



Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

Corso di Laurea magistrale in Relazioni Internazionali Comparete

Tesi di Laurea

—
Ca' Foscari
Dorsoduro 3246
30123 Venezia

National Security Strategies: Evolution of the American Defense Planning and Foreign Policy Agendas

Relatore

Ch. Prof. Duccio Basosi

Laureanda

Martina Berno

Matricola 807793

Anno Accademico

2011 / 2012

Abstract

Questo lavoro si propone di analizzare in modo preciso e accurato l'evoluzione della politica estera degli Stati Uniti d'America attraverso la lettura di un documento specifico, chiamato National Security Strategy, redatto da tutte le amministrazioni presidenziali a partire da Ronald Reagan. Questo documento, che si potrebbe definire in parole semplici come "il programma che ciascuna amministrazione si propone di seguire negli anni a venire" non solo presenta la "direzione" e le attività che s'intende svolgere, ma descrive anche il contesto internazionale dell'epoca, riflettendo appieno la visione, le interpretazioni, i propositi degli Stati Uniti o, più precisamente, della presidenza in carica. Il punto centrale affrontato riguarda il concetto di difesa – appunto della sicurezza nazionale, come il titolo esprime chiaramente – ma emergono inoltre altri temi, come l'idea di democrazia, quale principio fondante dello Stato americano e ideale da esportare, e anche "gli interessi" degli Stati Uniti, quindi l'insieme di obiettivi che s'intendono raggiungere per garantire al popolo americano benessere e prosperità. Al di là di questi aspetti ricorrenti, ogni National Security Strategy presenta caratteristiche proprie, strettamente legate all'approccio del presidente e dei suoi collaboratori, ma non solo: si descrive il quadro internazionale di quel momento storico, con tutte le sue specificità che, logicamente, sono in costante mutamento.

Il primo capitolo presenta un'analisi che mira proprio a presentare la nascita e la struttura generale delle National Security Strategies. Nello specifico, si sono evidenziati due documenti di natura diversa che contribuirono alla nascita della dottrina di sicurezza nazionale: il Goldwater-Nichols Act del 1986 e la National Security Decision Directive 75 del 1983, volendo così mostrare i due punti di partenza, uno più legato a un filone di tipo "legislativo-burocratico", il secondo invece di

natura più “pratica”, ossia la volontà del Presidente Reagan di delineare in modo più chiaro l’atteggiamento statunitense nei confronti dell’Unione Sovietica. Si procede quindi con l’analisi del processo di elaborazione della strategia, sottolineando come l’amministrazione – e soprattutto il presidente – si adoperino per formulare il documento. S’include inoltre in questa parte il modo in cui la dottrina viene sviluppata all’interno del National Security Council per essere infine completata e approvata dal Congresso.

Nel secondo capitolo si propone invece un percorso che approfondisce l’operato di ogni amministrazione, partendo dal presidente Reagan fino all’attuale presidente, Barack Obama. Si propone un *excursus* storico focalizzato sulla politica estera, che individua sia i propositi dell’amministrazione in questione, sia le azioni concrete che sono poi state realizzate: l’intento è sì quello di offrire un’analisi storica, ma anche di descrivere nel dettaglio le diverse National Security Strategies.

Nel terzo capitolo viene presentato un confronto tra i diversi documenti, facendo emergere le differenze che li contraddistinguono. Si tiene conto, come è del resto necessario, dei cambiamenti storici in corso, ma allo stesso tempo si sottolineano le visioni dei presidenti: è sì l’ambiente esterno che influenza la politica estera, ma è altresì rilevante come quel presidente decida di approcciarsi nei confronti del resto del mondo. Un esempio è dato dalla politica estera di George W. Bush: gli attacchi alle Twin Towers hanno dato uno stampo molto preciso alla sua dottrina, che da quel momento si concentrò sulla definizione di terrorismo accentuando il suo slancio unilateralista e la sua definizione di Stati Uniti come una potenza ad alto contenuto morale.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1	5
1a. Definition of National Security Strategies	5
1b. History of the National Security Strategy	7
1c. The National Security Council and the interagency process	19
1d. The developmental process of the National Security Strategies	26
Chapter 2	31
2a. The Reagan administration	31
2b. The George H. W. Bush administration	51
2c. The Clinton administration	66
2d. The George W. Bush administration	80
2e. The Obama administration	94
Chapter 3	99
3a. Reagan's 1987 and 1988 National Security Strategy	99
3b. Bush's 1990 and 1991 National Security Strategy	104
3c. Clinton's 1994, 1997 and 1998 National Security Strategy	107
3d. G. W. Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy	109
3e. Obama's 2010 National Security Strategy	111
Conclusions	112

Chapter one

1.a Definition of National Security Strategy

Vision isn't enough... The President needs a strategy to design and execute foreign policy. I do mean the translation of the President's vision into policies, policies that are coherent... the translation requires the establishment of priorities... policies are unified by a strategy, in a document called the National Security Strategy of the United States.

Colin Powell

This work is about how the United States of America, one of the leading powers of contemporary world, deals with defense and international relations through a specific American document called National Security Strategy.

The national security strategy contains all the objectives, both regarding homeland and national security issues, and it is supposed to be the foundation of American foreign policy.

Each National Security Strategy is not only about foreign policy, in fact, it deals with the goals and the interests which are at the core of American national security¹. Very often the word

¹ John K. Bartolotto, *The Origin and Developmental Process of the National Security Strategy*, (U.S. Army War College, 2004), 3.

“democracy” occurs, not only democracy as an idea, but the intention of spreading it around the world for it is the basis of the American state. Just to provide an example, Clinton’s National Security Strategy of 1999, where topics such as promoting democracy and human rights are deeply dealt with ².

Moreover Foreign policy in all its contents is analyzed, starting from Us “worldwide commitments”, American strategic visions priorities, to Us capabilities to confront external threats and aggressions³.

Another element is the evaluation of American capabilities, namely military forces and intelligence, between effective weapons and strategic power and the aims and goals set as the fundamentals of the National Security Strategy⁴.

Every National Security Strategy must deal with all these topics and they must have a firm structure, but every President has his own priorities, and each administration different objectives to accomplish.

For example President Reagan organized its National Security Strategy focusing most on the threats posed by the USSR, while President G. W. Bush had to face the problems of terrorism and the fact that American values are no longer deemed as just and equal as they were in the past.

Another definition of Security Strategy is given by the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies:

National Security strategy, or “grand strategy”, is the art and science of developing, integrating, and deploying the political, economic, diplomatic, military, informational, and other instruments or national power and influence to secure political objectives in peace and war. A national security strategy seeks to counter real or potential threats to a state’s interests, values, or survival. This focus on perceived threats differentiates a security strategy from a state’s general foreign and

² William Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, (Washington D.C.: The White House, December 1998), 2.

³ J. K. Bartolotto, *op. cit.*, 3.

⁴ J. K. Bartolotto, *Ibid.*, 4.

domestic policy initiatives . National security strategy should also be distinguished from military strategy or doctrine⁵.

In a nutshell, the National Security Strategy expresses American strategic vision, the values and rights the United States represents in the world and the way, both with military and intelligence powers, they would defend them. Finally the National Security Strategy is used by the President to demonstrate what his administration has accomplished and therefore to enhance his authority⁶.

One last description of the National Security Strategy is given by President Reagan:

The fundamental, strategic nature of the NSS is threefold: one, it furnishes a historical perspective to past strategic structure; two, it delineates the interest of the United States; three, it analyzes the threat and objectives of the United States, and the means to achieve these objectives⁷

1.b History of the National Security Strategy

It is necessary to provide a historical context in order to better understand when the concept of National Security and National Security Strategy started to develop in the United States⁸.

The term National Security Strategy came into usage only in 1986, the key year when President Reagan released his “ National Security Strategy of the United States ”, but the

⁵ The George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, *Module 9 – National Security Strategy: Processes and Structures*, 2003, in J. K. Bartolotto, *Ibid*.

⁶ J. K. Bartolotto, *op. cit.*, 5.

⁷ Ronald Reagan, *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, (Washington D.C.: The White House, January 1988), 1.

⁸ Walter Lippman, *U.S. Foreign policy: Shield of the Republic*, (Boston: Little and Brown, 1943), 49.

concept of National Security dates back forty-one years prior to Reagan's document.

In fact, the end of the Second World War, in 1945, was the turning point for the concept of National Security, it was then that the United States fully realized that a new system for foreign policy was needed, mainly to bear Us role as a superpower in the international context⁹. It was necessary to deploy a well-organized plan for National security. Each administration tried to elaborate a new set of procedures and institutions in order to compete with that other superpower left after the war, the Soviet Union.

Congress intervened by passing the National Security Act of July 1947, which has been called the "Magna Charta of the national security state"¹⁰. This new act was a revolution for foreign policy because, apart from reorganizing the armed forces by creating separate departments of the army, navy and air force, it established the National Security Council (NSC) under the command of the President¹¹ to better coordinate policy-making, and replaced the OSS with an independent Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)¹².

SEC.2. [50 U.S.C. 401] In enacting this legislation, it is the intent of Congress to provide a comprehensive program for the future security of the United States; to provide for the establishment of integrated policies and procedures for the departments, agencies, and functions of the Government relating to the national security, to provide a Department of Defense, including the three military departments of the Army, the Navy (...), and the Air Force under the direction, authority, and control of the Secretary of Defense. (...).

SEC. 101. [50 U.S.C. 402] There is hereby established a council to be known as the National Security Council (...).

The function of the Council shall be advised the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security¹³.

⁹ George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 597.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 614.

¹¹ J. Bartolotto, *op. cit.*, 2.

¹² G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 614.

¹³ National Security Act, Public Law, July 1947.

This excerpt explains the changes brought about with the National Security Act of 1947 and it must be underlined the importance it had on American foreign policy since it has come into effect. Not only were the new measures and procedures key aspects, but also the figure of President Truman. Despite his lack of experience in foreign policy, he played a prominent role in developing US foreign policy in the postwar years¹⁴.

The National Security Council is, still nowadays, the President's principal forum for considering national security and foreign policy matters with his advisors. The Council aims at advising and assisting the President on national security and foreign policies¹⁵.

The release of the National Security Act of 1947 triggered a chain of events which got the Executive Branch to step in the American policymaking¹⁶. After the Second World War the United States needed guidelines and specific procedures in order to cope with foreign policy. The main threats at the time were posed by the Soviet Union: the American administration was afraid not to keep up with its enemy's strength. In fact, in the late 1940s two key events made the United States reconsider the dangerousness of the USSR and China: the explosion of the first Soviet atomic bomb and the victory of the communist party of Mao Zedong and the institution of the People's Republic Of China. These two unexpected events alerted the American administration:

[...] la combinazione tra la netta superiorità militare convenzionale dell'URSS e il suo potenziale arsenale atomico alterava gli equilibri postbellici e apriva scenari assai foschi, a maggior ragione se ad essa si aggiungeva la nascita di un nuovo gigante comunista in Asia¹⁷.

¹⁴ Arnaldo Testi, *Il secolo degli Stati Uniti*, (Bologna, Il Mulino, 2008), 149.

¹⁵ <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/nsc>.

¹⁶ J. K. Bartolotto, *op. cit.*, 2.

¹⁷ Mario del Pero, *Gli Stati Uniti e il mondo 1776-2006*, (Bari, Editori Laterza, 2008), 298-299.

Del Pero underlines how these events have been perceived negatively by the Us government, they realized how complicated the situation had turned. Towards this difficult context organized policies and measures were necessary.

In addition to the concerns of the American administration, it is important to analyze the article “The sources of Soviet Conduct” by George Kennan, published in Foreign Affairs in 1947. George Kennan was a diplomat, working as a functionary in the Us Embassy in Moscow¹⁸. In his article he wrote what he thought was to be the American strategy towards the Ussr, no collaboration or cooperation was possible with the Kremlin and the only thing the United States was supposed to do was blocking and containing the communist threat. He portrayed the Soviet leadership in near pathological terms and helped destroy American will to understand and negotiate with its onetime ally¹⁹. In explaining his theory and vision he defined his strategy as of one of “containment”: “[...] the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of long term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies”²⁰.

His vision laid the basis for the Truman Doctrine, which was to be the key strategy during the Cold War²¹, as President Truman himself said during a joint session of the houses of Congress on March 12, 1947: “It must be the policy of the United States”²².

Kennan’s article was transposed in an official document by the Truman’s administration Security Council, the NSC-68, *United States Objectives and Programs for National Security*, which represented Us ideology of foreign policy after 1945. This document’s core concept was to contain Soviet expansionism and the spreading of communism. Moreover it was fundamental

¹⁸ M. Del Pero, *Ibid.*, 283.

¹⁹ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 604.

²⁰ Niall Ferguson, *Colossus*, (New York, Penguin Books, 2005), 79.

²¹ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 284.

²² avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp

to the United States to convey an image of power and strength, it was necessary that the Ussr understood the American role in the world²³.

As said before, Kennan's vision was fundamental to the development of Us foreign policy, in fact in the administration and in the whole country the fear of a Soviet expansionism grew bigger and bigger, to the point of creating a true alarmism for communism. In this following excerpt taken from the NSC-68 that alarmism is made quite clear:

The Soviet Union, unlike previous aspirants to hegemony, is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world [...] The issues that face us are momentous, involving the fulfillment or destruction not only of this republic but of civilization itself [...] The fundamental design of those who control the Soviet Union and the international communist movement is to retain and solidify their absolute power, first in the Soviet Union and second in the areas now under their control. In the mind of the Soviet leaders, however, achievement of this design requires the dynamic extension of their authority and the ultimate elimination of any effective opposition to their authority [...] The design, therefore, calls for the complete subversion or forcible destruction of the machinery of government and structure of society in the countries of the non-Soviet world and their replacement by an apparatus and structure subservient to and controlled from the Kremlin [...] The United States, as the [...] center of power in the non-Soviet world and the bulwark of opposition to Soviet expansion, is the principal enemy whose integrity and vitality must be subverted or destroyed [...]²⁴

For the authors of the NSC-68 it was fundamental to underline that American power was the strongest, that the expansion of the Ussr and the spreading of communism must be prevented, it was about credibility: the United States must reaffirm its role, it was not only about military power itself but also about the perception the rest of the world had of the American country: a superpower²⁵. As Del Pero argued:

²³ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 301.

²⁴ NSC-68, *United States Objectives and Programs for National Security*, Washington, 1950.

²⁵ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 301.

L'NSC-68 [...] esprimeva la progressive interiorizzazione nella cultura strategica e nella politica estera statunitense degli stereotipi e dei manicheismi più radicali dell'anticomunismo. L'ideologia si faceva strategia e cultura politica; l'identità subiva una rilevante trasmutazione; gli interessi diventavano potenzialmente infiniti²⁶.

In the following years, during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations there was no significant and relevant changes regarding the development and the management of foreign policy, in fact the most fulfilling rationale was the “Annual Report to Congress”, released by the Secretary of Defense. During the Nixon administration an annual “State of the World Report” is published, and with this document the issuing of National Security Strategies becomes custom.²⁷

It was Kissinger, who at that time was National Security Advisor, that proposed the releasing of an annual report under the President's name regarding foreign policy²⁸. Those reports served as Kissinger claimed:

as a conceptual outline of the President's foreign policy, as a status report, and as agenda for action. It could simultaneously guide our bureaucracy and inform foreign governments about our thinking²⁹.

The four reports issued by the Nixon's administration were largely developed by Kissinger, starting from 1970 until 1973, when Kissinger became Secretary of State, and they constituted the explanations to the administration's decisions and actions toward the rest of the world. Again as Kissinger argued: “once the president's annual review became established, it produced some of the most thoughtful government statements of foreign policy”³⁰, this declaration clearly underlines how important and vital national strategy reports were to the American government, so important that

²⁶ M. Del Pero, *Ibid.*, 302.

²⁷ John L. Gaddis, “A Grand Strategy of transformation”, *Foreign Policy*, Nov/Dec 2003, 54.

²⁸ John L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 303.

²⁹ Richard Nixon, *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: A new Strategy for Peace*, A report to Congress, February 18, 1970, (Washington, GPO, 1970), 4.

³⁰ Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*, (Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1979), 158-159.

some years later issuing National Security reports became mandatory with a law by the United State Congress³¹.

In fact, in 1986, during the Reagan administration, with the Goldwater-Nichols Act, releasing National reports became a law. These reports were properly called National Security Strategies, each President together with his National Security Council had to report every year to Congress and the American people³². The Executive Branch became in charge of publishing a National Security Strategy and, in 1987, the first document called “The National Security Strategy of the United States” was published by the Reagan administration³³.

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 states the following about the issuing of National Security Strategy reports in Section 104a:

“Sec. 104. (a)(1) The President shall transmit to Congress each year a comprehensive report on the national security strategy of the United States.

“(2) [...]

(b) Each national security strategy report shall set forth the national security strategy of the United States and shall include a comprehensive description and discussion of the following:

(1) The worldwide interests, goals, and objectives of the United States that are vital to the national security of the United States.

(2) The foreign policy, worldwide commitments, and national defense capabilities of the United States necessary to deter aggression and to implement the national security strategy of the United States.

(3) The proposed short-term and long-term uses of the political, economic, military, and other elements of the national power of the United States to protect and promote the interests and achieve the goals and objectives referred to in paragraph (1).

(4) The adequacy of the capabilities of the United States to carry out the national security strategy of the United States, [...].

(5) Such other information as may be necessary to help inform Congress on matters relating to the national security strategy of the United States.

(c) Each national security strategy report shall be transmitted in both a classified and an unclassified form.”³⁴

³¹ Lawrence J. Korb, *A New National Security Strategy in an Age of Terrorists, Tyrants, and Weapons of Mass Destruction* (New York, Brookings Institution Press, 2003), 13.

³² John L. Gaddis, *op. cit.*, 54

³³ Charles J. Fairchild, *Does our National Security Strategy Address the Real threats?*, 1989, available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1989/FCJ.htm>

³⁴ Public law 99-433: *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986*, sec. 104a, (Washington) 1986 .

With the ratification of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, through which the Congress amended the National Security Act of 1947, presidents are required to produce annually a National Security Strategy report, with which the United States release its own strategic planning before it is achieved and it is a very important practice because it reflects the strategic vision and thinking of a president. The amendment that included National Security Strategy Report was meant to enhance the effectiveness and guide lines of the Department of Defense, implementing its efficiency and decreasing all the possible mistakes concerning military and intelligence intervention³⁵. According to Snider, the Goldwater-Nichols Act was a way to solve a remarkable problem in the American governmental process; in fact the Executive Branch did not succeed in formulating a mid- and long- term strategy to foster the interests vital to the nation's security. What was necessary was a written strategy that could inform Congress on the resources, both military and economic, that were needed to execute the strategy, and therefore to facilitate the task for the Department of Defense³⁶.

Still, another two scholars give more reasons for the reform of the Department of Defense, here is their statement:

Congress created the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986 to force the Department of Defense to be more responsive to the Commander-in-Chief and more efficient in the conduct of interservice matters. Lines of communication between president, cabinet, and service chiefs were fragmented and fundamentally separated. These divisions caused unhealthy competition between the Department of Defense organizations ranging from procurement to operations³⁷.

³⁵ Don M. Snider, *The National Security Strategy: Documenting Strategic Vision*, (Strategic Studies Institute, 1995), 2.

³⁶ Dom N. Snider, *Ibid.*, 2.

³⁷ Clark A. Murdock, Richard W. Weitz, *Beyond Goldwater –Nichols, New Proposal for Defense Reform*, Joint Force Quarterly, issue 38: 34-41

A reform of the Department of Defense was necessary because Congress realized the U.S. weaknesses in accomplishing its military objectives, for example the operations in Vietnam, Iran, Lebanon and Grenada triggered the debate between the Congress and the Defense apparatus on frequent problems in defense communications and command structures³⁸. Those problems refer to military operations that were considered failures both on a military and economic point of view, i.e. the invasion of Grenada and Operation Urgent Fury, where the Joint Chiefs of Staff constrained the four military services to play an integral role in the invasion³⁹. The reorganization of the Defense Department brought about by the Goldwater- Nichols Act was also aimed at reforming the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for example by clarifying the functions of the JCS chairman and by setting new rules about the body's role regarding military operations and the use of combatant forces⁴⁰.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff is the most important military advisory group to the President, and it is composed of the chiefs of the Army, Navy, Air Force and the Marine Corps. Its history dates back to the end of the Second World War, when President Roosevelt created it with the idea of a cooperation with the British Joint Chiefs of Staff. In 1947, when Congress passed the National Security Act, the Joint Chiefs of Staff became entitled to prepare strategic actions and to direct the initiatives of the military forces, and, in addition, to coordinate joint logistic plans. However there were constant rivalries between the different services, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, and the advisor and first Secretary of Defense James

³⁸ Greg Parlier, *The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986: Resurgence in Defense Reform and The Legacy of Eisenhower*, (War in the Modern Era Seminar, May 15, 1989, National Defense University), available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1989/PGH.htm>

³⁹ David Isenberg, *Missing the Point: Why the Reforms of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Won't Improve U.S. Defense Policy*, (Cato Institute: Policy Analysis Number 100, February 29, 1988), available from <http://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/missing-point-why-reforms-joint-chiefs-staff-wont-improve-us-defense-policy>

⁴⁰ David Isenberg, *Ibid.*, 2.

