazi Germany. The United States offered England 50 overage destroyers in return for military bases in British possessions in the Western Hemisphere. He also took steps to strengthen American defenses, most notably by mobilizing the National Guard and asking for a peace-time draft. But in the 1940 presidential campaign, he also promised the American people he would not lead this nation into war.

Roosevelt, in building a case for rearmament and American aid to Britain, stressed the national security threat posed by Hitler's regime. If America did not take the necessary steps to rearm, eventually the Western Hemisphere would be a target of Nazi aggression. The preservation of Britain's Royal Navy served as a front line of defense for the
United States.

At the same time, Roosevelt made it clear that Nazism threatened the fundamental values of human decency. In campaign speeches, FDR contrasted the values of American democracy and compared them to the machinations of dictatorships. After his re-election in November 1940, Roosevelt's rhetoric would become increasingly strident about the evil nature of the Nazi regime. Hitler and his minions brought destruction, slavery, and death to the people of Europe they managed to conquer. Roosevelt foresaw even more foreboding threats. In one pre-war Pearl Harbor speech, Roosevelt even declared that the Nazi regime remained bent on attacking all religions if it achieved world domination.

During the Cold War, appeasement became a pejorative most often hurled by conservatives against those who questioned whether détente with the Soviet Union might be possible. Conservatives said we must avoid another Munich and not show weakness in confronting another totalitarian power; converts often sing the loudest in church—the anti-interventionist movement had had a strong conservative tint in 1940 and 1941, when Senator Robert Taft and a group of Midwestern and Western Senators, primarily from the Republican Party, consistently opposed such measures as the Destroyer-Base Deal and a host of other actions.

But it would be incorrect to tar the anti-interventionist movement by the late 1930s and early 1940s as simply a conservative anti-Roosevelt, anti-New Deal movement. As Justus D. Doencke's documentary history of the America First Committee shows, this organization strived to attract members from across the ideological spectrum. Not only did conservatives join America First, but also some from the left, most notably the socialist Norman Thomas, embraced the goals of the organization. A number of businessman joined, but so did the fiery labor leader of the United Mine Workers, John L. Lewis. Two future American presidents, John F. Kennedy and Gerald R. Ford, were also members.6

The organization even attracted some American Jews. When Charles Lindbergh in late 1941 implied in a public address that Jews were unwisely supporting intervention and should be careful, the leadership of the movement debated how to deal with the fall-out from the address. Internal documents show many members of the executive board did not want to be tarred as an anti-Semitic group.

Even though as a historian, I think FDR and the interventionists had it right; it is important to give his opponents their due, for they raised a number of valid arguments. Could Hitler really invade the United States? Anti-interventionists made a strong case that it was both unlikely and militarily difficult for Hitler to accomplish this feat. Moreover, they offered a solid critique which called into question the premise that the United States could not economically survive if Europe remained in Nazi hands. In their view, there remained sufficient natural resources and trading partners within the Western Hemisphere to sustain the United States. Anti-interventionists questioned why we should come to the aid of a Communist regime that had suppressed freedom of religion and other basic freedoms. They also challenged the notion that American and British interests were one and the same. In aiding Britain, they said, the United States was not merely supporting a democracy, but an imperial power. Why should we prop up the British Empire?

The America First Committee and other mainstream anti-interventionists raised important questions regarding the consequences of war for individual liberty. Their fears were not completely unfounded. In retrospect we know that FDR struck hard against his critics and sought to tar the anti-interventionist movement as a front for Nazi subversion. Historians have used declassified documents
and other records to show how Roosevelt used the FBI to conduct extensive surveillance against the anti-interventionists seeking to find acts of disloyalty. Even though the link was never found, the surveillance continued until Pearl Harbor. Although there existed a small and vocal pro-Nazi American Bund movement and several other fringe radical conservative movements, most anti-interventionists did not serve as a Nazi-inspired Fifth column.7

Anti-interventionists were also correct regarding their concerns over the growing centralization of political and economic power in the hands of the Executive Branch. Moreover, Robert Taft, Hamilton Fish, and many other anti-interventionists also suspected the motives of Franklin Roosevelt. When I interviewed Hamilton Fish in the late 1980s in his New York City apartment I was stunned that the passage of more than 40 years had not dimmed the former Congressman's strong antipathy toward FDR.

Was Roosevelt lying during the 1940 political campaign when he declared his hatred of war and his unwillingness to send another generation to die in the trenches of Europe?

Of course, Roosevelt could be disingenuous. Was Roosevelt lying during the 1940 political campaign when he declared his hatred of war and his unwillingness to send another generation to die in the trenches of Europe? Was he taking an unnecessary risk to American national security in 1940 by maintaining that sending overage destroyers to England would not weaken the American Navy? When German U-Boats attacked American naval vessels taking hostile action against them, why did he claim these attacks were unprovoked?

Roosevelt has been both a blessing and a curse for historians seeking to understand him and his motivations. Although FDR was the first president to establish an official presidential library even before he died, he seldom wrote letters revealing his innermost thoughts or kept a "secret" diary. An opportunist and master politician, he often refused to make clear cut decisions, in order to offer himself maximum flexibility. His managerial style often set competing aides and government agencies at cross purposes.

It is also possible to overplay the portrait of Roosevelt as the opportunist. His actions in 1940 and 1941 show a political leader who viewed the Nazi state as a threat to American security. In his fireside speeches and other addresses, he consistently stated that Hitler's regime violated the fundamental standards of human decency. By 1940, there was no question the United States would mobilize sufficient forces to protect the Western Hemisphere. By 1941, not only did the United States firmly commit itself to aiding Great Britain through Lend Lease, but it also extended this assistance to the Soviet Union once it was invaded. It took on commitments to protect the sea lanes against U-Boats on a good portion of the North Atlantic. Roosevelt sent American forces to occupy Iceland and ordered the military to make contingency plans to occupy the Azores Islands if threatened by the Nazis.

Roosevelt's great strengths as war leader would be his willingness to embrace bi-partisan-ship at home and multilateralism abroad. In 1940, Roosevelt appointed two prominent Republicans, Henry Stimson and Frank Knox, to the positions of heads of the War and Navy Departments. He selected strong-willed and
independent thinkers as senior military leaders. Moreover, Roosevelt sought to build a broad coalition not only at home, but also abroad. He forged a close personal relationship with Winston Churchill and had the American military engage in extensive staff talks with the British and other future wartime Allies. Roosevelt, in the battle for domestic and worldwide public opinion, sought to place the war on a high moral plane. The Atlantic Charter issued after the first Churchill-Roosevelt summit in August 1941 declared that this would be a struggle not simply to preserve England and defeat Nazi tyranny, but also to preserve fundamental human rights. Although it skirted the question of decolonization in deference to Churchill's adamant views regarding the British Empire, this document declared the right of people to choose their form of government and live in peace. In a world engulfed in war, the document optimistically proclaimed a vision of a world freed from weapons of war. It argued that both nations remained committed to ensuring peoples around the world are freed from fear and want.

His critics at the time and historians in retrospect have criticized FDR for a soaring rhetoric that often did not match his actions. Was FDR simply parroting what the American public wanted to hear? Probably not. To begin with, Roosevelt is too consistent in building a public critique of the Nazi regime to simply dismiss it as mere platitudes. Moreover, Roosevelt probably, like many Americans who supported intervention, believed the two were too intertwined to be separated by 1940. According to Roosevelt's critique of the Nazi regime, it was antithetical to fundamental human liberties and remained bent upon aggression.

Did Roosevelt really want war with Germany in 1941? Certainly Roosevelt's actions in waging undeclared naval warfare could be interpreted as seeking to provoke Germany to declare war against the United States. But a case has been made that FDR wanted to avoid war with Nazi Germany if aiding Britain and the Soviet Union were enough. Although he was willing to risk war in 1941, it was primarily to keep supply lines open to Britain.

The United States and Germany did go to war, but only after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Hitler honored the Tripartite Pact with Japan and declared war against the United States in December 1941. The United States Congress quickly reciprocated. But Americans during the conflict itself remained far less passionate about the fight against Germany than they did regarding the struggle against Japan. After Pearl Harbor, the Roosevelt Administration in the early stages of the war worked hard to convince Americans to follow a Europe-first strategy. American attitudes toward Germans remained muted to point that the U.S. Army expressed some concerns early in the war that the incoming G.I. did not display enough hatred toward the Germans. Of course, the reaction is understandable given the fact that many Americans felt that they had been duped during the First World War by the over-inflated propaganda of the Wilson Administration that demonized Germans as an uncivilized race of Huns. The muted attitude toward Germany and Germans in the Second World War meant that Americans did not persecute German-Americans as they had during 1917 and 1918. In a war marked by unparalleled dehumanization of the enemy, the American public, and even many American soldiers, were able to distinguish between the Nazi regime and the German people. For the most part, most Americans did not view the German people as an evil race.

The nature of war against Germany had something to do with the somewhat benign attitude of the public and American GIs. Not until 1943 did American land forces confront
German armies in significant numbers. As Gerald Linderman has noted, warfare, especially in North Africa, remained somewhat "civilized," and many of the laws of war related to care of the wounded and POWs were often honored by both sides. Not until the battle for France and Germany would the Nazis begin to perpetrate significant numbers of war crimes against American soldiers, the most infamous case being the Malmedy massacre during the Battle of the Bulge. Although some American Jewish POWs in German hands were brutally treated, most captured Americans received relatively good treatment, and the International Red Cross regularly visited their prison camps. The U.S. in turn reciprocated and offered captured German prisoners in the United States a benign imprisonment.8

The liberation of the concentration and death camps in 1945 offered incontrovertible proof regarding the evils of the Nazi regime to both American soldiers and the wider public. After V-E Day, few questioned the reasons why the United States fought against Nazi Germany. The Nuremberg Trials of the Nazi leadership built a solid criminal and ultimately historical case, showing that the Second World War was no accident, but represented a cold, calculated pattern of aggression on the part of Hitler's regime. Moreover, it carefully documented the enormous crimes against humanity and the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis.

The Cold War led American leaders to blur the amount of support that existed within Germany for the Hitler regime. Denazification had been pursued with some vigor in the first years of the American and British occupation of western Germany but soon took a backseat to the needs of the Cold War. Many former Nazis were rehabilitated and a West German government was created and allowed to join the Western Alliance. Cold War rhetoric condemned the Nazis and their quest to build an aggressive totalitarian state bent on world domination. At the same time, many Cold Warriors made a sharp distinction between a few powerful Nazis and a large mass of misguided, even innocent, Germans. Moreover, while the Holocaust was not completely ignored, it was also not a dominant theme in the historiography of the Second World War.

Beginning in the 1960s, scholars began to investigate and document the full extent of Nazi racial ideology that produced the Holocaust. Although there are a number of sharp scholarly differences, it is fair to say that most historians increasingly saw the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis as not an aberration, but a central goal of the German State under Hitler's rule. By the 1970s, this scholarship increasingly shaped American perceptions of the Second World War as best reflected in both Hollywood films focusing on the Holocaust and the growing efforts to build memorials in the United States to this horrendous incident in human history. In many ways, this movement to preserve the memory of the Holocaust has contributed to the growing amnesia regarding the debates over America's entry into this war. Although I wish America had entered the Second World War solely on moral grounds and with a desire to stop genocide and other crimes against humanity, these remained secondary reasons at best for why most Americans went to war against Nazi Germany in 1941.

Pearl Harbor produced visceral reactions on the part of Americans in 1941—fear, but also a strong thirst for revenge. American propaganda against Japan often resorted to racial stereotypes and displayed great willingness to dehumanize the enemy. Racism no doubt played a part in this dehumanization, but it also stemmed, in part, from the nature of war in the Pacific. Historians of combat may disagree about the causes, but they do agree that the war in the Pacific theater quickly
degenerated into a "war without mercy." Victorious Japanese forces treated American POWs captured in the conflict brutally and did not cooperate with the International Red Cross. Americans treated captured Japanese prisoners better, but many Army and Marine units disliked having to take prisoners. The Japanese failure to respect the non-combatant status of medics led many of them to carry arms for sake of self-preservation.9

The war in the Pacific still engenders strong feelings, especially on the part of veterans of this conflict. In my oral histories with veterans of the Asian theater, I am struck by how veterans of the war against Japan generally have much more hatred of the Japanese than do their counterparts who fought against Germany. But Pearl Harbor looms large not only for the World War II generation, but also for succeeding ones. During the Cold War, many argued the United States could not afford, in an age of thermonuclear weapons, to suffer another surprise attack of that magnitude. After September 11, 2001, many Americans saw historical analogies between the attack on Pearl Harbor and the Al Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.10

Pearl Harbor also aroused deep suspicions in some quarters that a conspiracy had been fostered. Within days after Pearl Harbor, Robert Taft in a public speech wondered how the United States could have suffered such a catastrophic disaster.11 Even before the war ended, several official investigations took place seeking to affix responsibility for failing to anticipate and take measures to defend against this attack. After the war, Congress undertook a major investigation that produced thousands of pages of testimony from the key civilian and military leadership. None of these official investigations concluded that the Roosevelt Administration specifically knew Pearl Harbor was going to be attacked. All these reports remained quite critical of the leadership of the army and naval commanders at Pearl Harbor.

These investigations and reports have not silenced critics. In 1948, Charles Beard, an unrepentant opponent of entry in the Second World War, continued to maintain that the United States should have and could have avoided entering this global conflict. In President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War, 1941, Beard made the case that Roosevelt engineered America's entrance into this conflict by provoking Japan to attack Pearl Harbor. Beard's work would be followed by Charles Tansill's Back Door to War: the Roosevelt Foreign Policy, and these works laid the foundation for a veritable cottage industry of works that argue in one form or another that Roosevelt knew in advance that Pearl Harbor was going to be attacked.

Even though most scholars do not believe there is sufficient evidence to suggest Franklin Roosevelt knew the attack on Pearl Harbor was imminent, a large segment of Americans do agree with this proposition. But this acceptance of a Pearl Harbor conspiracy has not sparked a wider acceptance of a revisionist assessment of the necessity of the United States to fight against Japan in 1941. The Pearl Harbor conspiracy is embraced, except for a hard core of true believers, in much the same way as conspiracies surrounding the assassination of John F. Kennedy or

After September 11, 2001, many Americans saw historical analogies between the attack on Pearl Harbor and the Al Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.
the "alien cover-up" at the Roswell Airbase. Belief in these conspiracies may fuel a general distrust of government actions and motives but has not produced a significant movement for political change or historical revisionism. In fact, Congressmen and Senators, on a bipartisan basis, condemned historical revisionism as a result of the controversy over the Smithsonian Institute's Enola Gay.

Japan did embark in a wave of aggression in the 1930s and early 1940s. A case can be made for marking 1931 as the official beginning of the Second World War, since the Japanese Army seized control of Manchuria, and a year later Japan established a puppet regime there. However, Japanese actions in this period are far more ambiguous than Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939. Japanese troops were already stationed in Manchuria and Japan, like many other nations, maintained significant extraterritorial rights and concessions in China. The Japanese Army's aggressive actions in Manchuria were not initially sanctioned by the central government in Tokyo. Moreover, China's central government had only tenuous control over Manchuria in 1931.

Initially, the reaction of the United States toward Japanese aggression remained tepid at best. American foreign policy since the Open Door Notes of 1899 and 1900 emphasized access to open markets and the principle of Chinese territorial integrity. The administration of Herbert Hoover condemned the aggression and, under the leadership of Secretary of State Henry Stimson, announced a policy of non-recognition of Japan's actions in Manchuria. But Hoover did not threaten war or impose significant sanctions. Similarly, when war broke out between China and Japan in 1937, the Roosevelt Administration condemned Japan's attack on China in 1937, but it offered largely moral support to Chiang Kai-shek's regime.

Should the United States have challenged Japanese aggression? Beginning in the 1950s, some scholars wondered if American vital interests were threatened by Japan in 1940 and 1941. Revisionist historians argued as early as the 1950s that Roosevelt's foreign policy regarding Japan and China was unrealistic and naive. They maintained Japanese actions had not challenged the United States' vital interests. Moreover, Charles Tansill went so far as to suggest the United States should have welcomed Japanese actions in China. He believes Japanese occupation of China served as a strategic counterweight against potential Soviet aggression and growing Communist influence in Asia.

Other revisionists have not applauded Japanese aggression, but they do question the inconsistencies and miscalculations of American foreign policy, especially with regard to responding to Japanese aggression in China. Ultimately, the United States declared in negotiations with Japan in the Fall of 1941 that it expected a complete withdrawal of Japanese forces from China in order to mend relations between the two countries. Revisionists questioned whether it was realistic for America to demand that Japan unilaterally abandon China after achieving a series of battlefield victories that had deprived Chiang Kai-shek of the coastal cities. By making such demands, was it not inviting war?

Japanese aggression in China might not have led to war with the United States. But Japan's decision in 1940 to occupy northern French Indochina and make increasingly threatening moves against British and Dutch possessions in the Far East greatly alarmed the Roosevelt Administration. Moreover, Paul Schroeder, in The Axis Alliance and Japanese-American Relations, stressed the importance of Japan signing the Axis Alliance with Germany and Italy in September 1940. He and others have maintained that the United States overreacted to this pact and incorrectly viewed Japan and Nazi Germany as being cut
from the same cloth. As a result, the United States took far stronger actions against Japan after it occupied northern Indochina than it might have had the Tripartite Pact not been in existence. Instead of simple diplomatic protests, the United States embarked on a series of steadily escalating actions, initially limiting the sale of aviation fuel to the Japanese and requiring them to secure export licenses for American products. After Japan moved into southern Indochina in July 1941, the United States stiffened economic sanctions by freezing Japanese assets in the United States and by implementing an oil embargo.12

It is striking how divided American policymakers were even as late as November 1941. There were moderates in the Roosevelt Administration, most notably American Ambassador to Japan Joseph Grew, who thought they could reach a negotiated settlement. The moderates maintained that there remained deep divisions in the Japanese military and government among those who wanted an aggressive policy of expansion and those who believed it was in the best interest of Japan to remain part of a liberal world order. Hardliners, such as Stanley Hornbeck of the State Department, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, and other Administration officials, took a much different approach toward Japan. They saw Japan as in the grip of a militaristic clique and believed only strong measures would compel Japan to abandon an aggressive foreign policy. Bureaucratically, those favoring a tough line with Japan won the battle within the administration in 1941. According to Jonathan Utley, junior level officials in the State, Treasury, and Interior Departments made important decisions at several key turns regarding the implementation of sanctions against Japan that made them stronger than either Roosevelt or his Secretary of State Cordell Hull intended them to be.13

Even if the United States needed to challenge Japanese aggression, did it do it in the right manner? Many historians, most recently Sidney Pash in his pathbreaking dissertation, suggest the Roosevelt Administration pursued a policy of deterrence in trying to contain Japan. In short, FDR and advisors, in pursuing a Europe-first policy, wanted to stop potential Japanese aggression but did not want an immediate war with Japan. In retrospect, FDR and his advisors ended up with the worst of both worlds: a policy of deterrence which did not prevent war but left the United States unprepared for a full-scale war with Japan in 1941.14

The drift toward war with Japan in late 1941 suggests some of the limitations of FDR's presidential style. In dealing with Nazi Germany and trying to build an anti-Nazi coalition, Roosevelt often bypassed official channels and did not delegate key negotiations or decisions. For example, he did not take Secretary Hull with him to meet Winston Churchill off the coast of Newfoundland in August 1941. FDR was made abreast in the crucial months of 1941 of the exact disposition of naval vessels in the North Atlantic. He sent his closest advisor, Harry Hopkins, to the Soviet Union to assess the situation before deciding to supply aid.

In the case of American policy toward Japan, however, it is true that FDR set the broad parameters of a policy that led the United States to challenge Japanese actions in 1941. But it is striking how much of his authority over Japanese policy FDR did delegate to his Secretary. Until Pearl Harbor, Hull played a central role in shaping Japanese-American relations even though FDR had cut him out of many of the key decisions being made with regard to European affairs.

By fall of 1941, it was perfectly clear that there was no room for compromise with Nazi Germany. The United States declared in the Atlantic Charter that it sought a victory against Nazi Germany. We had frozen
German assets in the United States and were fighting an undeclared naval war in the North Atlantic. But even in this same period, Hull still believed a settlement could be reached. In this same period, Roosevelt even wondered if he should personally meet with the Japanese premier in order to improve relations (Hull persuaded him not to do it). Our aid to China remained miniscule, especially when compared with vast sums provided to Britain and the Soviet Union. Moreover, the United States had to struggle to maintain such gestures of deterrence as maintaining a sufficient number of ships in Pearl Harbor. Thus, to meet the needs of anti-submarine patrolling, several naval vessels from the Pacific were redeployed in the summer and fall of 1941 and dispatched to the North Atlantic.

Decades of criticism have been heaped on FDR and his Administration, especially over Pearl Harbor. Roosevelt's critics at the time also had made important misjudgments. Like FDR, most anti-interventionists underestimated the power and strength of Japan: both supporters and opponents of intervention agreed on one thing in the early 1940s—that America public opinion when they opted to go to war. The delivery of the final ultimatum to Secretary Hull after the attack on the United States forces only added fuel to the fire. We had been duped. To Japanese military leaders, Pearl Harbor and the subsequent attacks on the Philippines, Wake Island, Guam, the Dutch East Indies, and Malaysia were intended to deliver a knockout blow to the United States and Britain, and to lead to a negotiated peace that would allow Japan to maintain a vast sphere of influence in China and the Central Pacific.

The attack on Pearl Harbor was a masterful attack at a place few Americans realistically expected war to begin. In the months leading to the war, the administration and the military worked feverishly to strengthen the defense of the Philippines, the most vulnerable and likely place of a Japanese first strike against American forces. Like other military commanders in the Pacific, the two commanders at Pearl Harbor, Rear Admiral Husband E. Kimmel and Lt. General Walter Short, received a general war warning in November 1941. But these two commanders took at best half measures to adequately defend their commands. Moreover, they believed the Japanese Americans living in Hawaii posed the greater threat to their command through sabotage. As a result, on the morning of December 7, ammunition boxes were locked and airplanes were not dispersed, but parked in the center of the airfields. Fortunately, while Pearl Harbor was a disaster, it was not a knockout blow. Although victory was not certain or pre-ordained, we can now see in retrospect that the seeds of defeat were already sown on

In the late 1930s, most Americans did not embrace the anti-fascist cause, but in the early 1960s there existed widespread support for a foreign and military policy predicated on opposing communism.
December 7. Before Pearl Harbor it is doubtful many Americans would have been enthusiastic about preserving the territorial integrity of China or defending British Malaysia. Angered and humiliated, Americans thirsted for revenge against Japan to the point that Roosevelt feared it would divert America from his Germany First strategy. It also made seeking an end to the war against Japan even more difficult.

Why does it matter that memory and history clash so directly at times? On its most basic level, World War II has served as a paradigm for the good war for political leaders of all ideological spectrums. The general public, by failing to remember the debates surrounding America's entry into the Second World War, has viewed debates surrounding the Vietnam War and the two Gulf Wars as aberrations. Politically, if one compares the Congressional debates of 1940 and 1941 with those over escalation of American involvement in Vietnam in 1964-1965, the latter are much more deferential to the Executive Branch. In the late 1930s, most Americans did not embrace the anti-fascist cause, but in the early 1960s there existed widespread support for a foreign and military policy predicated on opposing communism.

Popular memory regarding the United States in the Second World War has been aligned with the forces of good. Although this article has focused on the ambiguities of our involvement in this conflict, I am in the group of historians who see the regimes of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan as threatening vital national interests of the United States. Moreover, the United States' participation in the Grand Alliance with Great Britain and the Soviet Union led to the defeat of Nazi Germany, ensuring that that brutal and barbaric regime ended. Morally, the Second World War, especially in Europe, was a necessary war.

Of course, we remember the past with the hope that we can shape the future. But history seldom happens quite the same way. The United States at the start of the new century emerged as the unparalleled military power of the world. In both conventional and nuclear weaponry, no other nation could match its strength. In a sense, Americans had learned one of the lessons of the Second World War and never disarmed to the same extent that we had after earlier conflicts. Tragically, the new threat to American security in the new century came not from a conventional military attack from another nation, but from an international terrorist network. Although the Al Qaeda movement did receive some support from the Taliban-controlled Afghanistan government and possibly from other countries, the terrorists used crudely simple weapons on September 11, 2001. They could have purchased the box cutters used to hijack four civilian airliners at any hardware store in America.

One of the great legacies of the Second World War was to crush Nazi tyranny and Japanese imperialism. Moreover, the United States played an important role in shaping a world order that led to the emergence of both Germany and Japan as democratic states and responsible members of the international community. But the same cannot be said for the ability of the United States and other nations to prevent the recurrence of genocide. As Samantha Powers documents in The Problem from Hell, the United States missed many opportunities to prevent the genocide that occurred in Cambodia, Rwanda, and the former Yugoslavia. Americans have been reluctant to intervene in these countries because many believed that vital U.S. interests were not at stake. Although few Americans have condoned genocide, there remained only tepid political support for a foreign policy that actively sought to prevent post-World War II genocides. In a sense,
Americans, as they did in the early 1940s, have generally supported the application of American force abroad to support U.S. national interests. Americans may not have learned one of the most important lessons of the Second World War regarding the moral imperative to act swiftly or decisively against regimes that engage in genocide. ◆

Endnotes
1 G. Kurt Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way* (Smithsonian Institute Press, 1995).
2 Charles A. Beard, *President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War, 1941* (Yale University Press, 1948); Charles Tansill, *Back Door to War* (H. Regnery, 1952).
7 Richard W. Steele, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and His Foreign Policy Critics* 94 Political Science Quarterly 15-32 (Spring 1979); Athan Theoharis, *The FBI and the American Legion Contact Program, 1940-1946* 100 Political Science Quarterly 271-286 (Summer 1985).
15 Doenecke, *supra* n. 6, at 454.
The Vietnam War was a turning point in American political history. The disastrous U.S. military intervention in Southeast Asia ended President Lyndon Johnson's presidency, split the Democratic Party, virtually destroyed the New Deal political coalition that had dominated American politics for nearly four decades, and paved the way for the economic turmoil of the 1970s. It opened the door to new and equally potent political forces that lasted into the 21st century. For more than a generation, and possibly beyond, its painful memories and "lessons" were a powerful influence on the formation and exercise of U.S. military and foreign policy.

The war also unleashed a level and variety of public dissent never before seen in American politics, but one that profoundly altered the ways that the American people communicate with their elected leaders. Before the war, and the Watergate scandal it helped to spawn, news reporters, the public, and even members of Congress, generally accepted information supplied from presidents and their advisors. In the wake of the war and the Watergate scandal, the press and the American people were less trusting and more apathetic about government, and doubtful of its ability to positively impact their lives.

The tragedy of Vietnam cannot be measured simply by its impact on American society, politics, or diplomacy. Compounding the calamity is the simple fact that millions of deaths might have been averted had the American people and their leaders opened their eyes to the delusions leading them progressively deeper into the morass of Southeast Asia in the 1950s and 1960s—a national crusade undertaken to defeat an enemy that had once been our ally and that had originally wanted nothing more than independence from brutal colonial rule.

From beginning to end, America's political, military, and diplomatic leaders deluded themselves, accepting and perpetrating a series of myths and illusions about Vietnam that exacerbated and deepened the ultimate catastrophe. Those include:

- Most Americans and their leaders were deluded about nature of the threat to freedom in Indochina, concluding that it was only "international" communism and not French colonialism. They also believed that the communist-supported nationalistic movement in Indochina was not indigenous, but directed from Moscow and Peking.
- President Eisenhower and his advisors

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were deluded about the success of their policies in Indochina and wrongly concluded that they were winning the armed struggle against the Vietminh guerrillas in the mid- and late-1950s.