Forrestal⁴¹ wanted to solve this matter through a memorandum called “Functions of The Armed Forces and the Joint Chiefs of Staff”. The document aimed at encouraging interservice cooperation by specifying the missions of each service, but unfortunately it did not help cooperation at all and was considered a failure.

As Isenberg claims:

The memorandum, popularly known as the Key West agreement, gave each of the three services a set of primary responsibilities, and each pledged to carry out certain functions to assist in the primary missions of the other services. But interservice disputes did not end.⁴²

Eisenhower intents were, however, to modify the chain of command, especially by changing the role of joint chiefs from commanders to planners and advisers; following the guidelines set out in the 1947 National Security Act.

All the changes produced between 1958 and 1986 aimed at resolving management issues, and at meeting rising national security demands, although the responsibilities of the Joint Chiefs of Staff remained basically the same throughout this period of time.⁴³

What brought to the major and most significant changes occurred with the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Amendment Act were a series of events that hit the sphere of American foreign policy such as the loss of the Vietnam War, the unsuccessful rescue of American Hostages in Iran, the bombing of the marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983 and the invasion of Grenada⁴⁴.

For instance, according to defense analyst William Lind, the involvement of each of the four services in the Grenada invasion, decided by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was an error:

⁴¹ A. Testi, *op. cit.*, 181.

⁴² Morton H. Halperin, David Halperin, *The Key West Key*, Foreign Policy no. 53, (Winter 1983-84) 114-130, in D. Isenberg, *op. cit.*, 2.

⁴³ David Isenberg, *op. cit.*, 2.

⁴⁴ D. Isenberg, *Ibid.*, 3.

One early plan of the invasion would have produced something much closer to a coup de main. [...] This plan was overruled by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that demanded of four services be involved – just as in the Iran rescue mission [...] So in what seems to have become the standards JCS approach to military operations, [...], we ended up with a plan that allowed the enemy to put on a reasonably good show⁴⁵.

Another example useful to better understand why a reform of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and, more generally, of the Department of Defense was needed, regards the events occurred in Vietnam and is given by Gen. Bruce Palmer⁴⁶:

not once during the war did the JCS advise the commander-in-chief or the secretary of defense that the strategy being pursued most probably would fail and that the United States would be unable to achieve its objectives.⁴⁷

The Goldwater – Nichols Act fixed several weaknesses that were present in the previous system, for example the functions of the Joint Chiefs Of Staff chairman were reorganized and changed in greater details. The intentions of the reform, were, with no doubt, to give the Joint Chiefs of Staff more functions regarding military operations, and specifically, what the armed forces could actually accomplish in military operations⁴⁸.

Besides, the new legislation clarified the functions assigned to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who, besides his role as main adviser to the Secretary of Defense, is in charge of developing and reviewing contingency plans and analyzing the preparedness of each military group to carry out its tasks⁴⁹. Here is the definition given by the Goldwater-Nichols Act:

⁴⁵ D. Isenberg, *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁶ D. Isenberg, *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁷ Gen. Bruce Palmer, Jr. (Ret), *The 25-Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam*, (Lexington, Ky: University Press of Kentucky, 1984), 46. In D. Isenberg, 4.

⁴⁸ D. Isenberg, *op. cit.*, 8

⁴⁹ D. Isenberg, *Ibid.*, 9.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. The other members are military advisers, [...], they shall provide advice on a particular matter when the President, the National Security Council, or the Secretary requests such advice.⁵⁰

The aim of the reform was to encourage joint operations and therefore to improve military interventions, and the cooperation in the Department of Defense, which is to be considered extremely important in a country like the United States, a superpower that has undertaken global commitments⁵¹.

Although the reform was deemed necessary to improve joint operations and, more generally, the system of the Department of Defense, there have been negative opinions as well, like the one given by Isenberg:

The overall effect of the changes made to the Joint Chiefs of Staff system have been modest. Over the long term they may improve U.S. military capabilities and enhance the prospects for success on the battlefield. That, however, is a narrow perspective. By choosing to focus primarily on military effectiveness, policymakers ignore a more important dimension: national military strategy. [...] It is not enough to make sure one can fight well. One must also know what one is fighting for⁵².

He underlined the importance of the political aspect rather than the mere use of military force, which in his opinion is not the only aspect necessary to carry out an effective foreign policy. Therefore, when taking into consideration what tools a country has to deploy its power, it is not only the military a government should focus on, but also other aspects such as the political context. The same should happen when developing a

⁵⁰ Public law 99-433: *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986*, sec. 151, (Washington 1986) .

⁵¹ D. Isenberg, *op. cit.*, 11.

⁵² D. Isenberg, *ibid.*, 12.

national security strategy, again military force is central, but strategy and policy planning are as important⁵³.

1.c The National Security Council and the interagency process

Today the United States is still considered one of the strongest country in the world, its strength based both on economic reasons and on military power, in fact it is currently deploying around two hundred and fifty missions in the shape of consulates, embassies and military facilities through which it leads a unified command system that covers the majority of the regions in the world.

The United States guides a set of alliances which promotes the principles of democracy, trying to spread them in those areas where dictatorships and regimes are still leading, open trade among all world countries and human rights⁵⁴, American power and influence affects almost the whole world⁵⁵, and in doing so all the instruments of national power are used. This is the reason why Presidents and their National Security Staffs must achieve cohesion and consistency when deploying their foreign policy plan, this is the reason why the use of interagency process is fundamental⁵⁶.

What matters the most when dealing with interagency and decision making processes is the integration of resources and unity in all the branches of the governmental apparatus, it is in fact essential that each body cooperates with the others,

⁵³ Dom N. Snider, *op. cit.*, 4.

⁵⁴ Gabriel Marcella, *National Security and the Interagency Process: Forward into the 21st Century*, (Strategic Studies Institute), 1995, 107.

⁵⁵ D. Snider, *op. cit.*, 5.

⁵⁶ G. Marcella, *op. cit.*, 107.

national security must be mastered effectively for it to work properly, in this case strategic integration is a key word.

The Second World War was the first international scene in which the United States tested its strategic integration within an interagency process. Mobilizing the nation to fight a dangerous and very demanding war tried the importance of resources and budgets, of integrating diplomacy with military power, gathering huge quantities of intelligence data, carrying out strategies to manage and balance competing areas, such as Europe and the Pacific zone in national strategy.

After the end of the war and the following onset of the Cold War several innovations emerged in the institutional field of the American government, for instance the system of the modern Department of State, and the most important among all, the birth of the Department of Defense, whose origin comes from the old War Department in 1949; moreover a centralized intelligence system emerged, military advisory groups and the United States Information Agency⁵⁷.

The late 1940s and early 1950s was a key period for American history, especially as far as foreign policy and national interests are concerned. John P. Lovell calls it “purposeful adaptation”⁵⁸ and explains his definition as “the need to develop and pursue foreign policy goals that are sensitive to national needs and aspirations and to the realities of a changing world environment”⁵⁹. American interagency process evolved to adapt to changing global realities of the last fifty years, during which very important documents such as the NSC-68, the framework that involved the containment strategy during the Cold War, were produced.

In 1945, the United States faced many international changes, among which creating a stable financial environment

⁵⁷ G. Marcella, *Ibid.*, 108.

⁵⁸ G. Marcella, *Ibid.*, 108.

⁵⁹ John p. Lovell, *The Challenge of American foreign policy: Purpose and adaptation*, (New York, Collier McMillian, 1985), 7, in G. Marcella, *op. cit.*, 104.

and promoting decolonization; but the most important was to mold a system of collective security. This process was highly influenced both by international changes and by the constant threat posed by the Soviet Union. When this bipolar system ended, foreign policy and the defense agenda had to evolve and to change according with the rest of the world⁶⁰.

The National Security Council was created in 1947, its functions and features can be found in the National Security Act of 1947:

The functions of the Council shall be to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security... [...] ... other functions the President may direct for the purpose of more effectively coordinating the policies and functions of the departments and agencies of the Government relating to the nation's security... [...]

[...]... assess and appraise the objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States [...], consider policies on matters of common interest to the departments and agencies of the Government concerned with the national security...[...]⁶¹

In the National Security Council there are statutory members, such as the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense and other as important secretaries. Besides there are some members which are considered more as advisors, such as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and other cabinet members.

The National Security Council has great authority over the planning and the development of policy, its power

⁶⁰ G. Marcella, *Ibid.*, 105.

⁶¹ National Security Act, 1947

competing for jurisdiction and importance with the Department of State and Defense⁶².

In the first two Presidential Decision Directives of the Clinton Administration in 1993, the National Security Council Staff, or the Executive Secretariat, its functions and size, are set forth, as in the following model:

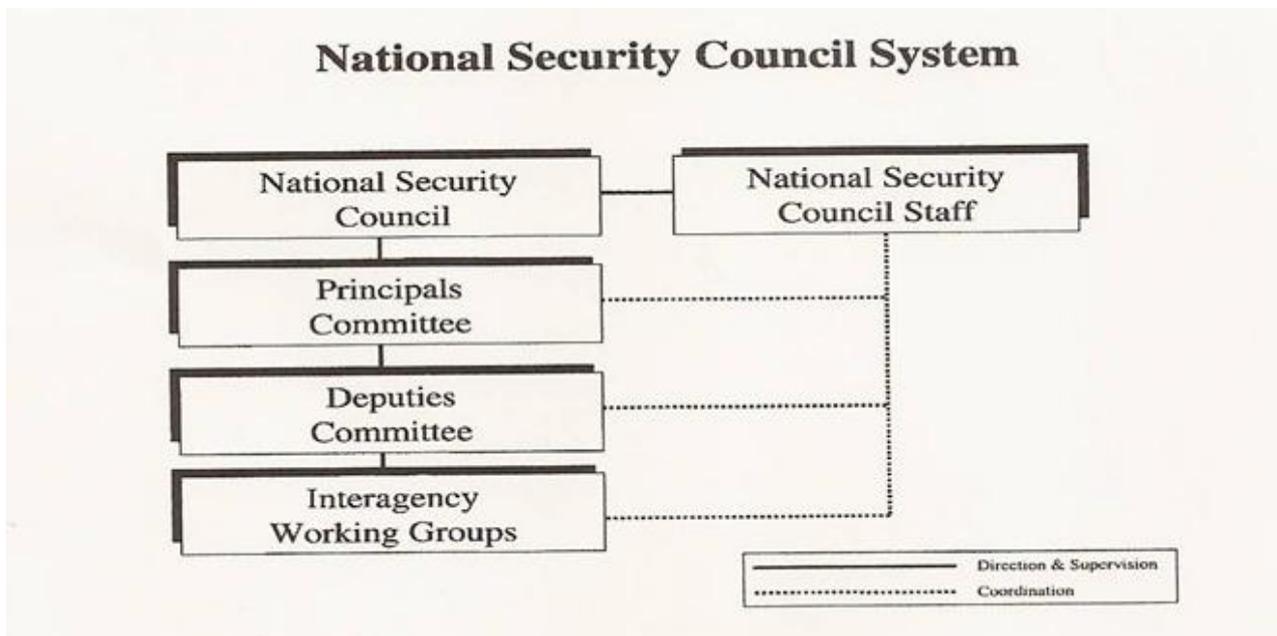


Fig. 1 National Security Council System⁶³

At the lowest level there are the Interagency Working Groups (IWGs) that are at the heart of the decision-making process, they meet regularly to estimate routine and crisis matters. Moreover they develop policy responses and build consensus throughout the government to plan unified actions.

⁶² G. Marcella, *op. cit.*, 111.

⁶³ G. Marcella, *ibid.*, 112

Soon after the IWGs comes the Deputies Committee, which is formed by undersecretaries who observe and control the actions of the interagency decision-making policy, it deals with crisis management and, if necessary, moves the issues to the Principal Committee for resolution⁶⁴.

The Principal Committee members are the representatives who constitute the senior forum for national security matters. Normally and ideally issues are to be resolved at the lowest level possible, and, if they are not, they are pushed to the higher level.

The chairman of the several IWGs and committees can switch between the National Security Council director and a senior State Department Official.

What is important to underline is the key aspect of interagency coordination, which must unite all the different branches of the government (offices, bureaus and agencies), making it work as one.

The National Security Council Staff organizes the everyday and long-term coordination and integration regarding national security matters across the whole government, and, in detail, as Marcella states:

1. Provides information and policy advice to the President
2. Manages the policy coordination process
3. Monitors implementation of presidential policy decisions
4. Manages the interdepartmental dimension of crisis
5. Articulates the President's policies
6. Undertakes long-term strategic planning⁶⁵

The policy coordination process inside the National Security Council clashes very often with policymaking. As Robert Pastor, President Carter's Director of Latin American Affairs at the NSC argues:

⁶⁴ G. Marcella, *Ibid.*, 113

⁶⁵ G. Marcella, *Ibid.*, 114.

[...] tension between NSC and State derives in part from the former's control of the agenda and the latter's control of implementation. State Department officials tend to be anxious about the NSC usurping implement the President's decisions or might do so in a way that would make decisions States disapproved of appear ineffective and wrong⁶⁶.

The National Security Council is theoretically of coordinating authority, but in some cases it can control some foreign policy matters, and in some other cases it allows the State or the Department of Defense to lead most national security and foreign policy issues. The NSC cooperates with the State, it is, in fact, an inside- state organ, but sometimes it may work on its own, depending on the matter at hand⁶⁷.

For instance, during the Kosovo crisis in 1988-89, the National Security Council took policy control over from State; the same happened with policies regarding Cuba and Haiti in 1993-95, which were dealt with outside the White House, because they were deeply related to domestic affairs⁶⁸.

Interagency is a very difficult process which aims at developing an effective policy to pursue. It is considered a political process because it involves a lot of different interests, both national and political ones, and power is always at stake. "the power game involves the push and pull of negotiation, the guarding of policy prerogatives, of hammering out compromises"⁶⁹. The interagency process is dominated by the National Security Council, and it is divided into four specific phases:

- The first one concerns the identification policy matters,

⁶⁶ Robert Pastor, *Condemned to Repetition: The United States and Nicaragua*, (Princeton University Press, 1987), 81.

⁶⁷ G. Marcella, *op. Cit.*, 115.

⁶⁸ G. Marcella, *Ibid.*, 116.

⁶⁹ Hedrick Smith, *The Power Game: How Washington Works*, (New York: Random House, 1988).

- The second one is about developing viable choices and options,
- The third one concerns formulating decisions,
- The fourth, and last one, is about supervising the application of decisions throughout the executive department⁷⁰.

The foreign policy process consists of five interrelated levels: conceptualization, articulation, budgeting, implementation analysis and feedback⁷¹.

Conceptualization is at the bottom of the decision-making process, its task is of developing policy, like Presidential Decision Directives. Articulation, which can be considered as a declaration, is the public statement of policy made expressed by the President or one of his subordinates, in order to gain public support. Budgeting consists of testimony before Congress to validate policy goals and to request funding. Implementation is the using of resources to achieve the policy objectives. The last ones, the post-implementation analysis and feedback is the assessment of policy efficacy⁷².

As stated in the previous paragraph, the interagency process is extremely important to develop an appropriate foreign policy agenda, a lot of actors are involved and it is always a challenge to fulfill policy objectives. As argued by Gabriel Marcella:

effective policy requires vision, control, resources, and a system of accountability. The most compelling challenge for the executive is to retain policy control⁷³.

Policy initiatives have to be overseen and analyzed in detail, and, considering the fact that Presidents do not have

⁷⁰ G. Marcella, *op. Cit.*, 117.

⁷¹ G. Marcella, *Ibid.*, 118.

⁷² G. Marcella, *Ibid.*, 119

⁷³ G. Marcella, *Ibid.*, 120

either time or the necessary expertise, responsibility is appointed to congressional committees and their staff. Congress is another stakeholder “ remains the main engine of national policy-making⁷⁴”: it is, in fact, responsible for analyzing policy initiatives and for voting funding to support national defense and foreign affairs. Indeed, the national security strategy document is mandated by Congress and is, therefore, an indicator of a path followed by an administration in national security and foreign policy.

1d. The Developmental process of the National Security Strategy

The development of each National Security Strategy starts with the representation of the world that an administration has⁷⁵. The National Security Strategy is a process, and, therefore, it includes the interests of a nation, its objectives and what instruments of power can be used to achieve those interests and objectives⁷⁶.

The National Security Strategy development is an “intensely political process⁷⁷”, as it is conceived through an interagency process, in which the National Security Council has a vital role⁷⁸. The document, accordingly to G. Marcella:

Expresses the US strategic vision, what the US stands for in the world, its priorities, and a sensing of how the instruments of national

⁷⁴ Joan Hoff, *A Faustian Foreign Policy from Woodrow Wilson to G.W. Bush: Dreams of perfectibility*, (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 33.

⁷⁵ Philip Zelikow, *The Transformation of National Security – Five Redefinitions*, available from <http://www.virginia.edu/history/files/faculty/zelikow/Transformation%20natl%20secty.pdf>

⁷⁶ Dennis M. Drew and Donald M. Snow, *Making Strategy: An Introduction to National Security Processes and Problems*, (Air University Press, Alabama), 1988, 13 in J. K. Bartolotto, *op. Cit.*, 5.

⁷⁷ J. K. Bartolotto, *Ibid.*, 5.

⁷⁸ Robert Ranquel, *Think Tanks and The National Security Strategy Formulation Process: A Comparison of Current Americana and French Patterns*, *Acquisition Review Quarterly*, Winter 1997, 3-4, in J. K. Bartolotto, *Ibid.*, 6.

power, (diplomatic, economic, military and informational) will be arrayed. Since it is truly an interagency product, the NSS also serves to discipline the interagency system to understand the President's agenda and priorities, and develops a common language that gives coherence to policy within an administration. It is also more than a strategic document. It is political, designed to enhance the presidential authority in order to mobilize the nation⁷⁹.

During the process of development of the National Security Strategy there may be several matters that complicates it. First, every time a new administration takes office, there is a vast turnover and increase of new staff, sometimes very experienced and provided with new predispositions about national security. Second, the National Security Strategy involves different levels of the bureaucratic apparatus, and all the agencies which take part in it, are often at odds with one another. Third, each new administration wants to give its mark and *modus operandi* on the National Security Strategy⁸⁰. In conclusion, it must be underlined that the environment in which the National Security Strategy is drafted and developed is one of deep and opponent politics. This tense climate rises because the Executive Branch needs to convey its strategic conception to Congress and several constituencies to legitimize its budget allocation. Moreover, the agenda of the President has to be established, especially as far as foreign policy is concerned⁸¹.

A definition given by the George C. Marshall European Center for Strategic Studies express the process of the creation of the National Security Strategy as follows:

The term National Security Strategy implies a planned, systematic, and rational process, where a consideration of national interests,

⁷⁹ G. Marcella, *op. Cit.*, 116.

⁸⁰ G. Marcella, *Ibid.*, 116.

⁸¹ Don M. Snider, J. Nagl, *The National Security Strategy: Documenting Strategic Vision*, The U.S. Army War College Guide to Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute, (U.S. Army War College, 2001), 130-131, in J. Bartolotto, *Op. Cit.*, 6.

values, and priorities decides policy objectives, and an analysis of available resources, and the external security environment determines the strategy to achieve these objectives. However, in practice, strategy making is rarely so straightforward. The security implications of trends in the international environment can be difficult to interpret and analyze; leading to the kind of strategic drift that characterized Western security policies following the end of the Cold War. Strategies often develop incrementally as a result of compromises between the conflicting interest groups involved in decision making. They are also shaped by strong leaders, organizational cultures, and governmental structures. In some states, economic policy alone can drive the whole security strategy process. Unforeseen events will also tend to upset the most rigorous planning, causing the distinct stages in a sequential process of strategic analysis, choice, and implementation to overlap⁸².

The development of a National Security Strategy starts with a National Security Decision Memo from the President, through which the cabinet departments that will be fully active in the drafting of the document are selected. Still, the first National Security Directive or National Security Memorandum, both from the President, are the papers that designate the kind of the contribution the National Security Council will give to the formulation of the policy⁸³.

As for the participants, who have responsibility in the strategy layout, apart from the President, who, of course, is the most relevant, there are interests groups and public opinion as well. The latter have a role that can be considered marginal in comparison to the President's, but, in reality, they do affect the matter of the policy⁸⁴.

⁸² The George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, *Op. Cit.* in J. Bartolotto, *Ibid.*

⁸³ J. K. Bartolotto, *op. cit.*, 8.

⁸⁴ Dennis M. Drew and Donald M. Snow, *Making a Strategy: An Introduction to National Security Processes and Problems*, (Alabama, Air University Press, 1988), 74. The authors give an interesting insight on the political influence of interest groups in the strategy process, "in the political sphere, a large number of such groups represent the gamut of interest on general issues of grand strategy and more specific policy issues. Each group attempts to influence public policy in directions compatible with its beliefs. Through such techniques as lobbying and education, interest groups transmit policy options and positions from the private sector to governmental actors who make policy decisions".

Again, the role of the President is extremely important, and, in fact, the realization or failure of the National Security Strategy is based upon his character and skills⁸⁵. Two key aspects are to be taken into consideration when analyzing the figure of the President. First, his leadership method, his nature and personality define how the Oval Office works concerning national security⁸⁶. Second, his views on American national interests and the worldwide security environment and the way these influence national security policies and in conclusion, his ability to bring these two components to influence the National Security Establishment with the aim of integrating its efforts in the direction of coherent policy⁸⁷.

The decision-making process of the National Security Council is appointed by each administration, so that the needs of the new president are fulfilled and his new management style is properly followed⁸⁸.

The formulation of a new National Security Strategy starts by analyzing the policies developed by the previous administration⁸⁹, then the National Security Council begins the actual project, following the mindset of the President and his staff. What follows is an interagency process, lead by the NSC, which can last months or years, depending on the administration, and ends when the several drafts are ultimately approved by the President⁹⁰.

In conclusion, what it is to be inferred by the National Security Strategy, is that it is a document of high importance, which conveys the intentions of the American country to its allies, its competitors and adversaries⁹¹.

⁸⁵ Sam C. Sarkesian, *Us Nation Security: Policymakers, Processes, and Politics* (Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), 260.

⁸⁶ J. K. Bartolotto, *op. cit.*, 9.

⁸⁷ Sam C. Sarkesian, *op. cit.*, 73-74.

⁸⁸ Dom N. Snider, *Strategy, Forces and Budgets: Dominant Influences in Executive Decision Making, Post Cold War 1988-89*, (Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1993), 56, in J. K. Bartolotto, *op. cit.*, 11.

⁸⁹ Lawrence J. Korb, *op. cit.*, 13.

⁹⁰ G. Marcella, *op. cit.*, 116.

⁹¹ Lawrence J. Korb, *op. cit.*, 5

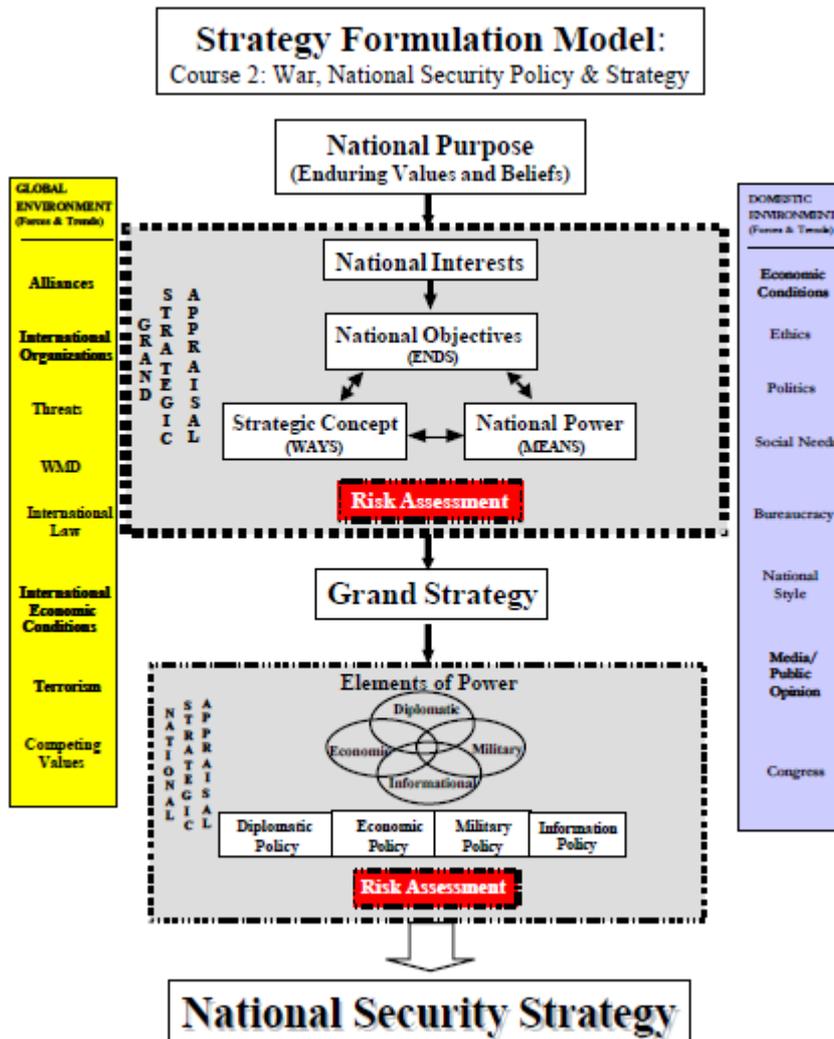


Figure 2: Strategy formulation model⁹²

⁹² J. Bartolotto, *op. cit.*, 30.

Chapter two

This chapter will deal with each administration, starting with President Reagan and ending with President Obama. Their foreign policy agendas will be fully analyzed with the help of National Security Strategy as well as other official documents, such as National Security Decision Directives.

2a. The Reagan Administration

Ronald Wilson Reagan became the 40th United States President in 1980, defeating Jimmy Carter, the democratic exponent, winning 489 electoral votes to 49⁹³. Reagan revived the American spirit, wounded by Vietnam and Watergate and affected by a loss of confidence and self-esteem. During his presidency he oversaw a rebirth on the domestic front and an incredible change on the international front which paved the way for the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. All these transformation lead to America's emergence as a global power⁹⁴.

Reagan's victory was strictly tied to foreign policy matters. As Di Nolfo argues, internal issues such as weak economy, unemployment and inflation often influence American's elections more strongly than foreign policy does, but in the 1980 vote, the case was just the opposite. The feeling among the American people was that Carter's had somehow spoiled United States prestige and influence worldwide⁹⁵.

⁹³ <http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents/ronaldreagan>

⁹⁴ G. C. Herring, *op. cit.*, 862.

⁹⁵ E. di Nolfo, *Storia delle Relazioni Internazionali*, (Bari, editori Laterza, 2009), 1255.

According to Di Nolfo:

Il fatto che le elezioni avessero luogo quando ancora non era risolta la questione dei 50 ostaggi americani, catturati il 4 novembre 1979 dagli student khomeinisti a Teheran e dopo il fallimento, nella notte fra il 24 e 25 aprile 1980, di un tentativo di liberarli con un colpo di mano militare, apparendo come una dimostrazione geometrica di questa decadenza, non poteva che influenzarne l'esito⁹⁶.

Upon his election Reagan promised all Americans he would restore the true American spirit, he would end an era of humiliation and military retreats. He wanted to reassert the grandeur and uniqueness of the United States. He wanted to fulfill without shame and hesitation the interests of his country.

His aim were to carry out an assertive and interventionist foreign policy with the objective of putting an end to a *status quo* which was not tolerable by the United States.

The American country had all it took to overcome this somehow "declining" situation, and what was necessary to do, obviously as far as foreign policy was concerned, was to revive its willingness to stand out in the international field.

President Reagan's ideas were to reintroduce real anti-communism, which characterized the earlier phase of the Cold War. Carter's focus on human rights and morality was to be considered but it had to be interpreted from a totally different point of view: the key words were anti-sovietism and anti-totalitarian. It had to be understood that the Soviet regime was doomed to fail⁹⁷.

President Reagan made his intentions clear when he delivered his commencement address at the University of Notre Dame in 1981:

The years ahead are great ones for this country, for the cause of freedom and the spread of civilization. [...]

⁹⁶ E. Di Nolfo, *Ibid.*, 1255

⁹⁷ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 378-379.

The West won't contain communism, it will transcend communism.
It won't bother to dismiss or denounce it, it will dismiss it as some
bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages are even now
being written. [...]

For the West, for America, the time has come to dare to show to the world that our civilized ideas, our traditions, our values, are not — like the ideology and war machine of totalitarian societies — just a facade of strength⁹⁸.

His message was quite straightforward, the Soviet Union could be challenged and defeated and the Cold War could be won by the United States⁹⁹.

Moreover, Reagan's new attitude toward the Soviet Union meant a new and different approach to détente. In fact, in one of his early speeches, he had defined it as "a one-way street the Soviet Union has used to pursue its own aims"¹⁰⁰.

If détente was dead, Cold War was back to life. The American focus on foreign policy gained a new ideological momentum and the speech delivered by Reagan on March 8, 1983, to a meeting of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, envisioned communism as "the focus of evil in the modern world," a common enemy that has to be defeated¹⁰¹.

Here's an excerpt of the President's address:

So, I urge you to speak out against those who would place the United States in a position of military and moral inferiority. [...] to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil¹⁰².

⁹⁸ <http://old.nationalreview.com/document/reagan200406091024.asp>

⁹⁹ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 379.

¹⁰⁰ Sean Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan*, (New York, Harper Perennial, 2009), 152.

¹⁰¹ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 380.

¹⁰² <http://www.nationalcenter.org/ReaganEvilEmpire1983.html>

With this speech Reagan made absolutely clear which kind of policy the United States wanted to pursue against the Ussr. It was no longer a détente climate, but a new beginning that aimed at showing to the world that the United States was the only superpower.

The USA – USSR antagonism was once again the framework of international relations.

Together with his reaffirmation of the American superiority Reagan started a new condemnation of the conditions of the people living in the Communist Bloc, and he was willing to help any country that wanted to fight against communism¹⁰³. This new policy was the premise of the so-called Reagan Doctrine¹⁰⁴, which had at its bases the moral and strategic need to give aid to those countries that wanted to fight for their freedom, defeating communism¹⁰⁵.

With this new Doctrine Reagan aimed at restarting the Cold War, not only and exclusively against the Soviet empire but confronting the revolutionary governments of Central American and regimes of Third World countries and the Soviet-backed People's Democratic Party in Afghanistan as well. It was a shift away from the Cold War policy of containment.¹⁰⁶

As Wilentz argues:

The basic idea had been present at the beginning of the administration and had been prefigured by the Carter administration's support for the Anti-Soviet Muslim mujahideen in Afghanistan; but it was now advocated by activists in the new right. [...] its reports on foreign affairs identified eight countries, where the United States could most easily beat back communism and the Soviet Union's influence:

¹⁰³ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 381.

¹⁰⁴ The term "Reagan Doctrine" was invented by columnist Charles Krauthammer in *The Reagan Doctrine*, *Time*, April 1, 1985, 54. It was never officially embraced by the White House, but it stated the core of the administration's policy, in S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 157.

¹⁰⁵ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 381.

¹⁰⁶ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 157.

Angola, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Iran, Laos, Libya, Nicaragua and Vietnam¹⁰⁷.

The first example of the Reagan's doctrine was the support to the Contras, in the Central American country of Nicaragua.

Starting from 1981 Reagan decided to give military and economic aids to the antigovernment guerillas, the Contras, who wanted to overthrow the Sandinista regime.

Meanwhile the United States intensified its support to the authoritarian and corrupted government of El Salvador, which was trying to defeat a leftist revolutionary movement which was receiving military aids by Nicaragua. These two fronts underlined the increase of the American involvement in Central America, and it reflected the ideology of the new administration.

Reagan's first Secretary of State, Alexander Haig Jr., was firmly convinced that a military intervention in Central America was necessary, but Reagan refused Haig's plan. Yet he agreed to carry out a covert operation backed by the Cia to support the Contras¹⁰⁸. In November of 1981 the administration allocated \$19 million to arm and train Nicaraguan guerrilla, which Congress was unaware of¹⁰⁹. This undercover operation was one the biggest regarding American involvement in Central America since the Bay of Pigs invasion.

In December 1982 the House of Representatives passed the Boland Amendment, which outlaw American assistance to the Contras with the purpose of overthrowing the Nicaraguan government, but authorized non-military aid¹¹⁰.

Reagan signed the Amendment, but the Contras operation went on, grew bigger over time until it developed into the Iran-Contra Affair.

¹⁰⁷ S. Wilentz, *ibid.*, 157.

¹⁰⁸ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 382.

¹⁰⁹ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 156.

¹¹⁰ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 383.

As the Nicaraguan operation secretly carried on another one started. This time the objective was a small island in the Caribbean, Grenada, where the Us army intervened to overthrow the communist government, supported by Cuba, and to free American students who had been training in the island at St. George University¹¹¹. The intervention had been demanded by the OECS (Organization of Eastern Caribbean States) to face a coup that had overthrown the rule of Maurice Bishop.

The intervention was a success due to low military expenditures and the speed it had been carried out. It brought credibility to the turn American foreign policy had taken with the Reagan administration¹¹². Nonetheless, the operation was strongly criticized by British Prime Minister Thatcher, who claimed the United States had acted unilaterally¹¹³.

Besides the Central American stage, the United States intensified its backup to Islamic groups that fought against the Afghan army and Soviet troops. This operation was also supported by Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. The former, together with the Us, financed the mujahideen and the latter provided weapons¹¹⁴.

The Afghan intervention did not arise the same issues as the Nicaraguan one, in fact, the nature and danger of radical Islamism was not yet totally understood.

The Reagan administration wanted the Ussr to have its own Vietnam¹¹⁵.

The war fought by the United States against the Soviet Union was , in addition to ideological and military plans, about strategic weapons and arm reductions.

Reagan wanted his country to have an undisputable military advantage toward the Soviets, his strategy was not far

¹¹¹ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 162.

¹¹² M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 383.

¹¹³ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 162.

¹¹⁴ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 384.

¹¹⁵ M. del Pero, *ibid.*, 384.

from the one expressed in the NSC-68¹¹⁶. As Herring claims, “Cold warrior Paul Nitze, the author of NSC-68, became known as the Reagan administration’s arms control dove!”¹¹⁷

As far as Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) and longer range strategic weapons were concerned, the Reagan administration demanded on larger cuts in Soviet forces than their own. During the INF consultations a zero option was proposed by the Us. This zero option proposed not to deploy Pershing and Tomahawk missiles in Europe if the Ussr would dismantle its SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles and other weapons headed to Western Europe¹¹⁸. It was “loaded to Western advantage and Soviet disadvantage,” Raymond Garthoff has written, “and it was clearly not a basis for negotiations aimed at reaching agreement”¹¹⁹

This negotiation did not lead to any kind of agreement, because intermediate- range missiles were deployed in Europe in 1983 and for this reason the Soviets suspended the talks¹²⁰.

As for strategic weapons, President Reagan started a new round of negotiations called Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START)¹²¹, with which a decrease in Soviet warheads and missile launchers was demanded, but leaving unaltered Us cruise missiles and other weapons¹²². The plan ruled against the Soviet Union, which was being asked to eliminate the core of its nuclear defense. According to Wilentz, “START looked to many Western observers like a disguised attempt to foreclose substantive arms control”¹²³.

¹¹⁶ M. del Pero, *ibid.*, 384.

¹¹⁷ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 868.

¹¹⁸ G. Herring, *ibid.*, 868.

¹¹⁹ Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, 1985), 1024, in G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 868.

¹²⁰ G. Herring, *ibid.*, 869.

¹²¹ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 155

¹²² G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 869.

¹²³ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 155.

It was clear that Reagan wanted the United States to be the only superpower, his last objective was to contain and reverse Soviet expansionism¹²⁴.

This strategy is made quite clear in the National Security Decision Directive 75, drafted in 1982 and finally approved by the President in 1983. It was one the first strategy document developed by the National Security Council, and it can be considered the very first National Security Strategy. It deals with Us relations with the Ussr, both economic and regarding military strategy, but it already gives an idea of the following National Security Strategies. A small excerpt of the document can make quickly understand Us policy toward the Ussr:

U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union will consist of three elements: external resistance to Soviet imperialism; internal pressure on the USSR to weaken the sources of Soviet imperialism; and negotiations to eliminate, outstanding disagreements.

U.S. tasks are:

1. To contain and over time reverse Soviet expansionism by competing effectively on a sustained basis with the Soviet Union in all international arenas – particularly in the overall military balance and in geographical regions of priority concern to the United States. This will remain the primary focus of U.S. policy toward the USSR.

2. To promote the process of change in the Soviet Union toward a more pluralistic political and economic system in which the power of the privileged elite is gradually reduced. [...]

3. To engage the Soviet Union in negotiations to attempt to reach agreements which protect and enhance U.S. interests and which are consistent with the principle of strict reciprocity and mutual interest [...]¹²⁵

The main objective expressed by this policy is to contain but especially to reverse Soviet expansionism. In the NSSS75 the President examines all the regions of the world which are help under the Soviet Empire. Those countries, namely

¹²⁴ R. Reagan, *National Security Decision Directive 75*, (Washington, 1983), 1.

¹²⁵ R. Reagan, *Ibid.*, 1.

Afghanistan, Cuba and “Soviet Third World Alliances¹²⁶” such as China and Yugoslavia. American foreign policies should try to help Soviet Alliances to move away from Moscow and to seek democratization domestically¹²⁷.

Arms control are as important, the United States has to use military means to maintain the balance and to enhance national security and global stability. Still, defense spending is extremely important to achieve military superiority. As Reagan asserts:

Sustaining steady, long-term growth in U.S. defense spending and capabilities, both nuclear and conventional. This is the most important way of conveying to the Soviets U.S. resolve and political staying-power¹²⁸.

Moreover, Reagan does not completely shut the “door” to dialog, but he claims that dialog and future Us-Soviet agreements are up to Soviet conduct. The improvement to the bilateral relations requires a change in Soviet policies¹²⁹.

Finally he analyzes American strategy aimed at containing the expansion of the Soviet power. First, continuing a strategic connection with China, in order to lower the possibilities for a Sino-Soviet rapprochement. Second, opposing Moscow’s efforts to strengthen its position in Afghanistan and blocking Soviet expansionism in the Middle East. Third, neutralizing the threats to U.S. security posed by the Soviet-Cuban relationship. In addition to contain Ussr expansionism he asserts that it is necessary to sustain ideological and political offensive in order to foster changes in the Soviet regime¹³⁰.

¹²⁶ R. Reagan, *Ibid.*, 5.

¹²⁷ R. Reagan, *Ibid.*, 4.

¹²⁸ R. Reagan, *Ibid.* 7.

¹²⁹ R. Reagan, *Ibid.*, 6.

¹³⁰ R. Reagan, *Ibid.*, 8.

Reagan foreign policy “was more complex than might appear on the surface¹³¹, he was an idealist and extremely pragmatic. His White House Staff, secretaries of State Alexander Haig Jr and George Schultz and the CIA director William Casey, were strongly unilateralists as well. “They knew little about the rest of the world. They had no faith in the United Nations and other international institutions”, Herring has written.

Reagan’s views of America were focused on the myth of Us exceptionalism, he believed his country’s ideals and institutions were superior and because of that it had to fight for its ideals.

The secretaries of State on one hand agreed with his convictions on defeating communism and his belief in strong defense, but on the other, they believed in close collaboration with America’ European allies and were more inclined to mediate with the Soviet Union and China. Who shared Reagan’s views on anti-communism was Casey.

Concepts were made even more confused by the inexperience in foreign policy of the White House Staff.

As Rothkopf claims:

The orchestrator of foreign policy, the National Security Council – by design – was plagued by weakness and chronic instability. Reacting against the dominant role played by Kissinger and Brzezinski, the president’s team deliberately downgraded the NSC and appointed lesser lights to head it. Reagan had six different national security advisers in eight years¹³².

There were, in fact, internal issues between the NSC staffer Richard Pipes, and Haig’s State Department. The former considered the Department of State as a rival, and the latter refused to share important documents with the NSC.

¹³¹ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 864.

¹³² G. Herring, *ibid.*, 865.

Haig wanted to be the “vicar” of Reagan’s foreign policy and doing so he worsened the already frail relationship with the White House Staff, who dubbed him CINCWORLD (commander in chief of the world) and later had him fired¹³³.

When in July 1982 George Schultz took office instead of Haig, the internal disputes did not get any better. Schultz, in fact, struggled with Secretary of Defense Weinberger over arms reductions and the deployment of U.S. military forces abroad.

Reagan was not very inclined to resolve the debates among his subordinates, only after the Iran-Contra Affair, later in his second term, some rules were imposed on the foreign policy process¹³⁴.

In the NSSD75 the President deeply talks about the way the increase in military expenditures would improve Us strategy and it would create a possibility to negotiate with the Ussr.

United States rearmament had already started in 1980, but with Reagan increased a lot. Defense expenditures grew from 22,7% to 27,1%. A greater amount of this investment were for strategic armaments, but some funds were spent for the creation of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), an anti-missile program¹³⁵.

Reagan launched the SDI project during a speech in March 1983:

[...]you know we must continue to restore our military strength. If we stop in midstream, we will send a signal of decline, of lessened will, to friends and adversaries alike. [...] What if free people could live secure in the knowledge that their security did not rest upon the threat of instant U.S. retaliation to deter a Soviet attack, that we could intercept and destroy strategic ballistic missiles before they reached our own soil or that of our allies? [...] I'm taking an important first step. I am directing a comprehensive and intensive effort to define a long-

¹³³ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 162.

¹³⁴ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 869.

¹³⁵ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 384-385.

term research and development program to begin to achieve our ultimate goal of eliminating the threat posed by strategic nuclear missiles [...]¹³⁶.