- American leaders in the 1950s were deluded about South Vietnamese Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem, wrongly concluding he that was a reformer dedicated to democratic ideals.

- President John F. Kennedy was deluded about the course of the conflict during his administration. With disastrous results, he disregarded the young reporters in South Vietnam, who alerted him and their readers to the serious deficiencies of the American-backed South Vietnamese government and its military forces. Relying on advisors like Vice President Lyndon Johnson, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy, Kennedy rejected a fundamental reappraisal of U.S. policy in Vietnam that might have halted or slowed the nation's descent into the quagmire of Southeast Asia.

- Throughout the 1960s, Kennedy, Johnson, and other American political leaders were deluded about the true nature of the conflict. They wrongly assumed that the war was primarily a military—not a political—struggle, and that the application of military might was a legitimate substitute for an educated program to help the South Vietnamese regime win the "hearts and minds" of its people.

- American voters in 1964 were innocently deluded about Johnson's intentions in Vietnam, believing his promises of "no wider war."

- Leaders in Congress were deluded and misled about the nature of the incidents in the Gulf of Tonkin in August 1964, which resulted in a breathtaking grant of war-making power to Johnson from Congress in days following the incidents.

- Like Kennedy, President Johnson and his advisors were deluded by the prospects of military might—particularly bombing—and believed that a military solution, short of destroying North Vietnam, was possible.

- Both Johnson and his successor, Richard Nixon, successfully deluded American voters about the steps they were willing to take to achieve peace. In the 1968 election, a winning presidential candidate again deluded American voters. Without explicitly saying so, Nixon allowed voters to believe that he possessed a plan to end the war with "honor." And during the early months of Nixon's presidency, opponents of the war in Congress were deluded into believing that Nixon planned to move quickly to end the fighting.

For the United States, Vietnam itself was a grand and very tragic delusion—a country that the American people and their leaders believed could be "saved" from what they believed was a Soviet-controlled communist regime that threatened to consume all of Southeast Asia. Indeed, for almost two decades, American leaders mistakenly concluded that the United States had the power, the will and means to win the war—if a definition of victory could ever be universally accepted.

However, it is not victory that most needed definition for America's leaders in the 1950s and 1960s. American policymakers—blinded by the bright light of communism—would have benefited from a clearer and more informed understanding of U.S. strategic interests, especially in Asia. At the time, in the wake of the Korean conflict, it appeared to many American leaders that the next front in
the war against communist aggression would be Southeast Asia. In retrospect, it appears that these leaders badly miscalculated the threat and nature of a supposed monolithic, international communist conspiracy. These miscalculations paved the way for the nation's tragic misadventure in Vietnam.

I.

To understand how American leaders mired their nation in Vietnam, it is necessary to first examine several events of the later Truman years. In particular, I believe that five events (and their cumulative effects) are vital in discovering the domestic American political roots of the Vietnam War, especially during the period 1953-1963:

1. The Soviets detonated an atom bomb in August 1949. In September 1949, President Harry Truman announced this fact to an alarmed American public. Among other things, it meant that the U.S. was no longer the world's only nuclear power. This drastically altered the nature of the Cold War and set off a nuclear arms race that lasted for much of the century.

2. "Loss" of China to communism in October 1949. When the Nationalist Chinese government of Chiang Kai-shek fell to the communist regime of Mao Zedong, congressional Republicans exploited the developments with a relentless assault on Truman's foreign policy. Leading Republicans charged that Truman and Secretary of State Dean Acheson were preventing communist expansion into Western Europe, they had, in the words of Republican Senator H. Alexander Smith of New Jersey, "left the back door wide open in Asia."

In the Senate, California Republican William Knowland—known as the "Senator from Formosa" for his devotion to Chiang Kai-shek—led a vigorous and sustained Republican attack on Truman and Acheson. He charged that Truman's policies "accelerated the spread of communism in Asia" so much that "gains for communism there have far more than offset the losses suffered by communism in Europe." Chiang was corrupt and inept as a leader, but Knowland still charged that the "debacle solely and exclusively rests upon the administration which initiated and tolerated it." Truman and Acheson, he suggested, were guilty of "appeasement," as well as "aiding, abetting and giving support to the spread of communism in Asia."

3. Sen. Joseph McCarthy's charges of communists in U.S. government in February 1950. The Wisconsin Republican's explosive allegations about communists in the U.S. State Department sparked a four-year "Red Scare" that initially tarnished Truman and other Democratic Party leaders. McCarthy's rhetoric, tacitly and explicitly condoned by Republican leaders, was breathtaking in its audacity and recklessness. "The Democratic label is now the property of men and women who have . . . bent to the whispered pleas from the lips of traitors . . . men and women who wear the political label stitched with the idiocy of a Truman, rotted by the deceit of [n] Acheson." The Roosevelt and Truman years, he said, represented "twenty years of treason."

4. Presentation to Truman of NSC-68. In April 1950, Truman's National Security Council produced a sobering assessment of the nation's military strength, NSC Memorandum 68 (NSC-68). It concluded that the Soviets posed a very real threat to world peace and would become only more menacing by 1955, when they could amass a nuclear arsenal of up to 200 bombs. "The Soviet Union is developing the military capacity to support its design for world domination," the NSC said. As a Defense Department official somberly told Truman, "We must realize that we are now in a mortal conflict." To keep pace with Soviet military expansion, some admin-
istration officials believed that the U.S. would have to spend as much as $50 billion a year for nuclear and conventional weapons—an amount about four times the current military budget.

5. Outbreak of Korean War in June 1950. When communist North Korean troops marched into South Korea, Truman committed U.S. troops to lead a United Nations coalition to repel the invasion. Republicans, not consulted by Truman before he dispatched the troops to Korea, charged that the president's inattention to the threat of communism in Korea had tempted the North Koreans to stage their attack. While the war initially helped Truman blunt partisan attacks regarding his Asian policies, Republicans quickly returned to the offensive. Later, as the war effort lagged, Truman and his party were subjected to harsh political attacks.

A complicating factor in Truman's mounting political troubles was his firing in 1951 of General Douglas MacArthur, commander of UN military forces in Korea. Piled on top of other perceived mistakes in China and the damaging attacks on the loyalty and competence of his State Department, the MacArthur episode made the weight of negative public opinion about Truman's foreign policy almost unbearable. Americans grew weary of the war. They also harbored serious and lasting doubts about the Democratic foreign policies—doubts that were only confirmed by MacArthur's dismissal.

With the exception of MacArthur's firing, these events occurred within a time span of 11 months and during the year leading up the 1950 mid-term elections. The results: In the Senate, Republicans came within two votes of seizing control. The Democrats' 54-to-42 margin had all but disappeared and, with it, most chances that Truman would have his way with the new 82nd Congress. Truman had not only lost five crucial votes in the Senate; voters had rejected the Senate's two Democratic leaders.

In the House, the Democratic losses were just as distressing for Truman. Democrats lost 27 seats.

Two years later, during the 1952 presidential election, Republican nominee Dwight D. Eisenhower blamed Truman for having "grossly underestimated" the communist threat and claimed that "we are in that war because this administration abandoned China to the Communists . . . [and] announced to all the world that it had written off most of the Far East as beyond our direct concern." His running mate Richard Nixon charged that Truman "has lost 600 million people to the communists."

In that election, not only did voters elect Eisenhower as the first Republican president in 20 years, they did so in a landslide while handing his party control of the House and Senate, if only by slim margins.

II.

Among the political lessons taken to heart by a generation of American political leaders following the 1950 and 1952 elections:

1. Communism was an evil, monolithic force, directed from Moscow, and bent on world domination. It must be opposed at all costs.

2. For a president to allow one inch of Asian soil to fall to the communists was to commit political suicide.

3. The Munich analogy. This deserves special attention. The attitude expressed in 1951 by Dean Rusk, the assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs under Truman, is instructive. Testifying before a joint meeting of the Senate's Foreign Relations and Armed Services committees, Rusk acknowledged that his intense dread of communist totalitarianism had been profoundly shaped by the experience of World War II and the years leading up to that cataclysmic conflict. As a graduate student, Rusk (who would later serve
as secretary of state under President Kennedy) had been in Berlin in March of 1933 when Hitler came to power. Later, back in the United States, he watched ruefully as European leaders appeased Hitler at Munich in 1938.

Recalling how the German authorities had once fined him for "tempting thieves" who returned his stolen canoe, Rusk said he concluded that "the United States and Western democracies, with our pacifism, isolationism, and indifference to aggression, were guilty of 'tempting thieves'” in Europe. "It was the failure of the governments of the world to prevent aggression," he later said, "that made the catastrophe of World War II inevitable." Like others in the Truman State Department, Rusk was determined that the United States not repeat the mistakes of 1938 in Asia. Like many of his generation, Rusk embraced the "lesson" that Hitler taught an entire generation of American leaders: Aggression unchecked is aggression unleashed. He concluded that "Communist absorption of additional countries in Asia would create vast new problems for the United States and, in fact, for the rest of the free world." Walking away from such a challenge, Rusk maintained, would amount to another Munich.

4. Although it had not yet been given the name, the "domino theory" was also widely accepted by American leaders. A typical congressional supporter of U.S. military assistance to the French in Indochina was Democratic Senator Hubert Humphrey, a liberal, anticommunist freshman from Minnesota who strongly backed Truman in Korea and who wanted to protect Indochina from "the Communist onslaught." Humphrey told the Senate in August 1951 that the loss of Indochina would be "as severe a blow as if we were to lose Korea." Like many members of Congress, Humphrey believed that a communist victory in Vietnam would only lead to "the loss of Malaya, the loss of Burma and Thailand, and ultimately the conquest of all the south and southeast Asiatic area."

III.

As Dwight Eisenhower prepared to assume power in early 1953, Americans could be forgiven if they were confused about their departing president's foreign policy goals. After years of insisting that the real threat to peace was the Soviet Union's designs on Western Europe, Harry Truman left office presiding over a military that had much of its manpower tied down, inexplicably, in an excruciating and maddening conflict in Asia. Even as the Soviet Union continued to loom as a greater threat in Europe, the U.S. was moving toward an even deeper and more consequential commitment to the defense of Asia.

Even as the Soviet Union continued to loom as a greater threat in Europe, the U.S. was moving toward an even deeper and more consequential commitment to the defense of Asia.
after World War II. Had the new president and his State Department responded to Ho Chi Minh's entreaties in the war's aftermath, the charismatic Vietnamese leader might never have turned so completely to China for help with his war of national independence against the oppressive French colonialists. But in the period when State Department officials were debating whether to side with the legitimate nationalistic passions of many in Indochina, a preoccupied Truman was absent from the debate. Eventually, he blindly heeded the counsel of certain State Department officials who were far more sympathetic to the desires of French leaders. Ho was snubbed, and a potential ally was lost to the Chinese.

Much later, in 1950, Truman willingly—but out of apparent political necessity—made the first down payment on the tragedy that would become the Vietnam War. Because he and his party had been painted soft on communism, especially communism in Asia, Democrats would vow never again to take lightly the communist threat in Asia. Because of Truman's painful experience, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and even Richard Nixon, each entered the White House acutely aware of the potential political consequences of insufficient vigilance against encroaching communism in Asia.

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But the down payment that Truman made in Indochina was not his alone. As a president labeled by his partisan and unyielding political opponents as a communist sympathizer, Truman could hardly be singularly condemned for seizing the opportunity for atone-ment in Asia. His decision to assist the French in what they convinced American officials was a noble effort to resist Chinese communist aggression in Indochina may have been naive and misguided, but it was hardly a tragic and irreversible mistake. Besides providing Truman and the Democrats with some measure of political inoculation against further charges of appeasement, Truman's decision to assist the French was prompted by a very legitimate desire to strengthen France's ability to resist Soviet communism in its European backyard.

Taking office in 1953, President Dwight Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles were no less committed to vigilance against communism in Asia (although Eisenhower approved an armistice agreement that accepted the communist government of North Korea). But where Truman and Acheson had stressed their successful containment policy against Soviet and Chinese communism, especially in Europe, Eisenhower and Dulles promised a far more ambitious and aggressive strategy for liberating the "captive peoples" under communist domination. In Indochina, at least, the Republican president and his secretary of state never seemed to understand that the real captors in Indochina were the French colonialists who were determined to reestablish their former empire using American money, arms, and assistance. And the only foreign troops on Vietnamese soil were French.

That mattered little to Eisenhower and Dulles, who spoke boldly of liberating those enslaved by communism, but merely refined Truman's successful containment policy under the label of "New Look." What really occurred in Indochina during Eisenhower's tenure as President was a congressional-executive consensus on the need to assist the French in what was widely characterized as their valiant struggle against the Soviet-backed Chinese communist threat in Indochina.
Persuaded by Eisenhower that preserving democracy in the region—which never really existed—was crucial to U.S. national security, members of Congress were more than willing to subsidize the lion's share of France's expenses. That was primarily because as long as France continued the fight, U.S. forces could remain on the sidelines. That was good politics so soon after the end of the recent, unpopular war in Korea. Few, if any, officials ever bothered to explain the contradiction inherent in official pronouncements that while U.S. national security was at stake in Indochina, French troops, and not American soldiers, were expected to defend American interests.

When French troops finally fled Indochina, the United States assumed responsibility for financing and training the South Vietnamese. The real purpose of the American aid, however, was to build a bastion strong enough to withstand the communist tide that Eisenhower and Dulles believed threatened all of Southeast Asia. That endeavor, of course, required hundreds of millions of American dollars. But it also required the active support and willing participation of the leaders and citizens of South Vietnam—something that Eisenhower, Dulles, and almost everyone associated with the American-led enterprise recognized but were never able to obtain. American leaders, it seemed, always cared more about South Vietnam's "salvation" than the people they were saving.

Despite that major stumbling block, Eisenhower and the Congress persisted. What kept the United States in Vietnam throughout the 1950s was the perception or illusion of success—or, rather, the absence of abject failure—that suggested that real reforms and military advances might someday be possible. But the optimism was always excessive, the faith in the power of old-fashioned Yankee know-how usually naive and the knowledge of Vietnam's culture and history woefully inadequate.

But even had American officials come to their senses, the story might not have changed much. Eisenhower and Dulles (and almost every other leader in Washington) had been profoundly influenced by the events of the early 1950s, as well as captured by their own fiery, partisan attacks on Democratic foreign policy failures. In any event, they seemed to truly believe that to abandon Indochina meant a communist victory in Saigon and a Democratic takeover in Washington. Politically, Eisenhower could not afford to abandon Indochina any more than Truman could have afforded to ignore it.

Except for dissuading Eisenhower from a military operation he had already rejected at the ill-fated French garrison at Dien Bien Phu, leading members of Congress were either quiescent or ignorant about U.S. policy toward Indochina during much of the 1950s. When they found the voice to find fault, it was usually to complain, as did Senator John F. Kennedy, about the French or, as did Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield, that support for the American-backed South Vietnamese leader, Ngo Dinh Diem, was insufficient. Because the conflict seemed under control, and Diem appeared to be the leader that South Vietnam needed, few leaders in Congress bothered to notice the increasing Vietminh strength, as well as Diem's troubling lack of enthusiasm for political and economic reforms that might have deprived the communist fires of the political oxygen they needed to survive. In the process, few noticed that the so-called democratic government in South Vietnam was nothing of the sort.

By 1960, Eisenhower and Dulles had done little to fundamentally improve the situation in South Vietnam. But the massive influx of American dollars and military equipment did buy Diem's regime time, meaning that President Kennedy inherited that nation's chronic problems when he became president.
in 1961. In a way, Kennedy had the extreme misfortune to become president at a time when Eisenhower's status quo policy in Indochina had run out of gas.

But Kennedy was no innocent bystander. Just as wedded to the domino theory in Southeast Asia as his predecessors, Kennedy regarded the preservation of South Vietnam's government as vital to U.S. security and believed the conflict was a proxy war in which the Soviets were testing the American will to resist communism. In 1961, following the debacle at the Bay of Pigs and his disastrous summit with Khrushchev in Vienna, Kennedy—like Truman before him—found Indochina to be just the place to prove his commitment to the anticommunist struggle.

When the time came to decide whether to give up on Vietnam or pour in more American men and resources, it was Kennedy who willingly played the hand that Eisenhower and Dulles had dealt him. Those cards were being played fewer than 12 years after China had gone communist and Harry Truman was labeled a communist dupe for having "allowed" Mao Zedong's ascendancy. No matter how troubling and distasteful another Asian conflict might have been, Kennedy believed that he and his party could not withstand the political gales resulting from any decision that turned Diem into a Vietnamese Chiang Kai-shek.

Kennedy's decision to send substantial numbers of military "advisors" was a monumental move that opened the door to the future escalation of the Johnson years. Yet it was a decision made with little thought about the basis for Vietnam's supposed importance to U.S. national security or a realistic assessment of the chances for success absent a democratic leader amenable to the necessary political and economic reforms. Furthermore, it was accomplished with little more than minor grumbling from compliant members of Congress who were still blissfully ignorant about the stakes in Southeast Asia.

But it was Kennedy's fateful decision, in the summer of 1963, to put his administration on the side of the South Vietnamese military officers planning Diem's demise that virtually ensured that the Southeast Asian country would be enveloped in domestic strife, political corruption, and military lethargy for the remainder of the war. As bad as he was, Diem proved a more skillful leader than the parade of rogues, incompetents, and dictators that succeeded him. While historians will debate for years whether Kennedy, had he lived, would have escalated the war to the degree that Johnson did in 1965, it is clear that Kennedy, at the very least, left Johnson a Vietnam plagued by problems too daunting for any American army or nation-building enterprise. Even had he wanted to withdraw U.S. forces from Vietnam, Kennedy would have been unwilling—prior to the 1964 elections, at least—to invite the inevitable political firestorm from conservatives of both political parties.

Johnson, as a new president unsure of his political standing and facing an election in less than a year, would prove even more reticent to tamper with the Eisenhower-Kennedy policy in Vietnam. Advised by the very men Kennedy had hired and whose advice he had heeded, Johnson vowed to carry out Kennedy's policies, foreign and domestic. And he had no interest in any fundamental reappraisal of the policy that had resulted in the murder of the president of a nation the United States supported in its struggle against the Viet Cong. Even as he campaigned for election in his own right, pledging "no wider war," Congress eagerly gave him permission to widen the war as much as he liked. While the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin resolution might not have given Johnson any powers he did not already possess, its near-unanimous passage ensured that he would never again feel the need to engage members of Congress in any
meaningful or substantive consultation as he took the nation headlong into the "wider war" he had once decried.

Like his predecessors, Johnson believed he was fighting against a Soviet-Chinese puppet regime in Hanoi. The degree to which the North Vietnamese and their Viet Cong allies were primarily concerned with the independence and unification of their nation was ignored. Instead, Johnson stressed his belief in the Munich analogy, openly worried about finding himself on the losing side of another "who lost China" debate, and said repeatedly that the U.S. presence in South Vietnam was aimed at preventing World War III.

It often seemed, however, that Johnson's motives were more personal. Besides his obvious intense personal dislike of Ho, whom he never met, Johnson believed that any diminution of the U.S. effort in Vietnam would violate the SEATO treaty and the commitments of three presidents, bringing upon him embarrassment and discredit. To "tuck tail and run," Johnson believed, would mean that he, and by extension his country, would stand accused of cowardice and mendacity.

But Johnson never fully informed the American people about the war being fought in their name. To share the real nature of the escalation and its expected costs with members of Congress and their constituents would have jeopardized his beloved Great Society.

Congress—despite having been deceived about the Gulf of Tonkin incidents—enthusiastically gave Johnson carte blanche to fight the war on his terms. More tragic were those like Majority Leader Mike Mansfield, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman J. William Fulbright, and Senator George McGovern of South Dakota, who subjugated their serious doubts about Johnson's policies during an election year and gave him their support and then, in the ensuing months, gave him their silence.

Even among the most highly skeptical members of Congress—McGovern, Mansfield, and Senator Frank Church of Idaho—support for continued appropriations for Vietnam was strong. Indeed, support for "our boys in the field" would remain an article of faith in the Congress for the remainder of the decade and would prove the most influential argument against withholding funds to force a
troop withdrawal.

Withdrawal was never the only alternative to escalation. But calls for a negotiated settlement, which Johnson embraced rhetorically, were always spurned in practice. Johnson believed, and most certainly correctly, that any negotiated settlement would result in a communist-dominated South Vietnam. (Of course, after 25 years of war and millions of lost lives, including almost 60,000 Americans, the ultimate result was no different.) But Johnson and his aides were transfixed by the evils of monolithic communism and the domino theory. They never entertained the idea—advanced by Fulbright and others—that the United States might have been able to peacefully coexist with a South Vietnamese communist regime that would have served as a buffer with communist China, or at least one that would have been equally hostile to the U.S. and China. Encouraged by his hawkish advisors, Johnson equated a negotiated settlement with appeasement, recalling the perceived "lessons" of Munich that aggression unchecked is aggression unleashed. As long as the Americans believed, as did the North Vietnamese, that more could be gained on the battlefield than the negotiating table, a peaceful settlement was impossible.

Only when one or both sides realized the futility of continued war were negotiations conceivable. Johnson and Gen. William Westmoreland, the U.S. commander in Vietnam, were enamored of their war of attrition, and always believed the next troop deployment would finally sap the communists of their will to fight. While Westmoreland was correct in assuming that the conflict was one of attrition, he never seemed to understand that it was the Americans whose patience for the fighting was limited. Meanwhile, those without patience—the Fulbrights, McGovern, Mansfields, and the anti-war protestors—were also, in Johnson's estimation, lacking patriotism.

Johnson's problem, however, was not the incessant cries of his critics for negotiations, but rather his mistaken belief that the U.S. could win the conflict in Vietnam entirely on the battlefield. Vietnam was also a political conflict in which the hearts and minds of the people were at stake. No matter how much Johnson and the U.S. military wished it to be, more bombs and more troops could never force the political and economic changes necessary to convince millions of South Vietnamese that their government in Saigon was worth fighting for. Convinced that he and his country would be labeled cowards or appeasers if he refused to fight, Johnson sometimes doubted that the application of military force was sufficient, but he never seriously considered de-escalation, a bona fide initiative to seek a neutral Vietnam, or engaging the North Vietnamese in peace talks.

Although he agonized over the 1965 decisions to begin the bombing campaign and to double the number of ground troops in South Vietnam, Johnson—having achieved a popular mandate for a more limited American role in Vietnam—allowed himself to become a captive to his fear of a repeat of the partisan political forces of the early 1950s. And his errors were compounded by the ways he and his advisors deceived the public and Congress about the administration's policy and then ignored or spurned the cautionary advice of prescient advisors and congressional critics. Instead of listening and learning from men like Mansfield and Undersecretary of State George Ball, Johnson merely humored them. To his detriment, Johnson also mishandled his detractors in Congress—particularly Robert Kennedy and Fulbright—and forced them to fight him and his war with even more passion and intensity.

But the failed policy in Vietnam was not Johnson's alone. While many members of Congress can be faulted for abdicating their constitutional responsibilities regarding
Vietnam, Mansfield, Fulbright, and Senate Armed Services Chairman Richard Russell deserve special mention. Even when it became obvious that Johnson would not achieve his objectives in Vietnam, Mansfield and Russell were loyal soldiers. With profound doubts about the war and possessing enough power and influence to force Johnson to alter course, Mansfield's and Russell's perverse, singular sense of loyalty to Johnson prevented them from speaking out in ways that might have saved thousands of American lives. At a time when the Senate might have benefited from the passion and initiative of a strong leader, Mansfield, Russell, and Fulbright were absent, handicapped by their tragic unwillingness to assume the legitimate leadership roles their positions demanded. And yet it is not clear that such leadership would have made a difference. Even the more vociferous opponents of the war proved ineffective because of their fundamental reluctance to coalesce behind any leader, as well as their inability to agree on a single coherent plan to end the war.

Few members of Congress—Morse and Gruening excepted—could ever claim to have clean hands regarding Vietnam. From almost the beginning of the war to its end, the story of Congress was one of a tragic abdication of power and responsibility. While some would later claim the war in Vietnam was a most political conflict, hampered by the meddling of politicians who tied the hands of the military commanders in the field, the truth was that Congress meddled in Vietnam almost not at all, and certainly not before 1966 and not substantially until 1969. It was not until 1973, after the war was virtually over, that members of Congress finally mustered the "courage" to withhold funding for the conflict.

Only when Richard Nixon took office did Mansfield begin to lose his reluctance to challenge the commander-in-chief over Vietnam. By then it was too late. The issue in 1969 was

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not whether to end the war, but how and how soon. Like Johnson, the American people gave Nixon a mandate to end the fighting. Like Johnson, Nixon—slavishly loyal to South Vietnamese leader Nguyen Van Thieu—squandered it in favor of a deceitful, excruciatingly slow withdrawal strategy in pursuit of an "honorable peace." To Nixon and Kissinger, that meant withdrawing U.S. troops slowly enough to leave all parties dissatisfied but not outraged. Nixon did not quite achieve that objective, but Vietnamization, along with his dissolution of the draft, did disarm his critics and allowed him to continually claim, even as he escalated and widened the fighting, that the incremental troop withdrawals were proof that the war was all but over.

Nixon refused to stop the fighting for many of the same reasons as Johnson did. Like the four presidents before him, the Republican president believed he could not withstand the partisan attacks after a precipitate withdrawal. But by 1969, Nixon knew what Johnson, in 1965, did not: a military victory in Vietnam was impossible short of a massive and overwhelming application of U.S. firepower. That, Nixon knew, would have been political suicide and still would not guarantee a U.S. vic-
tory. Nixon, therefore, attempted to split the difference by escalating the bombing in hopes of driving the North Vietnamese to the bargaining table, while he simultaneously de-escalated the ground war with his gradual troop withdrawals.

Like a gunslinger in a Western movie, Nixon shot his way out, escaping the barroom brawl while walking backwards toward the door with guns blazing. It was a retreat disguised as an offensive. And the ruse worked. By 1972, most Americans assumed the war was over and that Vietnamization had been marginally successful. Nixon won another term in a landslide over McGovern, the war's most visible and vociferous opponent. But Nixon had not won the war, or the peace that he had promised. He merely delayed the day of the communists' victory long enough so that he and the United States would not receive the blame.

IV.

The Vietnam War was America's longest armed conflict, a tragic crusade that cost millions of lives and ruined millions more. The war coincided with and contributed to the end of America's innocence. Because of Vietnam, Americans were exposed to the deceitfulness and cowardice of their presidents and other political leaders. From Eisenhower to Nixon, the decisions about Vietnam were almost always influenced, sometimes to overwhelming degrees, by domestic political considerations.

During the Vietnam era, had our presidents been more honest with Congress and the American people; had members of Congress more closely guarded their Constitutional war-making prerogatives; and had the American people and their leaders been better informed about Vietnam and the American policy there, we might have spared millions of lives and avoided untold misery.

In order to make informed, wise decisions about military and foreign policy, the Congress and the American people need more, not less, information from their presidents about why American troops should be deployed abroad. No matter what presidents and their advisors have almost always believed and practiced regarding the deployment of U.S. troops, the Constitution still invests Congress with the solemn responsibility and power to declare war. By any measure, the U.S. war in Vietnam serves as a chilling reminder of what can happen when Congress and the public take an ancillary role in the making of military and foreign policy.