The SDI project caused a lot of debate, both domestic and on international level, and it greatly influenced the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union¹³⁷.

In fact, General Secretary Andropov, just three days after the SDI was announced, accused the United States to “attempt to disarm the Soviet Union in the face of the US nuclear threats”.

Reagan plan, was, as a matter of fact, still a fantasy but a clear proposal to rearmament, for which the Soviets already were in a weaker and disadvantaged position¹³⁸.

Del Pero gives a definite explanation to the SDI:

Per molti, esso rappresentava la manifestazione estrema di una postura, quella reaganiana, aggressiva e bellicista. Per Reagan si trattava di qualcos' altro; della possibilità di salvare il mondo dall'olocausto nucleare; della riaffermazione dell'eccezionalità degli USA; [...] della definitiva riacquisizione di un primato morale e strategico di cui troppo frettolosamente si era decretata la fine¹³⁹.

Reagan had in mind a new era for the American hegemony, during the 1980s the United States regained a certain superiority which was not comparable with the first years of the Cold War.

It was, in fact, a frail hegemony and the reinforcement of military forces was growing together with a sense for its usefulness.

¹³⁶ R. Reagan, *Address to the Nation on National Security*, March, 1983. Available from <http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/offdocs/rrspch.htm>

¹³⁷ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 387.

¹³⁸ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 165.

¹³⁹ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 387.

These factors together with American public opinion's pressures and growing Soviets difficulties brought about a change in Us foreign policy, which was also influenced by Michail Gorbachev, the new secretary of the Soviet Communist Party¹⁴⁰.

1983 was a key year, Reagan proposed the SDI and intensified the covert operations both in Nicaragua and Afghanistan and the bipolar got even more tense.

From within the United States mounted the requests for less tense relations with the USSR and if necessary of an increase of military expenditures. The majority of the American citizens on one hand appreciated and shared Reagan's ideals and moral values and agreed on the new position achieved by their country. On the other, they demanded new negotiations with the Soviet Union and a commitment to decrease nuclear weapons.

Reagan accepted these requests only in part because he intensified the covert operations in Nicaragua and Afghanistan but agreed on a new round of negotiations with the USSR¹⁴¹.

The operation in Nicaragua got worse, the Boland Amendment was not respected and the Us government kept on supplying the Contras with weapons. A vast majority of Congress was against the Nicaraguan operation and this criticism brought Reagan to look for alternative methods to provide aids to the Contras.

The National Security Council proposed to use the profits resulting from the sale of military supplies to Iran to finance the Nicaraguan guerrilla.

This event known as the Iran-Contra Affair became public only in 1986. An inquiry later followed by there was no

¹⁴⁰ M. del Pero, *ibid.*, 388-389.

¹⁴¹ M. del Pero, *ibid.*, 389.

evidence of a direct involvement of the President, who managed to avoid the impeachment¹⁴².

The Iran-Contra scandal revealed the contradictions of the administration's foreign policy and the hostility moved by Congress toward the operations in Central America¹⁴³.

As for the Afghan front, Congress support was wider and so was public support¹⁴⁴. Since 1984 there has been an increasing money allocation from Congress to the Afghan resistance and therefore to the mujahideen who President Reagan later dubbed freedom fighters¹⁴⁵. The mujahideen were provided with military-advanced weapons, such as Stinger missile which were used to reduce Soviet's air superiority. Doing so the United States strengthened, both politically and militarily, that Islamic movement against which they would fight many years later¹⁴⁶.

If the task to carry out covert operations was increasing, bipolar relations improved starting from 1984. That year, President Reagan delivered a speech which started a new round of negotiations with the Soviet Union.

[...] Deterrence is essential to preserve peace and protect our way of life, but deterrence is not the beginning and end of our policy toward the Soviet Union. We must and will engage the Soviets in a dialog as serious and constructive as possible -- a dialog that will serve to promote peace in the troubled regions of the world, reduce the level of arms, and build a constructive working relationship.

Neither we nor the Soviet Union can wish away the differences between our two societies and our philosophies, but we should always remember that we do have common interests and the foremost among them is to avoid war and reduce the level of arms.

There is no rational alternative but to steer a course which I would call credible deterrence and peaceful competition. And if we do so, we

¹⁴² M. del Pero, *Ibid.*, 390-391.

¹⁴³ Richard A. Brody, Catherine Shapiro, *Policy Failure and Public Support. The Iran-Contra Affair and Public Assessment of President Reagan*, in *Political Behavior*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1989.

¹⁴⁴ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 216.

¹⁴⁵ N. Ferguson, *op. cit.*, 119.

¹⁴⁶ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 392.

might find areas in which we could engage in constructive cooperation. Our strength and vision of progress provide the basis for demonstrating with equal conviction our commitment to stay secure and to find peaceful solutions to problems through negotiations. That's why 1984 is a year of opportunities for peace. [...]We have proposed a set of initiatives that would reduce substantially nuclear arsenals and reduce the risk of nuclear confrontation¹⁴⁷. [...]

Many historians consider this speech as turn in Reagan's foreign policy toward the Soviet Union, called "Reagan Reversal"¹⁴⁸ by the political scientist Beth Fischer.

After long negotiations the United States and the Soviet Union agreed on a summit to be held in Geneva at the end of 1985. The meeting did not end well, the SDI was the main topic and reason of debate¹⁴⁹. Gorbachev claimed it violated the 1972 ABM treaty, and Reagan did not want to give up his project¹⁵⁰.

The 1985 meeting was followed by the one held in Reykjavik in October 1986¹⁵¹. Earlier that year, the Chernobyl disaster occurred, that revealed once more the danger posed by nuclear armaments¹⁵².

The Icelandic summit did not result into an agreement, but was extremely important because Reagan realized that Gorbachev was willing to undertake arms reductions even more deeper and that his position was not related to mere propaganda¹⁵³.

Despite not having reached a proper agreement, the Reykjavik meeting paved the way for a new cooperation between the United States and Moscow: arms and specifically, nuclear arms. Risks of an accidental conflict, Reagan's aversion

¹⁴⁷ R. Reagan, *Address to the Nation and Other Countries on United States-Soviet Relations*, January 16, 1984, available from <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1984/11684a.htm>

¹⁴⁸ B. Fischer, *Reagan Reversal*, cit. , in M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 393.

¹⁴⁹ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 251.

¹⁵⁰ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 393.

¹⁵¹ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 256.

¹⁵² M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 394.

¹⁵³ S. Wilentz, *op. cit.*, 256.

toward nuclear war and deterrence and Soviet difficulties helped brought this change about¹⁵⁴.

During the third summit held in Washington in December 1987, there were the first signs of concrete results. The INF treaty was ratified. Even if it eliminated only 5% of the two superpowers' arsenals, it represented a fundamental turning point: for the first time during the Cold War the United States and the USSR agreed upon decreasing their nuclear arms.

Moreover Gorbachev decided to end Ussr military intervention in Afghanistan¹⁵⁵.

At the fourth meeting, in Moscow, Reagan declared that the "evil empire" belonged to "another era" ; the summit represented the normalization of US-Soviet relations¹⁵⁶.

Cold war was ending with the collapse of one of the two parts and, in the fight for hegemony, the Soviet Union lost. Together with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the idea of a Soviet empire died and just one superpower remained, the United States¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵⁴ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 394.

¹⁵⁵ M. del Pero, *ibid.*, 395.

¹⁵⁶ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 898.

¹⁵⁷ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 396.

The 1987 and 1988 National Security Strategy Reports.

The 1987 document was the very first to be called National Security Strategy. President Reagan together with the National Security had already produced several National Security Decision Directives, which dealt with a set of substrategies aiming at promoting tools to achieve national security objectives¹⁵⁸.

The 1987 strategy was mostly focused on the Soviet Union and it is divided into two major sections, one each on foreign and defense policy.

The document underlines the orientation of the Reagan administration toward cabinet government and the strong emphasis on the use of military instruments of power¹⁵⁹.

Moreover the President highlighted the importance the NSS has in advancing and conveying to the world Us interests and to reduce the risks to his nation and allies¹⁶⁰.

As said above, the document is divided into two major sections. The first one deals with American foreign policy, namely the specific setting of the country's goals such as promoting democracy, and the role the Us has in this process and as defender of democracy itself.

Still, what is to be underlined is the importance Reagan gives to the use of military forces as a way to keep strengths and economic vitality up. In fact, he gives priority to military forces rather than to alliances with other countries¹⁶¹.

He also asserts the importance of an international economic policy, with the object of supporting and promoting market-oriented policies to broaden economic opportunity and

¹⁵⁸ R. Reagan, *op. cit.*, 40.

¹⁵⁹ D. Snider, J. Nagl, *op. cit.*, 131

¹⁶⁰ R. Reagan, *op. cit.*, 1.

¹⁶¹ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 9-10.

individual welfare. Doing so he firmly criticizes the Soviet model, “the Soviet model of economic organization does not work and will not work¹⁶²”.

Then the president deals with regional policies, examining each area of the world and the policies of the United States. It is soon underlined the danger posed by Central American countries like Cuba and Nicaragua, which were areas of strategic opportunity for the Soviet Union¹⁶³.

U.S. national security policy for the Western Hemisphere seeks to address these problems within the broader framework of the promotion of democracy, fostering economic development, strengthening dialogue and diplomacy [...] and contributing to defense capabilities that allow progress without debilitating external inference¹⁶⁴.

It is clear that the final objective was to strengthen US alliances to restrain Soviet power. Every area of the world was to be considered important for this purpose. For instance Japan was a key state for its capabilities could make a significant contribution to deterrence¹⁶⁵.

As Reagan underlines in this passage the Soviet Union is still a key topic:

[...] the most significant threat to U .S. security and national interests is the global challenge posed by the Soviet Union. There is no doubt that Moscow aspires to alter the existing international system and establish Soviet global hegemony. [...] Our policy for dealing with the Soviets rests on three guiding principles :

- Realism, which means that we must recognize the nature of the Soviet system and deal frankly and forthrightly with problems in our relationship .

¹⁶² R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 11.

¹⁶³ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 13.

¹⁶⁴ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 14.

¹⁶⁵ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 15.

- Strength, which is more than military power, but includes political determination, the strength of alliances, and economic health as well.
- Dialogue, which means that we are prepared to discuss all the issues that divide us and are ready to work for practical and fair solution on a basis compatible with our fundamental interests¹⁶⁶.

In the following chapter the President deals with U.S. defense policy, namely the importance of military forces and the use of nuclear arms. It is fundamental for the United States to have specialized forces in order to maintain nuclear deterrence.

He also claimed the importance of the SDI and its role in changing the concept of deterrence¹⁶⁷.

Lastly he underlines that arms control is an integral part of the National Security Strategy and that the United States “would base decisions regarding its strategic force on the nature of the threat posed by Soviet strategic forces¹⁶⁸”

In conclusion he once more focuses on the importance of restoring the image of the United States “as a light of freedom throughout the world¹⁶⁹”.

With the report drafted in 1988 two major changes were introduced. The first one was to highlight and underline the tools of national power, in particular the economic part which very little was dealt with in the 1987 report.

This first change brought about the second modification “which was to present separate strategies for each region while integrating the various instruments of power¹⁷⁰”.

In the first pages of the strategy it is emphasized that the United States needs to stop the danger of nuclear warfare¹⁷¹ and the growing expansion of totalitarian rule¹⁷².

¹⁶⁶ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 16.

¹⁶⁷ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 21-22.

¹⁶⁸ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 24.

¹⁶⁹ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 41.

¹⁷⁰ D. Snider, *op. cit.*, 131.

¹⁷¹ The necessity to stop nuclear weapons was strictly related to the Chernobyl disaster, occurred just one year prior to the drafting of the NSS.

As said earlier Us economic policy together with international economic policy were in this report more dealt with, and it is underlined that American economy has domestic and international relations. Still, American responsibility is help sustain and extend global economic recovery¹⁷³.

Arms reductions are as important, in fact, the President sees arms reduction as a mean to secure American policy and to prevent the Ussr to gain unilateral advantage¹⁷⁴.

One of the objectives of Us foreign policy is to maintain strategic deterrence toward the Soviet Union:

Our strategic forces and the associated targeting policy must be perceived as making nuclear warfare a totally unacceptable and unrewarding proposition for the Soviet leadership. Our targeting policy:

- Denies the Soviets the ability to achieve essential military objectives by holding at risk Soviet war-making capabilities [...] including war-supporting industry which provides the foundation for Soviet military power [...].¹⁷⁵

In the last part of the report Reagan expresses his strategies for the entire world, focusing mostly on the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and Central America. He underlines once more that the Ussr poses the most significant threat to Us security, but he also states that there have been some improvements in the bilateral relations¹⁷⁶.

In conclusion he deepens the execution of the strategy and mostly on how important are relations between the constituencies and the Executive Branch. Moreover he asserts

¹⁷² R. Reagan, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, 1988, 9.

¹⁷³ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 11.

¹⁷⁴ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 15.

¹⁷⁵ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 14.

¹⁷⁶ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 26.

that Congress has to act accordingly to the Executive Branch, in order to conduct rational and coherent policies¹⁷⁷.

2b. The George Bush administration

When Bush became president of the United States in 1989 there was a very important transformation going on at international level, a radical change which was affecting the whole world: the collapse of the Soviet Union¹⁷⁸.

The United States had already started to soften relations with the Soviet Union a year earlier¹⁷⁹, and Bush in his inaugural address reasserted this process of opening relations, saying that "a new breeze is blowing," and that "great nations of the world are moving toward democracy through the door to freedom."¹⁸⁰

A very important step was taken when Bush and Gorbachev met in Malta in December 1989, and discussed arms reductions and strengthening their relations. Two years later, at a meeting in Moscow, the two leaders signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, known as START, with which they agreed upon decreasing their nuclear weaponry. The START treaty marked an important step in the bilateral relations¹⁸¹.

During the first year of his administration, the communist block dissolved and liberalization processes started both in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe. To Washington this

¹⁷⁷ R. Reagan. *Ibid.*, 40.

¹⁷⁸ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 402.

¹⁷⁹ <http://millercenter.org/president/bush/essays/biography/5>

¹⁸⁰ G. Bush, *Inaugural Address*, January 20, 1989, available from <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres63.html>

¹⁸¹ <http://millercenter.org/president/bush/essays/biography/5>

change was absolutely positive, its enemy finally had been defeated, but this change was somehow considered as a threat for Europe and its political balance. Geopolitical dilemmas, which were in part resolved by the bipolar order, could open up again.

This was the first problem that the new administration had to face. It had to cope with a very delicate political transition in Eastern Europe without undermining the Soviets and to pay attention to the transformation occurring in Germany as well. The West Germany government wanted to get to a fast reunification of the country¹⁸².

Bush understood the importance and at the same time the complexity of the process, although it was obviously inevitable. He tried to guide this change, to manage it in order to reassure his one-time enemy, and now allies, of the Cold War.

Bush promoted a vast consultation with the USSR, Great Britain and France, trying to manage the process on a multilateral and international point of view. At the beginning, there were three main plans on how to advance with German reunification, but just one was actually considered: involving the two Germanys with the World War II victors in what was called the "Two-plus-Four " treaty¹⁸³.

12 September 1990 the "Two-plus-Four" treaty was officially signed, the four countries gave up their rights and Germany was again a sovereign country; the only remaining issue was if Germany was to be part of NATO.

The USSR initially opposed having it as member of NATO, and Bush helped resolving this matter with a compromise: Germany would be part of NATO but NATO troops would be present only in West Germany¹⁸⁴.

¹⁸² M. del Pero, *ibid.*, 402.

¹⁸³ <http://millercenter.org/president/bush/essays/biography/5>

¹⁸⁴ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 907.

The way the Bush administration handled the reunification of the two Germanys was an undeniable success. But especially, it fostered the idea that it was enough to redefine the geopolitical architecture of Europe and the transatlantic relations.

It was considered as a replacement of the Cold War bipolar system¹⁸⁵, a new model for Europe between freedom and order¹⁸⁶. A new geopolitical order was opening for Europe.

This optimistic view was soon proved wrong, in fact, once Eastern Europe escaped from the Soviet yoke, new scenario rose.

In 1991 Slovenia and Croatia proclaimed their independence and Serbia waged war against the two states to prevent the dissolution of the federation. The clashes in Slovenia ended fast, but the one between Serbia and Croatia would go on for more years to come and open of the most cruel war in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The events in the Balkans revealed that the Bush administration was still strictly conservative and was somehow cautious when dealing with military intervention¹⁸⁷.

In fact, when Yugoslavia started to crumble, the American government had hoped to convince the various players to keep away from violence and bloodshed and dealing with the breakup through a democratic process¹⁸⁸.

The American behavior of non-intervention was caused by several factors. First, the Us underestimated the importance and relevance of the events in the Balkans region. Second, the administration gave more consideration to others countries, such as Iraq and the Middle East.

¹⁸⁵ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 404.

¹⁸⁶ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 907.

¹⁸⁷ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 404.

¹⁸⁸ <http://millercenter.org/president/bush/essays/biography/5>

Moreover, the non-intervention in Serbia was also due to Ussr-U.S. relations: Bush did not want to create other tensions with Moscow¹⁸⁹.

Besides, the administration hoped to see the European Community would intervene to solve a conflict in its territory.

Many of President Bush's advisers thought that military intervention in the former Yugoslavia would more likely remind the Vietnam War¹⁹⁰, and was to be avoided.

The new crisis in Yugoslavia underlined the cautious realism among Bush and his advisers and this inhibited a military action. This new vision was particularly affected by the Vietnam War which laid the bases for the Powell Doctrine.

The Powell Doctrine asserts that the United States should be involved militarily only in operations against an identified enemy, with rules of engagement and exit strategies discussed in advance to avoid undertaking peacekeeping missions that could last indefinitely¹⁹¹.

Bush conservatism was manifest when his administration had to deal with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, which threatened the stability of a region vital to the U.S. Iraq was a country full of debts with the Arab world after the war against Iran, and wanted to gain leadership in the region through the control of Kuwait oil resources. Saddam Hussein therefore, thought he could invade Kuwait exploiting the end of the Cold War and underestimating the reaction of the United States¹⁹². The invasion violated international law, and the Bush administration was alarmed at the chance of Iraq controlling Kuwait's oil resources¹⁹³.

The reaction of the Bush administration laid the bases for a new way of managing international crises. Three were the key

¹⁸⁹ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 405.

¹⁹⁰ <http://millercenter.org/president/bush/essays/biography/5>

¹⁹¹ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 405.

¹⁹² G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 908.

¹⁹³ <http://millercenter.org/president/bush/essays/biography/5>

elements of the American response: the acknowledgement of the United Nations as only authority having the right to permit a military operation in Kuwait, making the intervention formally legal and legitimate to the international public opinion.

The United Nations approved many resolutions which condemned the actions of Baghdad and established a deadline for the withdrawal of Iraqis troops in Kuwait.

The Resolution was number 660, which condemned the aggression and requested that Iraq withdraw "immediately and unconditionally"¹⁹⁴.

At the same time the Us fostered an intense diplomatic action, trying to convince the Soviet Union, which Iraq was allied with, not to stand in the way of intervention.

The administration wanted to gain support domestically for the military action so it turned to Congress for authorization. On January 12, Congress broadly voted to endorse the use of military force against Iraq¹⁹⁵.

On January 16, 1991, operation Desert Storm began. Allied forces started massive air bombing against Iraq. The ground war quickly overwhelmed the Iraqi forces.

The war had ended very fast, in less than two months, and the Bush administration had successfully engaged in the largest military action since the Vietnam War and had won it.

On March 6, President Bush addressed a joint session of Congress and stated, "tonight Kuwait is free."

From the moment Operation Desert Storm commenced on January 16th until the time the guns fell silent at midnight 1 week ago, this nation has watched its sons and daughters with pride, watched over them with prayer. As Commander in Chief, I can report to you our armed forces fought with honor and valor. And as President, I can report to the Nation aggression is defeated. The war is over. This is a victory for every country in the coalition, for the United Nations. A

¹⁹⁴ Security Council Resolution 660, August 2, 1990 available from <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/575/10/IMG/NR057510.pdf?OpenElement>

¹⁹⁵ <http://millercenter.org/president/bush/essays/biography/5>

victory for unprecedented international cooperation and diplomacy, so well led by our Secretary of State, James Baker. It is a victory for the rule of law and for what is right¹⁹⁶.

But the expectations produced by the conflict and by the idea of new world order were soon disregarded. Bush, Baker and National Security Adviser Scowcroft did not want to carry out another mission, continuing the ground operations, to depose Saddam's regime. They were aware it could destabilize the whole region and open a lengthy conflict.

Once again, the decision of avoiding further military engagement in Iraq reflected the realism that prevailed Bush foreign policy. Nonetheless, his declaration appeared inconsistent with the way Bush legitimized the promotion of a military action in Iraq¹⁹⁷.

During his presidency, Bush committed much of his time to foreign policies. In his first inaugural address, the President talked about how important was homogeneity between the executive and legislative branches, especially when dealing with foreign affairs.

He also put together a team of advisers, including National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, Secretary of State James Baker, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, who generally worked well together.