Because of Vietnam and the Watergate scandal that it helped spawn, Americans learned to distrust their leaders to a degree almost unimaginable in the 1950s and early 1960s. In the name of fighting communism in Vietnam, the political and military leadership of the United States did more-than-insignificant damage to the resilient, but not-impervious, experiment known as American democracy. Despite the valor of brave soldiers on both sides, the Vietnam War should never be remembered as an honorable cause. Instead, it is more appropriate to view it as the kind of epic tragedy that can result when shortsighted leaders place domestic political concerns above the nation's better interests. ◆
On Tuesday morning, October 25, 1983, Ronald Reagan strode into the White House briefing room accompanied by the Prime Minister of Dominica, Eugenia Charles. As the current chair of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) stood beside him, the President announced: "Early this morning, forces from six Caribbean democracies and the United States began a landing or landings on the island of Grenada in the eastern Caribbean." The United States had undertaken this action, Reagan argued, for three reasons: to protect innocent lives, including those of almost a thousand Americans; to forestall further chaos; and to assist in the restoration of conditions of law and order and of government institutions to the island. Ultimately, he submitted, the U.S./OECS "collective action" had been "forced" on the United States by events that had "no precedent in the eastern Caribbean and no place in any civilized society."2

Of the many persons in President Reagan's diverse audience, few had ever heard of Grenada, a sovereign state of approximately 110,000 inhabitants and 133 square miles.3 Perhaps even fewer had heard of Dominica and its hard-boiled Prime Minister, Eugenia Charles. And surely, only a few experts then could properly identify the OECS, the regional institution that had formally requested American military assistance on October 23.4 Accordingly, Reagan's brief remarks left many questions, both grave and trivial, to be answered. From the outset, however, one fact was apparent to virtually everyone: the United States had committed its troops to combat for the first time since the Vietnam War.5

On the island of Grenada, reaction to the American "rescue mission" was overwhelmingly favorable.6 A CBS poll of Grenadian public opinion, for example, found that 91% of those contacted were "glad the United States troops [had come] to Grenada."7 Similarly, by early November, Reagan's decision to employ armed force had garnered strong support in the United States: an ABC-Washington Post survey found 71% in favor and only 22% opposed.8 Outside Grenada and the United States, however, the story was markedly different.9

Within a week of the invasion, 79 governments had condemned, repudiated, or in some way expressed disapproval of the operation.10 As one might expect, the Soviet Union was

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among the first to voice a scathing denunciation. TASS, the official Soviet news agency, dubbed Reagan "a modern Napoleon," simple-minded and devoid of conscience; it characterized the American action as "an act of open international banditry." Shortly thereafter, the United Nations General Assembly joined in the attack, voting 108 to 9 to condemn the American action as a "violation of international law." An even larger majority than that which had earlier condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan approved the November 2 resolution. More striking, however, was the reaction of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, a strident anti-communist and Reagan's most staunch supporter in Europe. In a Sunday phone-in radio program on the BBC World Service, the Tory leader remarked, "If you are going to pronounce a new law that 'wherever there is communism imposed against the will of the people then the U.S. shall enter,' then we are going to have really terrible wars in the world." The Cold War "Grenada episode," forgotten by many over the past two decades, nevertheless merits our close attention. For today we hear echoes of that period in our own. An activist, Republican presidency once again governs the U.S. While the "evil empire" has ceased to exist, an "axis of evil" has filled its place in presidential rhetoric. Once again, talk of a possible invasion was only temporarily distracted by an American tragedy. [Only two days before the Grenada invasion, one may recall, a suicide bombing of the Marines in Beirut inflicted the greatest loss of life that Corps had suffered since Iwo Jima. And the February 1, 2003 Columbia shuttle disaster preceded by less than two months the March 19 U.S.-British attack on Iraq.] Again, international organizations have debated the wisdom of forcible action to promote international peace and security. Once more, an armed conflict has been launched—after satellite-image-enhanced argument—with the participation of every branch of the U.S. military, with significant loss of civilian life, and with long-time stalwart U.S. allies questioning the wisdom of precipitous U.S. action. And for a second time, grave post-invasion questions have been raised about the quality of pre-invasion intelligence.

This essay will explore two Grenadian "echoes" in Iraq, hoping that these echoes may help us better understand our current circumstances, and more specific, the role that international rules and institutions may play in fostering global peace and security. First, it will briefly discuss the Reagan Administration's pre-invasion rhetoric. Thereafter, it will review the role that international law and organization considerations played in the Reagan Administration's invasion's deliberations.

From the outset, though, it is important to acknowledge a number of salient distinctions between the 1983 Grenada and 2003 Iraq episodes. First, the deliberations associated with the Grenada invasion were undertaken over a very brief time frame—13 days—while those associated with Iraq took place over many months. Indeed, on September 17, 2001, six days after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, President Bush is reported to have signed a 2½-page "TOP SECRET" document that outlined the plan for going to war in Afghanistan as part of a global campaign against terrorism, but also directed the Pentagon to begin planning military options for an invasion of Iraq. Second, neither the U.S. nor its eastern Caribbean allies consulted the United Nations before the Grenada invasion, but the U.N. proved a routine, high profile pre-war forum for Iraq discussions, with a U.S./British-drafted Security Council Resolution on Iraq—1441—garnering unanimous endorsement on November 8, 2002, with the U.S. President and Secretary of State making conspicuous
personal pre-war appeals for decisive international action before, respectively, the U.N. General Assembly\textsuperscript{25} and Security Council.\textsuperscript{26} Moreover, the Bush Administration made multiple post-war appearances before UN-associated bodies in an effort to solicit the assistance of the international community. Such efforts were reflected, for example, in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1511 of October 16, 2003\textsuperscript{27} and the Madrid International Conference on Reconstruction in Iraq.\textsuperscript{28}

Third, the degree of access afforded journalists during the Grenada and Iraq operations was markedly different. During the first three days of the Grenada action, Admiral Wesley L. McDonald banned reporters from the island for "operational reasons." When confronted by cries of censorship from the media and some members of Congress, however, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General John W. Vessey directed McDonald to land reporters in Grenada beginning on October 28, 1983.\textsuperscript{29} Vessey would subsequently acknowledge that the "huge mistake at the National level was failing to find a way to take some press along."\textsuperscript{30} During Operation "Iraqi Freedom," by contrast, journalists enjoyed unprecedented access to the battlefield because of a unique partnership between the U.S. military and the media that "embedded" 600 American journalists within specific military units.\textsuperscript{31}

Fourth, while the desire to rescue imperiled Americans played a prominent role in the Reagan administration's justification for taking military action, the Bush administration's public rationale for action only minimally suggested the protection of U.S. citizens and did not refer to a rescue or the safety of Americans in the target country per se. On March 21, 2003, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld identified eight military objectives of Operation "Iraqi Freedom": First, to "end the regime of Saddam Hussein. Second, to identify, isolate, and eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. Third, to search for, to capture and to drive out terrorists from that country. Fourth, to collect such intelligence as we can relate to terrorist networks. Fifth, to collect such intelligence as we can relate to the global network of illicit weapons of mass destruction. Sixth, to end sanctions and to immediately deliver humanitarian weapons of mass destruction. Seventh, to secure Iraq's oil fields and resources, which belong to the Iraqi people. And last, to help the Iraqi people create conditions for a transition to a representative self-government."\textsuperscript{32}

Finally, the Grenada episode took place during the waning days of the Cold War bipolarity, with communism and communist states perceived by the U.S. Administration as posing the gravest threats to U.S. national "security." The Iraq episode has unfolded in a post-cold war era of globalization and unipolarity, a period when Washington decision-makers view terrorists, weapons of mass destruction, and rogue states as the greatest menaces to the United States and its allies.\textsuperscript{33}

\textbf{II}

Just like that which preceded the March 2003 U.S. attack on Iraq, the Grenada invasion was preceded by maximalist administration rhetoric about regional and strategic threat.\textsuperscript{34} On February 24, 1982, for example, Ronald Reagan issued an implicit call for the Marxist government of Grenada to return to the "democratic" fold while introducing his "Caribbean Basin Initiative" (CBI). In an address to the Permanent Council of the OAS, the President maintained:

Nowhere in its whole sordid history have the promises of communism been redeemed. Everywhere it has exploited and aggravated temporary
economic suffering to seize power and then to institutionalize economic deprivation and suppress human rights . . . .

In the Caribbean we above all seek to protect those values and principles that shape the proud heritage of this hemisphere. Some, however, have turned from their American neighbors and their heritage. Let them return to the traditions and common values of this hemisphere and we all will welcome them. The choice is theirs.35

Only two months later, while in Bridgetown, Barbados, Reagan observed:
El Salvador isn't the only country that's being threatened with Marxism, and I think all of us are concerned with the overturn of Westminster parliamentary democracy in Grenada. That country now bears the Soviet and Cuban trademark, which means that it will attempt to spread the virus among its neighbors.36

And less than a year later, on March 10, 1983, the President painted a menacing picture of Grenada using predominantly red hues:
Grenada, that tiny little island—with Cuba at the west end of the Caribbean, Grenada at the east end—that tiny little island is building now, or having built for it, on its soil and shores, a naval base, a superior air base, storage bases and facilities for the storage of munitions, barracks, and training ground for the military. I'm sure all of that is simply to encourage the export of nutmeg.

People who make these arguments haven't taken a good look at a map lately or followed the extraordinary buildup of Soviet and Cuban military power in the region or read the Soviet's discussions about why the region is important to them and how they intend to use it.

It isn't nutmeg that's at stake in the Caribbean and Central America; it is the United States' national security.37

The President delivered his rhetorical coup de grace to Grenada on March 23, 1983. In a "National Security Address to the Nation,"38 a presentation reminiscent in some respects to Secretary Powell's satellite-image-supported remarks to the UN on February 5, 2003,39 Reagan unveiled reconnaissance photographs of Grenada. Here, he dramatically revealed to the American television audience what had been no secret to students of Caribbean politics or even to those American medical students who had been jogging around it: Grenada was building a lengthy runway at Point Salines. Reagan explained:

On the small island of Grenada, at the southern end of the Caribbean chain, the Cubans with Soviet financing and backing, are in the process of building an airfield with a 10,000-foot runway. Grenada doesn't even have an air force. Who is it intended for?

The Caribbean is a very important passageway for our international commerce and military lines of communication. More than half of all American oil imports now pass through the Caribbean. The rapid buildup of Grenada's military potential is unrelated to any conceivable threat to this country of under 110,000 people and totally at odds with the pattern of other eastern Caribbean states, most of which are unarmed.

The Soviet-Cuban militarization of Grenada, in short, can only be seen as
power projection into the region.40 Had not an October 1983 coup on Grenada led to instability, uncertainty, and perceived menace to U.S. nationals and Grenada's eastern Caribbean neighbors, it seems highly unlikely that the U.S. would have launched Operation "Urgent Fury."41 Even so, some aspects of the Reagan Administration's pre-invasion rhetoric are noteworthy and might be kept in mind when discussing Iraq today.

First, the strategic threat posed by Grenada was almost certainly overstated. The Administration painted a "Caribbean Triangle" of Nicaragua, Cuba, and Grenada that is highly reminiscent—from a rhetorical standpoint—to today's "axis of evil." Nevertheless, the degree to which the three Caribbean states strategically collaborated was relatively modest.42 Modest, too, were Grenada's military capabilities in 1983 and its practical capacity then to export communism. As Sally Shelton-Colby, U.S. Ambassador to Grenada and Barbados from 1979 to 1981, remarked of the allegedly threatening Grenadian military facilities: "[T]he President was almost wanting to see these installations in Grenada as opposed to actually seeing them or having evidence that they were there."43 Francis McNeil, who served as President Reagan's Special Emissary during the Grenada episode, offered a similar assessment of the exaggerated perception of threat posed by a Cuba-backed Grenada: "Wishful thinking is a problem that afflicts any government . . . but it seemed to me that the ideological component of the Reagan Administration harkened back to almost the McCarthy period."44 Ironically, in the two decades since the invasion, Cuban influence has returned to Grenada. The countries renewed diplomatic ties in 1992, and Cuba has "funded scholarships for Grenadians and helped with construction projects including a 270-bed hospital opened" in 2003.45

The Bush administration, of course, long emphasized the threat posed by Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Prominent pre-war articulations of this assessment included the Bush Administration White Paper, "A Decade of Deception and Defiance," released on September 12, 2002,46 the CIA's public report on "Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs," published in October 2002,47 and at least nine dedicated Presidential radio addresses delivered from September 14, 2002 through March 15, 2003.48 Perhaps the most high profile arguments were advanced in the President's address to the United Nations General Assembly on September 12, 2002,49 his October 7, 2002 speech at the Cincinnati Museum Center,50 Bush's January 28, 2003 "State of the Union Address,"51 and Secretary of State Colin Powell's multimedia-supported address to the United Nations Security Council on February 5, 2003.52 In his January 28 nationally televised speech, the President contended that "the British government had learned that Saddam Hussein [had] recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa," an assertion retracted six months later—under controversy—by the administration.53 These Bush administration characterizations of Iraqi WMD notwithstanding, such weapons eluded UNMOVIC and IAEA inspectors and, thus far, have eluded post-invasion U.S. search efforts as well.54 To be sure, even if significant evidence of Iraqi
"weapons of mass destruction" per se does eventually emerge, a prospect that seems increasingly unlikely, one might still dispute whether these weapons would have posed a significant threat to the U.S. per se.

Second, the extent to which the Soviet Union would or could have strategically exploited Grenada seems in retrospect rather slight. Indeed, while the EC financially supported the project to build Grenada's infamous 10,000-foot runway, the Soviet Union did not.55 Ironically, though, the degree to which Grenada's People's Revolutionary Government was committed to a "Marxist-Leninist Line of March"—a very high degree—and its willingness to use extreme means—enthusiastic—was only fully appreciated after the U.S. post-invasion capture and assessment of the PRG's documents.57 Thus, while the administration's rhetoric almost certainly exaggerated the Grenadian strategic threat, the Grenadian regime was genuinely menacing—primarily to its own nationals,58 who continued to celebrate their liberation long after the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the island. The extent to which American nationals on Grenada—nearly 1,000 in all, most of whom were students at St. George's Medical School—were threatened after October 19, 1983 remains a matter of scholarly dispute.59

Similar, the immediate threat posed to United States citizens by Saddam Hussein's Iraq was arguably rather modest. Even so, the Iraqi regime's threat to its own nationals—especially Shiites and Kurds—was manifest. Amnesty International, for example, submits that "tens of thousands of people . . . 'disappeared'" during Hussein's rule. In a May 2003 report, moreover, Human Rights Watch concluded that "as many as 290,000 Iraqis [had] 'disappeared' by the Iraqi government over the past two decades."60 Furthermore, the Government of Saddam Hussein seems clearly to have been violating the reporting requirements of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1441. As David Kay, the former chief U.S. weapons inspector in Iraq, noted in January 28, 2004 testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee: "We have discovered hundreds of cases, based on both documents, physical evidence and the testimony of Iraqis, of activities that were prohibited under the initial U.N. Resolution 687 and that should have been reported under 1441, with Iraqi testimony that not only did they not tell the U.N. about this, they were instructed not to do it and they hid material."61

III

Echoes of international law and organization's role in the Grenada episode have recently been heard, too, at the headquarters of the U.N. and of NATO.62 The story of law's role in the Grenada decision is therefore also worth briefly revisiting.

Many have suggested—implicitly or explicitly—that international legal/organizational considerations played virtually no role in Reagan's Grenada deliberations—though, ironically, pre-invasion "special ops" were under way by October 24, U.N. Day.63 Lawrence Eagleburger, for example, who in 1983 was Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, replied, "not much," when asked what impact international legal considerations had exerted on deliberations.64 President Reagan replied rather glibly in a November 3 Q&A Session to a question about the U.N. General Assembly's condemnation of U.S. action: "One hundred nations in the United Nations have not agreed with us on just about everything that's come up before them where we're involved, and [their condemnatory resolution] didn't upset my breakfast at all."65 And Allan Gerson, Legal Advisor in 1983 to the U.S. Mission to the U.N., asserted that the Reagan administration had not given "a second's thought . . . to bringing the crisis in Grenada to the United Nations." He continued: "Of
course, in some vague sense, international law might have been declared the victor had the notice and consultation requirements of the U.N. and OAS Charters been complied with, but no one in the administration thought in those terms. The last American president to consider the ends of international law above national interests was President Dwight D. Eisenhower in the Suez Crisis of 1956."66

Such words notwithstanding, international law and organization actually did play modest roles in Reagan's pre-invasion deliberations, though not deterministic ones. For example, relatively early in the decision-making process, on October 21, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Langhorne "Tony" Motley apprehended that an inadequate legal defense might well compromise the administration's justification exercise. That Friday, he decided to approve James Michel's suggestion to bring in the lawyers.67 The Assistant Secretary recognized that a plausible legal rationale would simplify matters later if the American military were to launch a full-scale invasion of Grenada. Because he "didn't want nine thousand years of [post-invasion] Security Council debate,"68 he directed his principal deputy to convene a group of attorneys to consider the various legal implications of an American invasion.

Furthermore, the lack of an OECS invitation on Thursday, October 20, postponed at least for a time the administration's ultimate decision to take forcible action.69 Once word of that OECS verbal invitation was received in Washington very early on Saturday morning, October 22, policy discussions were held until some time after dawn. Only five hours or so later, the "Special Situations Group" (SSG) decided to dispatch special emissary Francis McNeil to Barbados to secure a written invitation, and McNeil would carry with him an invitation outline previously drafted by the Legal Adviser's Office (known as "L") in Washington—though a document McNeil would wisely jettison for an OECS-drafted one.70

International law and organization played non-trivial roles in Reagan's post-invasion justification exercise, too, with those principally responsible for legal justification at the State Department and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (USUN)—Michael Kozak and Allan Gerson, respectively—advocating fundamentally different rationales for Operation "Urgent Fury."71

In preparing U.S. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick's legal argument for her October 27 address to the Security Council, for example, Allan Gerson believed that the American use of force might be justified principally as an anticipatory "collective self-defense" action.72 Though Grenada had not launched an "armed attack" as such, he judged that the eastern Caribbean states had legitimate legal grounds for acting before those hard-line Marxist-Leninist coup leaders responsible for Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop's murder on October 1973 could consolidate their control. Within this context, he supposed, the United States could maintain that its military assistance had been grounded "on concern for the safety of the region and for the stability of the Western Hemisphere, as well as an interest in serving the safety of American medical students left stranded on the island."74

In his late-night telephone conversation with Gerson, Michael Kozak objected strongly to the proposed anticipatory self-defense argument.75 Grenada had posed to the other OECS states no imminent threat of "armed attack." Hence, to invoke an anticipatory self-defense argument here would be seriously to damage Article 51's limitation on the permissible recourse to self-defense. If the United States were to endorse a self-defense rationale, Kozak feared, it would extend an exception to the U.N. Charter's prohibition on the use of force to the point that armies could
march through it. And any such future armies might not be those of the United States and its allies.

Kozak advised Gerson to limit the USUN's legal justification to "protection of nationals" grounds. According to Gerson's own account, he responded:

You can't be serious . . . The whole world knows that that's not what the operation was really about. If it was, it would have been much more limited, without the need for OECS involvement. If protection of nationals is what we were truly interested in, we would have done an Entebbe-style rescue. Here U.S. national security interests in the region were involved. We didn't want another Cuba or Nicaragua in the Caribbean, especially one led by the likes of the group that killed Maurice Bishop. And we had reason to act: the OECS states felt threatened. Isn't that why we did what we did? If so, why not say it.76

The Deputy Legal Adviser replied that the State Department did not wish the U.S. legal case tied to grounds of checking Soviet or Cuban influence in the western hemisphere. At length, the telephone debate concluded, though to neither side's complete satisfaction.

In light of the previous evening's inconclusive discussions between Kozak and Gerson, Secretary of State George Shultz was sufficiently concerned about the content of Ambassador Kirkpatrick's imminent Security Council speech that he directed his deputy, Kenneth Dam, to contact the ambassador on Thursday morning, October 27. Dam explained then to Kirkpatrick that Shultz wanted her address that day to underscore that "the U.S. operation in Grenada was based on a unique combination of circumstances, that it was a reaction to very particular and compelling circumstances." Moreover, the Secretary wished her to "avoid any reference to self-defense as a legal justification."77 Either Shultz or Dam must earlier have been briefed by Michael Kozak about USUN's predilection for a self-defense rationale and have shared Kozak's concern that the U.S. legal justification be narrowly drawn.

That Thursday evening in New York, Kirkpatrick would comply with the letter, if not the spirit, of Secretary Shultz's directive. Although she altered her prepared text to emphasize the "unique" character of the Grenada case, her speech did not altogether eschew the self-defense argument. Indeed, she submitted that the OECS microstates had been "spurred to action" because Maurice Bishop's murderers "could reasonably be expected to wield [Grenada's] awesome power against its neighbors." When asked for assistance, explained Ambassador Kirkpatrick, "the United States, whose own nationals and vital interests were independently affected, joined the effort to restore minimal conditions of law and order in Grenada and eliminate the threat posed to the security of the entire region."78 The content of this speech, however accurately it reflected the administration's policy thinking, could little have pleased Foggy Bottom. Noted Michael Kozak tersely in a 1988 interview: "[Ambassador Kirkpatrick] talked policy, not law."79

The same might be said of the Bush administration's new "National Security Strategy," which articulates the intellectual rationale for the U.S. operation in Iraq. The strategy submits that "the concept of imminent threat"—the circumstance under which "international law recognized that nations" might "lawfully take action to defend themselves"—must be adapted to "the capabilities and objectives of today's adversaries." When confronted by new threats, it contends, the United States may be permitted to undertake "preemption."80 Such an argument, in support of "preventive war," departs substantially from main-
stream understandings of the state's legal right to self-protection under the U.N. Charter framework. The argument's cogency depends in large part, of course, on the ability of the United States reliably to assess a given threat's imminence, a capacity arguably called into question by apparent failings in the Bush administration's gathering, analysis, or use of pre-invasion intelligence on Iraq. Frank McNeil's Grenada admonition would thus seem equally well applied to the Iraq episode: "Wishful thinking is a problem that afflicts any government."82

Within the Reagan administration's ranks, attitudes toward international law and organization significantly varied.83 Even so, the Reagan administration could not afford completely to ignore rules and institutions. By awaiting an OECS invitation and by working with OECS forces during and after the invasion, Operation "Urgent Fury" and its post-invasion political legacy were enhanced. Caribbean forces, for example, helped stabilize post-invasion Grenada, and Grenada's closest eastern Caribbean neighbors might conclude that the views of their regional organization had been seriously considered.84

U.S. policy-makers today and in the future would do well to consider these Grenadian legacies, both the perils of failing to secure unambiguous U.N. endorsement and the advantages of a multilateral, international institutional approach to armed conflict and to post-conflict peace-building. Indeed, in the months preceding the Iraq war, some in the Bush administration—most notably, Colin Powell—did apparently appreciate the importance of international institutions: for establishing precedent, for enlistong collaboration in international security endeavors, and for legitimizing the recourse to armed force. Accordingly, a fair amount of public speaking and diplomatic wrangling was done at U.N. headquarters, by the President, his Secretary of State, and others.86 Unfortunately, however, the Bush Administration, like the Reagan administration before it, ultimately chose international legal expediency over principle, in the pursuit of its "regime change" and "security" objectives.

Endnotes

1 This essay, which was presented at the April 11-12, 2003 "Re-Thinking Global Security Conference" at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, draws heavily upon earlier work, The Grenada Invasion: Politics, Law, and Foreign Policy Decisionmaking (Westview, 1993). For their helpful comments, I wish to acknowledge John S. Duffield, Gary Williams, and the editorial staff of The Long Term View.


3 Grenada is about twice the size of Washington, D.C. United States Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Background Notes: Grenada 23, March 1980. Indicative of the island's obscurity in October of 1983, there was some doubt then over how to properly pronounce its name.

4 The OECS was established June 4, 1981, as a successor to the West Indies Associated States Council of Ministers, set up in September 1966. The group includes seven member states: Antigua/Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts/Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The governing treaty of the OECS is the OECS Treaty of Establishment, June 18, 1981. Reprinted in 20 International Legal Materials 1166 (1981).

5 This does not include Operation "Rice Bowl," the failed Iran hostage rescue mission launched by President Carter on April 24, 1980. See Richard A. Gabriel, Military Incompetence 85-116 (Hill & Wang, 1985); David C. Martin and John Walcott, Best Laid Plans: The Inside Story of America's War Against Terrorism 1-42 (Harper & Row, 1988); and Gary Sick, All Fall Down 327-356 (Viking Penguin, 1985).


7 Eighty-five percent believed they had been in danger under the Revolutionary Military Council. Seventy-six percent thought Cuba had wanted to take control of the Grenadian government. See Gregory Sandford and Richard Vigilante, Grenada: The Untold Story 16 (Madison Books, 1984); and
Grenadians Welcomed Invasion, A Poll Finds, N.Y. Times 21 (Nov. 6, 1983).


Initially, Congress was rather critical of the administration's action. However, opinion on Capitol Hill did an abrupt about-face in response to several factors: the massive public support of the action; the apparent evidence of danger in Grenada provided by the returning students; the discovery of Cuban and Soviet weapons; and the popularity of Reagan's October 27 speech. See Schoenhals and Melanson, *Revolution and Intervention in Grenada* 154-158.

Larry Speakes recalled later: "When that first planeload [of medical students] returned...and the first student off the plane knelt and kissed the ground and they all cheered their country and thanked the U.S. military for rescuing them from a dangerous and chaotic situation, the public relations problem was solved right there." Larry Speakes, *Speaking Out* 159-160 (Charles Scribner & Sons, 1988).


10 Anthony Payne et al., *Grenada: Revolution and Invasion* 168.


14 A brief, 20-year retrospective on the Grenada invasion was offered by the BBC: http://www.bbc.co.uk/caribbean/feature.ram.


18 On the *Columbia* shuttle disaster, see, for example: http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/shuttle/. The scale and the scope of the Beirut bombing, of course, were very different from the *Columbia* disaster. Moreover, the Beirut attack preceded much more closely the invasion decision than did the tragic loss of the *Columbia* crew. Still, both episodes were shocking national tragedies.


David Kay, the former top U.S. weapons inspector in Iraq, told the Senate Armed Services Committee on January 28, 2004: "It turns out that we were all wrong, probably in my judgment, and that is most disturbing." Transcript: David Kay at Senate hearing, http://www.cnn.com/2004/US/01/28/kay.transcript/ (Jan. 28, 2004).

In The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill, former treasury secretary O'Neill contends that as early as the first three months of 2001, the Bush administration was examining military options for removing Saddam Hussein. Ron Suskind, The Price Of Loyalty (Simon & Schuster, 2004).


Remarks at Bridgetown, Barbados, April 8, 1982, 18 Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents 463 (Apr. 19, 1982).


Reagan's address would be remembered as his "Star Wars" speech because he proposed here the "Strategic Defense Initiative," a US program to counter the Soviet strategic ballistic missile threat with high technology.


41 For a detailed examination of the Reagan Administration's invasion decision and of the factors informing that decision, see Beck, The Grenada Invasion 197-227 and Robert J. Beck, The McNeil Mission and the Decision to Invade Grenada 44 Naval War College Rev. 93-112 (Spring 1991). At least three prominent factors support this interpretation. First, before Maurice Bishop's murder on October 19, the U.S. military (including the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of Defense Weinberger) was HIGHLY reluctant to begin even contingency planning for an evacuation. Indeed, in October of 1983 there was no contingency plan to invade Grenada, and the most recent aerial photos of the island were five months old. Second, no cabinet-level discussions on Grenada were undertaken by the Reagan administration until the evening of October 20, the day after Bishop's murder. Third, at those cabinet-level discussions, and even before President Reagan was significantly engaged in the decision-making process, the "Special Situations Group" (SSG) determined that a decision on military action should await the outcome of conversations with the Caribbean states. Moreover, indicative of the seriousness attached by the Reagan administration to OECS deliberations (in Bridgetown, Barbados on October 21), once their results were known in Washington, Reagan was awakened at 5 a.m. on October 22 in Augusta, Georgia to discuss the implications of the OECS invitation. The President "was very unequivocal," Robert McFarlane would later recall. "He couldn't wait." [Lou Cannon's interview with Robert McFarlane, April 16, 1990; cited in Lou Cannon, President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime 441 (Simon & Schuster, 1992). Reagan would note in his memoir: "Under [the] circumstances, there was only one answer I could give to McFarlane and Shultz and those six countries who [had] asked for our help." [Ronald W. Reagan, An American Life: The Autobiography 449 (Simon & Schuster, 1990)].