President Bush approach to foreign policies was mostly characterized by his pragmatism and conservatism. He did not urge into new actions or policy transformation and always tried

¹⁹⁶ George H. W. Bush, *Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the End of the Gulf War* (March 6, 1991), available from <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3430>

¹⁹⁷ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 406-407.

have both domestic and international consent for military interventions¹⁹⁸.

The first example occurred in his first months in office in June 1989, when the administration was troubled by an unforeseen crisis in China.

The Chinese army suppressed a pro-democracy movement demonstrating in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Demonstrations had started peacefully some years earlier at Beijing University to remonstrate against cutting off the electricity at 11pm. The protest raged into a nationwide protest mounted by Westernized students pursuing greater democracy and intellectual freedom from a regime unwilling to change. The military suppressed the demonstrations with tanks and fired into the crowd, killing hundreds of protestors.

The administration was caught totally off guard and responded with uncertainty. Bush was shocked by those events, but he feared the consequences in Sino-American relations and commercial ties. The administration imposed tough sanctions cutting arm sales and worked with other nations to deny China credits from the World Bank and other international institutions. The Chinese Republic did not react well to these sanctions but did not ease repressions.

As Herring has written:

The dynamics of Sino-American relations changed completely after Tiananmen. The Bush administration never quite resolved the dilemma of how to take a firm stand on principle without compromising interests deemed vital¹⁹⁹.

The second example is the intervention in Iraq: on the domestic front even though it was clear he had support from the government he wanted to have the operation voted by

¹⁹⁸ <http://millercenter.org/president/bush/essays/biography/5>

¹⁹⁹ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 902.

Congress, and on an international level he sought UN approval²⁰⁰.

He relied mostly on his past experiences in foreign affairs, in fact, he served as ambassador to the United Nations, U.S. representative to China, director of Central Intelligence, and Vice President during the Reagan presidency²⁰¹.

The new world order

During several speeches held in 1990 and 1991, during the outburst of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and later Operation Desert Storm, Bush proclaimed the arrival of “a new world order”²⁰².

In particular, this excerpt taken from his address to the National on invasion of Iraq is clearly significant:

This is an historic moment. We have in this past year made great progress in ending the long era of conflict and cold war. We have before us the opportunity to forge for ourselves and for future generations a new world order—a world where the rule of law, not the law of the jungle, governs the conduct of nations. When we are successful—and we will be—we have a real chance at this new world order, an order in which a credible United Nations can use its peacekeeping role to fulfill the promise and vision of the U.N.'s founders²⁰³.

President Bush's New World Order involved international joint security operations, and it erased Cold War perception and generated new allies. There was a lot of debate around Bush new conception of New World Order, the doubts were if it was a

²⁰⁰ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 407.

²⁰¹ <http://millercenter.org/president/bush/essays/biography/5>

²⁰² Walter L. Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy*, (Yale University Press, 2008), 271.

²⁰³ G. H.W. Bush, *Address to the Nation on the Invasion of Iraq* (January 16, 1991), available from <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3428>

realistic foreign policy doctrine or directly an idealistic approach to the future. Many critics stated that the Bush administration did not fully explained the objectives of the New World Order and how it wanted to accomplish them.

In particular, some claimed that Bush offered no concrete vision of the international role of the United States, once Cold War and its policy of containment was over and no longer relevant²⁰⁴.

Realists criticized this new theory as well, because in their opinion, it was difficult to justify American engagement in situations without a clear national interest.

On the other hand, some others believed that with the Cold War over, it was up to the United States to become a world leader and to defend human rights and fight for the rise of democratic regimes²⁰⁵.

The new world order seemed to pave the way for a new role of the United States in the world, a role, as set forth by Undersecretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, of lone superpower. According to Wolfowitz, the nation had to keep total military supremacy and prevent any powers from challenging its position²⁰⁶.

Nonetheless the American citizens seemed to be asking a change in the course of Bush foreign policy, requesting a change in the compass both on domestic and foreign policies. They demanded a more intense focus on issues at home²⁰⁷; in fact, in his last year, he fought with a stagnant economy and increasing taxes²⁰⁸, and a change in foreign policy.

²⁰⁴ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 922.

²⁰⁵ <http://millercenter.org/president/bush/essays/biography/5>

²⁰⁶ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 922.

²⁰⁷ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 407.

²⁰⁸ John Robert Greene, *The Presidency of George Bush*, (Lawrence, Kansas, 2000), 141-64, in G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 922.

The 1990, 1991 and 1993 National Security Strategy Reports.

President Bush and the National Security Council produced three National Security Reports.

The first one, dated 1990, was drafted in a spiral of global change and the main issue was of course the change occurring in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe²⁰⁹.

In the preface of the document the President already talks of the new approach that the United States will endorse to cope with Soviet Union, and the by then impending end of the Cold War.

[...] it was inevitable that the Soviet Union would have to turn inward to face the internal contradictions of its own deeply flood system, as our policy of containment always envisioned.

Today, after four decades, the international landscape is marked by change that is breathtaking in its character, dimension and pace. The familiar moorings of postwar security policy are being loosened by developments that were barely imagined years of even months ago.

[...] This report outlines the direction we will take to protect the legacy of the postwar era while enabling the United States shape a new era, one that moves beyond containment and that will take us into the next century²¹⁰.

This excerpt conveys the idea that the administration had already thought beyond the Cold War and already understood that the Communist bloc was about to collapse.

In the first chapter the President deals with the goals and objectives of the nation. First of domestic prosperity, and then the idea of nurturing democracy and spreading it in Eastern Europe is present, so is the willingness to open a free international economic system and with it facilitating the rise of the free market system.

²⁰⁹ D. Snider, *op. cit.*, 132.

²¹⁰ G. H. W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, (The White House, 1990).

[...] we have also worked to advance the welfare of our people by contributing to an international environment of peace, freedom, and progress within which our democracy – and other free nations – can flourish. These broad goals have guided American foreign and defense policy throughout the life of the Republic. [...] they animated Woodrow Wilson Fourteen Points, and my initiatives in support of democracy in Eastern Europe this past year.

[...] another enduring element of our strategy has been a commitment to a free and open international economic system²¹¹.

Moreover he states the importance of a democratic world, free from totalitarian regimes in which human rights and freedom can flourish.

In the next chapter Bush deals with communism, in particular with the crisis within it. The communist crisis has several reasons, domestic one caused by economic stagnation. He also admitted that starting from the mid-1980's a new Soviet leadership has come to power and began reforming the system. In the international theater these new series of reforms has brought quieter conditions that lead to troops withdrawal from Afghanistan and lesser military involvement.

in 1989, the Soviets began unilaterally reducing their heavy military burden and their presence in Eastern Europe, while proclaiming a more tolerant policy toward their East bloc neighbors' internal affairs²¹².

As Bush underlines, the transformation in the Communist bloc was not totally due to domestic reforms, but also, to American postwar policies: “we are facing a strategic transformation born of the success of our postwar policies”.

²¹¹ G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 1.

²¹² G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 5.

Besides, these changes brought new life to countries such Germany, which would become a new economic and political leader.

In the third chapter the president deals with regional challenges, analyzing the different areas of the world and explaining which policies the Us will promote towards them.

Again, the main focus is represented by the Soviet Union, which as Bush claims “remains the only other military superpower²¹³”. Us policy toward the Ussr is to move beyond containment and to look for Soviet integration in the international system, because, as Bush states, “it has begun to move toward democracy”. The United States would seek arms control agreements, namely the START treaty which would actually be signed in 1991.

The arm reductions programs and the new view beyond containment laid the basis for constructing a large cooperation with the Ussr²¹⁴.

The role of Western Europe is also fundamental, and the Us need it to be strong, both politically and economically.

We support the European Community's efforts to create a single unified market by 1992. A strong European Community will ensure more efficient use of European resources for common efforts, and will also be a strategic magnet to the nations of Eastern Europe²¹⁵.

In the fourth chapter Bush talks about alliances “our first priority in foreign policy remains solidarity with our allies and friends²¹⁶” and arms control. The two are strictly tied together, arms control agreements won't compromise allied security.

The START treaty is fundamental to this purpose because it decrease the risk of nuclear war and creates a more stable nuclear balance.

²¹³ G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 9.

²¹⁴ G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 10.

²¹⁵ G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 10.

²¹⁶ G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 15.

The fifth chapter concerns Us economic agenda, stating that the United States supports free worldwide trade and does not forget to mention the relevance of oil as secure and essential supply of energy²¹⁷.

The sixth and last chapter deals with Us Defense agenda, it underlines the importance of the consistency of America's grand strategy, focusing on deterrence and strong alliances.²¹⁸

The 1991 National Security Strategy report focuses mainly on the final collapse of the Soviet Union, the consequent dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the dangerous situation in the Middle East with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait²¹⁹.

The document's first chapter, concerns the end of the Soviet Union and a new era for the world.

The bitter struggle that divided the world for over two generations has come to an end. The collapse of the Soviet domination in Eastern Europe means that the Cold War is over, its core issue resolved. We have entered a new era, one whose outline would have been unimaginable only three years ago. This new era offers great hope, [...] almost immediately new crises and instabilities came upon us. The Gulf War was a forceful remainder that there are still autonomous sources of turbulence in the world.

[...] for over 40 years, the American grand strategy of containment has reflected and era of expanding Soviet power.

[...] the Soviet Union remains the only state possessing the physical military capability to destroy American society, [...] even with a START treaty, the Soviets will retain more than 6,000 strategic weapons²²⁰.

Bush' words summarize pretty effectively what are America's challenges for the years to come, dealing with a crumbling Soviet, which, however, is still to be considered the

²¹⁷ G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 15-22.

²¹⁸ G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 23.

²¹⁹ D. Snider, *op. cit.*, 132.

²²⁰ G. H. W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, (The White House, August 1991).

only country able to destroy the United States. He, for once, states definitely that the Cold war is over. The era of bipolarism is gone and a new one opens. A new one that could be positive, that could be a source of hope but that can pose new threats as well. One example of these new threats are the turbulence in the Middle East.

This report is very similarly written to its predecessor in 1990, and the biggest changes are, as said above, the collapse of the Soviet Union and on international level, the new willingness of the United States to search for international cooperation by strengthening institutions like the United Nations and promoting economic freedom, human rights and democratic institutions.

The 1993 National Security Strategy Report, the last of the Bush administration, was published in January, just before President-elect Bill Clinton took office.

Unlike the previous documents, this one focuses mostly on the accomplishments of the past rather than to the future. The Republican administration of President Bush guided the transition out of the Cold War and entered the world into a new era.

In two of the most important chapters, the one about economy and the other about defense, a new title has come up: “what we have achieved”, not only talking about new proposals for the future, but also, and especially, underlining what has been achieved during the presidency.

Our strategy has shifted from a focus on a global threat to one on regional challenges and opportunities, from containment to a new regional defense strategy. The demise of the global threat posed by Soviet Communism leaves America and its allies with an unprecedented opportunity to preserve with greater ease a security environment within which our democratic ideals can prosper. Where

once a European-wide war, potentially leading to nuclear exchange, was theoretically only weeks and yards away, today such a threat has receded and would take years to rekindle. With the end of the Cold War, there are no significant hostile alliances. We have a substantial lead in critical areas of warfare. The combination of these trends has given our Nation and our alliances great depth for our strategic position²²¹.

From the excerpt it can be inferred that the American Strategy no longer focuses on the Soviet Union, the world has now become a safer place where democratic ideal can flourish.

Bush also underlines the “gulf achievement”, remembering it was an important victory for the country.

Most recently, our commitment and leadership in the Gulf War sustained the confidence and respect of the world. More than half a million men and women of our armed forces helped carry out an historic campaign to liberate Kuwait and stop Saddam Hussein from dominating the region and essentially controlling global energy resources. The quality, training, technological sophistication, and logistics expertise of our Armed Forces, together with superb military planning and leadership, produced a swift victory²²².

In conclusion Bush remarks the core ideals of the United States, highlighting the American vision full of cooperation and progress, a community of interdependent nations joined that share together the same values.

Let us work together to lead the world toward the 21st Century, the Age of Democratic Peace. There is no more important goal to which we could aspire²²³.

²²¹ G. H. W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, (The White House, 1993) ,18.

²²² G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 19.

²²³ G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 26.

2c. The Clinton Administration

The presidency of William Jefferson Clinton started off with a sharp focus on domestic affairs rather than foreign ones. During his political campaign, he focused mostly on the economy, and economic-related issues: unemployment, inflation, the health care crisis, and welfare reform²²⁴ his election slogan was, in fact, “it’s the economy, stupid”²²⁵.

The Clinton administration was fully committed to increasing domestic wealth by broaden foreign trade and was enthusiastic for globalization. “Since we don’t have geopolitics anymore”, one of Clinton’s adviser once said, “trade is the name of the game”²²⁶

President Clinton had relatively little experience in foreign affairs. He exposed Bush Cold war views and asserted that they were old, and inappropriate for the new American nation which was trying to adapt to a new world after the Cold war. Clinton’s critics were also regarding human rights, whose defense, vice-president Gore and Clinton himself declared, had been completely ignored in the Balkan region, particularly in the former Yugoslavia.

Despite his lack of experience in foreign policy, Clinton was elected. The electorate was more interested in the economy and domestic issues. The end of the Cold War “supported” Clinton talks, and put aside foreign policy matters which were considered a democratic weakness²²⁷.

Clinton and his administration’s views on foreign policy were not very consistent: on one hand there was a push to focus more firmly on domestic issues, on the other the new

²²⁴ <http://millercenter.org/president/clinton/essays/biography/4>

²²⁵ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 408.

²²⁶ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 926.

²²⁷ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 409.

emphasis dedicated to human rights and the possible interventions to defend them.

The two matters were somehow in contradiction, especially if it is taken into account Clinton's momentum to promote Liberism even in countries like China, where a Communist regime ruled the country.

The President formalized his foreign policy program in four points:

- Support of globalization and opening of trade barriers
- Active promotion of human rights
- Reduction of international engagements of the Cold War period
- Decrease of military expenditures²²⁸

Clinton's team of foreign policy advisers, Anthony Lake and Secretary of State Warren Christopher had been moved by what happened in Vietnam, and were not very comfortable with the idea of unilateral intervention and therefore committed to working through the United Nations and other international organizations²²⁹.

Clinton's key word for foreign policy was enlargement, in opposition to the old one of containment. National Security Adviser Lake proclaimed this new doctrine of enlargement in a speech delivered in 1993:

For half a century America's engagement in the world revolved around containment of a hostile Soviet Union. Our efforts helped block Soviet expansionism, topple Communist repression and secure a great victory for human freedom. [...] Throughout the Cold War, we contained a global threat to market democracies; now we should seek to enlarge their reach, particularly in places of special significance to us.

²²⁸ M. del Pero, *ibid.*, 409

²²⁹ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 925-926

The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement -- enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies²³⁰.

Enlargement was the president's pillar of foreign affairs, integrated in a view of foreign policy coming out of the Wilsonian mold of spreading the democracy and respect of human rights.

Clinton's achievements in foreign policy were ambivalent and there were failures as well, like in the countries of Rwanda and Somalia, which put together with some domestic missteps²³¹, conveyed a feeling that on international matters the presidency was not consistent and sometimes shallow.

Nonetheless, Clinton obtained some accomplishments during his first two years in office. In 1993 the United States signed the North American Free Trade Association treaty (NAFTA), which enabled America, Canada and Mexico to have their goods flow in a common market²³².

In the same year, the President oversaw the signing of the Oslo Accords, during which the PLO was asked for the recognition of Israel and give up terrorism, and Israel, on his side, had to turn over the Gaza strip and the city of Jericho to a lately established Palestine Authority²³³.

In Haiti, Clinton tried to pursue his foreign policy ideals to promote democracy and human rights. He obtained a United Nations' mandate to end the military regime of Raoul Cédras, who in 1991 had overthrown president-elect Aristide.

United State forces were sent in to guarantee the comeback of Aristide and restore democracy.

²³⁰ Anthony Lake, *From Containment to Enlargement*, Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, September 21, 1993 available from <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/lakedoc.html>

²³¹ Health Care reforms was one the internal issues the Clinton administration had to deal with.

²³² M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 410.

²³³ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 927.

The NAFTA treaty, the Oslo agreements and the intervention in Haiti were only partial accomplishments.

In Mexico the NAFTA was not bound to labor union's tutelage and soon criticized by SINISTRA DEMOCRATICA which accused Clinton to be pursuing the same foreign policy ideals as Bush.

The hope mounted by the Oslo agreements was soon dead²³⁴. This agreements should have been guiding the future negotiations on the situation of the West Bank and Jerusalem, but it was blocked from an unexpected event: in November 1995 the then Israel Prime Minister Rabin was assassinated.

In the following years Clinton tried all he could, in vain, to revive the peace process, and during his last year in office he held a meeting in Camp David with the new Israeli Prime Minister Barak and Arafat.

Barack seemed willing to cooperate but Arafat was not. He wanted Israel's withdrawal from its pre-1967 borders²³⁵.

In Haiti the democratic institutions of the already impoverished nation remained fragile and endangered²³⁶.

The most difficult and demanding events for the Clinton administration happened in Somalia and later in Rwanda.

The President had backed up American intervention in Somalia, when outgoing-President George H. W. Bush had sent there American troops to end humanitarian massacre going on in the Eastern African country, after the fall of the regime ruled by Siad Barre.

The operation was supported both by American and international public opinion and authorized by the United Nations and entailed the involvement of foreign forces and a gradual decrease of American soldiers in the field.

The outcome, however, was completely different: what was supposed to be a humanitarian mission to combat famine,

²³⁴ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 411.

²³⁵ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 935.

²³⁶ <http://millercenter.org/president/clinton/essays/biography/4>

turned into a real struggle, the American troops were involved in the clashes among Somali combatants which ended in October 1993 in a bloody conflict in Mogadishu when 18 American soldiers and 1000 militants lost their lives²³⁷.

Public support for the American mission decreased, and Clinton announced a withdrawal of U.S. forces, which occurred in March 1994. The intervention accomplished little in Somalia: warlords remained in control, and no government was restored in the country after the United States and the United Nations left. The failure of the American intervention led to the resignation of Secretary of Defense Les Aspin and created the impression of a President not totally prepared for foreign affairs²³⁸.

What happened in Somalia deeply affected the following choices in foreign policy of President Clinton, and as Del Pero asserts:

La dottrina dell'interventismo umanitario subì una drastica revisione, in accordo con molti dei principi della Dottrina Powell. Gli interventi andavano ora selezionati con attenzione e delegati il più possibile ad alleati locali; in caso di coinvolgimento, gli USA dovevano evitare per quanto possibile di mettere propri uomini sul campo a fare affidamento sulla loro superiorità tecnologica.²³⁹

This new vision on foreign policy and American intervention abroad was soon brought into question, with ethnic and rivalries outburst in Rwanda.

In April 1994, the ethnic group of the Hutu, one of the three living in the country, killed around 800,000 Tutsi in genocide sponsored by the government²⁴⁰.

²³⁷ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 927.

²³⁸ <http://millercenter.org/president/clinton/essays/biography/4>

²³⁹ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 412.

The failure in Somalia still clouded the thoughts of Americans and of the Clinton administration, and neither the United States nor the United Nations intervened to stop the massacre²⁴¹. The genocide, defined as “the fastest, most efficient killing spree of the twentieth century”²⁴² caused the deaths of approximately one million people and the inertia of the international community played an important role in this event.

The United States abdicated its role as a leader, refusing to guide and international mission and letting the United Nations and Europe intervene alone²⁴³.

In 1993-94 another crisis got worse in the Balkans. During the 1992 electoral campaign both Clinton and Gore reported the non-intervention against the Serbian regime ruled by Milosevic. Once in office, however, also the Clinton administration had to face with the highly complex situation in the former Yugoslavia. War had spread to Bosnia and with it an escalation of violence²⁴⁴.

The administration was divided on what to do. Vice-president Gore, Lake and UN ambassador Madeleine Albright wanted to intervene but Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Aspin and Powell, who preferred to avoid an American involvement in the area. Powell, especially, until his departing as Joint Chiefs chairman stood as an influential hindrance. Moreover, the potential spending of intervention and the chance of dubious success, the indecision of Congress and little public support formed insurmountable walls.

As Herring wrote:

The administration would do no more than air-drop food for besieged civilians, undertake “covert inaction” by facilitating arms shipments to

²⁴¹ <http://millercenter.org/president/clinton/essays/biography/4>

²⁴² Samantha Power, *Bystanders to Genocide*, Atlantic Monthly, September 2001, 84.

²⁴³ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 412.

²⁴⁴ M. del Pero, *ibid.*, 413.

Bosnian Muslims, and verbally support the European Community's lame efforts to arrange a diplomatic settlement²⁴⁵.

Us strategy in the Balkans was considered as almost a "non - policy", the administration did not have a common agreement on whether act or not, the Somali crisis still haunted the American behavior. The United States was unwilling to take on direct responsibilities, it abdicated its role a world leader and thought that Europe was supposed to respond to this international crisis²⁴⁶.

During 1994 there was a change of some of the conditions which used to define a passive and non-interventionist American foreign policy.