42 Grenada had few links with Nicaragua. Even so, its Cuban relationship was very important to the PRG, both financially and ideologically, as became manifest when arms shipments commenced in April 1979. Moreover, Cuba viewed Grenada as a model of what socialist aid might achieve. See, for example, John Walton Cotman, The Gorrion Tree: Cuba and the Grenada Revolution (Peter Lang, 1993).


52 Secretary Colin L. Powell, Remarks to the United Nations Security Council, New York City, http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2003/17300.htm (Feb. 5, 2003). "[E]ight days after the State of the Union, when Powell addressed the U.N., he deliberately left out any reference to Iraqi attempts to buy uranium from Africa. 'I didn't use the uranium at that point..."


54 Various post-war accounts and interpretations of Iraqi WMD—their nature, scope, and degree of threat—have been offered. On February 6, 2004, CIA Director George Tenet observed that his agency's analysts had "never said there was an imminent threat" posed by Iraq. George J. Tenet, Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction, Remarks as prepared for delivery by Director of Central Intelligence George J. Tenet at Georgetown University, http://www.cia.gov/cia/public_affairs/speeches/2004/tenet_georgetownspeech_02052004.html.

That same day, while announcing his formation of a nine-member independent commission to examine U.S. intelligence capabilities, especially intelligence about weapons of mass destruction, President Bush submitted that Saddam Hussein's regime had maintained weapons "programs and activities." George W. Bush, President Bush Announces Formation of Independent Commission, http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/02/20040206-3.html (Feb. 6, 2004).


55 See Payne et al., Revolution and Invasion, at 34, 67; Schoenhals and Melanson, Revolution and Intervention, at 56; and Valenta and Valenta, Leninism in Grenada, at 18-19. It might be said, though, that the Soviet Union left Cuba to take the lead in Grenadian economic development assistance.

56 Bishop proposed that his People's Revolutionary Government pursue three basic objectives: the building of a "vanguard party" based on "democratic centralism"; the establishment of a "socialist society"; and adherence to "proletarian internationalism." See Line of March for the Party, presented by Maurice Bishop, Central Committee Chairman, General Meeting of the Party, Sept. 13, 1982. Reprinted in Seabury and McDougall, eds., The Grenada Papers, at 59-88.

57 A preliminary evaluation of some of the 12 1/2 tons of Grenada documents was published by the U.S. Department of State and Department of Defense on December 16, 1983 under the title, "Grenada: A Preliminary Report."

In September, 1984, the State and Defense Departments published the three-volume Grenada Documents: An Overview and Selection, edited by Michael Ledeen and Herbert Romerstein. See also Paul Seabury and Walter A. McDougall, eds., The Grenada Papers (Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1984); and Nicholas Dujmovic, The Grenada Documents: Window on Totalitarianism (Pergamon-Brassey's, 1988).

58 "It is difficult to deny either the NJM's inclinations towards Leninism or its extensive political, ideological, and above all military ties with the Soviet Union and Cuba." Valenta and Valenta, Leninism in Grenada, in Grenada and Soviet/Cuban Policy, eds. Valenta and Ellison, at 3.

The Foreign Affairs Committee of the British House of Commons drew a similar conclusion in 1984: "The NJM appears to have become, essentially, a classic revolutionary movement in the Bolshevik mould, dependent on a small number of party members and sustained in power by its control of the media and the armed services." See "Second Report," p. viii. Even so, the NJM did not block the availability of foreign literature—e.g., Time magazine or radio such as Radio Antilles and the BBC World Service.

59 Beck, The Grenada Invasion, at 199-203.


4244780 (January 29, 2004).


64 Author's interview with Lawrence Eagleburger, March 15, 1993.


66 Allan Gerson, The Kirkpatrick Mission, at 223.

67 Beck, The Grenada Invasion, at 110.


69 An "invitation" of external assistance was also made by Sir Paul Scoon, Grenada's Governor-General. Its international legal significance was dubious, however, and its effect on Reagan decision-making was negligible. Even so, the administration's judgment that Scoon's invitation might enhance the invasion's perceived legitimacy prompted a SEAL Team rescue attempt of Scoon from his house arrest. See Beck, The Grenada Invasion, at 19-20, 156-157, 205-206.

70 Beck, The Grenada Invasion, at 203-205.

71 For a detailed account of these discussions, see id. at 188-196.


74 Gerson, supra n. 66, at 226.

75 Author's interview with Allan Gerson, Nov. 4, 1988; author's interview with Michael Kozak, Nov. 3, 1988.

76 Gerson, supra n. 66, at 227.

77 Id. at 228.


84 This is not to suggest that the Reagan administration would have decided not to invade in the absence of OECS support. Indeed, the invasion decision was reached despite Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) unwillingness on October 22-23, 1983 to endorse the use of force, at least in the first instance. Beck, The Grenada Invasion, at 139-141.

The presidentially signed National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) that formally authorized the intervention explicitly articulated three U.S. policy goals, ones that seem genuinely to have driven the invasion decision: the protection of American citizens; the restoration of democratic government to Grenada; and the elimination of current and future Cuban intervention on the island. The second and third objectives surely reflected core Reagan administration values.


say82505/shashi-tharoor/why-america-still-needs-the-united-
nations.html.

86 For a discussion of the Bush administration's prewar
maneuvering, see James P. Rubin, Stumbling Into War,
org/20030901faessay82504/james-p-rubin/stumbling-into-
war.html.
It has become clear, very quickly, that Iraq is not a liberated country, but an occupied country. We became familiar with the term "occupied country" during World War II. We talked of German-occupied France, German-occupied Europe. And after the war we spoke of Soviet-occupied Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Eastern Europe. It was the Nazis, the Soviets, who occupied other countries.

Now we are the occupiers. True, we liberated Iraq from Saddam Hussein, but not from us. Just as in 1898 we liberated Cuba from Spain, but not from us. Spanish tyranny was overthrown, but the United States established a military base in Cuba, as we are doing in Iraq. U.S. corporations moved into Cuba, just as Bechtel and Halliburton and the oil corporations are moving into Iraq. The United States was deciding what kind of constitution Cuba would have, just as our government is now forming a constitution for Iraq. Not a liberation, an occupation.

And it is an ugly occupation. On August 7, The New York Times reported that U.S. General Ricardo Sanchez in Baghdad was worried about Iraqi reaction to the occupation. Iraqi leaders who were pro-American were giving him a message, as he put it: "When you take a father in front of his family and put a bag over his head and put him on the ground you have had a significant adverse effect on his dignity and respect in the eyes of his family." (That's very perceptive.)

CBS News reported on July 19 that Amnesty International is looking into a number of cases of suspected torture in Iraq by American authorities. One such case involves Khraisan al-Aballi, CBS said. "When American soldiers raided the al-Aballi house, they came in shooting. . . . They shot and wounded his brother Dureid." U.S. soldiers took Khraisan, his 80-year-old father, and his brother away. "Khraisan says his interrogators stripped him naked and kept him awake for more than a week, either standing or on his knees, bound hand and foot, with a bag over his head," CBS reported. Khraisan told CBS he informed his captors, "I don't know what you want. I don't know what you want. I have nothing." At one point, "I asked them to kill me," Khraisan said. After eight days, they let him and his father go. Paul Bremer, the U.S. administrator of Iraq, responded, "We are, in fact, carrying out our international obligations."

On June 17, two reporters for the Knight Ridder chain wrote about the Falluja area: "In dozens of interviews during the past five days, most residents across the area said there was no Ba'athist or Sunni conspiracy against U.S. soldiers, there were only people ready to fight because their relatives had been hurt or killed, or they themselves had been humiliated by home searches and road stops." One woman said, after her husband was taken from their home because of empty wooden crates, which

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they had bought for firewood, that the United States is guilty of terrorism. "If I find any American soldiers, I will cut their heads off," she said. According to the reporters, "Residents in At Agilia—a village north of Baghdad—said two of their farmers and five others from another village were killed when U.S. soldiers shot them while they were watering their fields of sunflowers, tomatoes, and cucumbers."

Soldiers who are set down in a country where they were told they would be welcomed as liberators only to find they are surrounded by a hostile population become fearful, trigger-happy, and unhappy. We've been reading the reports of GIs angry at their being kept in Iraq. In mid-July, an ABC News reporter in Iraq told of being pulled aside by a sergeant who said to him: "I've got my own 'Most Wanted List.'" He was referring to the deck of cards the U.S. government published, featuring Saddam Hussein, his sons, and other wanted members of the former Iraqi regime. "The aces in my deck are Paul Bremer, Donald Rumsfeld, George Bush, and Paul Wolfowitz," the sergeant said.

Such sentiments are becoming known to the American public. In May, a Gallup Poll reported that only 13 percent of the American public thought the war was going badly. By July 4, the figure was 42 percent. By late August, it was 49 percent.

Then there is the occupation of the United States. I wake up in the morning, read the newspaper, and feel that we are an occupied country, that some alien group has taken over. Those Mexican workers trying to cross the border—dying in the attempt to evade immigration officials (ironically, trying to cross into land taken from Mexico by the United States in 1848)—those Mexican workers are not alien to me. Those millions of people in this country who are not citizens and therefore, by the PATRIOT Act, are subject to being pulled out of their homes and held indefinitely by the FBI, with no constitutional rights—those people are not alien to me. But this small group of men who have taken power in Washington, they are alien to me.

I wake up thinking this country is in the grip of a President who was not elected, who has surrounded himself with thugs in suits who care nothing about human life abroad or here, who care nothing about freedom abroad or here, who care nothing about what happens to the earth, the water, the air. And I wonder what kind of world our children and grandchildren will inherit. More Americans are beginning to feel, like the soldiers in Iraq, that something is terribly wrong, that this is not what we want our country to be.

More and more every day, the lies are being exposed. And then there is the largest lie: that everything the United States does is to be pardoned because we are engaged in a "war on terrorism."
unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we now know that we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we do not know we don't know. . . . That is, the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. . . . Simply because you do not have evidence that something exists does not mean that you have evidence that it doesn't exist."

Well, Rumsfeld has clarified things for us.

That explains why this government, not knowing exactly where to find the criminals of September 11, will just go ahead and invade and bomb Afghanistan, killing thousands of people, driving hundreds of thousands from their homes, and still not know where the criminals are.

That explains why the government, not really knowing what weapons Saddam Hussein is hiding, will invade and bomb Iraq, to the horror of most of the world, killing thousands of civilians and soldiers and terrorizing the population.

That explains why the government, not knowing who are terrorists and who are not, will put hundreds of people in confinement at Guantanamo under such conditions that 20 have tried to commit suicide.

That explains why, not knowing which noncitizens are terrorists, the Attorney General will take away the constitutional rights of 20 million of them.

The so-called war on terrorism is not only a war on innocent people in other countries, but it is also a war on the people of the United States: a war on our liberties, a war on our standard of living. The wealth of the country is being stolen from the people and handed over to the super-rich. The lives of our young are being stolen. And the thieves are in the White House.

It's interesting to me that polls taken among African-Americans have shown consistently 60 percent opposition to the war in Iraq. Shortly after Colin Powell made his report to the United Nations on "Weapons of Mass Destruction," I did a phone interview with an African-American radio station in Washington, D.C., a program called "GW on the Hill." After I talked with the host there were eight call-ins. I took notes on what the callers said:

John: "What Powell said was political garbage."

Another caller: "Powell was just playing the game. That's what happens when people get into high office."

Robert: "If we go to war, innocent people will die for no good reason."

Kareen: "What Powell said was hogwash. War will not be good for this country."

Susan: "What is so good about being a powerful country?"

Terry: "It's all about oil."

Another caller: "The U.S. is in search of an empire and it will fall as the Romans did. Remember when Ali fought Foreman. He seemed asleep but when he woke up he was ferocious. So will the people wake up."

It is often said that this Administration can get away with war because unlike Vietnam, the casualties are few. True, only a few hundred battle casualties, unlike Vietnam. But battle casualties are not all. When wars end, the casualties keep mounting up—sickness, trauma. After the Vietnam War, veterans reported birth defects in their families due to the Agent Orange spraying in Vietnam. In the first Gulf War there were only a few hundred battle casualties, but the Veterans Administration reported recently that in the 10 years following the Gulf War, 8,000 veterans died. About 200,000 of the 600,000 veterans of the Gulf War filed complaints about illnesses incurred from the weapons our government used in the war. In the current war, how many young men and women sent by Bush to liberate Iraq will come home with related illnesses?

What is our job? To point all this out.
Human beings do not naturally support violence and terror. They do so only when they believe their lives or country are at stake. These were not at stake in the Iraq War. Bush lied to the American people about Saddam and his weapons. And when people learn the truth—as happened in the course of the Vietnam War—they will turn against the government. We who are for peace have the support of the rest of the world. The United States cannot indefinitely ignore the 10 million people who protested around the world on February 15. The power of government—whatever weapons it possesses, whatever money it has at its disposal—is fragile. When it loses its legitimacy in the eyes of its people, its days are numbered.

We need to engage in whatever nonviolent actions appeal to us. There is no act too small, no act too bold. The history of social change is the history of millions of actions, small and large, coming together at critical points to create a power that governments cannot suppress. We find ourselves today at one of those critical points.◆
In *New York Times v. United States*, Justice William O. Douglas made the point that even though it has become popular to believe that the President has the power to use the American military on his own authority, "there is not a word in the Constitution that grants that power to him. It runs only to Congress." In other words, the President's authority to use the American military derives from Congress.

The fact that the President is the Commander-in-Chief places him on top of the military chain of command. Nothing more. This means the decision to deploy our military forces (except for the period of an emergency) belongs exclusively to Congress.

In addition, civilian control of the military comes primarily from Congress representing the people; ours is not a Presidential form of government. In essence, Congress is the policy-making branch of the Federal government. The fact is, we have distorted the Constitution by allowing all Presidents since Harry S. Truman to use military power on their own authority.

According to the Constitution, only Congress has the power to move the United States from peace to war. Clearly, one of the major innovations of the Constitution was to transfer the power to use our military forces from the King (the President) to the people (Congress).

The Founding Fathers made it clear in the Constitution, and in what they said later, that they wanted Congress, not the President, to be the authority behind the use of our military. The only power granted to the President by the framers was to repel sudden attacks. When President George Washington was considering action against the Creek Nation of Indians in 1793, he wrote, "The Constitution rests the power of declaring war with Congress; therefore no offensive expedition of importance can be undertaken until after they have deliberated upon the subject and authorized such a measure."

Regarding military matters, Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution gives Congress the responsibility to "provide for the common Defence" plus these other potent powers:

- To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and water;
- To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;
- To provide and maintain a Navy;
- To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;
- To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;
- To provide for organizing, arming and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States.
States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

- To exercise . . . Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dockyards, and other needful Buildings; —and

- To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

- In addition, Congress has the power to regulate foreign commerce, which is a corollary to the warmaking power.

If the framers wanted the President to dominate military affairs, they would have given these specific powers to the President.

At the 1787 Convention, George Mason of Virginia made it clear that he was against "power of war to the Executive" because he was "not safely to be trusted with it." Mason was "for clogging rather than facilitating war."4

On Friday, June 1, 1787, Charles Pinckney of South Carolina made it clear at the Convention that a President with too much power could become "a monarchy, of the worst kind, to wit an elective one."5

At the Pennsylvania ratifying convention, James Wilson expressed this view regarding the system of checks and balances: "This system will not hurry us into war; it is calculated to guard against it. It will not be in the power of a single man, or a single body of men, to involve us in such distress; for the important power of declaring war is vested in the legislature at large—this declaration must be made with the concurrence of the House of Representatives; from this circumstance we may draw a certain conclusion, that nothing but our national interest can draw us into a war."6

The reality is that for more than 160 years, from Washington to Roosevelt, no President claimed that he had the power to move the country from peace to war without first getting authority to do so from Congress. The "Commander-in-Chief" clause simply says: "The President shall be the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual service of the United States."7 It says absolutely nothing about the President having any power at all to use the American military in whatever way he wants. The President's authority to deploy troops must come from Congress because that is what the Constitution directs.

Alexander Hamilton put it this way: "In this respect his [the President's] authority would be nominally the same with that of the King of Great Britain, but in substance much inferior to it. It would amount to nothing more than the supreme command and direction of the military and naval forces, as first General and Admiral of the Confederacy; while that of the British King extends to the declaring of war and to the raising and regulating of fleets and armies,—all which, by the Constitution under consideration, would appertain to the legislature."8 (Emphasis added.)

Commenting on what Hamilton wrote, the well known authority on Presidential power, Edward S. Corwin, writes: "Rendered freely, this appears to mean that in any war in which the United States becomes involved—one presumably declared by Congress—the President will be top general and top admiral of the forces provided by Congress."9

David S. Friedman, an expert on checks and balances regarding military matters, writes: "In fact, the Framers intended the function of Commander-in-Chief to be noth-
ing more than the supreme commander of the American Army and Navy." It is puzzling that something as clear and as logical as this can be so misunderstood by so many members of Congress and the executive branch.

Congress must never vote to go to war just because that is what the President wants. As a separate and equal branch of government, Congress has the responsibility to come to its own conclusions based on the information it receives. A good case can be made that the last person to trust about going to war is the President. That is why the founders came to the conclusion that the war-making power belongs with Congress.

In July of 1824, when Secretary of State John Quincy Adams was questioned regarding whether the United States would defend Columbia from Spain based on the Monroe Doctrine, he replied, "By the Constitution of the United States, the ultimate decision of this question belongs to the Legislative Department of Government."11

Even Franklin D. Roosevelt, a strong advocate of centralizing government power in the Presidency, understood the dominant role of Congress regarding the use of military power. In the period just before World War II, he made it clear that we would not get involved in this war until Congress allowed it.

Yes, Roosevelt did take certain actions, but he understood that there was a point beyond which he could not go without congressional authority. When he was asked by the French for help at the beginning of World War II, Roosevelt said, "These statements carry with them no implication of military commitments. Only Congress can make such commitments."12

The brilliance of the Constitution is that it extended the system of checks and balances to include military affairs. The specific powers given to Congress by the founders to control the President were no accident.

The noted International Law scholar John Bassett Moore summarized the issue of who has the war-making authority, Congress or the President, this way: "There can hardly be room for doubt that the framers of the Constitution, when they vested in Congress the power to declare war, never imagined that they were leaving it to the executive to use the military and naval forces of the United States all over the world for the purpose of actually coercing other nations, occupying their territory, and killing their soldiers and citizens, according to his own notions of the fitness of things, as long as he refrained from calling his action war or persisted in calling it peace."13

Therefore, the United States must not go to war in Korea, the Balkans, Iraq, or anyplace else, until Congress authorizes such action, and at the appropriate time. Congress must never give a blank check to any President and thereby abdicate its war-making responsibility as it did with the October 2002 Iraq Resolution, essentially without any debate.

The President's role as Commander-in-Chief has nothing to do with when the nation goes to war. (In business terms, Congress is the board of directors, the President is the chief executive officer.) This power to deploy the American military on his own authority would make the President a military dictator. The Constitution was written to prevent this situation from happening.

As the dean of the Massachusetts School of Law, Lawrence R. Velvel has written: "This
kind of abdication of responsibility is wrong under our Constitution and should not be countenanced. Congress should be required, as the framers intended, to make the decision on war in the first place, just like it makes decisions on other laws and policies in the first place."\textsuperscript{14}

With the background now established of what the Constitution requires, let us consider what have been the consequences of Presidents acting unconstitutionally.

Let's never forget that during the critically important month of January 1965, only Congress could have prevented President Lyndon B. Johnson from beginning his deceitful process of Americanizing the war in Vietnam. LBJ knew this and did everything he could to prevent a debate in Congress on the war from happening. Unfortunately for our country, he was successful. In his well thought-out book, \textit{Choosing War}, Fredrik Logevall writes: "All the while, Johnson took care to hide from Congress and the nation the nature of the administration's thinking and planning."\textsuperscript{15}

Much that went wrong in Vietnam can be traced back to the fact that Congress allowed the President to dictate policy. For example, in May of 1965 Johnson asked Congress for a supplementary appropriation of $700 million for Vietnam. Since Johnson didn't need the money immediately, this was his way of getting congressional approval for escalating the war. This was the last opportunity Congress had to uphold the rule of law by preventing the President from fighting an Executive Branch War.

Senator Wayne Morse said, "The first point I wish to make is that no matter what semantics Senators use and no matter how much they protest... The fact is that they are abdicating their clear constitutional duties under the Constitution of the United States, for, when they vote for this appropriation, they will again vote to give the President power to make an undeclared war."\textsuperscript{16}

There were two top Democrats in the Senate who opposed the war and could have defeated the supplementary appropriation legislation. If they did, President Johnson could not have proceeded, on his own authority, with his plan for having the U.S. military fight the war for the South Vietnamese. History has proved that this was not a wise strategy. Unfortunately, the Majority Leader Mike Mansfield and the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Senator Richard B. Russell, remained silent in the mistaken belief that their first loyalty was to the President, not to the legislative branch. They ended up defying the Constitution by making the Presidency superior to the legislative branch regarding the warmaking authority.

To the Founding Fathers, "declare war" meant Congress granting to the President the "authority" to use the American military in the name of the people, and most important, to stay involved. Congressional oversight does not end when a war starts.

Furthermore, contrary to what many members of Congress believe, appropriating funds does not absolve Congress from its constitutional responsibility to stay involved with foreign policy. After our troops have been deployed, the best way to ensure that they are properly used, and have the greatest opportunity to come home alive, is for Congress to monitor policy closely, and to challenge it firmly when necessary.

\textbf{Congressional oversight does not end when a war starts.}

By allowing the President to do whatever he wanted, Congress failed to support our forces in Vietnam. It abandoned our troops in the field. This is not what our Founding
Fathers wanted to happen. Our system of checks and balances demands that Congress and the President negotiate regarding what the nation's military and foreign policy will be. Our choice is to continue as a Constitutional Republic or to defy the framers and become a Presidential form of government.

For example, if Congress had been involved from the beginning, it might have been able to prevent the executive branch from selecting a losing strategy in Vietnam—a strategy based on false concepts including McNamara's "gradual escalation," Westmoreland's "search and destroy," and fighting a war of attrition that benefited the enemy, not the United States. Time was on the side of the North Vietnamese.

In addition, the Paris peace negotiations were in disarray right from the start. A big part of the problem was that Congress allowed President Nixon and his National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger to do whatever they wanted. Kissinger had secret meetings for years with the North Vietnamese and told nothing to Congress, the American people, nor the government of South Vietnam about what was going on. This is not the way the American government is expected to operate.

The Congress is an independent branch of government that must defend the powers the Constitution granted it. And it is particularly important that this be done when Congress and the President are from the same political party. The first obligation of a member of Congress is to defend the rights of Congress based on the Constitution, not to simply support the President on foreign policy. Most members of Congress don't understand the importance of following this simple logic.

Congress must consider each issue from the legislative viewpoint with the President establishing the position of the Executive Branch. This is where the negotiations must begin. Congress abdicates its responsibility when it just follows the President. For example, the then Senator-Elect from Georgia, Saxby Chambliss, actually said that he cannot wait to go to Washington to "work for his boss the President." This attitude may be good politics, but it is contrary to the Constitution. Senator Mitch McConnell said recently on "Meet the Press" that his job was to pass the President's agenda. What about the agenda of Congress? That is a formula for weak government. Checks and balances necessitates that Congress and the President compete for power. Unfortunately, the people have been led to believe that when it comes to foreign policy, Congress and the Presidency are no longer co-equal and separate branches of government.

The Congress has surrendered its power so thoroughly that the current Speaker of the House, J. Dennis Hastert, said this in a speech on January 10, 2000, to the Mid-America Committee: "When it comes to issues of national security, the heavy presumption in the Congress—in both political parties—is that we must stand fully behind our President."17 This statement is in direct opposition to the Constitution. When policy is being formed, the role of Congress is to develop its own ideas. National policy must be what is worked out between Congress and the President. At no point should Congress be blindly following any President.

As Ezra Y. Siff writes in his fine book dealing with this issue: "That the judiciary may overrule the executive is something each first-year law student is taught in Marbury v. Madison. Yet, members of the United States Senate, after a history of close to 200 years, still did not realize the independence of the legislative branch and the duty of its members to exercise that independence if they think executive action to be wrong."18

If Speaker Hastert disagrees with the Constitution, it is his obligation to have it amended. Until then he has no choice but to understand that he represents a different and
co-equal branch of government. Congress must fight for the ideas it believes are right. This formula is the best insurance we can have that the domestic and foreign policies ultimately agreed to are those that are in the best interest of our nation. It is only in the 20th century, with the Cold War, that Congress has allowed the power to use our military forces to move to the President, where it does not belong, and has brought the nation great harm. The fact that Congress allowed Presidents Truman and Johnson to have their way in Korea and Vietnam does not make it legal or wise.

In their book on the Korean War, D. Clayton James and Anne Sharp Wells show how out of control the Truman administration was by writing: "Moreover, Truman's bypassing of Congress was undertaken upon the persistent advice of Acheson. So strong was Acheson's influence on Truman that none of the foremost military officials who were involved in the Blair House sessions that final week of June, including boisterous Secretary of Defense Johnson and much-respected Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Omar Bradley, challenged the Secretary of State's main ideas, even on military matters." This kind of situation can happen only when Congress chooses to stand aside and not be a factor when policy is decided.

Robert Mann wrote this in his book on Vietnam: "But his [Truman's] unilateral decision to inform congressional leaders, not to consult them, would have broad implications for the nation's future involvement in the political and military affairs of Southeast Asia. Relying on varying interpretations of Truman's precedent, rarely would another President feel compelled to consult members of Congress before committing the United States to the armed struggle against communism in Asia." (The more correct word would be "authorize" not "consult.")

Mr. Friedman writes: "Yet . . . no President ever claimed that congressional authorization could be assumed until President Truman did so in June 1950." Senator Sam J. Ervin, Jr. of Watergate fame and an expert on the Constitution wrote, "The only security America has against anarchy on the one hand and tyranny on the other is to be found in reverence to the Constitution by those entrusted with governmental power."22

Most thoughtful Americans expected that Vietnam would be our last Presidential war, but Congress is still too cowardly, and lacking in knowledge of the Constitution, to use its constitutional power.

As a part of the Truman-Acheson decision to freeze Congress out of decision-making on Korea, the administration also decided, during this emergency period, to start giving financial aid to the French in support of the war in Vietnam. Joseph C. Goulden wrote this in his book on Korea: "Truman approved Acheson's proposed aid. Thus did the United States take the unwitting first step toward involvement in the Vietnam War." Would Congress have agreed to start helping the French in Indochina as part of our going to war in Korea? Truman defied the Constitution by keeping Congress blind.

Mann put it this way: "The President agreed to a paltry $10 million in assistance [to the French]. But in making his decision, Truman established a Presidential precedent regarding Vietnam that would last into the 1970s: he did not consult the House or Senate." Could it be that had Congress been involved in Korea from the beginning, the final result in Vietnam might have been more favorable to the United States? In a Senate speech dealing with the Korean War, Senator Robert A. Taft said, "The
President simply usurped authority, in violation of the laws and the Constitution, when he sent troops to Korea to carry out the resolution of the United Nations in an undeclared war. 25 This unconstitutional act led directly to what happened in Vietnam. Most thoughtful Americans expected that Vietnam would be our last Presidential war, but Congress is still too cowardly, and lacking in knowledge of the Constitution, to use its constitutional power.

Averell Harriman disagreed with what Truman did in Korea. He said, "I thought it was a mistake and so did many others at the time." Harriman added, "Mr. Truman said he had considered such a move; if he got a Joint Resolution it would tie the hands of a successor... I did not realize until later that Dean Acheson had opposed going to Congress." 26

So the President of the United States placed the views of his Secretary of State above those of the Founding Fathers and the Constitution they wrote—a Constitution that the President had sworn to "preserve, protect, and defend." Mr. Goulden writes further that the "politically astute Averell Harriman would have taken advantage of the ground swell of public opinion supporting the administration. He felt that "President Truman would have gotten such overwhelming support that it would have silenced some of those who later were critical." 27 This is because the war would have been constitutional. What President Truman was so arrogantly concerned with at the time was protecting the powers of the President "against all comers including the Congress." This was a sad period in American constitutional history that receives little attention when the Truman administration is evaluated.

I wonder if Acheson ever thought about the relationship between his irresponsible decision-making in Korea and what happened in Vietnam. Especially when he was called in as one of the "Wise Men" on Vietnam by LBJ. Mr. Goulden writes: "Acheson's disdain for the prospect of having to listen to 'ponderous questions' from congressional committees and his unwillingness to pause to 'analyze what you were doing' displayed a contempt toward Congress that ultimately cost the administration dearly." 28

In contrast, on April 5, 1954 when President Eisenhower was under pressure to intervene in Indochina, he told Secretary Dulles, "Such a move is impossible" that without congressional support, an air strike would be "completely unconstitutional and indefensible." 29

At the same time Senator Arthur Watkins of Utah was defending the role of Congress by saying, "It is the duty of the President, when he has information of that kind, to advise the Congress, so that Congress can grant him, under its constitutional power, authority to go ahead. I hope the President will not follow the example of President Truman and take action without consulting Congress." 30 Congress must make it clear that it will not allow any President to defy the Constitution and use the American military on his or her authority alone.

After Vietnam, Congress tried to limit the President's ability to make war by passing the War Powers Resolution. This unwise legislation does the opposite because it allows the President to commit American troops anywhere in the world, anytime he wants, for up to 60 days without congressional involvement. This resolution further removes Congress from the decision-making process and in effect invalidates the Constitution. This unconstitutional legislation must be repealed.

The President cannot act domestically without legislation passed by Congress, including the critically important authorization of the funds needed. Internationally, the Founding Fathers wanted the same procedure followed. If we are to be guided by the rule of law, NATO or the U.N. must never be used again as justification for the United States to
go to war. Congress alone must be the deciding authority.

Mr. Truman was irresponsible when he fought an unconstitutional war in Korea under the cover of the United Nations. Congress should have insisted that it be a part of the decision, even if it had to use the power of the purse to get its way. Congress must never be immobilized or terrorized by any President. For example, according to Helen Fessenden, at a recent House committee hearing, Richard L. Armitage warned that the President would not appreciate too much congressional interference. The nation cannot allow this kind of executive branch dominance to continue.

To prevent more mistakes, Congress must make it clear to the President and people, such as his Secretary of Defense, Donald H. Rumsfeld, that the power of the purse is vested in Congress by the Constitution. This means that every dollar for military action, for reconstruction of Iraq or for other future operations, and for new weapons systems, must have the explicit approval of Congress. This process is what makes us a Constitutional Republic, instead of the Presidential monarchy we are becoming.

It is interesting that before President Truman, no President believed he had war-making power. In contrast, every President after Truman believes that, as Commander-in-Chief, he has this authority. Therefore one man, Harry Truman, altered the Constitution when he based his intervention in Korea on the authority of the United Nations, not Congress. This distortion of the Constitution threatened our system of government. And Congress did nothing.

David S. Friedman writes: "According to the 1967 National Commitments Report of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 'every President since World War II has asserted at one time or another that he had the authority to commit the armed forces to conflict without the consent of Congress.' Moreover, even when no claim was asserted, these Presidents have undertaken military action as though they possessed this authority. Despite variations in the forcefulness with which Presidents have put forward their claim of unlimited war power, not a single one has repudiated Truman's theory. To the contrary, all have acted as though Truman's usurpation of power was legal."32

It is interesting that before President Truman, no President believed he had war-making power. In contrast, every President after Truman believes that, as Commander-in-Chief, he has this authority.

The same logic applies to Mr. Clinton using our military forces in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Haiti, Somalia, Sudan, and Kosovo without legislative authority. "Like my predecessors of both parties, I have not agreed that I was constitutionally mandated to get it," President Clinton said, about his need for congressional authority before invading Haiti, as if both parties breaking the law makes it legal. In a September 15, 1994 television speech, Clinton talked about carrying "out the will of the United Nations." What lawless nonsense. Again Congress did nothing.

The agreement between the Security Council and member states regarding the basis on which troops will be allotted to them is quite clear. It says troops will be assigned "in accordance with their respective constitutional processes."34

After the U.N. Charter was approved, Congress had to decide the meaning of "constitutional processes." How the United States would contribute troops to the U.N. was made law through the "U.N. Participation Act of 1945." It says that agreements "shall be sub-
ject to the approval of the Congress by appropriate Act or Joint Resolution. How could it be said with more clarity and precision? President Clinton should have known better.

And Congress must make certain that future Presidents understand the law. For example, Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, on the floor of the House of Representatives, said, "When uncontrolled and abused, Presidential power is a grave threat to our way of life, to our fundamental freedoms.

Mr. Clinton also made this statement on October 18, 1993: "But I think that, clearly, the Constitution leaves the President, for good and sufficient reasons, the ultimate decision-making authority. The President must make the ultimate decision." Where does it say this? If he is right, then we should get rid of the Constitution and replace it with a presidential monarchy.

Following the Constitution is particularly important when someone as untrustworthy as Mr. Clinton becomes President. Only Congress can defend the rights of the people by standing firmly against the President.

It is interesting that on the February 29, 2000 "Frontline" program dealing with Kosovo, former Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen pointed out that the Clinton administration had to go slow regarding the use of ground troops because it was concerned about how Congress would react. In essence, even without using its full power, Congress was still able to keep us out of a ground war in the Balkans. This is an example of why our founders gave the warmaking power to Congress.

On the same program, General Michael E. Ryan, the Air Force chief of staff made clear that a ground war in Kosovo would have been difficult to win and would have resulted in high casualties. So why would someone like Senator McCain be pushing the idea that President Clinton, on his own authority, should be ordering ground troops into Kosovo? Instead of getting himself free press by promoting an unconstitutional idea, Senator McCain should have been defending the powers of the legislative branch as contained in the Constitution.

The issues of the separation of powers and checks and balances have gotten so distorted that former Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright made this hard-nosed challenge to Congress in her January 24, 2000 statement at the U.N.: "So let me be clear; only the President and the Executive Branch can speak for the United States." This lady may understand power, but she doesn't understand the Constitution.

Fortunately, Senator John W. Warner challenged Ms. Albright on the Senate floor. He said, "The President does not have sole authority in the area of foreign affairs. Out of respect for the Members of the Congress who . . . have respect for you, and want to work with you, but not in the face of such a defiant proclamation as that."

The President's power as Commander-in-Chief in time of war takes over only after authority to deploy our forces has been received from Congress. The power of Congress is so complete that, by using its power of the purse, it can stop a military deployment even after it has begun. William P. Barr, the deputy attorney general at the time, agrees on this point. Before Desert Storm he told President Bush, "If they [Congress] do not like the way you are employing the forces, they can take away the money for them to operate." This is how Congress ended the war in Vietnam in 1973—it denied the Executive Branch the funds needed to continue the war.

As we learned in Vietnam, the American military cannot be successfully committed to combat without the total support of the people. Lyndon Johnson used the questionable Tonkin Gulf incident of August 4, 1964 to convince Congress to pass the Tonkin Gulf
Resolution three days later. This act of Congress turned out to be a blank check allowing LBJ to do whatever he wanted. Think about this: President Johnson escalated the war by bombing North Vietnam based on an attack that never happened. It was a monumental blunder. Only Congress can prevent this kind of tragedy from happening again. What Congress did in Vietnam by allowing the President to dictate strategy was to abdicate its portion of the responsibility for U.S. foreign policy.

It has now been more than 50 years since Truman unconstitutionally deployed our troops in Korea. For those who believe he had to act quickly, the answer is that it took only three days for Congress to pass the 1955 Formosa resolution. Truman had five days to get Congressional approval regarding Korea. President Franklin D. Roosevelt got his declaration of war on Pearl Harbor Day.

How disappointing that influential Senators such as Bob Dole and John McCain believe that they know more about the Constitution than our Founding Fathers did. Here is what Senator Dole said regarding the warmaking power: "In my view the President has the authority and the power under the Constitution to do what he feels should be done regardless of what Congress does." Where does he find this foolishness in the Constitution? Isn't it time that all members of Congress be required to pass a test on the Constitution before they are sworn in?

On the Senate floor, John McCain actually said, "The President will be sending 20,000 Americans to Bosnia for one year, whether we approve or disapprove . . . the President has the authority under the Constitution to do so, and he intends to exercise that authority with or without our approval." How could these two men who wanted to be President be so uninformed concerning what is written in the Constitution?

The situation regarding Desert Storm is most interesting to consider. The United States had more than 500,000 troops ready to go from a defensive position (Desert Shield) to the offensive position (Desert Storm) in early 1991. Could President Bush attack the Iraqi forces on his own authority as Commander-in-Chief, or did he need to go to Congress for authorization?

Bob Woodward outlines the administration's position this way: "William R. Barr, the Deputy Attorney General, said that in his opinion and that of the senior department lawyers, the President has full authority to conduct military operations as the commander-in-chief, regardless of whether Congress voted a resolution of support."42

In a recent telephone conversation, I asked Mr. Barr where in the Constitution he found justification for his position. His answer was that at the Constitutional Convention, in his opinion, "to declare war" was intended as a legal and limited term. This reasoning implies that the framers intended the President to be the warmaking authority. This view would disagree sharply with those of Washington, Madison, Hamilton, Roger Sherman, George Mason, Charles Pinckney, Elbridge Gerry, and James Wilson, who were all at the 1787 Constitutional Convention.

The fact is, there is nothing in the Constitution which gives the President the right to decide what wars he wants to fight. The Founding Fathers were solidly against presidential wars. As we discovered in Korea and Vietnam, presidential wars are a bad idea. Truman and Johnson found out that the people support the President at the beginning of a war but withdraw their support when things get rough. I hope the nation and the second Bush administration does not have to re-learn this lesson.

Wisely, President Bush the father did not follow the advice of people like his Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney and did go to Congress to receive the legal authority and the
support needed before proceeding with Desert Storm. This procedure is precisely what the Constitution of the American people demands. (And most important, Congress held a full debate.)

In his excellent September 20, 2001 speech to a Joint Session of Congress, President George W. Bush made clear that he would be working closely with Congress to defeat terrorism. The President made his point forcefully by saying, "And ladies and gentlemen of the Congress I thank you . . . for what you have already done and for what we will do together."44 (Emphasis added.)

After September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush acted prudently by asking Congress for authorization only to deploy our military forces to fight terrorism. This method has been used many times before and is fully constitutional. The resolution authorizing the use of our military against terrorism was passed by the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate on September 14, 2001. Point (A) says:

That the President is authorized to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons.45

When President George W. Bush was deciding on war with Iraq, Congress should not have given him a blank check dated October 10, 2002. The decision regarding a declaration of war should have been fully debated immediately before the President was recommending that we attack Iraq, which turned out to be on March 19, 2003. The Constitution does not allow for the President to walk around for months with the power to start a war.

The fact is that the Turkish parliament had a more timely and thorough debate on the war with Iraq than Congress did. And it must be remembered that this was the first time the United States was going to attack a nation at peace. In addition, had there been a full debate, maybe Congress could have made clear to the American people that September 11th was caused by Osama bin Laden not Sadaam Hussein. The Bush administration continues implying otherwise.

If any President cannot get Congress to authorize an offensive military action, then the Constitution says he cannot proceed. The Constitution made the people, not the President, sovereign. Passage of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution by Congress in 1964 gave President Johnson a blank check to do whatever he wanted in Vietnam. This tragic unconstitutional mistake had drastic consequences for our nation. Now Congress has made the same mistake again.

By passing the Iraq Resolution in October of 2002, Congress transferred all warmaking authority to President Bush. This power that clearly belongs exclusively to Congress was now controlled by the President. He alone could decide if and when a war would start with Iraq, and how much the war would cost.

Thereby, in addition to the warmaking power, Congress has in effect passed on to President Bush the all-important power of the purse. The prominent expert on separation of powers, Dr. Louis Fisher, put it this way: "Presidents have no authority to make financial commitments of tens of billions of dollars."46

In the Federalist Papers, Madison made clear that the power of the purse was the ultimate legislative power: "This power over the purse may, in fact, be regarded as the most
complete and effectual weapon with which any Constitution can arm the immediate representatives of the people, for obtaining a redress of every grievance, and for carrying into effect every just and salutary measure."\textsuperscript{47}

Former Speaker of the House Joseph G. Cannon added to Madison's comments by saying, "When Congress consents to the Executive making the budget, it will have surrendered the most important part of a representative government."\textsuperscript{48}

The Founding Fathers would be disturbed to know that Congress has willingly given up its warmaking and foreign policy powers to the President and his small group of advisers. Dean Velvel writes:

Those who favor Executive decision-making on war will retort that Congress is a bunch of 'inepts' whose views are not to be trusted on this matter. Regardless of this viewpoint, the declaration of war clause gives the decision-making power over to Congress. That is the Constitution we have, and if one wants to change it, one ought to amend the Constitution.

But I also have another quarrel with the idea that Congress is not the group whom you want making the decision on war. To wit: regardless of adverse views of Congress, which I share, I certainly don't want the people in the Executive making the decision on war. They should be held in as low regard as the Congress, and have richly earned that low regard in both war and peace from 1960 to date by lying, ineptitude, secrecy, arrogance, a failure to understand limits, and plain crookedness.\textsuperscript{49}

We are moving so steadily towards a Presidential form of government that in a July 15, 2003 \textit{Washington Post} article dealing with sending troops to Liberia, only President Bush was mentioned. There was not one word about Congress.\textsuperscript{50} No one seems to understand that it is unlawful for the President to place U.S. troops in harm's way on his own authority.

On the July 13, 2003 "Meet the Press" program, Tim Russert asked Secretary Rumsfeld if the President had decided to send troops to Liberia. The secretary said that he did not know. What is interesting here is that it did not occur to these men that Congress has the lead role here.

\textbf{The idea that the President must be blindly supported in foreign policy defies our constitutional concept of checks and balances.}

Current events are proving that the nation is going to regret that a full discussion was not held in Congress before the House passed the Iraq War Resolution on October 10, 2002, and the Senate passed it on October 11, 2002. An independent and courageous Congress would not have held this vote until events made it necessary. Just because the President and the Executive Branch want a vote on war is no reason for Congress to act.

Congress voted at the wrong time. Instead it should have waited until more conclusive information was available to it and only decided to vote if and when the legislative branch decided it was necessary. Congress is a separate branch of government that must come to its own conclusions, while overseeing the executive branch vigorously. This is what separation of powers and checks and balances are all about. This is especially important when Congress and the President are from the same political party.

The direction of foreign policy must be decided between the President and Congress.
The idea that the President must be blindly supported in foreign policy defies our constitutional concept of checks and balances. President Teddy Roosevelt wrote, "To announce that there must be no criticism of the President, or that we are to stand by the President, right or wrong, is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American people."51

Our Constitution made a brilliant switch by granting the legislative branch—not the executive branch—the warmaking power. And to make this authority firm, the Founders also gave Congress the power of the purse plus the power to impeach and remove the President from office.

To make the issue of warmaking clear, James Madison wrote, "In no part of the Constitution is more wisdom to be found than in the clause which confides the question of war and peace to the legislature, and not to the executive department."52 The Founding Fathers knew that this was the best way to guarantee that the American military would only be used with the consent of Congress. Any President who challenges this concept is in fact challenging Washington, Madison, Adams, and our constitutional form of government.

Our future success as a nation depends on understanding that the Constitution is what makes us Americans and what defines the common good.◆

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The Vanishing Case for War

By Thomas Powers

1.

The invasion and conquest of Iraq by the United States last spring was the result of what is probably the least ambiguous case of the misreading of secret intelligence information in American history. Whether it is even possible that a misreading so profound could yet be in some sense "a mistake" is a question to which I shall return. Going to war was not something we were forced to do, and it certainly was not something we were asked to do. It was something we elected to do for reasons that have still not been fully explained.

The official argument for war, pressed in numerous speeches by President Bush and others, failed to convince most of the world that war against Iraq was necessary and just; it failed to soften the opposition to war by long-time allies like France and Germany; and it failed to persuade even a simple majority of the Security Council to vote for war despite immense pressure from Washington. The President's argument was accepted only by the United States Congress, which voted to give him blanket authority to attack Iraq, and then kept silent during the worldwide debate that followed. The entire process—from the moment it became unmistakably clear that the President had decided to go to war in August 2002, until his announcement on May 1 that "major combat" was over—took about nine months, and it will stand for decades to come as an object lesson in secrecy and its hazards.

Any attempt to understand the war on Iraq must begin with the profound psychological shock caused by the destruction of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Bad as those attacks were, high administration officials concluded that a still greater danger existed—the possibility that terrorists would arm themselves with chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons, something they could hope to acquire only from outlaw regimes. President Bush identified his candidates for this "axis of evil" in his first State of the Union message in 2002—North Korea, Iran, and Iraq.

In a September 2002 paper establishing the administration's National Security Strategy, President Bush announced an aggressive new policy for dealing with this danger. The United States, he declared, "must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends. . . . To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively."

To justify preemptive war on Iraq, the administration made three interlocking claims—that Iraq was actively developing
weapons of mass destruction including nuclear bombs; that it had a secret working relationship with Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda terrorist network, which had been responsible for the attacks on September 11; and that the danger that Saddam Hussein would provide terrorists with weapons of mass destruction was so grave that it amounted to an imminent threat.

There was nothing tentative or timorous about this argument; officials hammered home all three points for months. But at the same time, President Bush had also pledged in a personal preamble to the National Security Strategy that any decision for war would be reached only after "using the best intelligence and proceeding with deliberation"—an implicit promise we are now in a position to judge. This exercise is not academic; understanding how secret intelligence information was used to justify war can help to answer two urgent questions—why Congress went along with so little argument, and how President Bush, if he should win a second term a year from now, might elect to deal with security threats posed by other "problem states" like Syria and Iran.

What the CIA learned in the years since 1998 has been kept largely secret, but beginning in the summer of 2002, President Bush and other officials began to speak often and loudly of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction as not merely a theoretical danger but an established fact. Some claims were general—in Cincinnati in October 2002, for example, shortly before Congress voted in favor of a blank-check resolution authorizing war, President Bush said, "The Iraqi regime . . . possesses and produces chemical and biological weapons. It is seeking nuclear weapons. It has given shelter and support to terrorism . . . The danger is already significant, and it grows worse with time. If we know Saddam Hussein has dangerous weapons today—and we do—does it make any sense for the world to wait . . . for the final proof, the smoking gun that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud?"

The force of the President's Cincinnati speech depends on his flat assertion of certitude—we know; and on his use of the present tense—the regime possesses and produces; it is seeking; Saddam Hussein has. To counter these claims would require access to the same secret intelligence information provided to the President, but no one else has such access—what American intelligence organizations learn is all filtered through the CIA, which is part of the executive branch of the government, led by directors appointed by the president, answerable to the president. In theory the director of the CIA can and should reach his own independent judgment; but in fact no director of central intelligence can disagree with the White House and keep his job for long.

"Continuing Programs" is both the title and the conclusion of the NIE, and it contains many flat claims no Congressman would be able to question—the Iraqis "possess chemical warfare bulk fills" for missiles; biological warfare programs "are active and . . . are larger and more advanced than they were before the Gulf War"; Iraq "has begun renewed production of mustard, sarin," and other chemical weapons; the CIA believes that Iraq "started reconstituting" its program to build nuclear weapons in 1998 and, according to "a foreign government service," had arranged to purchase "several tons of 'pure uranium' (probably yellowcake)" in Niger, referring to a kind of uranium ore that can be used to make fissionable material.

Many of these claims were also cited by President Bush in his State of the Union message to Congress last January with additional hard detail—Iraq might have 500 tons of chemical weapons, 25,000 liters of anthrax, 38,000 liters of botulinum toxin, 30,000 prohibited bombs and warheads. The Niger yellowcake story also found its way into the
President's State of the Union message. "The British government," Bush said, "has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa."

Secretary of State Colin Powell's nose for deceit was sharper than the President's; when he delivered the American case for war at a meeting of the U.N. Security Council on February 5, only a week after the President's State of the Union speech, he did not cite the yellowcake story, a fact that went unremarked at the time. Nor did Powell mention another claim often made by administration officials—that Mohamed Atta, one of the hijackers on September 11, had secretly met with an Iraqi intelligence official in Prague. But Powell did include a great many other general and specific claims about Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction, and on the truth of those claims the justification of the American invasion of Iraq must stand or fall.

Powell did not hedge or qualify his case. "My colleagues," he said, "every statement I make today is backed up by sources, solid sources. These are not assertions. What we're giving you are facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence. . . . My . . . purpose today is to provide you with additional information, to share with you what the United States knows about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. . . . I cannot tell you everything that we know, but what I can share with you . . . is deeply troubling."

Supporting his claims, Powell said, were intercepted telephone conversations, satellite photos of weapons and weapons sites, interviews with defectors, and reports from friendly intelligence services.

By my count, Powell made 29 claims about Iraqi weapons, programs, behaviors, events, and munitions which at least in theory should have been verifiable once American forces had free run of the country. Some were explicit and concrete, like the claims that "Iraq today has a stockpile of between 100 and 500 tons of chemical weapons agent," that Iraq "retains a covert force of up to a few dozen Scud-variant ballistic missiles," or that "Iraq has illegally imported 380 SA-2 rocket engines. . . . Should we take the risk that he will not someday use these weapons at a time . . . of his choosing?" Powell asked. "The United States will not and cannot run that risk to the American people."

The invasion and occupation of Iraq have now taken place. American intelligence officers and weapons experts have had six months to scour Iraq for evidence of the dangers cited to justify a preemptive war. What have they found?

The first serious and systematic effort to describe the nuts and bolts of Iraqi WMD was released on October 2, when David Kay, a weapons expert appointed by George Tenet to run the CIA's Iraq Survey Group, testified before congressional intelligence committees. His report was simultaneously frank and defensive. "We have not yet found stocks of weapons," he said, "but we are not yet at the point where we can say definitively either that such weapon stocks do not exist or that they existed before the war and our only task is to find where they have gone." It is the first part of that sentence which answers the question whether Iraq posed an imminent threat to the United States—no weapons found.
To place the reports side by side is instructive. Kay says nothing whatever about 11 of Powell's 29 claims, which we may take as a functional equivalent of "not found." At the top of this list are the "100 - 500 tons of chemical weapons agent," the sarin and mustard gas, the possible 25,000 liters of anthrax, the "few dozen" Scud missiles, the "wherewithal to develop smallpox." Not found. The factory with thousands of centrifuges intended to produce fissionable material for atomic bombs with the telltale aluminum tubes? Not found. It is difficult to convey the completeness of Kay's failure to find just about anything Powell cited as a justification for war.

In a few cases David Kay almost declares flatly that something isn't there—for example, that Iraq has had no chemical weapons program since 1991. Not just the weapons are missing; there has been no program—for 12 years. But then Kay hedges—in other words, they could be wrong, something might still turn up. So it goes—no evidence backing Powell's claim that Iraqi military units had been ordered to prepare for chemical warfare against invading armies; no evidence that "Iraq undertook significant post-1998 steps to actually build nuclear weapons . . ."

Did David Kay find anything that might be described as a weapon? Not really. The conclusion seems inescapable—on the eve of war, and probably for years beforehand, Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, and it had no active program to build them.

Saddam's weapons constituted half of the imminent threat that President Bush used to justify war; the other half was Saddam's relationship with al-Qaeda and his willingness to give them weapons for deadly new attacks on the United States. Al-Qaeda's history and operational style are the subject of another official document released in sanitized form last December—the 600-plus-page report prepared by the House and Senate intelligence committees (the "Joint Inquiry") on Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001. The most striking of the Joint Inquiry's many findings is that the FBI knew a great deal about the hijackers but was unable "to connect the dots."

But while the Joint Inquiry naturally focused on this failure, it also stressed the major change in the terrorist threat that took place when the state-sponsored terrorism of the 1980s gave way to the decentralized, international, and self-sustaining terrorist cells loosely organized by Osama bin Laden in the virtual network called al-Qaeda. This finding collided head-on with an article of faith in the White House. There Vice President Dick Cheney and other high officials believed that Palestinian terrorists would quickly fade away without clandestine support from Iran, Iraq, and Syria, and insisted that al-Qaeda, too, must depend on secret state sponsors. In a speech in Washington last October, Paul Wolfowitz, principal deputy of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, said, "Remember, now the dangers we're talking about are not 3,000 dead Americans a day, but 30,000 or 300,000, or even—God forbid—3 million." Wolfowitz went on to claim that the CIA had collected solid facts about a decade of senior-level contacts between Iraq and al-Qaeda, facts about training of al-Qaeda people, including in chemical and biological weapons, and facts about providing sanctuary for al-Qaeda people, including senior al-Qaeda people, including in Baghdad . . .

The President in his State of the Union message last January insisted "that Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of al-Qaeda," and Powell at the U.N. a week later added further details. He cited "a
foreign security service" as the source of information that Osama bin Laden met with "a senior Iraqi intelligence official in Khartoum" in 1996. At about the same time, according to "one of Saddam's former intelligence chiefs in Europe," Iraq provided training to al-Qaeda in document forgery, and after September 11 it gave refuge and medical treatment to Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi, who had various links to al-Qaeda, had helped to establish a "poison and explosive training center camp" in northern Iraq, and was telephoned by a jubilant terrorist shortly after the fatal shooting in Jordan of an American official last October.

The Joint Inquiry's report stressed the comings and goings of the September 11 plotters, noting that they "became radicalized in Germany, held meetings in Malaysia, and received funds channeled through the United Arab Emirates." Among the countries where al-Qaeda sought help or haven were Yemen, Malaysia, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, Spain, Bosnia, Chechnya, Morocco, Thailand, the Philippines, Dubai, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, and the United States.

But conspicuously missing from the Joint Inquiry's list of nations that supported al-Qaeda is Iraq; indeed its name rarely appears in the six hundred-plus pages of the report, and then only in passing concerning matters in doubt. What happened to the terrorist Zarqawi, the poison-making camp in northern Iraq, the "decade of senior-level contacts between Iraq and al-Qaeda," the "training," the "aid," the "support," and above all the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction given to terrorists for future attacks on America—the heart of the imminent danger that justified war?

These awkward rhetorical questions might be extended indefinitely, but the answer is always the same. In the six months since the President declared an end to major combat in Iraq not a single one of the factual claims about Iraqi weapons and links to al-Qaeda has been robustly confirmed, and in most cases there has been no confirmation of any kind whatever.

The administration's justification for war was not merely flawed or imperfect—it was wrong in almost every detail, and completely wrong at the heart. There was no imminent danger—indeed there was no distant danger.

The principal obstacle to answering this question lies in plain sight—the immense consequences of the mistake. The battle killing an American soldier every day or two has a sim-
pler character—the United States is trying to secure its conquest of Iraq, and Iraqis are resisting. Wars of occupation are ugly and hard to win but easy to drag out, and none of those responsible for getting the United States planted in Iraq—men like Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Cheney, and Paul Wolfowitz, who conceived the strategy; George Tenet and other high officials of the CIA, who chose and presented the evidence to justify war; or President Bush, who ordered it—will be quick to admit they made a mistake. The United States is certain to pay a debilitating price for the conquest of Iraq for a generation, and the argument over the cause of the disaster is sure to be long and bitter. The first round in this contest is already taking shape inside the Senate Intelligence Committee, where the majority is drafting a critique that blames the "mistake" on the CIA, while the minority argues that equally to blame were the marching orders coming out of the White House.