The difficult economic condition and the idea that the United States was a country in decline constituted Clinton inaction.

The situation changed fast: the American economy started to grow, and the inflation started to decrease. The growth was leaded by the so-called new economy, guided by technological products and new sectors.

This economic boom contributed to rearrange the United States at the core of the international stage reaffirming and spreading American hegemony.

The administration felt it was time to overcome past fears, and to act with a more active foreign policy, unilaterally if necessary. This change was deeply requested by the mass media, public opinion and by a great majority of the political environment, both the administration and Congress.

Madeleine Albright, in particular, wanted to change the course of American foreign policy. She would soon after become Secretary of State.

²⁴⁵ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 929.

²⁴⁶ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 413.

In 1994 there were new elections for the presidency, and the Republicans gained an important victory: after forty years they had the majority in the House of Representatives²⁴⁷.

The elections contributed to transforming Clinton's approach to foreign policy, which became gradually more assertive, interventionist and unilateral²⁴⁸.

Clinton changed his views on foreign policy, founding its changings on three key concepts:

- first of the doctrine of enlargement, reaffirming the connection to expanding market democracy, protecting self-determination and global security. This emphasis on interdependence, which recalled Wilson's ideas, was completed with a new interest for human rights.
- Second, it was necessary to deploy American public opinion in favor of a new intervention, which was rejected just some years earlier. This new interventionism was supported by Madeleine Albright, the new Secretary of State.
- New European Alliances, in particular Great Britain with Tony Blair. The Prime Minister shared Clinton's views on the need to modify the actions of international policies, and consider an active intervention to defend human rights²⁴⁹.

This new policy was first carried out in Bosnia.

After two years of keeping American engagement in the conflict to a minimum, the Clinton administration after the massacre in Srebrenica, where Serbian Soldiers killed all the male population, decided to intervene²⁵⁰.

²⁴⁷ M. del Pero, *ibid.*, 415.

²⁴⁸ Gary C. Jacobson, *The 1994 House Elections in Perspective*, in "Political Science Quarterly," 2, summer 1996, 203-23, in M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 415.

²⁴⁹ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 416-417.

²⁵⁰ <http://millercenter.org/president/clinton/essays/biography/4>

According to Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, what was happening in Bosnia was “another European Holocaust”.

In August 1995 with full US support NATO started intense air-attacks of Bosnian Serb positions²⁵¹.

American intervention laid the bases to reach a peace accord. Peace negotiations among Serbian, Croats and Bosnians took place in Dayton, Ohio in late 1995.

The Dayton agreements divided Bosnia into independent Muslim-Croat and Serb territories and supplied for NATO forces, led by the US, to maintain the critical truce²⁵².

The Dayton accords represented a weak compromise, but nonetheless they ended a brutal four-year war. To the United States the agreements were a proof of the effectiveness of the strategy the Clinton administration used and they legitimize the 1994 foreign policy change²⁵³.

The Bosnian “lesson” and the new foreign policy strategy was carried out a few years later during a crisis which opened up in Kosovo, a region located southern of Serbia mostly populated by Albanians. Serbia, back in 1989, had taken control of Kosovo, depriving the country of its autonomy. Like in Bosnia, violence and deportation seemed to be a sign of a new humanitarian massacre²⁵⁴.

In 1999, NATO was authorized to start massive attacks campaigns of Serbian targets. Washington deemed the crisis in Kosovo as a possibility to overthrow the Serbian nationalist regime ruled by Slobodan Milosevic, who was considered responsible for the tragic events occurred in former Yugoslavia.

²⁵¹ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 930.

²⁵² M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 418.

²⁵³ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 932.

²⁵⁴ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 418.

Bombings were carried out properly and intensified. Russia gave up its diplomatic support to Milosevic diplomacy, forced the Serbian government to withdraw from the region.²⁵⁵

The policy change started in 1994 brought the Administration to speed up plans to widen NATO beyond the borders set after the reunification of Germany.

This enlargement and spreading of NATO was carried out in order to protect new eastern European democracies, born after the collapse of the Soviet bloc, which openly demanded US support. Moreover, this enlargement theory represented the idea, once suggested by Lake, of the reaffirmation of the interdependence between spreading of democracy and global security.

Still, enlargement could be useful to expand the defenses against Russia, which remained the only possible antagonist to American military hard power.

This new theory, other than democracy and defense, could be linked to the spreading of free markets and trade interdependence²⁵⁶.

This doctrine had at its core the idea of increasing the community of market democracies worldwide, comprising free trade, multilateral peacekeeping efforts and international alliances. The policy fostered an activist role for the United States and was thought to spread and protect human and civil rights²⁵⁷.

In Clinton's mind, the United States must continue its role as the principal leader of the world in promoting human dignity and democracy, with the understanding that it must never act in isolation or overextend its reach.

Clinton's view on trade and markets enlargement was represented by the relationship with China. He was deeply committed to protecting human rights but also to spreading

²⁵⁵ <http://millercenter.org/president/clinton/essays/biography/4>

²⁵⁶ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 419-420.

²⁵⁷ <http://millercenter.org/president/clinton/essays/biography/4>

trade, and China's case was the most relevant example of how human rights and trade could be incompatible. In 1993, the administration approved a one-year most-favored-nation treatment for China, but limited its expansion on China's accomplishments in five human rights areas. Beijing protested this clause and with it American businessmen. At the end of the year the MFN was renewed without any conditions.

The United States had to pursue a policy of engagement towards China, to integrate it in the global community²⁵⁸.

In the years that follow the new doctrine of engagement was developed and promoted without further hesitations, in China, in spite of protests for human rights defense, and in the whole world.

The relationship between China and the United States represents the achievements but also the limits and contradictions of Clinton's foreign policy.

He actually obtained quite a few accomplishments especially after 1994, American fear of decline was challenged and finally defeated. The Us was once again the indisputable world leader, where there seemed to be no rivals.

Nonetheless, Clinton's foreign policy, in particular the theory of enlargement, was widely criticized. Criticism was mostly addressed to the issue of human rights, especially for China, which was, and still is, a very important American business partner, but it infringes human rights²⁵⁹.

Herring summarizes in these words the Clinton administration:

In foreign as in domestic policy, the administration's major claims to success were in the realm of economics. [...] during the Clinton's years, the United States concluded more than three hundred trade agreements. [...]

²⁵⁸ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 926-927.

²⁵⁹ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 422-423.

The American mood at the end of the century was one of triumphalism and smug, insular complacency. According to a January 2000 poll, Americans ranked foreign policy twentieth in terms of importance. [...] defense spending remained at a remarkably high level through the 1990s – more than \$325 billion in 1995. The United States maintained the capability to fight two major wars simultaneously. But the foreign affairs budget was sharply reduced. [...] foreign policy played no more than an incidental role in the 2000 presidential campaign. [...] America was both admired and feared. [...] the awesome display of U.S. military power in Kosovo worried allies as well as potential enemies. German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder fretted about the danger of U.S. unilateralism. A French diplomat observed in the spring of 1999 that the major danger in international politics was the American hyperpower²⁶⁰.

The 1994 National Security Strategy Report

In June 1994, the Clinton administration issued its first NSSR containing the presidency's strategy of "engagement and enlargement." The report was published a year and a half after President Clinton took office, and the rationale given to justify the late issuing was that the President had to concentrate mostly on domestic matters.

It seemed clear that the lack of the report was a consequence of initial consensus among the administration and its advisers and twenty-one drafts were written before the final document could be officially issued.

What occurred in the process showed inadequacy in the method, a lack of guidance and attention and many arguments between the Department of Defense and State. Moreover it was necessary to develop and implement a consistent foreign policy, and this was extremely difficult for the Clinton administration.

²⁶⁰ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 937-938.

Moreover, there was the political condition of the President, who he had to deal with a Republican majority in Congress. Because of this majority, from which he was widely disputed except on matter of international commerce, he had to build consensus within the Democratic Party.

After the initial six months, and especially with respect to the congressionally mandated withdrawal from Somalia and the consequent resignation of Secretary of Defense Aspin, Clinton's consensus on foreign policy was one of the worst in years²⁶¹.

The 1997 and 1998 National Security Reports

The second Security Strategy of the Clinton administration was issued in 1997 and was entitled "A National Security Strategy for a New Century".

Its objectives remained the same as the 1994 report: to enhance American Security, to bolster the economic prosperity of the United States, and to promote democracy abroad.

The set of priorities started with the fostering of a peaceful, undivided, democratic Europe, "we must help foster a peaceful, undivided, democratic Europe. When Europe is stable and at peace, America is more secure.²⁶²"; the firm investment in NATO expansion to help conclude the war in Bosnia²⁶³.

The second priority was the formation of a solid and flourishing community of the Asian-Pacific region²⁶⁴,

The United States aimed also at being a supporter as an international force for peace preserving both military and diplomatic tools.²⁶⁵

²⁶¹ D. Snider, J. Nagl, *op. cit.*, 133-134.

²⁶² W. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, (Washington, 1997), 2.

²⁶³ W. Clinton, *ibid.*, 24.

²⁶⁴ W. Clinton, *ibid.*, 26.

“The Imperative of Engagement,” was another strong point, arguing that “American leadership and engagement in the world are vital for our security.”²⁶⁶

Moreover, key priorities were also in the realm of economics, increasing open markets and bolster America’s economic prosperity²⁶⁷.

One important change from the 1994 report was a new focus on strategy implementation, focused around the beliefs of outlining the international environment and reacting to international crises²⁶⁸.

The core objectives of the 1998 National Security Strategy Report remained the same as in the previous report, the importance of enhancing domestic security, bolstering the economic prosperity of the United States and promoting democracy abroad.

As Snider has written:

[...] shared both a title and much substance with the 1997 report. Differences were of emphasis and degree, highlighted by a deeper recognition of increased global economic interdependence as a result of the long-term effects of the Asian financial crisis [...]The 1998 report also demonstrated a more integrated regional focus than did the 1997 report, with the three missions of enhancing security, promoting prosperity, and promoting democracy in each region separately highlighted²⁶⁹.

²⁶⁵ W. Clinton, *ibid.*, 6.

²⁶⁶ W. Clinton, *ibid.*, 7.

²⁶⁷ W. Clinton, *ibid.*, 2.

²⁶⁸ D. Snider, *op. cit.*, 136.

²⁶⁹ D. Snider, *ibid.*, 136-137.

2d. The George W. Bush Administration

George W. Bush was elected president defeating in the 2000 elections democratic candidate Al Gore.

Bush was not particularly prepared in foreign policy²⁷⁰ and sought to make up for his lack of qualification what appeared to be a strong national security team²⁷¹.

His team was extremely heterogeneous and reflected Bush's attempts to find a balance among the several souls of the American conservatism. Vice president Cheney and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld represented the traditional conservationist wing²⁷², and they believed that the United States must maintain total military hegemony and use its forces to pursue its interests, not letting diplomacy or scruples of allies to interfere with its mission²⁷³. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, the first African American and woman to hold that position, represented the realist wing; Secretary of State Colin Powell represented the Republican internationalist wing and Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defense, represented the neoconservative wing²⁷⁴. Wolfowitz, as a neocon, believed that the power of the United States must be used to reshape the world in its image²⁷⁵.

At the beginning the administration followed a firm unilateralist turn, criticizing Clinton's policy of humanitarian interventionism and bumbling internationalism. Their belief was that the United States, as the world's only remaining superpower, could best preserve their interests by acting alone to defeat potential enemies. They reprised and gave maximum priority to the defense system President Reagan had developed

²⁷⁰ Pier Francesco Galgani, *Una Questione di Carattere: l'Eredità della Politica Estera di George W. Bush*, (Bruno Mondadori, 2010), 51.

²⁷¹ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 938.

²⁷² M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 426.

²⁷³ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 939.

²⁷⁴ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 427.

²⁷⁵ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 939.

during the 1980's, which, other than being not so reliable and doubtfully viable, infringed agreements with the former Soviet Union.

In the first months of his administration, Bush and his administration rejected the Middle East peace process which Clinton had fostered. Moreover, without any earlier discussion, Security Adviser Rice told the European Community that the United States wanted to rescind from the Kyoto Protocol on global warming²⁷⁶. In addition, the United States suspended the talks with North Korea on the ABM treaty, aimed at halting the increase of long-range missiles²⁷⁷.

Both from the domestic and abroad fronts, many scholars criticized the administration initial foreign policy views, especially the unilateral trend and conceived it as a new isolationism²⁷⁸. Bush's foreign policy seemed quite inconsistent and without clear guidelines.

Everything changed when 11 September 2001, Arab terrorists operating under Osama bin Laden, hijacked four airlines which hit New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon in Washington. In the greatest attack the United States had ever suffered on its soil, almost 3000 were killed.

President Bush considered the Twin Towers attack as "a Pearl Harbor of the XX century", and the terrorist event changed and shaped Bush's forthcoming foreign policy²⁷⁹.

In Galgani's words:

Se fino a quel momento G. W. Bush era stato soprattutto l'anti-Clinton, il texano che aveva sconfitto Gore grazie a un verdetto della Corte Suprema, adesso si trovava ad affrontare il maggior attacco mai avvenuto contro il territorio degli Usa. Era alla guida di un paese in

²⁷⁶ G. Herring, *ibid.*, 939.

²⁷⁷ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 428.

²⁷⁸ G. Herring, *op. cit.* 439.

²⁷⁹ P. F. Galgani, *op. cit.*, 99.

Guerra ed era chiamato dalla Costituzione a vestire i panni del comandante in capo per garantire la sicurezza²⁸⁰.

The 9/11 attacks could not be considered as a random use of violence, because Al Qaida, the organization led by bin Laden, had as major aim the one of restoring traditional Islam. Its immediate objective was to defeat the “near enemy”, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt²⁸¹. The United States backed the rulers of these countries, hence becoming another enemy, this time a “far enemy”. Still, the United States supported Israel, and this, to the eyes of bin Laden was another proof that the American country represented a source of evil²⁸².

Bin Laden’s hoped that the attacks could expose U.S. vulnerability to the rest of the world, and doing so, he hoped to eliminate its aura of invincible power.

For the United States September 2001 represented a huge intelligence failure. After what happened, numerous evidence pointed to a plausible terrorist action. Bin laden had already hit the United States, and one of the most recent, the attack to the Uss Cole in Yemen. Still, some of the future terrorists had violated the rules of their immigration status; and some time before the attacks, U.S. intelligence intercepted al Qaida communications which said that “something spectacular” was going to happen to the Us. Those were actual signals that something might have been going to happen.

The government did not pay enough attention, it had, in fact, been living a decade of peace. The several agencies in charge of defense from terrorism, the FBI, the CIA, the Defense Department and the NSC failed to communicate among them,

²⁸⁰ P. F. Galgani, *ibid.*, 99.

²⁸¹ N. Ferguson, *op. cit.*, 120.

²⁸² G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 940.

therefore preventing to put the pieces together and understanding what was about to happen²⁸³.

Nine-eleven played an important role in the nation psyche. For the first time in centuries the United States came under foreign attack and Americans all of a sudden felt vulnerable. Congress, acting in unanimity, conferred the President new authority to fight international terrorism.

The war against terrorism was considered as a mission that could influence the life of nation and public apparatus.

A memorandum, sent to offices throughout the United States, by the CIA director George Tenet, entitled “We’re at War” outline the new approach:

[...] There can be no bureaucratic impediments to success. All the rules have changed. There must be an absolute and full sharing of information, ideas and capabilities. We do not have time to hold meetings to fix problems—fix them—quickly and smartly. Each person must assume an unprecedented degree of personal responsibility. We must ensure that the same principles apply in dealing with our law enforcement, military, other civilian agencies, and Intelligence Community colleagues. Whatever systemic problems existed in any of these relationships must be identified and solved now. There must be an absolute seamlessness in our approach to waging this war—and we must lead. [...]²⁸⁴

The consequences to the New York’s attacks were several. The administration carried out a military action in Afghanistan with the aim to defeat the country which had harbored bin Laden, to eliminate Al Qaida’s operative bases and most of all, to convey a clear message to all those states which could have acted ambiguously toward fundamentalist terrorism²⁸⁵.

²⁸³ G. Herring, *ibid.*, 941.

²⁸⁴ George Tenet, *We’re at War*, (September 2001), available from <http://www.hlswatch.com/2005/12/09/george-tenet-91601-were-at-war-memo/>

²⁸⁵ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 429.

The operation in Afghanistan was supported by the international community, which after the World Trade Center attacks, sided with the American nation. Many scholars thought these events would lead to the overcoming of those tensions which had characterized the last phase of Us relations with its allies, and therefore leading to the formation of a coalition like the one during the Gulf War in 1990-1991²⁸⁶.

This new coalition did not see the light, what happened was exactly the contrary. The anti-terrorist action was soon seen as radical, as a new global war.

Nationalism rose again, even stronger than before, and urged the United States to begin an imperialist mission, through which spread the democratic American model.

To the neocons it was time to end one the greatest limits of American foreign policy after the Cold War, namely the inability to actualize the extraordinary American supremacy to build an empire founded on moral principles²⁸⁷.

This new neoimperialist views were well received, although partially, by the Bush Administration. The campaign against terrorism filled Us foreign policy, and it acted on two main levels: operational and rhetoric²⁸⁸.

On the rhetoric front it all started with the January 2002 State of the Union Address. Bush identified an “axis of evil” made of Iran, Iraq, and North Korea and declared alarms that weapons of mass destruction produced by those rogue states might eventually get in the hands of terrorists²⁸⁹.

Bush was mostly persuaded by intelligence reports that asserted that Saddam was in possession of biological and chemical weapons and was trying to develop nuclear arms.

²⁸⁶ Jeffrey Gedmin, *Collecting the Anti-Terror Coalition*, in Policy Review, 109, October-November 2001, available from <http://www.hoover.org/publications/policy-review/article/6463>

²⁸⁷ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 430.

²⁸⁸ M. del Pero, *ibid.* 430.

²⁸⁹ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 943.

In the Bush administration Vice President Cheney and Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz, claimed that Iraq would be a probable source for terrorists to obtain such weapons. These members of the administration moved for a conclusive move against Saddam.

The United States had defeated Iraq ten years earlier when Bush's father was President, Cheney had been the senior Bush's secretary of defense, but Saddam was allowed to rule his country again after his troops were forced out from Kuwait.

In his January 29, 2002, State of the Union address, Bush made it clear that he would not allow Saddam to acquire such weapons²⁹⁰.

As we gather tonight, our nation is at war, our economy is in recession, and the civilized world faces unprecedented dangers. Yet the state of our union has never been stronger. [...]

There are regimes that threatens America with weapons of mass destruction, [...] these regimes and their allies constitute an axis of evil arming to threaten the peace of the world²⁹¹.

In this speech, Bush talked about regimes, namely, Iran, Iraq and North Korea which threated the United States and the rest of the world with weapons of mass destruction. With this speech Bush formally opened the military campaign to overthrow Saddam Hussein's regimes in Iraq²⁹².

A synthesis of this new doctrine can be found in The National Security Strategy of the United State, issued in November 2002, which will be fully analyzed in the next passage of this chapter.

According to Herring, much time before the drafting of the new doctrine, the administration started to regard war with Iraq as a viable option. Dictator Saddam Hussein had survived

²⁹⁰ <http://millercenter.org/president/gwbush/essays/biography/5>

²⁹¹ G. W. Bush, *State of the Union Address*, (January, 2002), available from <http://usgovinfo.about.com/library/weekly/aa013002a.htm>

²⁹² M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 431.

the loss of 1991 and almost ten years of Un sanctions, a fact extremely irritating for Vice President Cheney who had hoped to overthrow his regime back in the Gulf war. In the administration the voice of Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz became louder as they insisted to wage war against Iraq soon after 9/11, Powell, however, pressed to focus more on Afghanistan. “Once the Afghan conflict appeared won, Iraq immediately resurfaced²⁹³”.

The position of the neo-cons supplemented even further the beliefs of other top officials. At the beginning Powell wanted to eliminate Saddam but he insisted on having support by international institutions, but, by January 2003 his views were very different. He asserted that war was inevitable and proceeded.

Cheney, Rumsfeld and the neo-cons no longer conceived the war with Iraq as a possibility, but as something that the United States had absolutely to carry out. Even if no tangible proof of the presence of weapons of mass destruction was ever found in Saddam’s arsenal, they stood firmly in their position²⁹⁴.

Del Pero synthesized the reason for the war in Iraq quite effectively:

[...] le motivazioni formali per intraprendere un’azione militare erano due: la volontà del regime iracheno di dotarsi di armi non convenzionali e la sue frequente violazione delle risoluzioni ONU. [...] a queste se ne aggiungevano però altre due, [...]: l'imperativo etico di porre termine ad un regime brutale, in continuità con la dottrina dell'interventismo umanitario del decennio precedente, e la convinzione che il rovesciamento di Hussein e la creazione di una democrazia di stampo occidentale potesse rappresentare il primo tassello di un processo di alterazione politica e culturale complessiva degli assetti medio-orientali²⁹⁵.

²⁹³ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 945.

²⁹⁴ G. Herring, *ibid.*, 947.

²⁹⁵ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 431-432.