The two sides will never agree, but they are both right. The administration could never have convinced Congress of its argument for war without the mystique of secret intelligence to lend gravity to its case; and the argument over the cause of the disaster is sure to be long and bitter. The first round in this contest is already taking shape inside the Senate Intelligence Committee, where the majority is drafting a critique that blames the "mistake" on the CIA, while the minority argues that equally to blame were the marching orders coming out of the White House.

The two sides will never agree, but they are both right. The administration could never have convinced Congress of its argument for war without the mystique of secret intelligence to lend gravity to its case; and the CIA would never have made so much of so little if George Tenet had not been a willing member of the President's team. The problem is structural, not personal. Presidents can fire directors they don't like, and the CIA has no other customer. The big mistakes all come when presidents don't listen, or let it be known what they want to hear.

When the White House was embarrassed last summer by its reckless insertion of the Niger yellowcake story in the President's State of the Union speech, it was George Tenet who stepped in and took the blame. He didn't write the speech, approve the speech, or even read the speech before it was delivered, but the Niger yellowcake story was poisoned, it was based on fabricated documents, it was dangerously close to the Oval Office—so Tenet took the blame, and the analysts who knew better held their tongues.

The problem is the one-customer CIA and the mutual temptations of master and servant—the President's temptation to control what we "know" about the world, and thereby command assent for what he wants to do; the CIA director's temptation to be confirmed in his position at the President's side.

There is little mystery how the CIA could have put together a fat dossier of evidence that Saddam Hussein was actively seeking weapons of mass destruction. Analysts call it "cherry picking"—rummaging through the agency's vast inventory of reports received to find nuggets of fact or allegation that suggest Iraq has bought this, or sought that, or built or smuggled or hidden something else.

It now appears that it would have taken Iraq much longer than a year to make a nuclear weapon, even if the fissionable material were available, and the other judgments have so far turned out to be completely wrong as well, something we now know from David Kay's interim report. This raises the question what sort of "evidence" was cited in the NIE and how it was marshaled into the CIA's "Key Judgments." Continued faith in the President demands a verdict of honest error and George Tenet accordingly has defended the integrity of CIA analysts. But the distortion of evidence—the honest "mistake" the White House needs—always takes place at the upper end of the estimating process, where raw facts are turned into the language of a finding or key judgment. It is not the authors of the final draft who can, or will, explain where the reasoning went astray, but the analysts and collectors deep within the agency who are steeped in their specialties and can read the missing facts as easily as those that are known.

The activity required for a nation to build and deploy weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, is large and diffi-
cult to conceal. The fact that none has been found suggests that the evidence must have been thin. To me it seems likely that the WMD analysts recognized that the evidence was paltry, concluded the activity was low, and were unsure how to explain it. Left on their own, the analysts would have walked gingerly all around the mystery of Iraq's nuclear program, couching their findings in well-hedged paragraphs full of that special verb form we might call the intelligence conditional—things that may, might, or could be the case. We can be sure it was not the analysts who leaped to conclusions and gave the estimate writers their language—dictating the high confidence about all sorts of things that were not so. But we ought not to be distracted from the fact that 90 pages of doubtful "evidence" was the foundation for frightening but completely wrong "Key Judgments," and that these wrong claims were taken as gospel by members of Congress authorizing the President to go to war.

Why Senators and Congressmen accepted the CIA's findings is a question that demands explanation. They bought the story once, and might do it again. President Bush has warned both Syria and Iran to abandon their own programs to build weapons of mass destruction—warnings that closely follow in tone and wording those once directed at Iraq. Congress may soon find itself considering a new vote for war to meet threats and avoid dangers described by intelligence officials only in closed hearings. The key judgments, as before, will be laid out by the one-customer CIA; they will reflect the wishes and preconceptions of the White House; they will be based on evidence Congress will find it hard to judge; and there will be intense psychological pressure to accept what they are told, support the President, and stand fast against enemies.

Many Senators and Representatives argued that war was unnecessary or unwise or even wrong; some said the U.N. inspectors should be given more time, a few said they were not convinced the danger was imminent. But it seems that no one argued, or even suggested, what now appears to have been true—that Iraq was telling the truth in its 12,000-page report when it said it no longer had its banned weapons. Much more typical was the judgment of Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, who voted with multiple hesitations for the resolution but accepted the CIA's "Key Judgments." "This much is undisputed," she said about Iraq's ongoing programs for WMD, and she was right—it was undisputed. Senator John Kerry said much the same: "There is little question that Saddam Hussein wants . . . nuclear weapons." That was the problem—too little question. But even after the inspections resumed last November, and the CIA conspicuously failed to provide the team with information that turned up actual weapons of any kind, the members of Congress who had voted the blank check held their peace.

For the bigger part I blame the insistence of the President that Iraq threatened America, the willingness of the CIA to create a strong case for war out of weak evidence, and the readiness of Congress to ignore its own doubts and go along. Their faith in the case for war confirms that something has been going on deep in the American psyche since the beginning of the cold war, a progressive withering of the skeptical faculty when "secret intelligence" is called in to buttress a President's case for whatever he wants. The vote for war on Iraq was not unprecedented; 40 years ago Congress voted for war in Vietnam in the Tonkin Gulf resolution, too timid to insist on time to weigh reports of an attack on American ships at sea—reports that were either plain wrong or misleading. Again and again throughout the cold war, Congress
voted billions for new weapons systems to meet hypothetical, exaggerated, or even imaginary threats—routinely backed up by evidence too secret to reveal.

Years of talk about sources and methods, spies and defectors, classified documents and code-word clearances, spy satellites and intercepted communications, have generated a mystique of secret intelligence that chills doubt and freezes debate. The result is a tip-toeing deference which treats classified information as not only requiring special handling, but deserving special respect. "As always," George Tenet told the Senate Intelligence Committee during the war resolution debate last fall, "our declassification efforts seek a balance between your need for unfettered debate and our need to protect sources and methods." When Congress voted last October, it seemed to have lost some fundamental equilibrium—as if caution itself were aid to an enemy. A Congress so easily manipulated has in effect surrendered its role, allowing Presidents to do as they will.

"My colleagues," Colin Powell said at the U.N., "every statement I make today is backed up by sources, solid sources. . . . What we're giving you are facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence." But now, only six months later, we have ample reason to conclude that the intelligence wasn't solid at all, there was no need for war, Iraq's weapons of mass destruction didn't exist. This discovery ought to put the American people on constructive notice that the functioning of our democracy is threatened by the nexus of the White House and a too-pliant CIA—a closed loop of Presidents who know what they want, intelligence chiefs willing to make the argument and classify the evidence, and members of Congress under their spell. The hazard in this mix shows itself early—when the briefers assure Congress that their high confidence rests firmly on evidence too secret to share.◆
Global Discontent and Domestic Dissent: George W. Bush and

By Randall Doyle, Ph.D.

9/11 transformed America. The U.S. now sees 'evil' throughout the world and, if necessary, is prepared to act alone to eradicate it. This new 'preemptive' strategy is presented to the American people as a way to eliminate terrorism. Thus, 9/11 set America upon aggressive foreign and domestic policy paths, which have already led to wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, while the economy is in serious decline due to growing deficits and an increasingly unequal distribution of U.S. assets.

Not surprising, a distinctive new 'counterforce' coalition consisting of France, Germany, Russia and China has emerged in the last two years. Ironically, the 'preemptive' strategy that was conceived of to protect U.S. vital interests and security after 9/11 has created a backlash not only in the Arab world, but amongst our allies in the war against terrorism.

President George W. Bush is currently confronting a multi-policy failure. In the 1980 presidential campaign, former President Ronald Reagan spoke of a double-digit 'misery index' to describe the effects of incumbent President Jimmy Carter's term in office. Today, America suffers from a different kind of 'misery index' that represents a far greater danger to our future security than that posed by high interest rates and unemployment. The rise of domestic dissent toward the Bush Administration is growing due to policy failures on numerous fronts. This essay will focus upon a few of these in both the domestic and international realms and briefly describe the dangers they represent.

Allies For The War on Terrorism: "Buddy, Can You Spare a Dime (or a few troops)?"

Throughout the world there was enormous sympathy and a desire to help the U.S. fight terrorism after 9/11. Two years later this sympathy and support has largely vanished. The U.S. invaded Iraq in April 2003, and, to date, there has not been any significant troop support or financial support from any of our major NATO allies, except for Great Britain and Italy. Poland and other Eastern European countries have provided small troop contingents and logistical support. Russia and China have been reluctant to participate in the war in Iraq, even though they have a vested interest in eradicating terrorism and containing extremist religious movements. Although Turkey announced, in October 2003, it was willing to send 10,000 troops to Iraq to aid the U.S. in stabilizing the country, the offer was subsequently withdrawn due to political resistance in Iraq. The Kurds in northern Iraq, especially, are less than thrilled by the prospects of Turkish troops on their soil.

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Thus, assistance from the international community has been a mixed bag in Iraq. Many international agencies, such as the U.N., have already scaled back their presence significantly due to security problems. The U.S. desperately needs international assistance, but the post-9/11 global environment has shifted dramatically against America's plan to fight terrorism. Why?

Many critics point to President Bush's national address in which he stated America's primary goal was to destroy global terrorism. This statement of policy was not unexpected. However, his declaration that "either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists," was the beginning of the steady decline of support for U.S. efforts against terrorism. To put it simply, the global community was shaken and deeply disturbed by Bush's "cowboy diplomacy." America was wielding its power nakedly. Terms such as arrogance, hubris, colonialism, empire, and imperialism began to appear in journal articles and newspaper stories concerning U.S. strategy against terrorism.

International fears increased in response to the September 2002 publication of the Bush Administration's blueprint for national security entitled, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America. John Lewis Gaddis, professor of military and naval history at Yale University, recognized immediately that the Bush plan represents a much more aggressive use of U.S. power against its perceived enemies. If there were any doubts about the direction of U.S. foreign policy, this document clearly stated a new American willingness to use force—preemptively and unilaterally, if necessary. The message was quite clear, "Stand with us, or stand aside." Sadly, however, this hegemonic rhetoric and strategy has come back to haunt the U.S. after Bush, on the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln, prematurely declared the cessation of combat operations in Iraq.

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD): M.I.A. in Iraq

The primary reason that President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair gave for going to war was that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction, and that he could activate them within 45 minutes according to "sexed-up" intelligence reports. A confidential memo (later found to be a forgery) declared that Hussein was attempting to purchase yellow cake uranium from Niger in western Africa in order to develop nuclear weapons. Former U.S. ambassador Joseph Wilson publicly debunked this myth. This chilling scenario, however, was floated in Washington and London to great effect. Hussein was compared to Adolf Hitler. To ignore him was to repeat the cowardly appeasement of the 1938 Munich Conference—or so the argument went.

However, there was little credible evidence that Hussein was a danger beyond his own borders. Chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix and his crew valiantly searched for WMD and other materials that could be a threat to the West, or the region. Despite operating under tremendous pressure applied by neo-conservatives within the Bush administration, and an increasingly anxious British government, Blix came up dry. He was painted as an incompetent at best, anti-American at worst, U.N. operative. By implication, he never really intended to find weapons, or any kind of arsenal that could be used to justify the invasion of Iraq.

Finally, Blix was told to leave Iraq before U.S. military operations began. He later claimed emphatically that the U.S. and British governments had "over-interpreted" intelligence data. A sort of modern-day witch-hunt occurred because both governments were obsessed with finding weapons of mass destruction. Since the initial military operations ended, a significantly larger U.S. Survey
Team, led by CIA official David Kay, has also come up dry, though like Bush and Blair, Kay insists new information will lead to uncovering stockpiles of WMD.7 Ironically, the neo-cons in the White House and throughout the U.S. government have asked the American people and the international community for the very things, time and money, they denied to Blix.

To be sure, many throughout the global community sensed the hypocrisy embodied by U.S. policy concerning terrorism. A growing number began to question not just the justifications for invading Iraq, but the real intentions of the U.S. government. For many global observers, oil was the primary reason for America's rapid deployment and use of its military forces.8 Iraq encompasses the second-largest known oil reserves in the world.9 Of course, the Bush Administration vehemently denies this charge. It instead declared in very 'Wilsonian' tones that America's real purpose was to plant the seeds of democracy and self-determination in Iraq, along with the dubious claim that those trends would spread throughout the Middle East. Is it irrelevant to ask if the Iraqis, or any other country in the Middle East, requested such a political transformation? Historically, people residing in weak and vulnerable countries are never asked their preference; they are simply told what is good for them by the major Western powers.

Vietnam: Did We Really Learn Anything?
I joined the U.S. Navy in 1976 and served until 1980, in the period just after the fall of Saigon. The images of American helicopters flying from the rooftop of our embassy in South Vietnam left an indelible impression upon those I served with who had fought in Vietnam. Even for civilians, whether they had been for or against the war, this failed attempt at 'global shaping' left scars upon them as well.

However, as the Iraq war grinds on, many of these same military veterans and citizen witnesses of the Vietnam debacle are asking if we really learned anything from our misguided military adventure in Southeast Asia. The answer, apparently, is not much. Like the Vietnam War, the struggle in Iraq (i.e. terrorism at-large) is being described in all-or-nothing terms. There can only be victory. Dissent is treasonous and is to be fought with intimidation and punishment. Nancy Chang writes in Silencing Political Dissent that the passing of the USA PATRIOT Act, in October 2001, was designed to stifle and discourage any form of dissent or disagreement with the Bush agenda.10

Colonel David Hackworth, U.S. Army veteran and America's most decorated living combat soldier, has increasingly criticized the decision-making process concerning the Iraqi war. Hackworth, an often-seen guest on cor-
porate television concerning military matters, has been harsh in his criticism of the Pentagon's handling of this war. The basis for his sharp departure from the military establishment is the hundreds of daily e-mails from soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan he has received throughout the conflict. Troops are increasingly disgruntled with the mission in Iraq, with many stating unequivocally that they will not re-enlist at the end of their contracts. (It must be noted that these sentiments were expressed in the Pentagon-funded newspaper, Stars and Stripes, which had conducted a survey of approximately 2,000 soldiers.) In short, the brave men and women serving in Iraq are steadily turning against this war of "liberation." They know that they represent an army of occupation. Sadly, this self-evident truth has escaped the consciousness of those in the White House.

**McCarthyism at Home: The Danger of Dissent**

Most Americans understand that dissent is one of their constitutionally protected rights. Unfortunately, many Americans also believe that dissent should only be practiced when it is comfortable, safe, and patriotic. Even such tepid dissent is met with incredulity and fierce denunciation by a partisan, corporate media that has sloughed off the last vestiges of journalistic objectivity.

Even within academia there has been, for the most part, blind adherence to the Bush Administration's interpretations of events. Few have questioned their extreme measures. Shortly after the attacks on the World Trade Center towers, I spoke with a colleague at the university where I was then teaching American history and foreign affairs. I simply stated that America, at the very least, would have to re-evaluate its foreign policy concerning the Middle East, to which my colleague called me a "communist" and shut his door in my face. I was stunned. This man had always presented himself as a progressive and open-minded individual concerning America's role in the world. However, his liberal perspective returned only when America went on the attack.

In the aftermath of 9/11, I learned from listening to well-known liberals, or those who prided themselves on being modern-day iconoclasts, such as Christopher Hitchens, that my colleague's inability to re-consider American foreign policy in the Middle East (or anywhere else) represented the norm amongst the liberal intelligentsia. In short, many liberals and progressives simply found it personally and professionally prudent to accept the White House's self-serving political analysis. It was understood that to counter the propaganda concerning the real reasons for 9/11 being hammered home by corporate radio and television, an individual would have his patriotism called into question—or worse.

The neo-cons occupying the White House understood instinctively the importance of controlling the interpretation of events following 9/11. The Bush Administration's ability to control the post-9/11 dialogue contributed to its ability to convince Americans that Iraq had some degree of responsibility for the attacks. By the time Senators Ted Kennedy and Robert Byrd spoke out against the war, the die had been cast. Bush's first preemptive strike was against the U.S. Congress, which rolled over as it has done for every war in American history.

**Home of the Brave (and Poor): Who Pays For The War?**

America is experiencing record trade deficits, the national debt is rising and the economic recovery is spotty at best. In my adopted home state of Michigan, the manufacturing sector has lost more than 170,000 jobs. The Bush Administration is the first administration since Herbert Hoover to have lost more jobs (approximately three million) than it produced for three consecutive years.
The war in Iraq, and against terrorism overall, is the reason given by the Bush White House to those who are becoming increasingly alarmed at the declining American economy—that is, when it's not denying the problem. The latest economic figures show an 8.2% GDP growth for the third quarter of 2003 and lower unemployment. Many Bush supporters point to the $1.4 billion dollar tax cut (favoring the rich) as the primary reason for the recent surge in the domestic economy. However, there are other indications that the U.S. economy is far from a stable and consistent recovery.

First, the value of the dollar has fallen significantly against major international currencies, especially the Euro. Though a cheap dollar might make U.S. exports more attractive to foreign buyers, a strong dollar is vital for maintaining the level of foreign investment on which the U.S. has depended for decades. It is not surprising that foreign investment in America has dropped off dramatically. As a result, the U.S. treasury, or new borrowing, must make up the difference in terms of paying off domestic debts, which, of course, leads to an ever-higher national debt.

Perhaps most worrisome, the creation of jobs has been very slow. A huge increase in job productivity and GDP growth has not resulted in a major surge in living-wage jobs for millions of unemployed Americans. The 'Wal-Martization' of the American economy is causing our society to become a two-tier caste system. The vaunted middle-class is steadily withering away due to "corporate restructuring," foreign competition, and the relocation of American production facilities overseas. The bulk of new jobs are low-paying service-oriented employment. The tax base for state governments, such as Michigan, as well as the federal government, is shrinking.

So, who pays for the war? It appears that the brunt of the conflict is being placed on the backs of the poor and the working-class. Most of the soldiers fighting are from these lower socio-economic segments of U.S. society. Students at the university where I teach hardly ever bring up the war; they know that they are unlikely ever to be asked to serve in the military. That burden is for others who aren't fortunate, or wealthy, enough to attend college. Serving in the U.S. military is no longer seen as an individual or 'community' responsibility to the nation. Instead, it is now a path reserved almost exclusively for the lower classes—at best it is a stepping-stone for those in the lower middle-class struggling with ever-increasing higher education costs, and the almost certain prospect of getting a 'McJob' without a college degree.

In the fall of 2003, President Bush requested an additional $87 billion to meet the rising costs of the Iraqi occupation and our involvement in Afghanistan. The U.S. Congress rolled over like a well-trained dog, though the venerable Democrat U.S. Senator Robert Byrd accused Republican senators of "a mad rush to act." However, with an economy under severe stress, an important question remains unanswered—who will suffer from increased military expenditures? If Michigan is any indicator, the American public will accept fewer governmental services. Also, indoctrinated by conservative politicians' mantra of lower taxes, the great majority of people are paying more for those services in the form of tuition, user fees, health-care

Historically, the roots of war are usually associated with political vanity, unbridled nationalism, moral certainty, and cultural arrogance.
insurance premiums, and so on.

Being in a constant state of war, for whatever reason, represents one of the main factors for a country’s eventual decline. Historically, the roots of war are usually associated with political vanity, unbridled nationalism, moral certainty, and cultural arrogance. Chris Hedges, author of *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*, states, "When our own nation is at war with any other, we detest them under the character of cruel, perfidious, unjust and violent: But always esteem ourselves and allies equitable, moderate, and merciful." Historically, history has irrefutably shown that every major empire undercut its power and influence in global affairs due to long-term expenditures for war. The lack of investment in civil society affected the standard of living in their respective societies, which led in some cases to revolution or upheaval.

Put simply, the costs of war can debilitate a nation’s future economic and international credibility and viability as a hegemonic power. The increasing economic divisions in America represent irrefutable evidence that this process is well underway. At what point do we challenge the decisions of our political leaders? And, if we don’t, are we ready to accept our own domestic instability? Finally, how long before our domestic instability affects our ability to provide for, and protect, our real vital interests around the world?

**Global Discontent/Domestic Dissent: The Chickens Are Coming Home to Roost**

The old saying, "what goes around, comes around," seems relevant when evaluating the imperial efforts of our political representation in Washington, D.C., who have never quite grasped the historical patterns repeating themselves before their eyes.

First, the Muslim world will never concede its cultural sovereignty to Western domination. Numerous colonial powers have already failed in this quest. Americans are learning painfully again that people of non-Western societies are generally satisfied with their own indigenous culture. Muslims may absorb various elements from other cultures, but this must not be interpreted by various Western civilizations as a wish to become a mirror image of them. That view, ironically, only makes non-Westerners ripe for the dogmas of political and religious provocateurs in their own countries.

George F. Kennan, the architect of the original containment strategy, created in 1946 as a bulwark against communism, has stated time and again that the U.S. must accept and understand the limitations of its abilities and resources in trying to transform the world in its image. Kennan often quotes perhaps America’s greatest statesman, John Quincy Adams, who stated in 1823 that America would do well to defend and protect its own freedom and liberties. Kennan believes that the U.S. should practice caution and restraint when trying to project its values upon other cultures.

The domestic price for such misguided and imperialistic moves toward global domination is that our own freedoms and liberties are now threatened. The USA PATRIOT Act (2001) is a good example of how quickly a frightened and leaderless U.S. Congress capitulated when confronted by a national crisis. The Bush Administration pushed through this power-grabbing legislation stating that it was an important part of their war on terrorism. Initially, most American people accepted these new restrictions on their civil liberties due to the hysteria created by corporate newsrooms that reported terrorism was about to destroy the American way of life. Those who resisted this propaganda and questioned the constitutionality of these new measures were either ignored or attacked for their lack of patriotism.

The pendulum seems to be swinging back toward the restoration of constitutionally pro-
ected rights and privileges, and against the Bush Administration's ongoing efforts to acquire even more power. The eventual political fallout from President Bush's reactionary domestic and foreign policies is likely to provoke a serious backlash—sooner or later. Perhaps, an indication of things to come for those who openly dissented against the Bush policies was the ugly incident involving former U.S. Ambassador Joseph Wilson and his (CIA-affiliated) wife, Valerie Palme. Although she is considered a top analyst in the area of military weaponry at the CIA, her future with the agency has been seriously compromised due to being "outed" by conservative columnist Robert Novak. Wilson had publicly refuted the Bush Administration's claim that Saddam Hussein had attempted to purchase uranium from Niger. The attorney general has had to remove himself from the investigation due to his intimate involvement in passage of the PATRIOT Act and how it has been applied to dissenters. Also, the courts have begun to strike down the government's assertion that it can indefinitely detain both Americans and foreign nationals without charges or due representation.

In Conclusion: "Sometimes a Great Nation"

Although it prefers to believe otherwise, the United States does have economic and military limitations. America is not beyond the sweep of history. Its greatest strength lies in those values that only a free society can produce, such as liberty, justice, and tolerance. It is when we stray from these ideals that we become most vulnerable.

Therefore, why do we continually make the mistake in our foreign policy of not fostering, by example, these ideals amongst developing nations? The short answer is power and greed. The longer answer is that the U.S. believes, or at least those in positions of power believe, that the world must want our "civilization," by which we too often mean only the material benefits we so passionately pursue. We don't take the time to determine their sentiments on the issue. We assume that others want what we have, because we are convinced that we are the most intellectually and technologically advanced society in the world. Therefore, if somebody doesn't want what we have, there is something wrong with him. He must be subversive.

Manifest Destiny remains an extremely powerful aphrodisiac within U.S. foreign policy circles. Some segments of American citizenry are convinced of its spiritual inevitability. Its allure remains deeply embedded in the psyches of American policymakers who are convinced that something akin to paradise is possible if only the rest of the world would accept our version of it. They are so convinced of their righteousness that they are willing to put America's financial and political well being at risk. However, this misguided notion is doomed to fail. History's judgment is unmerciful on this point.

Niall Ferguson, the Herzog Professor of Financial History at New York University, has written critically on the subject of "empire" concerning Great Britain and America. In an article for *In The National Interests*, Ferguson is clearly skeptical about America's chances of creating long-term democratic institutions in Iraq. Why? The track record of U.S. military interventions, with the aim of constructing democratic institutions, has been less than scintillating. In fact, according to Ferguson, only four of 16 military interventions, since 1898, have succeeded in transforming non-democracies into liberal democratic societies (i.e. West Germany, Japan, Grenada, and Panama). It appears American Manifest Destiny and its ideological sidekick—liberal democracy—are not adaptable, or conducive, for every kind of global political environment.

Perhaps the late Speaker of the House of Representatives, Tip O'Neill's father, had it right after all. He told his son after his first
political campaign, which he lost in part for overlooking his own neighborhood in Boston, Massachusetts in the 1940s that, "all politics is local." 30

In the end, it will be the Iraqis, Pakistanis, Iranians, Syrians, and others in the pan-Arab world, who will determine their own fate, not the Americans. Although they differ on many theological points, most Christians and Muslims would agree that paradise must be earned, not bestowed. That is as true outside the mosque and church as it is inside.

Endnotes


10 Nancy Chang, Silencing Political Dissent: How Post-September 11 Anti-Terrorism Measures Threaten Our Civil Liberties 13 (Seven Stories Press, 2003).


20 Andrea Stone, Republicans to Support Iraq, Afghanistan Aid request, USA Today, Sept. 29, 2003.

21 Id.

22 Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000 (Knopf Publishing Group, 1989).


24 Kennedy, supra n. 22.


26 Id.


28 Id.


In addition to immediately killing 3,000 people, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 inevitably had rhetorical aspects, if one considers the meaning of rhetoric in its broadest sense. By highlighting this enigmatic term, we don't intend to demean the events of that day—quite the contrary. Rhetoric is never "mere," as per television's talking heads; rather, rhetoric invokes the whole range of human symbolic activity—including crashing large commercial passenger planes into skyscrapers. And, while intent remains a thorny interpretive issue in rhetorical studies generally, we can be fairly certain that the terrorist's intent was quite unambiguous: to spread fear. Moreover, and with morose irony, television provided the perfect medium to carry the Jihadist's anti-modern message. Of all the emotions, perhaps fear is most efficaciously pixilated.

So then, what were the rhetorical mechanisms at work on 9-11? First, and perhaps most important in our televisual age, was the time of day: the events took place in the bright light of summer's sun. These acts were meant to be seen, better yet, witnessed. Darkness would have spared us from seeing so much carnage. Many commentators immediately noted the symbolic—we would call them rhetorical—value of the targets: the World Trade Centers and the Pentagon are icons of American economic and military might. So they are. But little noted was exactly where the two planes hit the Trade Center Towers. Unlike the low trajectory of the plane that hit the Pentagon, these two planes struck the top portions of both towers. Why? We would suggest that visibility should not be overlooked. In contrast to the post-crash scene at the Pentagon where pictures were muted by geography and architecture, striking near the top of the Towers created a visual inferno irresistible to the camera's panoptic gaze. Our field of vision was thus horrifyingly clear—from nearly any and all camera angles. The terrorists had to know, too, that there was a great likelihood that their insidious rhetorical practices would be captured live; that is, with the proliferation of video cameras combined with the fact that video surveillance is now legion in America's cities, we would actually see the impossible transformation of passenger planes into precise, massive missiles.

Television went 24/7, commercial free with the story. Events were cancelled. We heard several times from our President. All airline traffic, save military, was grounded indefinitely. We called family and friends. We wondered why someone would do this, and who it could be. But most of all, we watched.