Once decided that war with Iraq was inevitable, the United States searched support from Congress and from the international community. The former granted its backing to the administration, but with the latter things went a little bit different. Bush was supported by his British ally, Prime Minister Tony Blair, who tried to convince the President to search support by the United Nations. The Security Council approved a resolution which forced Iraq to accept inspections to check its arsenals for weapons of mass destruction, and threatening Saddam in case he refused. To the United States this resolution was just a temporary measure. A few months later, after the failed attempt to obtain a second, and more incisive resolution, the United States decided to attack Iraq backed only by Great Britain, Australia and some other countries, but hindered by the majority of the international community²⁹⁶.

Doing so the United States led its army to its first preemptive war²⁹⁷. The American army reached Baghdad in a few weeks and President Bush declared the Iraqi operations concluded.

Bush's plan soon turned out to be not so well planned as he and his administration thought; initial celebrations of victory and rumors of a new U.S. imperium rapidly faded among fears of a dangerous and unmanageable postwar period, which turned out to be a real quagmire. The coalition did not have enough forces to maintain order and Iraq collapse into a civil war. At that point the United States were found itself in a military gridlock for which they were not prepared²⁹⁸.

The war was very well prepared for the initial stage, but the preparation was not as thorough for the critical postwar period.

By the fall 2003, American troops confronted with a full-fledged opposition which was steadily increasing. As the

²⁹⁶ M. Del Pero, *ibid.*, 432.

²⁹⁷ G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 948.

²⁹⁸ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.* 432.

insurgencies got worse and worse, the rationale for invading Iraq slowly collapsed.

No evidence was found to support the ties between the Iraqi regime and Al Qaida, and furthermore, no weapons of mass destruction were actually discovered²⁹⁹.

As insurgency in Iraq grew, hopes and support of American public opinion decrease.

American and Iraqi victims kept growing, and slowly the war in Iraq seemed to have no firm support.

Bush was reelected in 2004, his focus still on themes of national security and on the fear, still widely spread, of terrorism. After 2004, however, his popularity fell in conjunction with the stalemate of the Iraqi war.

Besides the increasing critiques toward the war in Iraq, another debate arose in the country: revelations of abuse of enemy detainees, in particular at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison. The interrogation tactics and imprisonment conditions did not respect the most basic rules of the Geneva Conventions, which had set the standards for treatment of prisoner of war.

In spite of the abrupt fall of consensus for the war and for the President himself, Bush was still stubbornly optimistic and he continued to assert that the United States would remain in Iraq until war would be over.

In 2006 the Democrats regained control of both houses of Congress which was divided on the war. Most members did not support an unconditional withdrawal, but by 2007, even some Republicans agreed on the removing Us troops from the Middle Eastern country. Bush went on his way, and decided to send an additional thirty thousand troops to contain the growing violence. The situation in Iraq was, anyway, not particularly changing, crime and corruption continued to flourish and the civil war did not stop.

²⁹⁹ G. Herring, *op., cit.*, 954-955.

At the beginning of 2008, a year of presidential elections, the war in Iraq and the United States seemed to be disconnecting. The war lost its top priority and public attention shifted more to domestic issues, especially in relation of a yielding economy.

The cost of the wars, both on an economic and human level, was extremely high for the United States; nearly four thousand Americans had been killed in Iraq and military expenditures were growing way too much.

The Bush administration's behavior and attitudes, together with its policies damaged the nation's image across a great part of the world, and anti-American developed more and more worldwide.

The U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq enraged the Muslim World, weakening Washington's attempts against international terrorism³⁰⁰. The only winner of this war turned out to be Iran, which no longer had to be confronted with a strong Sunni nation to its southern border and had close ties with Iraqi Shiites³⁰¹.

Bush's foreign policy changed during his second term, in part due to the changes in his administration composition. Powell resigned and was replaced by Rice and Rumsfeld was replaced by Robert Gates.

Rice, given her close relationship with Bush, emerged as an important player. With Rice as a guidance, the United States tried to repair the damages to European allies done in the first term, and open negotiation with North Korea on its nuclear program.

The Bush administration probably fought "the wrong war, in the wrong place and in the wrong way". Resources should be invested in the war with Afghanistan, what was supposed to be Bush's first concern. Saddam was a tyrant and ruled his country

³⁰⁰ G. Herring, *ibid.*, 954-958.

³⁰¹ *New York Times*, July 30, 2006.

in a cruel way, but his overthrow brought even more misery to the Iraqis, destabilized a critical region, and gave more possibilities to the terrorists to train and practice.

Moreover, the Bush administration worsened the relationship with the international community. The United States was accused of having fought a war for which it was not prepared, and for infringing the Geneva Conventions. “The United States of 2008 bore little resemblance to the global behemoth of the turn of the century”³⁰².

The 2002 and 2006 National Security Strategy Reports

In September 2002 the Bush administration issued its first National Security Strategy report, to make its new doctrine of foreign policy known to the world.

This report is a very particular one, because it was developed after the 9/11 attacks at the World Trade Center, and contained a written discussion on how the President wanted to act against terrorists.

In the report the influence of Wolfowitz and other neocons is manifested, through their view on 9/11 as a transformative moment that put “events in much sharper relief”³⁰³.

As Gaddis has written:

[...] George W. Bush’s report [...] has stirred controversy for it’s not only the first strategy statement of a new administration; it’s also the first since the surprise attacks of September 11, 2001. Such attacks are fortunately rare in American history – the only analogies are the British burning of the White House and Capitol in 1814 and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 – but they have one thing in

³⁰² G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 959-960.

³⁰³ Nicholas Lemann, “The War on What?” *New Yorker*, September 16, 2002, 44, in G. Herring, *op. cit.*, 944.

common: they prepare the way for new grand strategies by showing that old ones have failed. [...] ³⁰⁴

As every National Security Strategy report it first stated what the Us goals for the years ahead. These goals are to defend Us security, to prevent enemies to attack and to strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism. On the issue of terrorism, which is central to the report, Bush set out a list of objectives to defend his nation:

[...] defending the United States, the American people, and our interests at home and abroad by identifying and destroying the threat before it reaches our borders. While the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defense by acting preemptively against such terrorists, to prevent them from doing harm against our people and our country [...] ³⁰⁵

For the first time the concept of preemptive war is introduced, the President asserted the importance of defense, even if in the form of preemptive attacks.

Another important feature of Bush NSS is the relationship with allies, he wrote that cooperation with allies is fundamental, but :

[...] In exercising our leadership, we will respect the values, judgment, and interests of our friends and partners. Still, we will be prepared to act apart when our interests and unique responsibilities require. We will not allow such disagreements to obscure our determination to secure together, with our allies and our friends, our shared fundamental interests and values. [...] ³⁰⁶

The idea of defense is widely explained and dealt with in the strategy, and as Bush noted, the administration has

³⁰⁴ John Lewis Gaddis, *A Grand Strategy of Transformation*, in *Foreign Policy*, November 1, 2002.

³⁰⁵ George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, September 2002), 12.

³⁰⁶ G. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 34.

fostered the formation of a new Department of Homeland Security, which entailed a key reordering of the FBI to secure defense to all the levels of the nation³⁰⁷.

Del Pero gives a thorough view on Bush's NSS.

[...] il documento condensava ed esplicitava alcuni degli assiomi basilari del nuovo unilateralismo massimalista ed eccezionalista: la sfiducia nel multilateralismo e nelle organizzazioni internazionali; l'inutilità delle tradizioni politiche di alleanze; la natura precipuamente politica della sfida dell'islamismo radicale; la possibilità di ricorrere ad azioni militari preventive contro soggetti, statuali e non, che potevano costituire un pericolo per la sicurezza degli Stati Uniti. [...] L'obiettivo era quello di creare un equilibrio di potenza a favore della libertà.[...]³⁰⁸

The report issued in 2006 reflected the change in foreign policy taken by the administration. Neocons are gradually put aside, though remaining quite influential. The new doctrine of foreign policy can be considered softer, and more moderate under some points of views³⁰⁹.

The documents started off announcing that the United States is at war and the American government should do all it can to protect the American people:

[...] America is at war. This is a wartime national security strategy required by the grave challenge we face – the rise of terrorism, [...] fully revealed to the American people on September 11, 2001. This strategy reflects our most solemn obligation: to protect the security of the American people.³¹⁰

³⁰⁷ G. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 6.

³⁰⁸ M. Del Pero, *op. cit.*, 430.

³⁰⁹ M. Del Pero, *ibid.*, 433.

³¹⁰ G. W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, March 2006), 2.

The importance of defense was always underlined, and, without any doubt, the attacks of September 11 had shaped the way the administration perceived security.

As his father's last National Security Strategy, Bush asserted together with new aims and objectives, the successes achieved in the previous years.

2e. The Obama Administration

When President Obama took office in 2009 the United States was suffering an economy severe recession, and it was fighting two wars, one in Iraq and the other in Afghanistan.

Obama was against President George W. Bush's decision to invade Iraq in 2003, and promised during the election campaign to retreat American troops both from Afghanistan and Iraq³¹¹.

For almost ten years the United States had been engaged in inconclusive military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan which lead to ambiguous achievements and the pursuing of Us interests worldwide uncertain. The two wars caused the deaths of thousands of American soldiers and a military expenditure of over a trillion dollars has shadowed doubts on the efficacy of Us military forces³¹².

Those kind of military efforts could no longer be considered as an option, especially considering the economic crisis inflicting the United States and many of its allies³¹³.

To keep his promise of decreasing military expenditures, in February 2009, president Obama announced a plan decrease troop figures from 160,000 to 50,000 by August 2010, including the dismissal of all combat forces.

The troops still present, he added, would be withdrawn by the end of 2011. The withdrawal process went on smoothly, in part thanks to addition of 20,000 troops in 2007, which had helped the government of Iraq to restore partial stability to the country.

Obama's other war-related campaign promise was to enhance U.S. military engagement in Afghanistan with the

³¹¹ <http://millercenter.org/president/obama/essays/biography/5>

³¹² <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2012/01/23/10877/obamas-leaner-national-security-strategy-got-the-job-done-in-2011/>

³¹³ Mattia Diletti, *Il realismo magico di Obama*, in Limes, February 2011, 185.

objective to prevent the extremist Taliban from regaining power and letting Al Qaeda to use once more the country as shelter for terrorist operations against the United States.

Soon after taking office, Obama sent an additional 21,000 troops to Afghanistan, raising the American military presence there.

Obama, however, soon realized that a change in military strategy was necessary to enable the government of Afghanistan to defeat the Taliban on its own. In June, he nominated a new military commander, General Stanley McChrystal, to start a new course of action in Afghanistan. The General requested 40,000 more troops to be deployed to train Afghani forces to battle the Taliban instead of relying on American power.

After a series of meetings beginning in September, Obama announced during a speech at West Point on December 1, 2009, that he had passed a short-term surge of 33,000 troops but with the clause that American forces must begin to retreat from Afghanistan in July 2011³¹⁴.

As for Iraq, President Obama ended US direct engagement by 2011, starting troops withdrawal at the beginning of 2009³¹⁵.

2011 witnessed another important military accomplishment for the Obama Administration, the killing of Osama bin Laden during a raid into Pakistan.

The operation was particularly relevant because Osama bin Land was considered the most dangerous enemy to US security and the mastermind of Al Qaida which killed thousands of people in the 9/11 attacks.

Moreover under the Obama Administration, a successful military campaign against Qaddafi was conducted. The American forces did not act alone, but in cooperation with

³¹⁴ <http://millercenter.org/president/obama/essays/biography/5>

³¹⁵ <http://www.detroitnews.com/article/20090228/POLITICS/902280332/Obama+sets+firm+Iraq+withdrawal>

NATO forces. This underlines the new importance that Obama gave to international alliances³¹⁶.

He was, in fact, determined to establish solid relationships with foreign governments, especially in the Arab region. To this intent he traveled abroad more during his first year in office than any previous President.

In April 2010, he committed to a new nuclear arms reduction treaty, the New START, with Russian President Dmitri Medvedev.³¹⁷

The Obama administration detached in a significant way to the foreign policy of President Bush. Through his campaign that led to the killing of Osama bin Laded, he asserted the efficacy of Us military forces, and, in case of Libya, he showed how important worldwide alliances were fundamental to his foreign policy strategy. After the Bush administration, in fact, American credibility among its allies had decreased.

As Diletti claims:

[...] Per adesso il nuovo establishment deve pensare alla ricostruzione della propria credibilità piuttosto che all'espansione della democrazia, a una strategia di ricostruzione di piena credibilità quale potenza economica, geopolitica e militare.[...]³¹⁸

³¹⁶ <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2012/01/23/10877/obamas-leaner-national-security-strategy-got-the-job-done-in-2011/>

³¹⁷ <http://millercenter.org/president/obama/essays/biography/5>

³¹⁸ M. Diletti, *op. cit.*, 186.

The 2010 National Security Strategy Report

The 2010 Obama's National Security Strategy Report was the first his administration has produced so far. In the preface the President analyzes the American situation and set which were the cornerstone of Us foreign policy. He stated the situation the American military forces are in the wars with Iraq and Afghanistan and asserted the importance of defeating terrorism:

For nearly a decade, our Nation has been at war with a far-reaching network of violence and hatred. Even as we end one war in Iraq, our military has been called upon to renew our focus on Afghanistan as a part of a commitment to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qa'ida and its affiliates. This is part of a broad, multinational effort that is right and just [...] ³¹⁹

Obama asserted his intentions to fight and defeat terrorism, but cooperating with international institutions as well. His administration fostered anew the importance of “ a multilateral effort”, detaching more and more from G. W. Bush's unilateral views. Obama made clearer his administration will to cooperate: “the starting point for that collective action will be our engagement with other countries ³²⁰”

When talking about America's effort, and military ones especially, he highlighted the value of both the Armed Forces and diplomats as well. “our Armed Forces will always be a cornerstone of our security, but they must be complemented. Our security also depends upon diplomats ³²¹”.

The president also claims his intentions to nurture economic growth and reduce America's deficit. When he took

³¹⁹ Barack Obama, *National Security Strategy*, (Washington, 2010), 1.

³²⁰ B. Obama, *ibid.*, 3.

³²¹ B. Obama, *ibid.*, 1.

office the economy of the United States was going through, and still is, a very difficult moment, one of the lowest in decades. The NSS states that the rebuilding of America's economic strength is extremely important, because the leadership of the United States in world relies on its economy as well³²².

Even if the practical fulfillment of this strategy is still in progress, the definite detachment from the other presidencies is explicit, even when confronting with Clinton, a democratic president.

Obama's approach appears at the moment, innovative and realist. Innovative because he is moving American's foreign policy in a new direction³²³; and realist because the Obama administration has to find a way to carry out effectively Us foreign policy:

[...] Il presidente Americano sosteneva che è inutile e dannoso immaginare la presenza del demonio dentro e fuori l'America, (e che è anche dannoso pensare di essere l'angelo sceso in terra per combatterlo), ma non per questo bisogna abbandonarsi al cinismo e rinunciare ad un'azione guidata dai principi³²⁴. [...]

³²² B. Obama, *ibid.*, 4.

³²³ E. J. Dionne Jr., *The Obama Doctrine in Action*, in The Washington Post, 16 April 2009, available from http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2009-04-16/opinions/36776922_1_obama-doctrine-president-obama-peter-wehner

³²⁴ M. Diletti, *op. cit.*, 191.

Chapter three

Comparison of National Security Strategies

This chapter will deal with a deeper analysis of each National Security Strategy Report, considering their evolution through years and analyzing how the approach of the United States changed with respect to the geopolitical context.

3.a Reagan's 1987 and 1988 reports

Reagan was President of the United States for two mandates, from 1981 until 1989, with many changes on the political and international front.

His presidency can be divided into two main phases: the first one which can be identified as the evil empire one, the second, and last one as a period in which the President, started to rethink his view on the USSR.

During the first phase, the President described the Soviet Union as the Evil Empire, as the enemy par excellence and this can be proven examining his early speeches, in particular the one given in Orlando, when President Reagan kept his uncompromising posture on arms control with a fierce denunciation of the Soviet Union³²⁵.

The President addresses the Soviets as "those who would place the United States in a position of military and moral inferiority³²⁶."

This approach toward the USSR that Reagan conveyed can be found in one of the 300 and more National Security

³²⁵ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2012/mar/09/archive-1983-reagan-russia-evil-empire>

³²⁶ <http://www.nationalcenter.org/ReaganEvilEmpire1983.html>

Decision Directives, the NSDD 75³²⁷ developed in 1983, which can be considered the fundamental foreign-policy document by the Reagan administration³²⁸.

It is also important to underline that the document, at the time when it was developed, was considered as “classified” by the American government and only some years after the end of the Cold War it was made public. This strengthens once more the highly strategic importance it entailed.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the NSDD focuses only on the Soviet threat, and what were American policies to defeat it. The message conveyed was of a strong strategy, in which the president made clear US intention to undermine the Soviet communist empire.

The leading author of NSDD-75 was Richard Pipes, a former professor at Harvard who taught Russian history. He outlined that this was NSDD-75 as “a clear break from the past”.

Secretary of State Shultz described NSDD-75 as an attempt to go past containment and detente.

Surely it was revolutionary, moving beyond the doctrine of containment that had been the cornerstone of American foreign policy since George Kennan’s *Long Telegram* in February 1946³²⁹.

The very first National Security Strategy of the Reagan administration was published in 1987, still the Soviet Union is described as the enemy, and, even if the President introduced new topics such as arms control and regional policies towards other countries³³⁰, at the end everything is related to the Soviet Union.

³²⁷ M. del Pero, *op. cit.*, 384-385.

³²⁸ Paul Kengor, *Crucial Cold War Secret*, Sunday, January 13, 2008 available from <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2008/jan/13/crucial-cold-war-secret/?page=all>

³²⁹ Paul Kengor, *ibid.*

³³⁰ R. Reagan, *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, cit, 1.

In the fourth chapter of the NSS entitled “Taking advantages of U.S. Strengths and Soviet Weaknesses” he stated that the United States would try to overcome Soviet military superiority, using technological weapons do accomplish its mission³³¹.

In the next National Security Strategy produced by the administration, the one in 1988, Reagan’s tones towards the Soviet Union became slightly softer, anyway keeping up defenses. As said in the preface of the document:

In the Soviet Union we hear talk of “new thinking” and of basic changes in Soviet policies at home and abroad. We will welcome real changes, but we have yet to see any slackening of the growth of Soviet military power, or abandonment of expansionist aspirations. As we work to find areas for further cooperation, we will continue to judge the Soviets by their actions rather than their words, and to found our National Security Strategy on a realistic view of Soviet aims and capabilities³³².

This passage made quite clear United States intentions, according to which cooperation is likely but it must be mutual.

Di Nolfo’s words are as straightforward when underlining the difference between Reagan’s views in his first mandate and his second one:

[...] due mandate nettamente distinti dal punto di vista della politica internazionale: il primo dominato dall’impeto della controffensiva di propaganda antisovietica posta in essere dall’amministrazione Americana, il secondo dominato dall’avvio del dialogo che, dall’ascesa al potere di Andropov nell’Unione Sovietica sino a quella di Gorbacev, cambiò completamente la natura delle relazioni fra le superpotenze³³³.

³³¹ R. Reagan, *ibid.*, 20.

³³² R. Reagan, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, cit, 5.

³³³ E. Di Nolfo, *op. cit.*, 1255.

Reagan's foreign policy was deeply founded on the reaffirmation of the United States as the world leader, he wanted to assert how Communism was a wrong and destructive doctrine, and therefore, only defeating it the United States could regain its hegemonic superiority³³⁴.

"Reagan personified the providential destiny inherent in Myth of America identity", Hixson wrote, and with it kept and committed to faith ideals, which were always key elements among the conservative.

The religion element fostered Reagan's idea of fighting against the Soviet Union, the source of all evil, but especially a godless country.

It was not just the belief of American superiority on a military level, but also a superiority regarding moral and faith³³⁵.

Reagan's views of defeating communism were not only focused on the struggle with the Soviet empire, but also to a process of reinvigorating American identity through a renewed militarism in what was dubbed by the President himself as "United States backyard", the Caribbean and Central America.

In addition, the fighting in Central America gave an occasion to "unleash" the CIA, which the establishment was convinced had been held back after the disclosure of domestic spying and assassination conspiracy.

With new director Casey, the Intelligence revived its efficacy during operations to defeat the Sandinistas, and the illegal money allocation to the Contras³³⁶.

Despite such contradictions, many Americans rallied behind the illegal operation against the forces of evil. The Iran-Contra scandal thus failed to tarnish Reagan's legacy, as he remained Teflon-coated, an uncompromising defender of true Americanism³³⁷.

³³⁴ <http://millercenter.org/president/reagan/essays/biography/5>

³³⁵ W. Hixson, *op. cit.*, 256.

³³⁶ W. Hixson, *ibid.*, 263-264.

³³⁷ W. Hixson, *ibid.* 265.

President Reagan remained, therefore, an important figure for all Americans to get back their country's "fame" of undisputable superpower which won the Cold War.