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Kenneth Burke has argued that whenever the social order is disrupted, we, the inveterate symbol-using and abusing animal, try to rectify, and thus redeem, it through complex rhetorical means. We contend that the cataclysm of 9-11 and the televisual horrors therein, could only be redeemed by a corresponding televisual event: Gulf War II. We needed both to purify ourselves of the slaughter of innocent Americans we'd witnessed, and we needed a scapegoat so evil and so tangible—not a cave-dwelling Saudi on the lam—that our collective catharsis would be complete. As but one proof that American citizens needed (and wanted) to redeem the events of 9-11, poll after poll showed that nearly 70% of Americans believed that Saddam Hussein was involved in the events of 9-11—lack of evidence notwithstanding.

But strict evidence wasn't the point. We needed a televisual event that could redeem what we had witnessed on 9-11, and the very brief war on the Taliban hadn't accomplished that. Poofs of smoke exploding miles away on some desolate mountain range proximate to Kandahar could not redeem the violence we'd witnessed on 9-11. Nor could a military operation barely visible and largely run by the Northern Alliance. Lest we forget the power of the visual, the fighters of the Northern Alliance looked a whole lot like the enemies they were fighting. We needed to see American bombs dropping on strategic targets, American soldiers driving American tanks, and American intelligence directing American G.I.s. Coalitions be damned; if the world wouldn't join us, we couldn't afford to wait.

In the run-up to Gulf War II, the principal reason the administration gave us for our intervention in Iraq looked to the future: we must prevent the likes of another 9-11. With Saddam Hussein's alleged stash of chemical, biological, and nuclear (not "nucular") weapons, and possible links to Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations, the administration's preemptive actions would ensure a safe future. Compelling rhetoric, for certain. Persuasive to many. But 9-11 was the point: the referent for our collective action lay in the past. And that past had yet to be adequately redeemed. Without a 9-11 to direct its listeners, the administration's rhetorical strategy appears hopelessly paranoid. Without a 9-11, even the Iraqi dictator looks but a regional tyrant intent on vacuously firing his rifle upward from his porticoed palaces. And so armed with the vivid memory of 9-11, "hard" evidence of weapons of mass destruction, and minus a follow-up resolution to U.N. 1441, the war came. Unlike the melancholy Lincoln's war, though, a war in 2003 needed to be visually spectacular, redemptive, and pleasurable. In a word, it had to be entertaining.

In his oft-cited book, Amusing Ourselves to Death, Neil Postman argues that television aims at emotional gratification, and the emotion in need of being gratified is pleasure. Scholars at work on entertainment theory argue that audiences regard pleasurable televisual fare to be entertaining fare. Of what, though, does the pleasure consist? More specific, within the televisual context of Gulf War II, how did networks such as CNN, FOX, and MSNBC dramatize this event? We need only to read Homer to understand that a war, after all, is comprised of myriad events, people, and places. That said, the rhetorical choices made by network executives offer revealing insights into how war was made entertaining to a still-traumatized nation.

Perhaps most important, the U.S. viewing audience needed heroes and villains. And, in Gulf War II, those heroes and villains were plentiful. Of course frequent pictures of Saddam Hussein and his sycophantic inner circle provided viewers with an immediate frame for understanding why we were overthrowing the regime. So, too, the often graph-
ic testimony of Iraqi dissidents of his Baathist regime. But Burke also encourages us to pay attention to the names, for nouns are never "merely" objective, but function rather as symbolic action: "speech in its essence is not neutral. Far from aiming at suspended judgments, the spontaneous speech of a people is loaded with judgments. . . . Spontaneous speech is not a naming at all, but a system of attitudes, of implicit exhortations." Thus is speech "profoundly partisan" for Burke. Viewers of Gulf War II were treated to such colorful figures as "Chemical Ali" and "Dr. Germ," whose names not only overdetermined the context in which we were to understand them, but an entire program of retribution was warranted (contra the United Nations) on rhetorical grounds. The names afford to laugh at what had previously angered them.

Of course the French were also demonized, both for speaking out against the Bush Administration's "go-it-alone" position and for their diplomatic recalcitrance at the United Nations. While German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and Russian President Vladimir Putin also expressed opposition to Gulf War II, FOX News in particular went after the French and their Premier, Jacques Chirac. Carrying the flag for FOX was Bill O'Reilly, host of the popular "O'Reilly Factor." So incensed at French insubordination was the mercurial keeper of "the no-spin zone" that he tried to lead a fanciful boycott of French wine. Our hunch is that the strategy backfired, with French wine consumption spiking in places like Boston, New York City, and San Francisco. An Irishman should know that Beaujolais just isn't the beverage of choice in the heartland—no less Baton Rouge and Coeur d'Alene. So upset were many conservative commentators that, much to the chagrin of McDonalds and Bob Evans, a boycott of French Fries and French Toast was announced. And of course viewers seeking a nightcap of the networks' 24/7 coverage of Gulf War II could tune in to Leno-Letterman-O'Brian-Stewart for a nightly pillorying of the French.

As for heroes, there were several—not the least of whom were "embedded" reporters. The Defense Department's stroke of rhetorical brilliance was to put journalists into various fighting divisions and companies, Walter Rogers of CNN, for example, wasn't just

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reporting on the Army's 7th Cavalry Division, he was part of that division. And, as someone dodging bullets and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs), his heroism was manifest in every live report. Being directly in harm's way made the "embeds" natives, with all the implications and complications. Embeds became the soldier's voice—to say nothing of his and her flesh and blood as we were periodically and tragically reminded. With omnipresent maps and 3-D graphics, viewers could literally "follow along" as the troops headed toward the heart of Iraq. Somewhere offscreen were the Pentagon's "public affairs officers" carefully editing and scripting this Ultimate Road Movie, the same group who "selected the journalists as carefully as producers of 'The Bachelor' or 'Survivor' screen their contestants."9 That the grainy green images often lacked high production values only added to the "authenticity" of the reportage, sort of a Blair Witch Project meets Lawrence of Arabia. What we witnessed was therefore real in ways that the Defense Department could have only fantasized about. "How do you manage the media in times of war?" asks Bill Berkowitz. "Thoroughly embed them, surround them with PR enablers, and spread a little fear amongst those not embedded."10

A far less likely hero was Private First Class Jessica Lynch. Even as details of her $1 million book deal with Alfred A. Knopf are being made public, Private Lynch continues to be the public and military face of Gulf War II. Why? What, in the myriad possibilities of televisual heroicization, made possible Private Lynch's media celebrity? First, and most obvious, she lived. Americans like their action heroes wounded by enemy armaments but alive. As Thomas S. Frentz and Janice H. Rushing argue, the wounded action hero is a potent archetype, one whose bodily injuries often function as rhetorical warrants for participation and celebration in the public sphere.11 Second, there can be no doubt that gender matters: Private First Class Jeremy Lynch would not have received similar heroic accolades. A happy ending, even in a Wes Craven film, finds daybreak with the Final Girl shaken, but still intact.12 But unlike horror's version of the Final Girl, Private Lynch needed rescuing. Is this but male chivalry, circa 2003? Perhaps in another way, Private Lynch came to embody Gulf War II: as a woman, Lynch represents American exceptionalism to a part of the world where women are exceptional only in their oppression. There is also something of a class critique in television's (and the media more generally) fascination with Jessica Lynch. Not a child of privilege, Lynch embodied fantasies of classlessness that often ironically underwrite capitalist America's self image.13 However we come to understand mediated representations of Private Lynch, author (and former executive editor of George Magazine) Richard Blow is right: "Jessica Lynch is a Rorschach test of what Americans want to believe about the war. She is an empty vessel upon which to project our own fantasies, whether they be flag-waving patriotic, pro-war, anti-war, feminist, anti-feminist, whatever."

A final hero of Gulf War II was technology. The networks' adulation of the latest smart bombs, aircraft, "bunker busters," and various Global Positioning System technologies bordered on the fetishistic. In her brilliantly suggestive article titled "War Porn," Emma Brockes details television's sexualization of war in its anatomy of detail.15 Quoting from porn scholar Linda Williams, it's "the kind of spectacular vision you get in porn—where the point is to see the sex act from every angle. It's narcissistic; boys getting together admiring their toys. It is about us proudly displaying our weapons and there is something sexual about that." The language of "shock and awe" is equally at home on the battlefield as well as a Ron Jeremy-Harry Reems porn bac-
canal. The public's missile envy, though, wasn't sated merely by the visual; in addition, viewers were treated to a litany of statistical information redolent of Monday Night Football. Oftentimes those offering up the statistics were the war's "armchair quarterbacks," a phalanx of retired-Generals-on-retainer impossible to keep up with in their sheer volume. If Tommy Franks, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz ever needed advice or assistance, they would have only needed to tune their televisions to CNN or FOX.

But military hardware and GPS software weren't the only technological heroes of Gulf War II. In the consumer electronics market, bigger usually means better—and things have gotten a lot bigger since Gulf War I. Size sometimes does matter as Godzilla trailers only too recently reminded us. And, along with the rise of HDTV, surround sound, Plasma screens, and Picture-in-Picture (PIP) capabilities, among other visual technologies, war was theatre—in the privacy of one's living room. The point is not an inconsequential one. Spectating war is simply a vastly technologically improved and far more pleasurable activity in 2003.

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One conclusion was nearly unanimous. Miming the Generals' assessments, reporters repeatedly told audiences that America's invasion of Iraq was "surgical," and "precise," such that civilian casualties would be minimized. Even so, we didn't see many Iraqi casualties nor any American bodies. Remarkably, with all the high-tech visual equipment, we didn't see dead bodies, dying bodies, maimed bodies, or otherwise bleeding bodies. Even Jessica Lynch's body was carefully concealed, as it still is. Were we to believe America's televisual evidence, few if any bodies mattered to the war. "Isn't this also a deal with the devil, a decision to edit the hell out of war?" asks Ellen Goodman. "Aren't we also jeopardizing lives by not telling the essence of war itself?"

The Internet tells a very different story, one that U.S. networks didn't want us to see or even know much about. With a minimal amount of effort and knowledge, one can easily locate graphic images of Gulf War II: an Iraqi boy whose head, evacuated of brains, looks like a Halloween mask; an Iraqi girl, her lifeless body carried by a man, and whose foot remains attached to her leg by a last sinew of tendon; and American soldiers killed in battle, their bloated corpses mutilated by gunfire. Lest the horrors remind us that war is a killing business, the networks made certain that prime-time carnage would not interrupt our "enjoyment" of the war. Even to an audience numbed by prime-time kills, this reality of war was carefully concealed. Only "crass patriots" like Al Jazeera, Al-Aribiya, and Abu Dhabi TV would show an audience pictures of the mortally wounded. "[T]he difficulty of showing pain and the reluctance to show death," argues Goodman, "inevitably produces its own terrible biases. . . . War, without..."
gore, is glory—a myth that marches to the next front."\(^{18}\)

The only bodies we were authorized to see, perhaps even linger over as witnesses, belonged to Uday and Qusay Hussein, Saddam's sons killed well after the U.S. had declared victory. We were repeatedly reminded by those allowing us access to the bodies that our collective gaze was not mere highway rubber-necking, nor was it unseemly to visually inspect these bodies; rather, our lingering looks were warranted by their collective depravity. Executions also need witnesses, and the bloated misshapen bodies of Uday and Qusay Hussein provided visual proof to Iraqis (and Americans) that the Baathist Butchers had gotten their just desserts. In this sense was the American gaze doubled: our view of these bodies was diverted and then redirected by the military's strategic logic that Iraqi compliance could only be fully secured once Saddam's regime was literally dead. Seeing was believing: body politics indeed.

Of course one of the most visually pleasurable moment of Gulf War II involved a surrogate Saddam. As a small crowd of Iraqis gathered around a Baghdad statue, U.S. Marines helped to winch this mimetic, if cemented, tyrant to the ground. Reminiscent of similar televised scenes during the collapse of the former Soviet Union, the toppled statue offered a compelling visual to American audiences that Saddam's regime was indeed falling down before our eyes. That Marines seemed to be bringing down the statue was quickly corrected by the networks: the Iraqis were really doing the winching. The moment was synecdochic of Gulf War II: American might was doing only what Iraqis themselves wanted to do but couldn't. Perhaps it's not surprising that the best remembered and most frequently replayed moment for most Americans of Gulf War II involved a falling edifice: thus perhaps we had circled back to at least a partially redeemed 9-11.

The falling Saddam also offered viewers a temporal marker by which to make sense of Gulf War II. While the moment did not say "turn off your television sets, the war is over," it signaled that the end was at hand. That end got an official imprimatur with President George W. Bush's elaborately scripted and much-heralded "Top Gun Moment" in the Pacific Ocean. Lest we forget that Poppy's son was a pilot, too, the carrier landing of the Commander-in-Chief visually showcased to Americans that their President was daring, a military man, not a defense phony like tank-riding Michael Dukakis circa 1988, even less a soft-bodied ejaculator like his predecessor. With helmet in hand and sporting his pilot fatigues, President Bush visually showcased to the world that his tough-guy, smoke'em out rhetoric, would be redeemed by a hard-bodied Texan at home on the range and in the cockpit of a S-3B Viking.\(^ {19}\) The scene of the tailhook landing on the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln was easily transferrable: it might have been the President himself making daring nighttime raids from the Persian Gulf. The speech that evening didn't much matter: the visual logic said that Gulf War II was over—and that 9-11 was redeemed.

That image of President Bush landing aboard the Lincoln also brought audiences full circle: the same man, 20 months earlier, had made a rather improbable—many said courageous—visit to Ground Zero in Manhattan. The heroism of the impromptu and bullhorned shouts, "I can hear you. The rest of the world hears you. And the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon," had its corporeal and rhetorical resolution in Bush's dramatic landing. The world had indeed heard from the United States. Important, that hearing wasn't broadcast from the White House or the Crawford ranch; rather both messages came live from the theatre of war. Redemption was at hand.
Postscript: Simulated Patriotism and Redeeming America's Youth

Our foregoing analysis of the Gulf War II televisual spectacle might be rated MA, for mature audiences only; for many younger Americans experienced terrorism and redemption very differently—but no less significantly. Whereas most adults participated vicariously in Gulf War II via television, their offspring's vicarious outlets were perhaps far more "real." Unlike their "Armchair General" parents, a very different kind of soldier is emerging in America's living room suburbia, one weened less on CNN and FOX and far more on video games. The MTV Generation has grown up, and while Super Mario was fun circa 1985, Gen-Xers crave a more visually sophisticated kind of pixilated outlet. Gamers have traded their magic mushrooms of Pac-Man for assault rifles, Bradleys, and RPGs, as they march forward into a new age of digital warfare. The multi-billion dollar gaming industry has greeted them with open arms.

Video games are expanding the borders of their genre, placing participants in more realistic situations with more detailed game play. From the comfort of our own couches, it is now possible to visit exotic locales, meet the famous and infamous, encounter dangerous situations, and destroy it all with the precision and muscle of high-tech weaponry. In the aftermath of 9-11, the gaming industry got an unexpected and extraordinarily profitable boost. Be-pimpled teens wanted a piece of Osama, Mullah Omar, and swarthy looking men (thus terrorists) more generally. In the same week in November 2002, for example, French game publisher Ubi Soft released two titles for Microsoft's X-Box system: Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon and Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell. True to the famed author's style, both games deal with high-tech warfare taking place in the theatre of political intrigue. Their open-ended game play puts all the power in the mildly-sweaty palms of the player, giving the illusion of suave subterfuge for even the clumsiest living room super spy. Gamers will topple evil empires, intercept vital information, and battle terrorism at the front lines of freedom even while their real-life counterparts are combating the powers of evil in far-flung corners of the globe.

The couch potato patriot can now get closer and closer to the actual events taking place in our world today, and for a modest investment of $49.99, the interactive battle can be brought straight to the living room. On September 30, 2002, Gothic Games released its Conflict: Desert Storm for the X-Box video game system. This game, based on Gulf War I, puts players in control of a squad of soldiers deep in the heart of Iraq. The release could not have been more appropriately timed, since tensions between the United States and Iraq were growing daily and conflict looked inevitable. By March of 2003, a US-led alliance had entered Iraq—and Conflict: Desert Storm was re-released on all the major video game consoles, including personal computers. With the objective to overthrow Saddam's "reign of terror," the player and her squad work their way into Baghdad only to be faced with one of the dictator's infamous body doubles. Saddam escapes again! The game, far below the standard set by ground-breaking titles like Ghost Recon, still has been a consistent seller, and a sequel has already been slated for release only a year after the original was released. Perhaps this time gamers will have a chance to catch Saddam.

Clearly, gamers and patriots alike have made their desire to experience the battlefield known, and their voices have reached the upper-echelons of military institutions. The United States Army, in a most unexpected yet very savvy move, sunk taxpayer money into the development of its own video game, dubbed America's Army and available as a free download from their website. Though many gamers were wary of it being a mere
recruitment scam, the game has enjoyed immense popularity on the Internet, boasting over 1,890,000 registered users. The engine running America's Army is hyper-realistic, forcing the player to actually complete four training missions before even being allowed to join other players online. Once online, gamers are given the choice of joining the U.S. Army or OpFor, though this choice is largely semantic: at all times, the player looks like a United States soldier and the enemy a ski-masked terrorist, regardless of team. There is no ambiguity as to who the constant enemy is. Appreciative of America's Army's success, the Army has also supplied money to support the development of a title for Microsoft's X-Box called Full Spectrum Warrior. Though the game is slated for a 2004 release, it is already highly-anticipated by both fans of America's Army and shooter-fans alike.

Based on our brief survey of 9-11 and Gulf War II inspired video games, we would suggest that gaming represents the New American Civics. Our youth know geography, religion, politics, and technology perhaps less from the desiccated pages of a textbook and more from the menu and action sequences of Conflict: Desert Storm. And who can blame them? Much like television, new visual, audio, and digital technologies enable a realism that makes killing chillingly real and profoundly entertaining. And whether it's killing a hooker after rough sex in Vice City or taking out a terrorist with mortar rounds in America's Army, we're telling youth at a very early age that it's OK, even desirable, to redeem the social order—by any means necessary. Burke might as well be addressing the patriotic gamer: "the pattern [of dramatism] proclaims a principle of absolute "guilt" matched by a principle that is designed for the corresponding absolute cancellation of such guilt. And this cancellation is contrived by victimage, by the choice of a sacrificial offering that is correspondingly absolute in the perfection of its fitness." What more "perfect" victim for a post-9-11 world than Middle East terrorists whom we can blow up and pillage at will, ad infinitum? Who needs FOX/CNN/MSNBC realism when we can rely on our own wits to take out the Enemy? Why bother with an overworked military, a fiscally-minded Congress and an acrimonious U.N. when Sony and Microsoft offer redemption in a toggling joystick? Whither Gen-Digital?

We're left to wonder as we close this essay just how complete was our collective redemption in the aftermath of Gulf War II. Perhaps had the war truly come to an "end" in early May and had Saddam Hussein been killed or captured, the visual spectacle might have sated us. But with soldier-a-day casualties even as we look to winter and another presidential election in 2004, redemption is but a chimera. May and the USS Lincoln seem so distant, even hallucinatory. It seems that we don't much want to see Iraq these days, nor less become familiar with its cities, customs, geography, or history—even its oil. As our collective gaze turns to Kobe Bryant, Scott and Laci, Ben and J-Lo, NFL football, and the new fall prime-time television line-up, Gulf War II The Movie seems a bit quaint, too Hollywood-ish even for those of us who love a good ending. But for a month-and-a-half, it held our attention even as it captured our fancy. A sequel is in the offing, we fear.

Endnotes

1 That irony could not have been lost on Al Qaeda or the Taliban. It was the latter group that forbid the use of television by Afghan citizens.

2 Similarly, had the flight that crashed in Shanksville, Pennsylvania hit its intended target, the terrorists would have pulled off an obscene trifecta against America's most metonymic structures.

3 Burke's most succinct and lucid description of the dramatis-


7 A website dedicated to al-Sahaf—www.WeLoveTheIraqi-InformationMinister.com—proved so popular that it was shut down by a deluge of 400 hits per second. See *And now Gulf War II: The Movie*, April 11, 2003, Deutsche Presse-Agentur.

8 Embedding U.S. reporters with U.S. troops was the brain-child of Victoria Clarke, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. Prior to her work at the Pentagon, Clarke worked for Hill and Knowlton, the public relations firm involved in Gulf War I. In a 10-page memorandum to the National Security Council, Clarke argued that embedding reporters with combat divisions "would give Americans the opportunity to get the story, both 'good and bad'—before others seed the media with disinformation and distortions, as they most certainly will continue to do." Quoted in Bill Berkowitz, *Embedded, enthusiastic and unencumbered by truth*, workingforchange.com, http://www.workingforchange.com/article.cfm?itemid=14813 (Apr. 9, 2003). The idea of embedding isn't original with Clarke; rather, as Neil Mitchell claims, it was first tried by British media covering the Falklands. Later, in 1995, it was recommended to the Pentagon by veteran journalist Frank Aukofer and Vice Admiral William Lawrence. See Mitchell, *Death missing in G-rated war* 21 Herald Sun (Mar. 26, 2003).


10 *Id.*


12 For a brilliant and suggestive read of gender, the horror film, and the Final Girl, see Carol Clover, *Men, Women, and Chainsaws* 3-64 (Princeton University Press, 1992).

13 We are not unaware of the fact that class and Jessica Lynch can be read very differently; after all, not many 18-year-old scions of wealth volunteer to drive trucks for the Army.


17 Each of the three networks, states Firas Al-Atraqchi, "have shown scores of Iraqi civilians—women and children—as they are brought into hospitals and triage units for treatment ... as the hours turned into days, the pictures of Iraqi wounded became more disturbing, more grotesque." Firas Al-Atraqchi, *Sparing the public the horrors of war*, YellowTimes.org, http://www.yellowtimes.org/article.php?id=1192 (Mar. 22, 2003).

18 *Id.*

19 For an interesting reading of Hollywood Hard Bodies, see Susan Jeffords, *Hard Bodies: Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era* (Rutgers University Press, 1994). President Bush had originally wanted to arrive via the more muscular F-18 Hornet, but the Secret Service balked: having only two seats, the plane would have left the president far too unguarded.

20 Burke, *supra* n. 6, at 283-84, emphasis in original.
War as Entertainment: Television News Coverage of the War in Iraq

By Michelle M. Pulaski, Ph.D.

The second Persian Gulf War saw a media blitz like no other conflict in the history of the United States. Media outlets not only provided us with 24-hour coverage, they created a reality television genre of sorts. Complete with a cast of characters including embedded reporters, politicians, and military personnel, the news story began well before the first shot was fired. With leading titles such as "War Diary Spins Web of Intrigue," "Searching for Foes Door to Door," "Shock and Awe," "Are Iraqis Flipping Us Off?" and "Rumsfeld's Calibration Fetish," audiences often felt as if they were receiving promos for the upcoming season's television programs rather than news from the front lines.

To further the reality TV feeling, many network reporters used play-by-play sports dialogue to spice up the coverage. Tank Cams, grainy night vision cameras, and animated maps gave the war coverage a video game feel and allowed viewers to see more of the action. Despite the entertainment blitz, audiences somehow managed to get a picture of what was going on in Iraq. A new wave of news coverage had begun.

"Infotainment" and "newtainment" are terms coined to refer to the merger of news and entertainment coverage characterized by the first Persian Gulf War and taken to a new level in the Gulf War II. This hybrid concentrates on presenting quick facts in a flashy style. All of this translates to higher ratings.

The infotainment style of coverage has received a great deal of criticism. This criticism has taken many forms, including lack of anti-war commentary, sanitization of news and lack of reporter objectivity. Results from a study conducted by the Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) group showed that televised views from opponents of the war were greatly underrepresented during the period of study from March 20, 2003 to April 9, 2003. FAIR examined several news sources, including ABC World News Tonight, Fox's Special Report with Brit Hume, and PBS's News Hour With Jim Lehrer among others. Only 10% of sources shown on the programs were opposed to the war. The study also noted that criticism of military planning was rare.

Sanitized versions of the events in Iraq appeared to be the choice of the networks. In a Washington Post article, embedded reporter William Branigin described his eyewitness account of U.S. soldiers killing civilians on Highway 9 near Karbala, Iraq. The eyewitness report detailed the failure of U.S. soldiers to fire a warning shot when an unidentified vehi-

Dr. Pulaski is an assistant professor of communications at Pace University.
cle approached an intersection held by the U.S. This failure resulted in the death of 10 out of the vehicle's 15 passengers. Television stations and newspapers had a choice between Branigin's eyewitness account of the events and a watered down version of the story put out by the Pentagon. Many media outlets chose to report the Pentagon's more sanitized version of the story, which stated that warning shots had been fired and only seven civilians were killed. Here the media simply serves as the Pentagon's propaganda tool. Television is an easy way for the government to put its spin on media messages.

Media critics also examined the objectivity of news broadcasters and found that it was often lost especially in the case of the embedded reporter. American news media critic Norman Solomon, also the director of the Institute for Public Accuracy, has said that "[The reporters are] so embedded with the troops, they may as well be getting a P.R. retainer from the Pentagon." Echoing this sentiment are many other critics including Dr. Rita Kirk Whillock, chairwoman of the Division of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs at Southern Methodist University, who feels that reporters can't help but get close to soldiers. She says, "If you're an embedded reporter and you have no gun, you develop friendships with them." Reporter's loss of objectivity leads to biased reporting and distortion of the events of the war.

It is important to note that there were also many differences between what American audiences viewed on the news and what foreign audiences saw. BBC Television and American stations often covered the same stories but with stark contrasts. One striking example of the difference in coverage came on April 7, 2003 when a "friendly fire" incident took place on the battlefield in Iraq. Immediately following the event, BBC television broadcast live from the scene with a detailed report of the horror including the blood-stained road, mangled vehicles, and the number of casualties. Several hours later CNN had very little to report on the event and only mentioned that a friendly fire incident had occurred, and there was no word on U.S. casualties. This example represents a trend of sanitized, relatively gore-free broadcasting that was seen throughout U.S. war coverage. The reason for the differences in news reported from the U.S. and from overseas can be explained by looking at the Pentagon as well as audiences and advertisers. The Pentagon was a true propaganda machine during the war in Iraq, feeding the news media stories with a spin. American news producers always had the audience in mind when determining what to air and how much detail to include. Worries over offending viewers with gore and in turn upsetting advertisers were a major concern throughout the war. Anything that influences the bottom line is seriously scrutinized. Audiences in the U.S. are also accustomed to being entertained by their news like no other viewers.

Today entertainment is the news. Award shows such as the Oscars and the MTV Video Awards make national news. When the TV sitcom *Seinfeld* went off the air, the event was accompanied by several stories on network news. Given this, it is no surprise that the lines between news and entertainment have been blurred when it comes to news of war.

**The Embedded Reporter**

One of the major stars of Operation Iraqi Freedom media coverage was the embedded reporter. Due to heavy pressure from major news organizations requesting more access to the realities of war, the Department of Defense selected more than 600 reporters from a lottery prior to the start of the war. These journalists underwent military training
including chemical attack preparedness to ready themselves for travel and missions with Coalition forces. This unprecedented access to the war did not come without obstacles.

The U.S. government heavily censored the embedded reporters. Every White House tries to control media coverage of war to some extent (a certain amount of censorship is necessary to protect national security). Many of the reports delivered from the front lines by embedded reporters were scripted. All stories had to be approved by the unit leader before they could be covered. These stories then needed the approval of the Department of Defense before they were sent out to the public. Embedded reporters were not allowed to go far from their units, thus possibly missing out on many noteworthy stories. Often the embedded reporters would recount inaccurate information that was broadcast and misleading to the public.

The embedded reporter brings up many issues of objectivity as journalists seem to be "losing themselves" in battle. Their position on the battlefield makes them completely dependent on the troops for their safety thus giving a distorted view of the reality they are reporting on. Tom Brokaw calls this situation the "fog of journalism" where reporters get lost on the battlefield along with their objectivity. They are caught up in the moment and lose perspective.8

Some argue that there is no such thing as real objectivity in journalism, but a few correspondents truly crossed the line. One notable example of a journalist lost in the "fog" was veteran war correspondent Peter Arnett. NBC's Arnett was fired over comments he made on Iraqi television criticizing the American war plan. When asked to comment on the war plan, Arnett responded to the question with harsh criticism, throwing years of experience as a war correspondent out the window. Known for his years of reporting hard news from the front lines, Arnett's response was shocking not only because it was an anti-American one but also because it was a subjective comment from a reporter who was known for his objectivity. NBC published a statement on the matter expressing that "it was wrong for Mr. Arnett to grant an interview to state-controlled Iraqi TV—especially at a time of war—and it was wrong for him to discuss his personal observations and opinions in that interview."9

While the embedded reporters were lost in the "fog of journalism," the networks made a smart move pressuring the Department of Defense to have them there. The coverage allowed the audience to feel like part of the action, which was good for ratings.

A Wave of Patriotism
Loss of objectivity could also be seen in the wave of patriotism that swept through the almost three weeks of news media coverage. Many news outlets featured reporters with flags on their lapels and stars and stripes waving in the background. MSNBC had a wall of heroes entitled "America's Bravest," which contained photos of loved ones overseas sent by viewers. This wave of patriotism, apparent
after the September 11th attacks, led to a sanitized and biased version of the war coverage.

The sanitized coverage of the war has been criticized as being unrealistic. After the official fighting ceased and the media blitz calmed, Ted Koppel was quoted as saying "we need to show people the consequences of war. People die in war." The American people did not see the bodies of dead American soldiers, and few Iraqi casualties were aired. The dead bodies of Saddam's sons, however, were later broadcast widely in an effort to boost pro-war sentiments. Many critics argue that the lack of gore on the networks was a result of concerns over upsetting their sponsors versus their viewers.

In terms of media bias, it seemed as if reporters were afraid to cover anything viewed as unpatriotic. Anti-war protests were shown, but often in a negative light. The idea the news outlets seemed to be selling was "if you are not with us, you are against us" and "support the troops—support the war." The bottom line seemed to be that patriotism was good for ratings. Audiences were not necessarily looking for objectivity. During this time of crisis, television news viewers relied on the comforting words of news anchors detailing the successes of allied forces. This biased news coverage allowed the news outlets to reap ratings benefits.

The FOX News Effect
FOX News was the top-rated news network going into the war and continued to be on top after the ratings were all in. Since the start of the war, 3.3 million viewers have tuned in to FOX News (an increase of 239% according to Nielsen Media). Add FOX's numbers to the 2.7 million for CNN and 1.4 million for MSNBC, and all of the cable news networks have done well, better, in fact, than the broadcast network stations, which continue to suffer from low ratings. The Media Research Center graded each network's performance, and the FOX News Channel came out on top with a B, while CBS was a close second with a B-.11

"FOX doesn't sell journalism, it sells attitude," said Eric Alterman author of What Liberal Media.12 This attitude has garnered the network top billing in the war coverage ratings race largely because of its flag-waving slant. During the first Persian Gulf War, CNN held this top position, with the major broadcast network affiliates often preempting their coverage with feed from the cable news network.13 Viewers ended up staying at home to watch the Persian Gulf coverage on CNN instead of another news source. This phenomenon is known as the "CNN effect," and many experts thought this would again be CNN's war. Now it's the FOX effect. FOX's oft-repeated slogan, "Real journalism, fair and balanced" was traded in for a war cheerleader demeanor that many viewers seemed to like.

CNN took direct hits from FOX. In the April 21, 2003 issue of The New York Times (which looked more like a movie billboard than a television news promo), FOX personalities Bill O'Reilly, Greta Van Susteren, and others were depicted in celebrity poses with "Operation Iraqi Freedom" sprawled across the bottom half of the page. The advertisement contained quotes from various newspapers (similar to movie reviews) that focused on how much better FOX's coverage of the war was than CNN's.

FOX wasn't perfect. The Media Research Center pointed out that FOX's final grade suffered because of Geraldo Rivera.14 In a case of newscaster as actor, former talk show host Rivera dodged bullets and engaged with the enemy all the while microphone in hand, cameras rolling. Embedded within the 101st Airborne, Rivera made the ultimate journalistic mistake: threatening national security. He sketched a map in the sand detailing the location of military resources and was removed from the embedded operation at the request of
the Pentagon. It doesn't get more entertaining than this.

**Audience is Key**

Much of the Operation Iraqi Freedom news coverage was audience driven. Poll results show that a great number of Americans supported the war, and television news coverage reflected this sentiment. Although media coverage of the war had its critics, as detailed earlier, audiences seemed to approve of the patriotic slant given to many news stories. The media's bias happens to mirror many viewers' support of the war.

Audience-driven coverage included a highly criticized sanitized version of the war with little blood—especially American. News networks were constantly trying to determine whether or not coverage would offend their audience and if so, whether or not the people would stop watching. It was all about the audience.

Audiences desire celebrity, and television war coverage delivered. From background details of soldiers killed in action to the constant replay of P.O.W. Jessica Lynch's rescue footage, Americans were able to get up close and personal with Pentagon appointed celebrities. Audiences embraced the made-for-TV heroes as their own.

Apparently American audiences wanted something different out of their news than did viewers in other countries. The contrast between what Americans saw on the news and what European and pan-Arab audiences saw is striking. Foreign news bureaus showed far more blood and gore than American stations showed. The foreign media were delivering audiences the true face of war.

**The Jessica Lynch Story**

Perhaps no better example exists to illustrate the blending of news and entertainment than the Jessica Lynch story. Lynch is arguably the most famous P.O.W. the U.S. has ever known.

Lynch's story is Pentagon propaganda at its finest. Television audiences were able to see a P.O.W. rescue for the first time. The well shot, Pentagon-edited footage of her rescue was widely released to the media. Several news outlets got Jessica's story wrong, saying that she was a Rambo of sorts, fiercely firing her way out of trouble only to be captured in the end. The reality was that she never fired a bullet. Lynch was actually cowering, crying, and praying for survival. The Pentagon felt that our country needed a hero and kept quiet on the misinformation.


**Why is news entertainment?**

One of the reasons war coverage is becoming entertainment is the nature of the hard news story. Hard news is defined as any event that occurred within the previous 24 hours. Hard news focuses on issues of ongoing concern. Given this, there is a trend to personalize and individualize hard news stories to gain a wide audience. Personalization and individualization were rampant during Operation Iraqi Freedom coverage. Similar to guests on a talk show, biographies of soldiers were detailed along with shots of family farewells and reunions all in an effort to identify with the audience and of course in turn boost ratings.

Another part of the infotainment craze is reflected in the format of the news, which has obviously changed over the years. Leaders and celebrities have media training so they can appear credible on camera. In the age of the sound bite, politicians have learned to speak in 15-second blurbs. Audience attention
spans are short and to capture them, news needs to be quick. The bottom line is that news media is a ratings showdown, and if you can entertain the audience the best, you win.

Conclusion
Some of the most interesting news stories have developed in Iraq after the war officially ended, yet the amount of coverage has declined greatly. But in the minds of many, the war hasn't ended. In fact more soldiers have been killed since the official declaration of the end of the war than were killed during the official fighting phase. However, the fireworks display of the Shock and Awe campaign are missing, as are the embedded reporters, and networks are scrambling for ratings by covering other news. The "bang" has gone out of the war, and it's just not as entertaining to watch.

In a March 21, 2003 news briefing, Secretary of State Donald Rumsfeld cautions that "[w]hat we are seeing [on TV] is not the war in Iraq; what we're seeing are slices of the war in Iraq. We're seeing that particularized perspective that reporter or that commentator or that television camera happens to be able to see at the moment."17 It is important to keep this in mind, along with the fact that there was government censorship of media in this war as in all other U.S. conflicts. Audiences are not always getting the whole story, and news coverage will have some type of bias. It is up to the individual media consumer to be critical in gathering news information on the war from a variety of sources—ideally entertainment free sources.

It is almost impossible to imagine military news coverage without some elements of entertainment. After Operation Iraqi Freedom, there will be no going back to the days of war correspondence without the embedded reporter and the subsequent movie deals conflicts bring. TV viewers should have no worries; we will continue to be entertained.

Endnotes
5 Id.
7 Serafin.
8 Id.
14 Baker and Noyes.
16 Jamieson and Campbell.
Cinematistics: The Cosmetic

By David O. Whitten

**Cinematistics**: movie statistics.

**Cosmetics**: superficial measures to make something appear better, more attractive, or more impressive.

**Real**: true; not merely ostensible, nominal, or apparent; existing or occurring as fact; actual rather than imaginary, ideal, or fictitious; not imaginary.

**Realness**: real, actual, true, in general use to describe objects, persons, experiences, etc., that are what they are said or purport to be.

**Realism**: interest in or concern for the actual or real, as distinguished from the abstract, speculative, etc.; the tendency to view or represent things as they really are.

**Realistic**: interested in, concerned with, or based on what is real or practical.

**Reality**: the state or quality of being real; resemblance to what is real; a real thing or fact; real things, facts, or events taken as a whole; state of affairs.

On March 23, 2003, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences held its annual ceremony. Nominees announced weeks earlier gathered in Hollywood to see celebrity winners from last year hand statuettes affectionately called "Oscars" to this year's celebrity winners in a wide variety of cinematic categories from best actor to best film score. Millions of viewers worldwide watched filmmakers both known and unknown show off the latest designer fashions in clothing, hair dressing, and accouterments, catching the eye of the camera and by extension, the eye of the world.

The annual Oscars event is a showcase for technology as well as celebrity. The very latest viewing equipment displays the handicap of the industry. Clips from nominated films are shown on giant screens in splendid detail and beautiful color. For the 2003 event, the on-set screens were used to political as well as competitive advantage. The United States had but recently launched its attack on Iraq, an undertaking opposed by most film celebrities. So the Oscars became a forum for emphasizing opposition to the war, with film clips of soldiers in combat and statements by participants in the ceremony. Around the world, viewers were treated to Hollywood antiwar photography and rhetoric. Critics, including many who oppose the war in Iraq, have spoken out against airing political positions before an audience captured by the lure of celebrity. The strongest irony, however, is a fierce antiwar stance on the part of an industry grown fat by feeding on war. Filmmakers—defined broadly to include everyone associated with the creation of movies—are second only to war-implement manufacturers as beneficiaries of belligerence. What is more, bomb and bullet makers must seize their profits while the fighting is hot. Once the war is over, its profit potential to the armorers is over, too. Movie makers can cash in on a war forever after, and they do.

Hollywood, for all its outspokenness

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against war, created war's popular image. (Even Oscar is bellicose. The gold-plated metal statue is a man armed with a sword apparently prepared to defend the reel of film that forms his base.) Since 1939, there have been approximately 3,000 war-related movies.\(^1\) Twenty-one of them won the Oscar for Best Picture, and 42 more were nominated. War movies made up roughly 18 percent of the top grossing films marketed between 1939 and 2001.\(^2\)

**War Movies and Culture**

War movies are open windows on war. But films cannot convey the savage intensity of battle, and combatants cannot fill the gap between film and reality and rarely try. Samuel Fuller, producer-writer-director of *The Big Red One* (1980) is that rare filmmaker with personal experience of combat. He concludes that "a war movie is just like a man doing an autopsy on his own body. It's impossible. You cannot make a real war movie." He suggests that some viewers would have to taste the pain of gunshot wounds while watching the film so the audience could discover the feel of combat. *Saving Private Ryan* boasted a soundtrack of war noise engineered to make viewers uncomfortable. Most films depend on graphic visual mayhem to get a similar effect.

Lack of realism notwithstanding, films expose society, combatants and non-combatants alike, to the film culture of war and in the process create the popular image of war. Image is the driving force behind war, so anything that shapes it must be monitored carefully. The overwhelming majority of modern citizens know nothing about the military other than what they see on the electronic and silver screens. Few have firsthand experience with combat. Added to that reality is the removal of that vast majority from any prospect of being conscripted to fight and the prospect of participating in war from the sofa or armchair through the marvel of television, embedded journalists, and satellite transmission. Millions of Americans can support a war effort with no more consequences to them or their families than the energy it takes to change the channel on their television receiver.

During the war on Iraq, American television viewers could watch coalition troops weather sand storms and enemy small-arms fire, or touch the remote and watch a golf tournament instead. Although one can say the same of disaster coverage—one channel reveals the suffering of families during and after a flood, hurricane, tornado, or other natural disaster while another follows a football game—viewers have no input into where and when a natural disaster hits, but they do have a say in the decision to go to war. How they view war, then, is extremely important, and how they view war is determined more by the film industry than by any other single entity.

**Actors or Soldiers?**

What percentage of filmgoers could correctly distinguish between General George S. Patton and George C. Scott, the actor? Scott won the Oscar for best actor in 1970 for his title role in *Patton*. John Wayne never served in the armed forces, but his exploits on the silver screen as a U.S. Marine (*Flying Leathernecks* and *Sands of Iwo Jima*), a U.S. Navy officer (*Fighting Seabees* and *In Harm's Way*), a U.S. Army soldier (*The Green Berets* and *The Longest Day*), and U.S. flyer (*Flying Tigers* and *Jet Pilot*) defined the American fighting man in the 20th century. Wayne, who also created the popular image of the 19th century white horse soldier in the Indian wars (*Fort Apache*, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, and *Rio Grande*), crafted a forgettable portrayal of 12th-century Genghis Khan (*The Conqueror*) when archaic and modern war came together (Wayne played the ancient warrior).

Humphrey Bogart's name is synonymous
with war movies. Who can forget Charlie 
Alnutt and Rosie Sayer dodging German bul-
lets and sinking the German gunboat Louisa,
doing their part to win World War I in Africa
for England (and the empire because Charlie
was cast as a Canadian since Bogart's English
accent was not strong enough to be Cockney).
In Casablanca Bogart was the cynical
American who, when the chips were down,
made the penultimate personal sacrifice (the
ultimate sacrifice would be, of course, giving
up his life, so the penultimate must be giving
up the female love of his life) for the com-
monweal. Action in the North Atlantic cast
Bogart as a merchant seaman in a war infor-
mation vehicle designed to impress the public
with the important contributions to the war
effort by the sailors who were not in the navy
but the merchant marine. Action also deliv-
ered the essential war message that "loose lips
sink ships." In 1943, when the future for
democracy looked bleak, Bogart filmed
Sahara, the Hollywood telling of the real war
experience of a small multinational band of
Allies thrown together in North Africa after
the fall of Tobruk. A look at the film decades
after the fact impresses the viewer with the
defiant optimism of the Allies in the face of
overwhelming and frequent defeat. Mrs.
Miniver gives a similar impression. Had these
films been made after the war, their air of con-
fidence of ultimate victory could not have
been stronger.

Bogart films molded the public image of
World War II: To Have & Have Not addresses
tension in the French West Indies in the
months between the fall of France and the
entrance of the United States into the war;
Sirocco anticipates the conflicts between
Western Allies and the Middle East in the
decades after the war. In what may be Bogart's
most poignant World War II film, Key Largo
treats the tragic and lingering pain of the loss
of loved ones in the war, the purposefulness of
the conflict, and the mixed air of despair and
anticipation of the post-war years.

Gregory Peck became the poster bomber
pilot after filming Twelve O'Clock High. In
contrast, the actor Jimmy Stewart, who did in
fact pilot bombers over Germany during
World War II, contributed to the post war
image of the U.S. Air Force by portraying a
pilot in Strategic Air Command. Clark Gable,
who served in the U.S. Army Air Corps in
public relations, created the image of a sub-
marine commander in Run Silent, Run Deep,
and Curt Jurgens, in The Enemy Below, pre-
sents the image of a "respectable" German U-
boat commander—Jurgens was interned by
the Nazis during the war as an undesirable.
Cary Grant was a U.S. Navy submarine cap-
tain in Destination Tokyo and the comedy
Operation Petticoat; French Resistance fight-
er in To Catch a Thief; a civilian coast watch-
er in the Pacific war in the comedy Father
Goose; and a French Army officer in the
immediate post war era in Europe in I Was a
Male War Bride.

The image of World War II fighting men is
not limited to the World War II generation of
actors. Tom Hanks gave a memorable per-
formance as a U.S. Army infantry captain in
Saving Private Ryan. Arguably the most
poignant World War II film is The Best Years
of Our Lives in which Harold Russell, a vet-
eran of the U.S. Navy and the Pacific war,
where he lost both arms below the elbows,
earned two Oscars for his revelations of a
maimed citizen sailor who gave the best years
of his life for his country.

One star, stoic and never quoted as speak-
ing out on war, began his career as a combat-
ant. Rin Tin Tin (1916-1932) was rescued
from World War I German trenches by U.S.
Army Lieutenant Lee Duncan. Duncan
trained the precocious German Shepard and
introduced him to theater audiences in The
Man from Hell's River. In 1924 he starred in
Find Your Man. Rinty's 10-year film career
took him from silent to sound films (barkies)
as a war dog, making himself famous and his master rich.\textsuperscript{3}

**Good vs. Evil**

Hollywood has a love/hate relationship with war. Although there are well known exceptions—John Wayne hailed as a conservative who supported the war in Vietnam—most citizens of the cinematic community are liberal antiwar activists who feed at the trough of war. *The Video Hound's Golden Movie Retriever 2003* is a window on war movies.\textsuperscript{4} Table 1 sets out the *Hound's* war-related film categories. Under just one category, general war movies, the *Hound* lists 233 films. The World War II list comprises 734 additional titles. The listings are not mutually exclusive—some films may show up in more than one category—but the large number of war movies is clear from even a cursory examination of the table. And most of the films ever made have been lost: Martin Scorsese observes that "of the more than 21,000 feature-length films produced in the United States before 1951, less than half exist today and 75 percent of all silent films no longer exist."\textsuperscript{5}

Of the American Film Institute's Top 100 American Movies of the first century (1896-1996) of film making, 20 are war movies.\textsuperscript{7} AFI has also published a list of the 100 funniest movies of all time, and even five of these titles are war movies: *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (3), *M*A*S*H* (7), *The General* (18), *Private Benjamin* (82), and *Good Morning Vietnam* (100).\textsuperscript{8} The British Film Institute also produced a list. Of the top 100 British films of the 20th century, 14 are war films.\textsuperscript{9}

Since 1939, the top money-making films include no fewer than 76 war movies, for an average of better than one a year (notwithstanding 21 years when top grossing film titles did not include a war movie).\textsuperscript{10} The first year of the top grossing film data, 1939, led off with a war movie: *Gone with the Wind* grossed 199 million current dollars (dollars not adjusted for the changing purchasing value of money since 1939—if put in constant dollars, *GWTW* would be the top grossing film of all time). World War II began in 1939, and the silver screen reflected the times. One of

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<td>Nazis, et al.</td>
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1940's top-grossing films was *Santa Fe Trail*, not a picture of modern war, but fighting all the same. Two of 1941's top-grossing films were war movies: *Sergeant York*, a World War I saga based on the life and adventures of the real Sergeant York, and *A Yank in the R.A.F.*, which reflected the role of the United States as a bystander while Europe fought. Some Americans, determined to enter the fray, joined foreign military units, like the Royal Air Force. By year's end, of course, the United States was very much in the conflict and three of the top-grossing five films of 1942 reflected that new role: *Casablanca*, *Mrs. Miniver*, *Random Harvest*, and *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, not a war film but certainly a patriotic romp through song and dance.

The outcome of the war was in the balance in 1942 despite the optimistic tone of the top-grossing films of that year. By 1943 the money-making films were reflecting the long term pressure of world war: *Stage Door Canteen*, a star vehicle that gave scores of film celebrities an opportunity to show their support for the troops, and *This is the Army*.

The next year's two top-grossing films showed the new spirit of determination and defiance and the pain that war brought to the home front as the losses mounted: *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo* and *Since You Went Away*. The year of victory, 1945, saw only one war-related top money-maker in the theaters, *Anchors Aweigh*, a mixture of the light-hearted and the sadness associated with loss of life and the impact it had on survivors who soldiered on as their dead loved ones would have expected.

The first post-war year produced one war-related top-grossing film, and it was a blockbuster. *The Best Years of Our Lives* is perhaps the strongest statement Hollywood could make about war and its costs and benefits. World War II films have been top money-makers off and on over the years since the VE- and VJ-Days. *Pearl Harbor* was a big attraction in 2001, 60 years after the event, proof—if proof were needed—that wars never go out of date for Hollywood. Some of the World War II titles stick to the ugliness of combat: *Sands of Iwo Jima* (1949), *Battle Cry* (1955), *Guns of Navarone* (1961), *The Dirty Dozen* (1967), *The Longest Day* (1962), *Patton* (1970), and *Saving Private Ryan* ($216

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**AFI's Top War Movies**

2. *Casablanca*, 1942  
4. *Gone with the Wind*, 1939  
5. *Lawrence of Arabia*, 1962  
15. *Star Wars*, 1977  
17. *The African Queen*, 1951  
26. *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, 1964  
28. *Apocalypse Now*, 1979  
44. *The Birth of a Nation*, 1915  
52. *From Here to Eternity*, 1953  
54. *All Quiet on the Western Front*, 1930  
72. *Ben-Hur*, 1959  
75. *Dances with Wolves*, 1990  
79. *The Deer Hunter*, 1978  
83. *Platoon*, 1986  
89. *Patton*, 1970

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**BFI's Top War Movies**

18. *Henry V*, 1944  
27. *Doctor Zhivago*, 1965  
31. *Zulu*, 1964  
45. *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*, 1943  
68. *The Dam Busters*, 1955  
69. *Hamlet*, 1948  
75. *The Cruel Sea*, 1952  
89. *Fires Were Started*, 1943  
90. *Hope and Glory*, 1987  
92. *In Which We Serve*, 1942  
100. *The Killing Fields*, 1984
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Sergeant York is one of many World War I top-grossing films. Lawrence of Arabia (1962), Doctor Zhivago (1965), and Out of Africa (1985) are others. And the Viet Nam war has become another war worthy of investment in film and stars. Platoon (1986), Good Morning Vietnam (1987), and Forrest Gump (1994) are among the big money-makers.

Ancient wars have never lost box office attraction. The remake of Ben Hur was a top grossing film in 1959, and the original was a great attraction in 1926 when it cost $4 million to make. Spartacus was a financial hit in 1960, and Gladiator pulled in $188 million in 2000. And if the battles of the Star Wars films ($461 million in 1977; $290 million in 1980; $309 million in 1983; and $431 million in 1999) took place long, long ago, then they too are ancient money-makers for Hollywood.

War Oscars

The first Academy Award for best picture was given in 1927—for the better part of the first two decades of Oscar awards the ceremonies were not public; in 1944 the heretofore private Academy Award ceremony was broadcast over the radio12—and the winner was Wings, a war film. Although Wings is classified as a silent film, it did have a soundtrack for engine noise and other background sounds. Last Command, marginally a war film, was nominated for the 1928 best film Oscar but did not win, but All Quiet on the Western Front took the prize for 1930, as did Gone with the Wind for 1939. Mrs. Miniver won in 1942 and Casablanca for 1943 as the long list of World War II movies took the lead in best film Oscar winners among war movies: Best Years of Our Lives (1946), From Here to Eternity (1953), Bridge on the River Kwai (1957), Patton (1970), Schindler's List (1993), and English Patient (1996).

In 72 years of Oscar presentations for best actor and best actress, the Academy accepted 42 nominations from war movies for best actor and 23 for best actress. From these nominations, seven actresses and 12 actors in war movies won Oscars. (Statistically, war movies did better at making money at the box office than they did as vehicles for awards for actors and actresses. Supporting actors and actresses fared better.) The Academy began awarding Oscars to the best supporting actor and the best supporting actress in 1936. Through 2001 there were 47 supporting actor nominations and 16 Oscars from war movies, and 19 nominations for best supporting actress and 11 Oscars.

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Conclusion
Perhaps the opposition to war launched by some members of the film industry parallels the health warnings printed on cigarettes and alcoholic beverages. The public is warned, but the product is not withdrawn from an anxious market. Tobacco farmers may harbor genuine concern for the health of smokers, but they grow and sell tobacco nonetheless. In advertisements, distillers ask their clientele to drink responsibly, not to stop drinking. Movie makers take a similar stance: We oppose war, but we make our living, or at least part of it, by making films popular with the public, and we are going to continue to make them—if we stopped, someone else would take our place. So war and war movies are part of our culture, and that is not likely to change. The film industry opposed the war in Iraq, but the search is on for a fetching actress to portray Jessica Lynch in a film about her capture, ill treatment at the hands of the enemy, rescue by bold and brave men and women of Coalition Forces, and recovery and rehabilitation. Life goes on, and so does war. ◆

Endnotes
2 Id.
4 Craddock, supra n. 1.
5 Corey and Ochoa, supra n. 3, at 394.
6 Beyond differences of opinion about how to categorize films, there are errors in the Hound’s lists of films and one was particularly eye-catching for me. The D.I. (1957) starring Jack Webb is listed in the Hound under army training but the film is about the United States Marine Corps recruit training and the D.I. is a Drill Instructor. The Corps promoted the film to counter the 1956 disaster that took the life of six recruits at Parris Island, South Carolina, home of one of the two Marine Corps recruit training centers (the other is in San Diego, CA). The Hound’s error is repeated with The D.I. listed with Military: Army. In my count I left The D.I. in the training category with the idea that the category might just as well be listed as soldier training, but I removed it from Military: Army and added it to Military: Marines. Ironically the Hound could not differentiate between Devil Dogs and Dog Faces.

Jack Webb turns in a creditable performance as a Marine D.I. that balances the one Warren Oates presents as a U.S. Army drill sergeant in Stripes (1981). Although Stripes is comedic to the point of foolishness, Oates plays his role straight and maintains the dignity, competence and pride of U.S. Army sergeants. In Sahara (1943) “Frenchie” says it best when he tells a comrade sharing the U.S. Army tank driven by Sgt. Joe Gunn (Humphrey Bogart) that sergeants are the same the world over.

The listing error for The D.I. was obvious to me because I was on hand for the premiere of the film at Parris Island. A 16-year-old recruit on guard duty, my post gave me a view of the base outdoor theater so I walked my post in a military manner and watched Jack Webb say and do much of what my own D.I. Sgt. Forrestal Bowman said and did every day. Webb spent time on base observing the behavior of drill instructors and Bowman may have had some influence on the actor.

Decades later I learned that the real celebrity in view that night was the officer of the day who stopped at my guard post and quizzed me on my orders and function. Lt. Colonel F. I. “Ike” Fenton is the subject of one of David Douglas Duncan’s famous 1950 photographs, one taken at the battle for “no-name” ridge in Korea.

7 Corey and Ochoa, supra n. 3, at 376-91.
8 Id. at 396-411.
9 Id. at 412-13.
10 Throughout this paper the term war film or war movie is used to denote films the author deemed sufficiently linked to war to be given that designation. It might be argued that military film would be a better designation because Mister Roberts is included despite the lack of any combat. The Best Years of Our Lives shows no combat, but who could say it is not a war movie? Ten people going through the same lists of film titles are likely to come up with ten different sets of numbers when culling war movies from others, but the difference between the highest count of war films and the lowest would not likely be very large.

Most of the information on top grossing films comes from the Video Hound’s Golden Movie Retriever but those titles accompanied by money values were listed in American Film Institute Desk Reference, pp. 422-23. Some titles appeared in both references.

11 Hollywood works war themes into the most unexpected films. Sleepless in Seattle (1993) is unrelated to war, violence, and combat, yet an amusing few minutes is devoted to a discussion of a down-and-dirty war film, The Dirty Dozen.
12 Corey and Ochoa, supra n. 3, at 66.
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