As Hixson claims, quoting Fukuyama and his *End of History and the Last man*, the end of the Cold War meant nothing less than a Hegelian "end of history"³³⁸.

³³⁸ Francis Fukuyama, *End of History and the Last Man*, (New York, The Free Press, 1992), 266-307 in W. Hixson, *op. cit.*, 335.

3b. Bush's 1990 and 1991 reports

During his presidency President Bush witnessed a world that was changing, the coming of a new world, what he defined as "new era".

America's main and most dangerous enemy had finally been defeated and this brought the need to rebuild American foreign policy and security strategy³³⁹. The collective identity of the United States could not be bolstered by an overwhelming foreign enemy anymore, unless that enemy could be somehow reinvented in a new cultural environment³⁴⁰.

President Bush in his National Security Strategy report tried to identify the new world order that was developing ahead of the United States.

Already in his 1991 report he made clear that his country had moved beyond containment, Eastern Europe was changing its shape as new countries developed.

This idea of new world is one the first elements which made the difference between President Reagan and President Bush: when the former was in office the world had a bipolar configuration and there was just one enemy, the Soviet Union.

On the contrary, when the latter took office the world was in a phase of transition, the collapse of the Soviet Bloc and with it the rise of new countries in Eastern Europe, and the unification of the two Germanys. As a consequence, there was the need to shape American foreign policy accordingly to those variations.

American strategy should no longer be focused only on containment of the USSR but also to the support of democracy in Eastern Europe.

³³⁹ Philip S. Golub, *Power, Profit and Prestige: A History of American Imperial Expansionism*, (London, Pluto Press, 2010), 95.

³⁴⁰ Peter Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security*, (Columbia University Press, 1996), 536, in P. Golub, *op. cit.*, 95.

As stated in the first page of the 1991 strategy the Bush administration's aim was to support democracy in Eastern Europe.

Moreover, the support that the United States wanted to give to emerging democracies, was not only political but also economic, through the promotion of the free market system³⁴¹.

Another difference with his predecessor at the White House was the fact that Bush analyzed a possible future beyond containment:

How can we ensure continued international stability as U.S. – Soviet bipolarity gives way to global interdependence and multipolarity? What will be America's continuing leadership role – and the new roles of leadership assumed by our allies? [...] what will be the structure of the new Europe – politically, economically, and military – as the Eastern countries move toward democracy and Germany moves toward unification?³⁴²

Bush in his 1990 report analyzed all the possible answers to the questions on how to deal with a new international environment. He took into consideration the Soviet Union, Western Europe, Eastern Europe and all the areas deemed important to the United States.

His responses concerns American actions toward those countries, but they are tied to international cooperation, nurturing of democracy, and spreading the American hegemony worldwide.

The issue of proliferating American hegemony was present in Reagan's strategies, but accordingly to the threats found during his presidency. As said, the spreading of hegemony in Reagan's views was mainly focused on the defeat of the Soviet Union, whereas in the case of president Bush was

³⁴¹ G. H. W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, cit., 1.

³⁴² G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 7-8.

more expanded in other world scenarios, especially the middle east.

As Hixson claims:

The Persian Gulf War of 1991 underscored the arrival of U.S. global hegemony. No nation stood in the path of intervention, as the USSR was disintegrating, the British cousin cheered from the sidelines, and China – no longer considered Red despite the 1989 crackdown on democratic expression in Tiananmen Square – acquiesced in deference to its pursuit of most-favored nation trade status³⁴³.

Bush's stated even more clearly in his second National Security Strategy of 1991 the idea of the United States as the only superpower and American global hegemony:

Despite the emergence of new power centers, the United States remains the only state with truly global strength, reach and influence in every dimension – political, economic and military³⁴⁴.

Besides he stressed the importance of the Gulf intervention, which, as Hixson has claimed, was a very important message to the world. In that circumstance, the United States created a net of trust and alliances with allied countries³⁴⁵.

The main difference with Reagan's documents to be found in his strategy was, of course, the difference approach to the Soviet Union. When Bush wrote his second report, the Communist bloc lived the last moments of its life, and the America plan was to promote a democratic change in the USSR³⁴⁶.

³⁴³ W. Hixson, *op. cit.*, 269.

³⁴⁴ G. H. W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, cit., 2.

³⁴⁵ G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 2.

³⁴⁶ G. H. W. Bush, *ibid.*, 3.

3c. Clinton's 1994, 1997 and 1998 National Security Strategy Reports

President Clinton's Reports focused more on domestic issues and economics rather than other security matters. In 1992 the interests of the United States has moved sharply in the direction of economics and the administration's key strategy was to foster a deeper integration of countries into the global markets.

The first difference to be found with his predecessor George Bush is the greater focus on expanding free trade. George Bush's reports, both the first and second one, dealt mainly with the dissolution of the Soviet Block, that was the core topic. Bush had to cope with a new European pattern, the rise of a unified German and economics and domestic issues in general were not a very important part of his foreign policy speech.

The Clinton administration notably widened the global liberation agenda of its predecessor³⁴⁷, and according to an article published by The New York Times in February 1999:

[...] previous administrations had pushed for financial liberalization principally in Japan, but under President Clinton it became a worldwide effort directed to all kinds of countries, even smaller ones much less able to absorb it than Japan [...]³⁴⁸

On January 1993, the President instituted the National Economic Council (NEC), within the Executive Office to organize economic policies regarding domestic and international issues.

The Clinton administration was extremely focused of promoting free trade and at the same time advancing American

³⁴⁷ Philip S. Golub, *op. cit.*, 100.

³⁴⁸ Nicholas D. Kristof and David Sanger, *How the Us Wooed Asia to Let Cash Flow in*, (New York Times, February 16, 1999).

trade to the point of deploying the CIA and other agencies to foster Us economic interests, turning it a the Us foreign policy precedence³⁴⁹.

This inward turn toward economics could be considered as a consequence of the absence of an external enemy. As said, the Ussr no longer existed and the administration preferred to turn its objectives on trade and its global expansion³⁵⁰.

To this end the 1994 Clinton's NSS had been entitled "A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement", and it was mostly related to trade expansion³⁵¹.

Another difference with the Bush administration is the concept of humanitarian intervention. In his reports, Bush, mentioned human rights and the fact that the Us should foster them anyhow, but he never linked them to Us military interventions

In Clinton's 1997 and 1998 National Security Reports did not entail major changes and differences with the ones issued by George Bush³⁵².

³⁴⁹ P. S. Golub, *op. cit.*, 100.

³⁵⁰ W. Hixson, *op. cit.*, 271.

³⁵¹ W. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, cit., 3.

³⁵² D. Snider, *op. cit.*, 136.

3d. George W. Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy report

Bush's Strategy of 2002 was a resume and a redefinition of what the President said during a speech in West point on 1 June 2002.

According to Fukuyama, the Strategy did not represented a major change in comparison to the other doctrines, and did not contain any revolutionary element³⁵³. Analyzing the strategy it could be inferred that it dealt, as all others foreign policy documents, with the promotion of democratic governments in a free trade environment. According to Bush's hegemonic views he placed his country's military power at the center, underlining America's principles and democracy with the aim to mold the international environment according to its liberty and democratic principles. To do so it was necessary to get rid of the obstacles and threatens to freedom which could be found everywhere in the world, thus creating, as Bush has written:

[..] Today, the United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence. In keeping with our heritage and principles, we do not use our strength to press for unilateral advantage. We seek instead to create a balance of power that favors human freedom [...]³⁵⁴

But if Clinton' NSS of 1998 is taken into consideration, it is soon clear that Bush's document is different. Starting from the preface, Clinton asserted Us three main objectives: "To enhance our security", "To bolster America's economic prosperity" and "To promote democracy abroad"³⁵⁵.

³⁵³ Francis Fukuyama, *After the Neocons. America at the crossroads*, (New Haven, Yale University, 2006), 68.

³⁵⁴ G. W. Bush, *op. cit.*, 3.

³⁵⁵ W. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, (Washington, 1998), 2

According to Galgani, the difference between the two strategies is that Bush's one pursued defense, preservation and expansion of peace, while Clinton's document just presumed to do so. Bush underlined US backing to free and democratic societies, Clinton simply states promotion of democracy and the defense of human rights abroad.

Soon at the beginning of the strategies, while reading the first lines, it appears obvious how Bush's report was more elaborate and thorough than the one issued by Clinton³⁵⁶.

Also Gaddis sustains Galgani's theory on the difference of the documents:

[...] the differences are revealing. The Bush objectives speak of defending, preserving, and extending peace; the Clinton statement seems simply to assume peace. Bush calls for cooperation among great powers. Clinton never uses that term. Bush specifies the encouragement of free and open societies on every continent; Clinton contents himself with promoting democracy and human rights abroad. Even in these first few lines, then the Bush NSS comes across as more forceful and more carefully crafted than its predecessor³⁵⁷.

Another difference between the two reports is the introduction, made by Bush, of the concept of preemptive war. This strategy of preemption was in part a result of the 9/11 attacks; Bush's strategy did not abandon totally the strategies of containment and deterrence, but the two were gradually substituted with preemptive actions.

In a nutshell, Galgani summarizes the content and message of Bush's 2002 National Security Report:

[...] in definitiva la strategia di Bush presentava una profonda innovazione non tanto nei fini, propri di quasi tutte le amministrazioni, quanto nei mezzi. Con l'introduzione del concetto di *preemption* la Casa Bianca abbandonò un consenso durato decenni che poneva la

³⁵⁶ P. F. Galgani, *op. cit.*, 121-122.

³⁵⁷ J. L. Gaddis, *op. cit.*, 1.

deterrenza e il contenimento al centro della politica estera americana.[...] ³⁵⁸

3e. Obama's 2010 National Security Strategy Report

The main differences between Obama's 2010 National Security Strategy and his predecessor's, the one issued in 2002, are the concept of preemptive war, the concept of security and the views on international cooperation.

Obama's strategy erased totally the idea of preemptive war because he conceived it as risky and not apt to the foreign policy he wanted to pursue.

On international cooperation he insisted that the United States cannot achieve great objective on its own, and the international cooperation is vital to foster the international community.

From is different from his predecessor is also the way the Obama's administration pursue foreign goals. According to Obama, in fact, the United States did not possess unlimited resources to act and do whatever it wanted, the key word is "choice". As he chose to withdraw troops from Iraq he decided to undertake military buildup in Afghanistan.

What is to be inferred from Obama's doctrine is that it is a form of realism which is not afraid to deploy power (the United States is at the moment the only superpower), but it is at the same time conscious of practical limits and a great dose of self-awareness. Those are boundaries and limits that his predecessor, in particular G. W. Bush, had trouble understanding and accepting ³⁵⁹.

³⁵⁸ P. F. Galgani, *op. cit.*, 123.

³⁵⁹ E. J. Dionne Jr, *op. cit.*, 2.

Conclusions

The National Security Strategies can be considered as a key to interpret foreign policy aims of the only remaining superpower. Normally every administration issues its strategy report to define its foreign priorities, trying to outline its objectives. Objectives and aims that sometimes stay just as they are, and cannot be practically accomplished. Not always, in fact, the objectives are totally pursued, both due to internal lack of consensus in the administration or within Congress, or due to external issues. One example that it is possible to give is the case of the first National Security Strategy published by the Clinton administration, in which the President underlines very frequently his aims to defend human rights, outlining the concept of humanitarian interventionism. His aims are clear in theory but when it came time to accomplish them, reality turned out to be a little different. The case is the genocide occurred in Rwanda, where the administration had the possibility to intervene, but did not at the end, because, following the principles of the Powell Doctrine, there were not clear objectives in the region to justify an American engagement.

In every National Security Strategies, from Reagan to Obama, it can be found the idea of nurturing democracy. Fostering democracy is a core element of the American culture, it is something belonging to the colonial age. The twelve colonies fought for their independence against Great Britain and established a democracy, one the American people had always been attached to.

The first National Security Strategy was issued by the Reagan administration and the most relevant topic was the Soviet Union, how to contain it, and also the possible means to overthrow it once for all. With President Bush the end of bipolarism and the collapse of the Soviet Block are deeply dealt

with, he had to confront with a new world order and a new future for the years to come. With president Clinton the concept of foreign policy turned more inward, as the core issues for its administration was the fostering of American economy and with global free trade. In his second administration, though, he forged the concept of humanitarian interventionism, linking America's interventionist spirit with the idea of defending human rights.

George W. Bush changed the tones of the previous strategies, combining in his foreign policy's ideas preemptive war, unilateralism, especially after September 9/11 and repeated, even if with different subjects, Reagan's idea of the "evil empire". Bush outlined the "axis of evil", declaring the three countries belonging to it, as the source of all evils.

Obama completely changed his predecessor's approach, returning to the idea of multilateral cooperation and appeasing American interventionism which should be measured with the effective American resources.

In a nutshell, almost all National Security Strategies defined an enemy against which the United States had to protect itself. Along the years America's enemies changed from Communism to terrorism. The only presidency which did not define one clear foe was Clinton's one: there were regional threats but not a specific entity which opposed the United States.

A difference between Democrats and Republicans is the American representation they want to convey to the world. Democrats focus more on multilateralism and international cooperation, leaving slightly aside its superiority. The Republicans, on the other hand, try to rely more on Us interventionism and supremacy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- John K. Bartolotto**, *The Origin and Developmental Process of the National Security Strategy*, (U.S. Army War College), 2004
- Walter Lippman**, *U.S. Foreign policy: Shield of the Republic*, (Boston: Little and Brown, 1943).
- George C. Herring**, *From Colony to Superpower*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Arnaldo Testi**, *Il secolo degli Stati Uniti*, (Bologna, Il Mulino, 2008).
- Mario del Pero**, *Gli Stati Uniti e il mondo 1776-2006*, (Bari, Editori Laterza, 2008)
- Niall Ferguson**, *Colossus*, (New York, Penguin Books, 2005)
- John L. Gaddis**, "A Grand Strategy of transformation", *Foreign Policy*, Nov/Dec 2003
- John L. Gaddis**, *Strategies of Containment*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982)
- Henry Kissinger**, *White House Years*, (Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1979)
- Lawrence J. Korb**, *A New National Security Strategy in an Age of Terrorists, Tyrants, and Weapons of Mass Destruction* (New York, Brookings Institution Press, 2003)
- Don M. Snider**, *The National Security Strategy: Documenting Strategic Vision*, (Strategic Studies Institute 1995)
- Gabriel Marcella**, *National Security and the Interagency Process: Forward into the 21st Century*, (Strategic Studies Institute, 1995)
- John p. Lovell**, *The Challenge of American foreign policy: Purpose and adaptation*, (New York, Collier McMillian, 1985)
- Robert Pastor**, *Condemned to Repetition: The United States and Nicaragua*, (Princeton University Press, 1987)
- Hedrick Smith**, *The Power Game: How Washington Works*, (New York: Random House, 1998)

Joan Hoff, *A Faustian Foreign Policy from Woodrow Wilson to G.W. Bush: Dreams of perfectibility*, (Cambridge University Press), 2008

Dennis M. Drew and Donald M. Snow, *Making Strategy: An Introduction to National Security Processes and Problems*, (Air University Press, Alabama, 1988)

Don M. Snider, J. Nagl, *The National Security Strategy: Documenting Strategic Vision*, The U.S. Army War College Guide to Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute, (U.S. Army War College, 2001)

Dennis M. Drew and Donald M. Snow, *Making a Strategy: An Introduction to National Security Processes and Problems*, (Alabama, Air University Press, 1988)

Dom N. Snider, *Strategy, Forces and Budgets: Dominant Influences in Executive Decision Making, Post Cold War 1988-89*, (Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1993)

Ennio di Nolfo, *Storia delle Relazioni Internazionali*, (Bari, editori Laterza, 2009)

Sean Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan*, (New York, Harper Perennial, 2009)

Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, 1985)

Walter L. Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy*, (Yale University Press, 2008)

John Robert Greene, *The Presidency of George Bush*, (Lawrence, Kansas, 2000)

Pier Francesco Galgani, *Una Questione di Carattere: l'Eredità della Politica Estera di George W. Bush*, (Bruno Mondadori, 2010)

Francis Fukuyama, *End of History and the Last Man*, (New York, The Free Press, 1992)

Peter Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security*,(Columbia University Press, 1996)

Francis Fukuyama, *After the Neocons. America at the crossroads*, (New Haven, Yale University, 2006)

Official documents

NSC-68, *United States Objectives and Programs for National Security*, (Washington, 1950)

William Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, (Washington D.C.: The White House, December 1998)

Ronald Reagan, *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, (Washington D.C.: The White House, January 1988)

William Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, (Washington D.C.: The White House, December 1998).

Public law 99-433: *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986*

R. Reagan, *National Security Decision Directive 75*, (Washington, 1983)

R. Reagan, *Address to the Nation on National Security*, March, 1983. Available from <http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/offdocs/rrspch.htm>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/nsc>

R. Reagan, *Address to the Nation and Other Countries on United States-Soviet Relations*, January 16, 1984, available from <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1984/11684a.htm>

R. Reagan, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, 1988

G. Bush, *Inaugural Address*, January 20, 1989, available from <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres63.html>

Security Council Resolution 660, August 2, 1990 available from <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/575/10/IMG/NR057510.pdf?OpenElement>

George H. W. Bush, *Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the End of the Gulf War* (March 6, 1991), available from <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3430>

G. H. W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, (The White House, 1990).

G. H. W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, (The White House, August 1991)

G. H. W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, (The White House, 1993)

G. Bush, *Inaugural Address*, January 20, 1989, available from <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres63.html>

W. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, (Washington, 1997)

George Tenet, *We're at War*, (September 2001), available from <http://www.hlswatch.com/2005/12/09/george-tenet-91601-were-at-war-memo/>

G. W. Bush, *State of the Union Address*, (January, 2002), available from <http://usgovinfo.about.com/library/weekly/aa013002a.htm>

George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, September 2002)

Barack Obama, *National Security Strategy*, (Washington, 2010)

ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

John L. Gaddis, "A Grand Strategy of transformation", *Foreign Policy*, Nov/Dec 2003

Richard Nixon, *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: A new Strategy for Peace*, A report to Congress, February 18, 1970, (Washington, GPO, 1970)

Charles J. Fairchild, *Does our National Security Strategy Address the Real threats?*, 1989, available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1989/FCJ.htm>

Clark A. Murdock, Richard W. Weitz, *Beyond Goldwater –Nichols, New Proposal for Defense Reform*, *Joint Force Quarterly*, issue 38: 34-41

Greg Parlier, *The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986: Resurgence in Defense Reform and The Legacy of Eisenhower*, (War in the Modern Era Seminar, May 15, 1989, National Defense University), available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1989/PGH.htm>

David Isenberg, *Missing the Point: Why the Reforms of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Won't Improve U.S. Defense Policy*, (Cato Institute: Policy Analysis Number 100, February 29, 1988), available from <http://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/missing-point-why-reforms-joint-chiefs-staff-wont-improve-us-defense-policy>

Morton H. Halperin, David Halperin, *The Key West Key*, *Foreign Policy* no. 53, (Winter 1983-84)

Philip Zelikow, *The Transformation of National Security – Five Redefinitions*, available from
<http://www.virginia.edu/history/files/faculty/zelikow/Transformation%20natl%20secty.pdf>

Anthony Lake, *From Containment to Enlargement*, Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, September 21, 1993 available from
<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/lakedoc.html>

Samantha Power, *Bystanders to Genocide*, Atlantic Monthly, September 2001.

Gary C. Jacobson, *The 1994 House Elections in Perspective*, in “Political Science Quarterly,” 2, summer 1996

Jeffrey Gedmin, *Collecting the Anti-Terror Coalition*, in Policy Review, 109, October-November 2001, available from <http://www.hoover.org/publications/policy-review/article/6463>

Mattia Diletti, *Il realismo magico di Obama*, in Limes, February 2011

E. J. Dionne Jr., *The Obama Doctrine in Action*, in The Washington Post, 16 April 2009, available from http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2009-04-16/opinions/36776922_1_obama-doctrine-president-obama-peter-wehner

Paul Kengor, *Crucial Cold War Secret*, Sunday, January 13, 2008 available from <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2008/jan/13/crucial-cold-war-secret/?page=all>

Nicholas D. Kristof and David Sanger, *How the Us Wooed Asia to Let Cash Flow in*, (New York Times, February 16, 1999)

SITES

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2012/mar/09/archive-1983-reagan-russia-evil-empire>

<http://www.nationalcenter.org/ReaganEvilEmpire1983.html>

<http://www.detroitnews.com/article/20090228/POLITICS/902280332/Obama+sets+firm+Iraq+withdrawal>

<http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2012/01/23/10877/obamas-leaner-national-security-strategy-got-the-job-done-in-2011/>

<http://millercenter.org/president/gwbush/essays/biography/5>

<http://millercenter.org/president/obama/essays/biography/5>

<http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2012/01/23/10877/obamas-leaner-national-security-strategy-got-the-job-done-in-2011/>

<http://www.nationalcenter.org/ReaganEvilEmpire1983.html>

<http://millercenter.org/president/clinton/essays/biography/4>

<http://old.nationalreview.com/document/reagan200406091024.asp>

avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp