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**Idealism versus Realism in the Making of American Foreign Policy:
The Case of Jimmy Carter 1977-1981**

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DEDICATION

To the memory of my father.

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Abstract

This study deals with the influence that idealism and realism have on the making and conduct of the United States foreign policy with a particular interest in the foreign policy of President Jimmy Carter. The study examines the significance and meaning of Carter's foreign policy when his administration came into office in 1977 and place the Carter years in historical perspective. I argue that President Carter saw the world differently than his predecessors and that his foreign policy represented a change from the Cold war policies and patterns that had dominated U.S. foreign policy since WWII. The Carter administration entered office with an idealistic world order that supplanted the strategies of containment and anticommunism. U.S. foreign policy at the beginning of the Carter's administration did not operate on the assumptions of realpolitik. Instead it was very much consistent with an approach to international relations based on the idealistic assumptions of morality, preventive diplomacy, negotiations and human rights. Therefore not only did the Carter years reject the strategy of containment as the basis of his foreign policy when he entered office, it can be argued that it represented the first post-Cold War foreign policy since WWII. The research project also examines what explains why the Carter administration's idealistic foreign policy approach met with reversal by his fourth year in office when the Carter administration returned to Cold War realism by reinstating the strategy of containment base on a growing concern with the Soviet Union. The work also attempts to challenge the initial accounts of Carter's foreign policy that find him a weak, indecisive and inconsistent and finally examine what the implications are for post-Cold War U.S. foreign policy in the future.

Résumé

La présente thèse traite de l'influence de l'idéalisme et du réalisme sur la formulation et la conduite de la politique étrangère des Etats-Unis d'Amérique avec un intérêt particulier pour leur impact sur la politique étrangère du président Jimmy Carter. L'étude examine l'importance et la signification de la politique étrangère de Carter et la place dans sa perspective historique. Ensuite, ce travail de recherche montre que la vision du monde de Carter était tellement différente de celle des autres présidents américains qui l'ont précédé et montre encore que Carter apporte un changement à la politique étrangère des USA par rapport aux modèles et aux approches qui ont dominé la politique étrangère des Etats-Unis pendant la guerre froide. L'administration Carter a commencé son mandat avec une vue idéaliste de l'ordre mondial et a essayé de supplanter les stratégies du 'containment' et de l'anticommunisme en usage pendant la guerre froide. En effet en politique étrangère, la présidence Carter, à son début, n'agissait pas sur les présupposés de la *realpolitik*. Au contraire, elle était en total accord avec une vision des relations internationales basées sur la vision idéale de la morale, de la diplomatie préventive, des négociations et compromis et des droits de l'homme. Cette étude explique aussi les raisons qui ont fait que l'administration de Carter a été accueillie par un revirement de l'opinion américaine quand le président et son administration ont voulu revenir au réalisme de la guerre froide et rétablir la stratégie du 'containment' tenant compte d'une inquiétude née de l'expansion soviétique (Afghanistan). Ce travail de recherche remet en question les premières évaluations du président Carter qui l'ont présenté comme un président faible, indécis, et inconsistant. Et pour finir, cette étude explique les conséquences possibles de l'approche Carter sur la politique étrangère des Etats-Unis d'Amérique dans l'après guerre froide.

ملخص

تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى البحث في تأثير المثالية والواقعية على توجيهه و قيادة السياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة باهتمام خاص لوقعتها على سياسة الرئيس جيمي كارتر الخارجية. تبحث هذه الدراسة في معنى و أهمية السياسة الخارجية لكارتر و وضعها في المنظور التاريخي. ثم يبين هذا البحث بأن نظرة الرئيس كارتر للعالم كانت مختلفة عن سبقوه، و بأن سياسته الخارجية أتت بتغيير بالنسبة لسياسات الحرب الباردة و الأنماط التي كانت تسيطر على السياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة منذ الحرب العالمية الثانية.

لقد بدأ كارتر عهده لإدارة الولايات المتحدة بنظرة مثالية للنظام العالمي، و حاول استئصال استراتيجيات الاحتواء و معاداة الشيوعية المتبعة إبان الحرب الباردة. في حقيقة الأمر لم تعمل سياسة الولايات المتحدة الخارجية عند بداية حكم كارتر بانتهاج السياسة الواقعية، بل بالعكس كانت على اتساق تام مع التطلع لعلاقات دولية مبنية على أساس التصور الأخلاقي و الدبلوماسية الوقائية و التفاوض و حقوق الإنسان. كما توضح هذه الدراسة كذلك الأسباب التي جعلت إدارة كارتر تستقبل بالفرض من قبل الرأي العام الأمريكي عندما أراد الرئيس وإدارته الرجوع إلى واقعية الحرب الباردة و العودة إلى إستراتيجية المعاداة باعتبار اهتمام الاتحاد السوفيتي المتزايد في التوسع (أفغانستان). كما يحاول هذا البحث إعادة النظر في التقييمات الأولى للرئيس كارتر التي أظهرته على أنه رئيس ضعيف و غير حاسم و متناقض مع نفسه. و في الختام توضح هذه الدراسة النتائج المترتبة عن طريقة كارتر في التعامل مع السياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة بعد الحرب الباردة.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
DK	Democratic Kampuchea
FAO	Frente Amplio de Oposición
FSLN	Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional
ICBM	International Continental Ballistic Missiles
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
MFN	Most Favored Nations
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NLF	National Liberation Front
NSC	National Security Council
OAS	Organization of American States
PDPA	People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PRK	People's Republic of Kampuchea
PRM	Presidential Review Memorandum
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organization
START	Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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Introduction

Overview

This study is about the conduct of the United States foreign policy. It examines the influence and impacts that realism and idealism have on the making of American diplomacy. The push for two seemingly incompatible foreign policy goals springs from the political belief in U.S. foreign policy is rooted. The values that gave rise to fluctuations and alternating cycles in defining U.S. goals and postures include two quite different world views- realism and idealism – both of which at various times have dominated the thinking of U.S. policymakers and shaped their policies. The two value systems stem from form very divergent beliefs about the ways to best reconcile between ideals and interests, between principle and power, and between moral purpose and military primacy.

The history of American diplomacy can largely be written in terms of cyclical swings between realism and idealism. The split personality of realism and idealism has historically manifested itself in U.S. foreign policy. These two schools of thought have framed the U.S. foreign policy debate at least since World War II. For over 50 years, the United States struggled to develop a foreign policy that reflected its idealist values but simultaneously protected U.S. interests and promoted U.S. power. In general the idealist mood has been particularly dominant in the immediate aftermath of America's major war experiences and in times of optimism and prosperity, when hopes of successful American reform of international practices have risen, for example during and after World War I when U.S. President Woodrow Wilson championed an idealist American foreign policy dedicated to building “ a world safe for democracy” under the rule of law, managed by international organization, the League of Nations. But instructively, the idealist program was promptly repudiated, and values based on realist assumptions again prevailed in the thinking of policymakers prudently concerned more with core national interests such as

defense than with ideals when scares during the Cold War, for example, have been perceived to threaten U.S. security

This study takes as a case study realism and idealism in the American foreign policy during the four years of Jimmy Carter's Presidency. Although Jimmy Carter came to the white House with less international experience than most presidents in the modern era, he took an immediate interest in foreign policy, outlined an ambitious international agenda for his administration, and proceeded to accomplish many of the items that were placed on that agenda. Jimmy Carter had been widely misjudged. Although there were significant accomplishments in terms of both the agenda he had set for himself and the impact these policies have had on international politics, Carter had been widely misjudged, and he rarely earned the kind of praise for his achievements that might have been given to other presidents. The general impression that Carter's was a failed presidency, or at best a mediocre one, has remained the prevailing public and professional opinion.

Jimmy Carter became president, he inherited a foreign policy based on globalized containment and the domino theory policies that had left America exposed, overextended, defending questionable moral positions abroad and demoralized at home. Immediately after taking office, Carter sought to rekindle the 1976-7 'post-Vietnam mood and sense of purpose. In developing a post-Vietnam foreign policy, the Carter Administration sought to depart from the long held policy of containment and confrontation with the Soviet Union and, instead, promote a foreign policy based on democratic processes, global community, interdependence and human rights. This was a break from the policies from the policies of his predecessors, in which coercive diplomacy, military involvement abroad, and neglect of human rights abuses were commonplace. Yet Carter and his team understood that such an overambitious international agenda would be a very difficult undertaking.

Purpose of the Study

Public evaluations of President Jimmy Carter have fluctuated dramatically over time. Upon winning the presidency in 1976, Carter symbolized in the minds of many Americans the effort to restore a sense of honesty, morality, and optimism in the White House and the country following the Vietnam War and Watergate. By the end of his administration in 1980, Carter was overwhelmingly seen as a failed president- a leader whose weakness was evidenced by the Iran hostage crisis, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Yet by the late 1980s public perceptions of Carter began for change for the better as he won a new sense of respect and admiration for his post-presidential activities.

Assessment of the Carter administration foreign policy reveals that they, too, have evolved with time. During the late 1970s and early 1980s there were conflicting interpretations of the Carter administration's worldview and its foreign policy. The overwhelming consensus on Carter's foreign policy, however, remains negative. The most complete examination of Carter's record is Gaddis Smith's *Morality, Reason and Power*. Smithy argues that Carter did attempt to think in new ways about foreign policy, particularly concerning the threat of nuclear weapons, and pursued a foreign policy that was based on long-term benefits to the United States and the world rather than short-term calculations of gaining an advantage over the Soviet Union. He found that the President's foreign policy however, suffered form a public perception of weakness and a fundamental inconsistency that was exacerbated the Soviet actions around the world. The challenges from Moscow, in particular the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, led Carter , Smith contends, to radically shift his focus in foreign policy away from human rights and a multilateral approach to the world back to a return to orthodox Cold War positions . In the end, Smith concludes that the critics' scepticism about Carter's ability and ideas , divisions within his administration , the

actions of the Soviet Union, and the impossibility of seeing clearly what needed to be done – all combined to make Carter’s vision appear naïve.

Most other historians, albeit with different emphasis and for various reasons, have echoed findings. Michael Hunt in his *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (1987) finds that Carter was unprepared to lead America and that his thinking was unsystematic and “Shallow”. Most damning is Burton Kaufman. In his Book, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter*, (1993), he argues that Carter was an ineffective and an “extremely naïve” in the way he dealt with the Soviet Union and in the implementation of his human rights policy.

More recently a revisionist interpretation of Carter’s overall record in foreign policy offered more praise to Carter. Robert Strong’s *Working in the World* (2000) is a positive account of the Carter presidency intended to challenge some of the initial accounts of Carter’s conduct of American foreign policy that found him to be weak, indecisive, and inconsistent. Strong argues that Carter pursued a consistent foreign policy that dealt with the issues in a realistic manner. While acknowledging that Carter shifted his attitude toward the Soviet Union in mid-term from détente to confrontation, he refutes the assertion that there was an abandonment of the human rights policy and a change of course in Carter’s overall policy. The appearance of inconsistency, Strong argues, did not come from the conception of the policy, but from Carter’s overly ambitious agenda and unwillingness to prioritize among his initiative. Strong concludes that despite these problems Carter was a hardworking, intelligent and sincere individual in the conduct of a complex foreign policy agenda.

Similarly, Douglas Brinkley in his article “The Rising Stock of Jimmy Carter” finds that Carter made tremendous achievements, namely the Panama Canal treaties, the Camp David Accords, normalizing relations with China and promoting majority rule in Africa. He also argues that Carter’s greatest success was his human rights policy which gave the U.S. moral credibility around the world.

Although there now appears to be a disagreement concerning the failed or the successful evolution of the Carter administration's worldview and its foreign policy, there remains a further disagreement over to what extent Carter's early policy represented a change from the Cold War past. Did the Carter administration's foreign policy represent "containment by other means- which it operated within the tradition of détente initiated under the stewardship of Henry Kissinger during the Nixon and Ford Administrations? Or Was the Carter's foreign policy based on the rejection of containment that had dominated U.S. foreign policy since World War II ?

This study has a dual aim. The first purpose is to determine the significance and meaning of Carter's national security policy when his administration first came into office and to place Carter in historical perspective. Three questions are addressed: To what extent did Carter administration policymakers see the world differently from their predecessors? To what extent did the theory and practice of the Carter administration's foreign policy represent change from the Cold War patterns that had dominated U.S. foreign policy since World War II? What explains why the Carter administration initial foreign policy met with failure and reversal by its fourth year in office when the administration returned to Cold War realism by reinstating the strategy of containment based on realistic orientation and a growing concern with the Soviet Union and anticommunism – best symbolized by the Carter Doctrine?. The second aim is to engage in some revisionism of what we know, or think we know, about what Jimmy carter did in foreign affairs while he was in the Whiter House. This study attempts to challenge some of the initial accounts of Carter's conduct of foreign policy that found him naïve, weak, indecisive, and inconsistent.

I take the position that the Carter administration entered office with an idealistic world order approach that ultimately supplanted the strategy of containment. That approach was intended to replace the Cold War and détente policies of its post-World War II predecessors which

were based on strategies of containment: global containment of Soviet communism during the Cold war years from Truman to Johnson, followed by selective containment of the Soviet under Nixon and Ford. Therefore, not only did the Carter administration reject the strategy of containment as the basis of its foreign policy when it entered office, it can be argued that it represented the first post-Cold War foreign policy since World War II. I also argue that Carter was not as weak and indecisive any more as he was perceived at the time.

Methodological Concerns

One of the approaches to study U.S. foreign policy is the historical approach. This study employs this approach as its method. This approach comes out of the scholarly tradition of history and the humanities within academia. It tends to emphasize a historical understanding of U.S. foreign policy, attempts to recapture the specifics of the times, recognizes a wealth of factors influencing foreign policy, relies heavily on primary source documentation, and results in well written narratives for a scholarly and more general audience.

Historical reconstruction and narrative analysis are important methodological tools used in this study to explore U.S. foreign issues and assess the role Jimmy Carter played in his conduct of a complex foreign policy agenda. Historical reconstruction is necessary to uncover and explain the issues that Carter confronted and that affected him in his decision-making and narrative analysis is more than needed to critically assess Carter's policy and its outcome.

Within this methodological framework, I use the case-study approach because it is an appropriate method to bring us to an understanding of complex issues and events and emphasize detailed contextual analysis. I am fully aware that the problem with this method is that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability or generality of findings or that the intense exposure to study of the case biases the findings.

Therefore, some care was taken in the selection of cases to spread them chronologically across the life of the administration, to balance them with regard to perceived successes and failures. The cases were chosen consciously. The cases do not only examine accomplishments but failures as well. In some instances, the cases examine Carter accomplishments, like the Panama Canal treaties or the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel; others uncover his failures such as in Iran or Nicaragua.

But as usually occurs in the case study method, there is an artificial coherence in narratives that isolate a single issue and examine its origins, development, and resolution over what may be a considerable period of time. All the cases in this study come from one presidential administration. That fact simplifies the research project since all the stories told involve the same central and many of the same secondary actors.

Literature Review

This study uses a wide range of primary sources to reconstruct the policy history of the period under study and a large body of secondary literature from a wide range array of fields including cultural, diplomatic history and political science. The place to begin with any study of the Carter's presidency is, of course the vast holdings of the Jimmy Carter library in Atlanta, Georgia as it houses the 26 million documents shipped from the White House after Carter left office in 1981. The bulk of Carter's presidential papers held there are in the White House Central File (WHCF). The papers provide a window to Carter's thinking on major policy issues.

A number of former officials in the Carter administration have written their books and memoirs. President Carter's own memoirs, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (1982) is an especially full account of the Camp David summit of 1978 as well as the events leading to Carter's recognition of the People's Republic of China. Zbigniew Brzezinski's *Power and*

Principle: *Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981* (1986) is frank and extremely rich concerning foreign policy. Also valuable is Cyrus Vance's *Hard Choices: Critical Years of America's Foreign Policy* (1983). Together the Brzezinski and Vance volumes cover the full range of Carter's foreign policy.

Other books by former members of the Carter administration are equally important. Robert Pastor's *Condemned to Repetition: The U.S. and Nicaragua* (1987) provides a defense of the administration's response to the Nicaraguan revolution by a former member of the NSC who was one of the architects of that policy. William B. Quandt, *Camp David Peacemaking and Politics* (1986) is an excellent history of the Camp David accords by another member of the NSC who was responsible for handling the Arab-Israeli dispute; Gary Sick, *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran* (1985) is a good account by a third NSC member that describes the American response to the Iranian Revolution.

The Carter's administration has also received substantial scholarly attention. The place to begin with is Gaddis Smith's *Morality, Reason, and Power: American Diplomacy in the Carter Years* (1986). The book's title indicates what Smith believes were the three themes of Carter's foreign policy. For a more recent revisionist account of the Carter's presidency, Robert Strong's *Working in the World: Jimmy Carter and the Making of Foreign Policy* (2000) is a good book.

Probably no aspect of Carter's foreign policy has elicited more appraisal than Carter's commitment to human rights. The literature on human rights and foreign policy is daunting, but the most complete study of Carter's human rights policy is Joshua Muravchik, *The Uncertain Crusade: Jimmy Carter and the Dilemma of U.S. Human Rights* (1980)

Widely cited accounts of the U.S. response to the Iranian Revolution are Michael Ledeen and William Lewis, *Debate: American Failure in Iran* (1981), and Barry Rubin, *Paved With Good Intentions: The American Experience in Iran* (1980). On Carter's policy with respect to Central America, Walter Lafeber, *Inevitable Revolutions* (1984) provides an excellent of U.S. policy in the region. A brilliant study of the politics and diplomacy of the SALT II treaty is Strobe Talbot, *Endgame: The Inside Story of SALT II* (1979).

Structure:

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter one discusses the basic thrust of American foreign policy during the period from 1945 to 1975, investigating the origins of the Cold War, and discussing its impact on U.S. foreign policy. During that period, U.S. foreign policy had gone through many permutations but the ideological conflict between the U.S. and the USSR had underlain the bulk of American strategy. A considerable amount of continuity existed in U.S. foreign policy from Truman to Johnson; continuity based a strategy of containment, a *realpolitik* approach to international relations, and an ideology of anticommunism. Ultimately this led to shorthand concepts such as the "domino theory" and the continuing escalation of American intervention in the Vietnam War. The lesson for many foreign policy elites was to reject Cold War global policies. Indeed, these U.S. policies began, in fact, to change in the presidencies of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. These U.S. experiences in the decades following WW II are intensively discussed because every facet of the period is subject to intense debates and provided the difficult domestic and international context in which Carter became president.

Chapter two explores the theoretical elements that influence the making and conduct of American foreign policy. Idealism and realism are such elements. The conduct of U.S. foreign policy has always alternated between idealism and realism. While the American clash owes

an intellectual debt to an antecedent European thought, it was in the U.S. that both approaches were fully established in theory and practice. Throughout American history, U.S. policymakers had struggled with realistic and idealistic approaches to the challenges facing them. Thus realism and idealism are continuing traditions in American diplomacy. While one theory may predominate in certain periods, as did idealism did after 1915, and realism after 1945, neither has ever dispelled the influence of the other, and hat this duality accounts for the U.S. ability to pursue seemingly contradictory foreign policy;

Chapter three argues that the Carter administration entered office with a world order that ultimately supplanted the strategy of containment by a strategy of adjustment and global interdependence. This new approach to U.S. foreign policy would no longer revolve on the Soviet Union and the maintenance of international status quo. The Carter administration emphasized the need to address a variety of national security issues and to take a preventive diplomacy approach. The chapter, then, exposes how the U.S. entered into negotiations with the Soviet Union, its long-standing Cold War adversary, over arms race, thus rejecting the policy of confrontation that had been prevailing in the decades following WWII. If the Carter's vision of global interdependence downplayed the role of great powers and the utility of force, it saw a world of great complexity where pluralism and independence reigned supreme. In this new world, Carter administration officials felt they had no choice but address a variety of international issues that involved numerous actors. But this time the policy would be that of preventive diplomacy not coercion or force. Consequently, the U.S. negotiated with Panama canal treaties, used diplomacy to bring Egypt and Israel into signing a peace treaty, and helped bringing majority rule in Rhodesia.

The most important aspect and cornerstone of Carter' foreign policy is dealt with in chapter four: human rights. Indeed it was during the presidency of Jimmy Carter that an unprecedented emphasis on human rights was displayed. Unquestionably Carter gave human

rights greater rhetorical prominence and drew greater attention to the human rights practices of other governments than did his predecessors. But Carter was criticized for inconsistent policy applications, and critics were not completely wrong. The tension between a quest for a more consistent human rights policy and the old security considerations had led most commentators to criticize Carter's foreign policy as naïve and simplistic. The chapter, then, provides a detailed examination of the Carter's development of foreign policy with regard to human rights and the complexities it faced in implementing its policy. Throughout the case studies presented in this chapter, there is evidence that Carter's record on human rights is mixed, and that in the case of Indochina, for example, Carter was really caught between his commitment to human rights and geopolitical considerations. But despite the failures and flaws of his policy, there is no doubt that Carter was the first U.S. president largely responsible for the enhancement of both international and domestic attention to human rights.

Finally, the most serious crises that Carter and his team confronted are discussed in chapter five. The revolutions in Iran, Nicaragua, and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan came to challenge Carter's attempt to promote world politics based on global interdependence, preventive diplomacy, peaceful cooperation, and universal standards of morality and human rights. These challenges in 1979 and 1980 may have been necessary to show the limitations of a foreign policy based on ideals and standards of morality. In response to these challenges and to the shift in public mood away from the idealism of the post-Cold War, Carter returned to the Cold War realism of containment and anticommunism.

CHAPTER ONE

The Theoretical Framework Idealism v Realism

American Realism is an approach to the world that arises not only from the realities of global politics but from the nature of American character. From the fact we are all united as a people not only by a narrow nationalism of blood and soil, but by universal ideas of human freedom and human rights. We believe that our principles are the greatest source of our power. And we are led into the world as much by our moral ideas as by our material interests

(Condoleeca Rice, 2007)

Introduction

For over two hundred years, American foreign policy has been influenced by numerous theories and concerns. Each has dominated for a time. Idealism and realism are such two elements. The conduct of American foreign policy has always alternated between idealism and realism. Idealists and realists fundamentally disagree over the capacity of human society, and especially international politics, to eliminate the vagaries of existence in an anarchic state system and on the primary determinants of state behaviour in international politics. Realists emphasize the role that power plays in international politics. They argue that maintaining and enhancing one's security within the international system requires a realistic assessment of the world and one's place in it. Since the international system is dynamic and interdependent, changes anywhere have impacts everywhere including in one's own country. International peace depends on what is called the balance of power. Maintaining international peace and security requires that power is balanced with power. No state should become so predominant as to threaten the independence and sovereignty of other countries

Along with realism, idealism has had a pronounced impact on policy making in the United States. Idealists criticize realists about their excessive emphasis on power. Idealists argue that what ultimately shape world politics are moral ideals and values. Peace, prosperity, respect for human rights, self determination of peoples, and the right to democratically elect one's government are the values that drive the international system. The raw use of power and the use of war as a tool of foreign policy must be checked by the rules of international law, collective security, multilateralism, and the United Nations. There must be peaceful methods of resolving international conflicts. President Woodrow Wilson was instrumental in establishing the League of Nations. Since the League of Nations failed to prevent World War II, idealism has often been criticized by realists as being ineffective. Nonetheless, at the end of World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt helped to bring about the United Nations as mankind's last best hope for a peaceful world.

While the American clash between realism and idealism owes an intellectual debt to antecedent European thought, it was in the United States that both approaches were fully established, in theory and practice. Whereas in Europe, utopian idealism remained excluded from the realm of practice, in the United States it became a recurrent, contrapuntal theme of statesmen and politicians, commentators and theorists.

From the earliest days, American leaders have struggled with realistic versus idealistic approaches to the international challenges facing them. The exceptionalist notion of America as a grand experiment and its repudiation of the European tradition that were so central to the founding of the American republic led to idealism in American political culture. Early American leaders associated Europe with "power politics" what today would be called realism. Many early American leaders associated thought, or at least hoped that the quest for national power did not necessarily have to be the driving force behind foreign

policy. Instead these leaders were idealists and had a different vision; an image of what the world should be.

As America grew and its power with it, American policy makers had become more preoccupied with geopolitical spheres of influence and military balances, and the equation of national power with military power might be derived from the assumptions of *realpolitik*. Correspondingly, debates about military preparedness and related issues were cloaked in the language of realism. The prescription that America act realistically by power and maintaining international order through military strength and reasoned strategy attracted a large following, mainly after the end of World War Two.

Realism and idealism are, thus, continuing traditions in American diplomacy for they compete to define the nation's objectives. While one tradition may predominate in certain periods, as idealism did after 1915, and realism did after 1945, neither has even dispelled the influence of the other. Thus American foreign policy traditionally encompasses both prudent realism and moral idealism. Each tradition responds to two indispensable needs: to protect the U.S. from external threats in a hostile world and to stand for ideals worthy of emulation. This duality accounts for American policy makers' ability to pursue seemingly contradictory foreign policy. Today's climate of opinion continues to reflect both traditions.

1.1 What Is Realism in International Relations?

Realism is a theoretical approach to the study and practice of international relations. Realism is an opposing approach to idealism to the definition and pursuit of national objectives. Realists tend to accept conditions as they are and to define the ends and means of policy by the measures of anticipated goals, costs, necessities, and chances of success.

As a distinct school of thought in international relations theory, Realism places an emphasis on the State as the primary actor in world politics. Realism assumes that since the purpose of statecraft is national survival in a hostile and anarchical environment, the acquisition of power is the proper rational and inevitable goal of foreign policy. To realists international politics can be defined as a struggle between power-maximizing states in an anarchical environment. Hence realism is sometimes referred to as the power politics school of thought. Indeed the realist paradigm equates international politics with power politics. For realists power is the central organizing principle of international politics, not international law or organizations, and international law and world bodies like the United Nations are cynically used and abused by the powerful states to further their own interests. This underlines the correctness of the realist paradigm which views the structure of the international system as a hierarchy based on power capabilities, where the principle of equality between states does not exist since states have different power capabilities, and where the weak are at the mercy of more powerful states.

The concept of 'anarchy' as noted above is an important pillar of the realist paradigm. Anarchy stems from the fact that there is no authority above states capable of regulating their interactions, which means that states must arrive at relations with other states on their own, rather being dictated to by some higher entity. Therefore, states must look to themselves to protect their interests and ensure their survival. Realism assumes that sovereign states, rather than international institutions are the primary actors in international in affairs. Each state is seen as a rational actor that must look to help itself to pursue its self-interest and ensure its own security. Thus the concept of 'self-help' and 'sovereignty' become integral parts of the realist view in global affairs. Since all states seek to pursue national interest and are preoccupied with ensuring their own security, they will attempt to amass resources and maximize power. In such an anarchic world, relations between states

are determined by their relative level of power in terms of military and economic capabilities. Thus, since world politics is dominated by conflict and competition, states must acquire the necessary military capabilities to deter attack in a dangerous and uncertain world.

Realists look at the observable realities of the world and how it actually functions and not how it should be. If you desire survival in an anarchical society, the realists propose that this objective is best achieved by studying how people behave, not how they ought to behave. Realism appeals to policymakers owing to its commonsensical approach which corresponds to the world as it seems. In particular, it emphasizes the limitations available to policymakers and guides them as how to avoid conflicts. Realism presents an opportunity for policymakers to legitimize their decisions in that it posits a view which closely approximates the foreign policy requirements of a hegemony. The fact is certainly aided by the fact most international relations literature originates from a specific country: the United States. Indeed to regard American statesmen as independent would be naïve because, since 1945, the language of foreign policy has been the language power and political realism. Such foreign policy writing is infused with interest, mostly in order to maintain, explain, and justify U.S. external policy.

Realists have enjoyed a distinguished position in the American foreign policy community in the past and remain a respectable group today. Their track record as a guide to foreign policy is quite impressive. Hans J. Morgenthau, George Kennan, and Kenneth Waltz were among the first to recognize that the Vietnam War, for example, was a foolish diversion of American power, and Waltz was one of the few foreign policy experts who understood that the Soviet Union was a Potemkin colossus with feet of clay. When assorted hawks were sounding frantic alarms about Soviet power in the 1970s, Waltz was writing that the real issue was whether the Soviets could hope to keep up with the far wealthier and

more powerful United States. The 1980s proved they could not, and that Waltz and his fellow realists had been essentially correct.

1.2 The Classic Philosophical and Modern Scientific Variants of Realism

Throughout the analysis of international relations, no other theory has been as enduring or dominant as realism. Realism claims a long pedigree. The historical lineage of realism began with the ancient Greeks. Thucydides, in the fifth century is often portrayed as the founder of the school. His work and analysis of the Peloponnesian War was an exposition of realist concepts. For Thucydides, “the real reason (for the war)...was the growth of Athenian power and the fear this caused in Sparta.” (Thucydides 49). Thucydides’ work on the *Peloponnesian War* (431 BC) in which he described Athens’ behaviour toward the tiny island of Melos, as the strong do what they want and the weak what they must do, and endure the consequences .

It was not until the early 1500s that a political philosopher of the Realist tradition could share the status of Thucydides. Niccolo Machiavelli was widely condemned at the time, and, since, for his cynical and amoral advice on the way government should be conducted. Nevertheless, what he captured in his writings became the essence of what we know today as Realism. Then, each realist scholar since this time has contributed some part to the realist show. Machiavelli with his classic, *The Prince*, demonstrated the ruthlessness which the ruler of the state must display so that the security of the state could be maintained, preserved, and protected. From that time there were sporadic writings promoting Realism. Later Hobbes’ *Leviathan* with notions of social contract, and variables such as the state, self-interest, sovereignty, and power aided the realist cause. E.H Carr’s *Twenty Years of Crisis* (1939) emphasized the shortcomings of the idealist view of nature, thereby catapulting Realism to the very fore of international relations theory, a position from

where it would dominate in the decades to come. Along with Carr, Hans Joachim Morgenthau is purported by dominant international relations literature to be the founding father of realist theory of international politics. His book, *Politics Among Nations*, (1948) is considered the Bible of international relations on the subject. By the late 1970s, Kenneth Waltz attempted to reformulate Realism in a new and distinctive way. The approach he took in his landmark book, *Theory of International Politics* (1979) became known as Neorealism.

Thucydides posits as one of the early fathers of political realism which posits that interstate relations are based on might rather right. Through his study of the *Peloponnesian War*, a destructive war among Greek city-states, which began in 421 B.C., Thucydides observed that the strategic interaction of states followed a discernible and recurrent pattern. According to Thucydides, within a given system of states, certain systems of hierarchy among the states determine the pattern of their relations. He, therefore, claimed that while a change in the hierarchy of weaker nations did not affect a given system; a disturbance in the order of stronger states would decisively upset the stability of the system. Thucydides argued that the Peloponnesian War was the result of a systematic change, brought about by the increasing power of the Athenian city-state which tried to exceed the power of Sparta., and “the fear that this cause[d] in Sparta.” (Thucydides 49)

Thucydides was the first to describe international relations as anarchic and immoral. The “Melian Dialogue” best exemplifies his view that interstate politics lack regulation and justice. In the “Melian Dialogue”, he wrote that in interstate relations, “the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept.” (Thucydides 50) For Thucydides, international relations allow the mighty do as they please and force the weak to suffer what they must. Isn't Thucydides' dictum relevant today in the U.S. actions in Iraq?

The impact of Thucydides' work upon scholars of the Cold War period provides evidence for the relevance of his realist theory in today's world. In fact while the Peloponnesian War is chronologically distant from the present time, Thucydides' influence upon realist scholars in the post-1945 period and in turn upon U.S. diplomacy is direct. Indeed the foundations of American diplomacy during the Cold War with regard to the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union and the ethical consequences posed for smaller states caught in the vortex of bipolar competition are derived from his work.

Writings of the early Cold War years often derive their inspirations from Thucydides' work. This period has spawned a significant body of theoretical literature that finds in the Athenian-Spartan rivalry a precedent to the American-Soviet bipolar competition. In 1947, U.S. Secretary of State, George Marshall had called attention to the significance of the Peloponnesian War for an understanding of the contemporary world. "I doubt seriously whether a man can think with full wisdom and with deep convictions regarding certain of the basic issues today who has not reviewed in his mind the period of the Peloponnesian War and the fall of Athens", he said (Washington Birthday Remarks, Feb 22, 1947) Moreover, during the Cold War polarization, policy-makers equated American power to ancient Athens glory, as told in the Peloponnesian War. Thus in 1952, Louis Halle, Director of the State's Department Policy Planning Staff, wrote that "the present in which our country finds herself, like Athens after Peloponnesian wars, called upon to assume leadership of the free world brings him (Thucydides) virtually to our side. It seems to me that since World War II Thucydides has come closer to us so that now he speaks to our ears" (Halle 261)

Through the Cold War, scholarly work focused on the conclusions that Thucydides drew from his study of power and competition in bipolar systems. The contemporary

interpretation of the Peloponnesian War paraphrases what realists have come to term the “security dilemma”: a power of a subordinate state in a relatively stable international system increases disproportionately; it is brought into conflict with the dominant states, the struggle between these contenders. In short, the study of polarity in the Greek’s world in the period between the Persian and Peloponnesian War has influenced the work of realist authors such as Kenneth Waltz and Joseph Nye. In turn, this scholarship has influenced American diplomacy as reflected in the works of Louis Halle in the 1950s, and Henry Kissinger in the 1970s.

In his book *The Prince*, Machiavelli said “My intention being to write something of use to those who understand, it appears to me more proper to go to the real truth of the matter than to its imagination, and many have imagined republics and principalities which have never been seen or known to exist in reality; for how we live is so far removed from how we ought to live, that he who abandons what is done for what ought to be done, will rather bring about his own ruin and preservation” (90-91)

In this statement, we note a new spirit of realism and empiricism. Machiavelli is telling his readers that the appropriate way to understand politics is to eschew ideals and to look directly at the empirical reality of human behaviour. For this reason, Machiavelli is considered one of the great theorists of realpolitik, so much that his name has become synonymous with the term. *The Prince* opens with a dedication to Lorenzo the Magnificent, the Medici ruler of Florence who had destroyed Machiavelli’s beloved republic, for Machiavelli’s all a political realist who understood that someone like Lorenzo would be required to unite Italy. Consequently, Machiavelli proposes in his dedication to teach Lorenzo those political skills necessary to found a united Italy. It is this focus on power that in large part makes Machiavelli the first modern thinker. Following Machiavelli, power became a key variable of political analysis. It is clear that Machiavelli’s emphasis on power

implies a particular and essentially modern view that human beings are essentially self-interested and self-regarding. Clearly power would not be an effective influence unless self-interest was the defining characteristic of the human personality.

What makes Machiavelli's views genuinely modern is the attitude he adopts toward those aspects of human nature and the corresponding reality of power politics. Machiavelli does not consider self-interest and self-regard to be sinful, anymore than he does the desire for power. Machiavelli is empirical. Being bad for Machiavelli does not mean being sinful, it simply means what humans naturally are. Power has to do with the manipulation of people's self-interest. To the extent that the political leader understands this, and is able to determine what it is that people desire in any given situation, he can logically deduce the kinds of action he must employ to maintain his control of the situation.

Machiavelli says the prince, like any political ruler, must learn to think about politics in a new way. He must be strictly empirical in his political analysis, and cold-bloodedly logical in the conclusions he draws from that analysis. This requires that he eschews all ethical ideals, for it is precisely such ideals that blind the political leader to the reality of politics. And the prince must act logically as he thinks, even if it means violating generally held moral values. In short, if the prince expects to maintain his power, he cannot himself always behave "ideally. The dictate of power require cold-blooded logic in action. On the international level, Machiavelli believed that the republic must exist among other states that are a constant threat to its existence. Those conditions that generate power are ever present in international affairs. Consequently, the leader of the republic must exercise well the rules of power politics in dealing with foreign countries.

In the *Leviathan*, Hobbes explained the idea of the Social Contract in the sense that the state is the result of a contract between human beings, and that the scope and extent of the power of government are to be determined by an analysis of the terms of the contract.

Government is legitimate only if it corresponds to what men rationally consented to. This is a very modern notion that runs counter the medieval thought which presumed that secular government exist by divine sanction. The idea was prevalent in Hobbes' time, and was employed by the royalists who argued that the monarch rules by "divine right". The consent-contract theory flatly rejected this idea. Instead, it claimed that government is legitimate only to the extent that people have consented to it. Of political importance to Hobbes is that the contract theory makes possible what he believes to be a strictly logical "scientific" analysis of the state. Like all contract theorists, he reasons that human beings would consent only to that which rationally accords with their needs and desires that is with their human nature. Hobbes, like all realist theorists, thinks that the state is a rational structure. Therefore, it is raw self-interest, not moral impulses that explains the existence of the state. It is a basic desire for security that compels men to contract into civil society, so the contractual basis of the state is security. Another characteristic of the state is that it should be sovereign not only from international but from domestic restraints as well. The state, Hobbes, argues, cannot exist unless men lay down the right of governing. People should turn over not some but all powers or rights to government. "as if everyman should say to everyman, I authorize and give up my right of governing myself, to this man, or to this assembly of men...SOVEREIGN" (158). The theory of sovereignty is the heart of Hobbes' political thinking. Sovereignty means ultimate power, and when applied to political unit such as the state, it means that the state possesses final and ultimate power over all social and political bodies. When we say that the U.S. is sovereign we mean that it has final political authority domestically and absolute political autonomy from other countries internationally. For this reason, it would not only be considered illegitimate for any other nation-state to invade American borders, (as it was illegitimate for the U.S. to

invade Iraq), but it would be equally illegitimate for any subordinate political unit within the U.S. to claim final authority.

An important political variable in Hobbes's political thought, like with all realist theorists, is defined in terms of power. The absence of objective ethical truths makes power the key political variable. While Aristotle and the other classical thinkers conceived liberty as moral freedom, Hobbes conceived it as freedom from restraint, which is simply freedom to exercise one's power however one wants. This is why Hobbes insists that in a state of nature where there can exist no legal restraints, men have a right to everything, a right limited by the practical fact that they cannot amass sufficient power to exercise it. Their right, thus, is limited not by ethical considerations, but only by the restraints inherent in their natural conditions. In other words, there is no ethical dimension at all to rights and liberties as defined by Hobbes. They are defined strictly in terms of power.

The influence of Hobbes' thought has been nowhere greater than in the field of international relations. The power politics school of thought is generally indebted to Hobbes for its basic vision of international politics is essentially Hobbesian. The realists, for example, maintain that the international arena perfectly corresponds to Hobbes' description of the state of nature. There exists no sovereign authority above the states, hence no overarching systems of law. As a consequence, there is no way to constrain individual nation-states which are concerned only with their interest just as Hobbes' "natural man" is concerned only with his own self-interest. Each state finds itself in a perpetual struggle for power, with the result that each state finds itself in a chronic condition of war. In a word, an objective analysis of the international arena, realists argue, demonstrates the truth of Hobbes' assertion that the essence of politics is power, not principle.

Prior to WWI, it could be said that the field of international relations was in its infancy. No clear philosophical premises directed the study of global politics. Interstate relations

were not usually guided by paradigms of thought. Rather global politics tended to be largely anarchic and unscientific (Linklater 9-10). The First World War presented a major challenge to Realism. Realist practices were increasingly challenged particularly in the United States whose national experience to date differed markedly from the European states. The U.S. President Woodrow Wilson framed his Fourteen Points as the basis for the subsequent peace. These points included banning secret treaties, freedom of navigation and trade aimed at increasing interdependence, arms reductions, self-determination and the formation of what became the League of Nations. The allies largely acquiesced. The postwar era was one of optimism and pacifism. The “war to end all wars” had been fought, and the Kellogg-Briand Pact had outlawed the war. The discipline of international relations was founded in a climate that was a responsibility of academia being to contribute a further nail in the coffin of armed conflict. In the wake of a world war, the concept of an “international community” was pressed in the minds of the nations’ leaders with the hope of developing a system of international institutions and laws capable of preventing another major conflict. By the late 1930s the optimism that accompanied the end of the First World War was unravelling. The new Nazi regime in Germany was intimidating its neighbors, Italy had swallowed up Ethiopia, Japan was carving a new empire out of China, a civil war had swept Spain, and the World could do little to stop these new catastrophes. In this climate, the historian and former British diplomat E.H. Carr launched an attack on the legalistic and moralistic approach and the liberal principles that had marked the young international theory of the inter-war years.

Carr is purported by dominant International Relations literature to be, along with Hans J Morgenthau, one of the founding fathers of the realist theory of international politics and an influential theorist of international relations. Carr is also the best known Briton in a generation of predominantly American political realists. His book, *Twenty Years of Crisis*,

is therefore one of the founding texts of political realism. However, it should be noted that Carr was not a straightforward but a peculiar realist for his realism differs greatly from his contemporaries'. Carr believes that realism should be tempered with the moral values of utopian thought. At the same time, Carr wrote a tremendous critique of idealist theory that targeted every branch of political thought. He openly criticized British academics and intellectuals as idealists, who not only ignored the crucial role of power in international politics, but held a naïve idealistic view of international politics and interstate relations. His criticism departed from the fact that idealists paid little attention to the realities of the world around them. Instead they were radically determined to transform world politics and create a peaceful world order where states would no longer care about the balance of power.

Carr did not believe that it was possible to achieve a peaceful world because in the existing world "power is an essential element of politics". (100) Indeed Carr strongly believed that power was an important ingredient of politics. "International politics are always power politics, for it is impossible to eliminate power from them." (130). Carr's emphasis on power in international politics, however, does not preclude from disagreeing with those take this realist principle to its extremes. Unquestionably, Carr sees power as the main driving force of international politics, that interaction in the international arena can be well understood with reference to the selfish nature of states, to their lust for influence and the conflictual character of politics. On the other hand, he does not see power as the only driving force at work in the international arena. Unlike other realists, Carr believes that morality plays a role in politics. He maintained that serious policymakers pay attention to ideals as well as power. "Utopia and reality are two facets of political science...any political thought must be based on elements of both utopia and reality." (10, 87) It is abundantly clear that Carr thought that international politics was not only about power. Instead he refers to a "realistic" and international morality reflected in the actual behavior

of the states that recognize each other as members of the same community with similar goals and “feelings». In this context, Carr wrote:

The fact that national propaganda everywhere so eagerly cloaks itself by ideologies of a professedly international character prove the existence of an international stock of common ideas, however limited, and however weakly held, to which appeal can be made and a belief that these common ideas stand somehow in the scale of values above national interests. This struggle of common ideas is what we mean by international morality.”(130)

Carr sees no contradiction when he says that interstate relations are about power as well as about liberal ideals. The search for the “golden mean” between sheer power and morality also characterizes Carr’s analysis. Carr believes that “If, however, it is utopian to ignore the elements of power, it is an unreal kind of realism which ignores the element of morality in any world order”. Therefore, Carr reasons that the key is to find the proper combination of “utopia and reality” (14). However Carr is not helpful in this regard, because he also argues at different points that utopia and reality are incompatible with each other. He writes, for example, “Politics are made up of two elements -utopia and reality-belonging to two different planes which can never meet.” (87) He goes on to say, “This constant interaction of irreconcilable forces is the stuff of politics. Every political situation contains mutually incompatible elements of utopia and reality, of morality and power.”(88). We believe that power and ideals can be combined and states can pursue these goals simultaneously as the U.S. had done when it fought Nazi Germany in the Second World War, and when it opposed the Soviet Union during the Cold War era. In both cases, the U.S. was engaged in conflicts that combined between ideals and concerns for power, so it did not have to choose between its ideals and its concerns about power

In sum to say that Carr rejects pure realism is not completely correct because, despite his articulation on the role of morality in international politics, he never gave up the idea that power is essential in politics and that power calculations matter more than moral ideals. “the role of power” he wrote “is greater and that of morality is less” (151). This best reflects the peculiar realism of Carr.

While there is a consensus that realism is the power politics school of thought, it is important to explain there is not one kind of realism but many. We have already explained how Carr realism was different from his contemporaries, and it is also important to distinguish the classical realism of Hans J Morgenthau from the structural or neo-realism of Kenneth Waltz. Both paradigms were based on universal assumptions about the basic of state behaviour, but their assumptions differed fundamentally in their points of departure. The differences were intellectually grounded in the contemporary events during which the theories were articulated. Classical realism assumed a pessimistic view of human nature- an *animus dominandi*, in Morgenthau’s phrase- that led states to seek power wherever and whenever they could. Since state behaviour was merely an organized form of human behaviour, human nature was the ultimate cause of state behaviour. By contrast, the Neorealists give priority to the international system and its structural features , as distinct from the attributes and relations between the interacting units in explaining the behavior of individual states Although both variants of realism base their analysis of international politics on the importance of the role power and agree that power is the decisive determinant in the interstate relations in the international arena, there is a good deal of variations of how individual realists conceptualize and measure power and disagree on the underlying reasons why international politics can be described as a struggle for power.

The classical realist conception of power began with Thucydides who represented power politics as a law of human behavior. The drive to amass power and dominate others

is held by classical realists to be a fundamental aspect of human nature. The behavior of the states as a self-seeking egoist is understood to be a reflection of the characteristics that comprise the state. This reduction of the driving force behind international politics to a condition of human nature is one of the defining characteristics of classical realism and is most famously represented in the works of Hans J. Morgenthau. Morgenthau held that “politics, like society in general is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature”(Politics...4). The important point for Morgenthau was, first, to recognize that these laws exist and second, to devise policies that are consistent with the basic fact that human beings possess an inherent will to power. For both Thucydides and Morgenthau, the essential continuity of states behaviour is their power-seeking, which is rooted in the biological drives for human beings. Morgenthau emphasized the role of power in international politics. He does, however, make a sharp distinction between political power and physical force. Morgenthau argues that there is a fundamental difference between threatening the use of violence to achieve a particular outcome and its actual use; the latter represents, for Morgenthau “an abdication of political power in favor of the military or pseudo-military power.” (Politics...27)

Yet on the other hand, it is equally apparent that Morgenthau also defined power in terms of national power approach. Like other classical realists, Morgenthau equates power with identifiable and measurable resources. Morgenthau distinguishes between two types of elements that contributed to the power of a nation: those that are stable and those subject to constant change. The stable elements, which were largely of quantitative nature, included geography, natural resources(food, raw materials), industrial capacity, military preparedness, and population. Morgenthau identified four qualitative factors that have a bearing on national power: national character, national morale, the quality of government, and the quality of diplomacy. Morgenthau singled out the quality of diplomacy as the most

important factor contributing to the power of a nation. According to Morgenthau, “the conduct of a nation’s foreign affairs by its diplomats is for national power in peace what military strategy and tactics are for national power in war (Politics...129)

Morgenthau’s works form the basis for many authors in the Realist tradition. Yet it was not until 1979 that Kenneth N. Waltz attempted to reformulate realism in a new and distinctive way. His aim was to cure the defects with earlier theories of international relations, including classical realism, by applying a more scientific approach. The new approach Structural realism or neo-realism (first coined in Waltz’s book, *Man, The State, and War*), which is most often associated with Kenneth Waltz’s landmark book, *Theory of International Politics*(1979) became known as neorealism or structural realism. The new approach shifts the focus away from the laws of nature and, instead, emphasizes the importance of structure of international system and its role as the primary determinant of state behaviour. Unlike traditional realism that views state behaviour directed by its self-interested nature, Waltz gives priority to the international system and its structural features, as distinct from the attributes of and relations between the interacting units in explaining the behaviour of individual states.

While classical realists saw international politics in terms of the characteristics of states and their interaction with each other Waltz emphasized the importance of the system-level or structure in world politics (79), and argues that structure, not human nature, directs state conducts. Structure is a tool determining how states might shape their behaviour and interaction with one another (81). Waltz recognizes that the structure of the international political system is defined by the organizing principle of anarchy. (114). The concept of anarchy as described by Waltz provides a viable description of the workings of the international system. Within a state, organizations with specialized functions are formed to achieve shared objectives under a government. In the international system, nation-states

cannot unite for a common goal under the supervision of an “international government” because of the competing entities interested only in attaining their objectives even at the expense of the interests of world community.

In the international system, the neorealists contend, there are no laws governing the behaviour of the states, and states are not held accountable for their criminal actions in a court of law that enforces its rulings. In this condition of anarchy, states act as independent and sovereign political units, and are assumed at a minimum to want to ensure their own survival. Waltz explained this idea by emphasizing that anarchy in the international system pushes states to concentrate on their own survival and interest through their “self-help” or struggle for power. (98) Indeed the driving force of survival is the primary factor influencing their behaviour, and in turn states develop military capabilities, as a means to increase their relative power. This situation is often viewed as synonymous to a state of war. Structural realists argue that because there is always the possibility that any particular state may resort to force, the outbreak of war is a likely scenario in an anarchical environment. According to Waltz, anarchy produces lack of trust among states and prevents states from entering into cooperative agreements to end the state of war. Moreover, Waltz argues that the structure of the system limits cooperation among states through fears of power accumulated by other states, and thus compels the states to seek power. The desire of each state to maximize power results in a ‘balance of power’ which shapes international relations and also gives rise to the ‘security dilemma’ that all states face.

1.3 Morgenthau: A Critic of U.S. Foreign Policy

Morgenthau had been one of the foremost prominent critics of American foreign policy, and of the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War in particular. Morgenthau made a blistering attack on the policy makers of the Truman administration. Morgenthau charged

that U.S. post-World War II policy of containment of the Soviet Union was largely based on ideals found in the liberal and capitalist world views. It is exactly this type of ideals Morgenthau thought was inappropriate as it had committed the U.S. into taking the role of ‘world policemen’ and engaged them in economic and military operations world wide. The same held true of American policy toward China. Morgenthau criticized Truman and Acheson for presenting “the Chinese Communists as the enemies of mankind, in order to appease the China lobby. The standard of thought applied on China was simply to test the nature and the policies of the Communist government of China by principles of western morality. Government leaders were adopting the “moralistic approach” and thus taking the nation down the road of hatred rather than reason. The U.S. policy makers had become the voice of what is vulgar, blind, and weak in the people.

Morgenthau’s remedy was to understand the past and adhere to its lessons. He called on the nation to “remember the great and simple truths...of the early statesmen of the Republic.” Americans should remember that “the golden age of isolated normalcy is gone forever,” that “diplomacy without power is feeble, and power without diplomacy is destructive and blind.” He cautioned that “no nation’s power is without limits “and that consequently its policies must respect the power and interests of others.” Americans, he stated, “have shown throughout their history that they are able to face the truth and act upon it with courage and resourcefulness in war, with common sense and moral determination in peace.” Americans must forget “the sentimental notion that foreign policy is a struggle between virtue and vice, with virtue bound to win.” They must forget the “utopia notion that a brave new world without power politics will follow the unconditional surrender of wicked and powerful, can have the mission to make the world over in its own image.” Most importantly, Morgenthau urged the Americans to “remember always that is not only a political necessity, but also a moral duty for a nation to follow in its dealings with other

nations but one guiding star, one standard of thought, one rule for action: The National Interest.” (In Defense...239-243).

Morgenthau’s criticism of U.S. foreign policy was best illustrated through his opposition to the war in Vietnam. He condemned the war as immoral and imprudent “the policy-makers who are so concerned about our collective and their personal prestige might take a moment to reflect on the kind of country America will be when it emerges from so senseless, hopeless, and brutalizing war.” (Vietnam ...19-20) After full-scale military intervention through U.S. combat troops in 1965, he had become a public critic. Morgenthau had brought forward the argument that it was the national interest of the U.S. to guarantee stability in South East Asia, striving towards a balance of power policy between Vietnam and China. Morgenthau had assessed China not to be strong enough for military and territorial expansionism as a regional hegemony and to threaten U.S. interests. He had been convinced about the necessity and ability to come to terms with China. For him, the Vietnam War had been a paradox because this war weakened the real ally and strengthened the real rival. Another argument had been that Vietnam had maintained no relations with Soviet Union. Morgenthau had marked the Vietnam War to be a case of misguided foreign policy (The Pathology...3-4) .

Another point of criticism had been that Morgenthau denied an ideological approach in U.S. foreign policy of anti-communism which was, in his eyes, established within the circle of foreign policy makers, the academic elites, and the public, pursuing idealistic political goals of democracy promotion and nation building. He had been convinced that this approach was wrong. For him, nationalism, not democracy, had been the strongest ideology, determining the particular national interests and the foreign policy of a state. He had accused U.S. foreign policy makers to be anti-communist on principle, presuming all communist states to threaten U.S. interests and security and being responsible for the major

evils from which the world suffers. His further argumentation had been that this demonological interpretation of communism was, on the one hand, dangerous, drawing off the attention of U.S. foreign policy makers from the real threat, Soviet expansionism. For Morgenthau, this threat required a strategic and pragmatic foreign policy in terms of power balancing with the Soviet Union (The Pathology...8-9).

On the other hand, he had advanced the view that a blanket opposition to communism was intended, opening the possibility to legitimate a certain kind of U.S. foreign policy. He had persisted that this foreign policy was characterized by idealistic goals of democracy promotion and nation building leading to interventionism and Vietnam War. Morgenthau had been of the opinion that U.S foreign policy makers had to distinguish between different communist states according to their intrinsic nature, their relationship with the Soviet Union and the degree of subservience to Moscow or China, and the threat they carry for the interests of the United States. He had distinguished between different types of communist states. Communist states in Eastern Europe or Cuba should be contained and deterred because of their subservience to Soviet Union, while nationalistic communist states such as Italy or the states in Indochina should be supported because they have traditionally taken positions independent from the Soviet Union or China. Morgenthau had assumed that the communist leaders in these states were nationalistic, and communism was in fact nationalism, featured by a liberation movement against old colonial or new imperial powers and the demand for a national right of self-determination, and independence against the tempted control of the Soviet Union and the colonial powers China and France. He had been convinced that Vietnam would also be prepared to fight against a new imperial power, the U.S. Finally, he had assessed and declared Vietnam, whether communist or not, to be no problem for U.S. security interest in South East Asia. Morgenthau had accused the Kennedy

and the Johnson administrations to have misjudged Ho Chi Minh, leading to a war which he had put down to ideological blindness. (U.S. Misadventure...9-35)

Within his reflections on the Vietnam War, Morgenthau had challenged the ideological motives of U.S. engagement in Vietnam and the idealistic goals of war. These goals had been democracy and nation building to prevent the spread of communism. It had been the Kennedy administration which justified and described the Vietnam War as a war between the good democracies against the evil of communism and affirmed that democracy is a superior and universal value to be spread in South East Asia. He had been of the opinion that this ideological approach in U.S. foreign policy would imply an interventionist impulse leading inevitably to a taint of colonialism, imperial interventionism, and a crusade in the name of freedom. In other words, Morgenthau had denied a Wilsonian approach in foreign policy, alluding to the involved danger of ongoing military intervention be justified as “just wars” (Myers 266-267)

Morgenthau warned that the U.S. ideological, and immoral foreign policy had put American prestige, legitimacy, and credibility in the world at stake. His understanding of the prestige in the context of his opposition to the Vietnam War had been that he assumed an exceptional reputation of the U.S. as a legitimate power in the world, setting it apart from all other nations. For him, this legitimacy had been the result of the inimitable moral attractiveness and integrity of U.S. national identity, political culture, and social and economic systems. He had given reasons for this assumed attractiveness, arguing that the state ensure security, equality, and the liberty of its citizens who are allowed to claim further moral principles of human and minority rights and the right of self-determination. It had been Morgenthau’s primary concern that these moral principles should be preserved in favor of integrity of the U.S. political culture and social system, and by this, democracy should be perfected at home.

His second concern had been that these principles should guide an ethical U.S. foreign policy, leading to credibility as a moral power in the world which respects the equality of all states in terms of sovereignty and the particular right of national self-determination as universal moral principles. Morgenthau was convinced that the U.S. was an attractive and successful ideal, a kind of beacon with gravity. Other nations should learn a lesson from this system and emulate it if they want to learn a lesson and to emulate. If other nations had decided for another political culture and social system, such as communism, this would have come up with the paramount and universal moral principle of self-determination, all states were free to claim and which Morgenthau had emphasized. In other words, an ethical U.S. foreign policy should be characterized by abandoning to enforce a particular social system or a particular culture such as democracy, both predicated to be universal and therefore imposed on other cultures and nations. This understanding of morality was the reason why Morgenthau had denied a Wilsonian approach of democracy and nation building in U.S. foreign policy, mainly by military interventions, as immoral. Therefore in his opinion, the Vietnam War was been immoral and contrary to the U.S. moral integrity, prestige, legitimacy, and credibility he had believed in. He had claimed U.S. foreign policy to admit failure, to end the war, and to concede the Vietnam people the right to self-determination without any U.S. intervention or participation.

1.4 Wilsonian Idealism

Wilsonian idealism is the term of passive rebuke frequently applied to the system of foreign policy of U.S. president during World War I. Also known as political idealism, this strand of thought has been grossly distorted by overuse over the course of the past fifty years; originally coined as a shot at Wilson for his responsibility in the breakdown of the

balance that set the stage for World War II, political idealism has since been expounded into a system of thought that provides a polar opposite to political realism.

The idealistic impulse was long expressed before there was an America ; in John Winthrop's 1630 sermon about Boston's destined role a "city upon a hill" with "eyes of the people upon us". It grows from the assumption that America is a society different from all others inventing a model of freedom, opportunity, and self-government toward which all people might aspire. Idealism was firmly grounded in the belief that the U.S. was a nation set apart by its values and principles. Idealists strongly believe that the force of America is the force of moral principle and that the idea of America is to serve humanity and that morality not expediency must be the guiding principle of all American policy. As for use of military force, idealists argue that while other nations used force for the oppression of mankind and their own aggrandizement, the U.S. would use force only for the elevation of the spirit of human race.

The idealist school of thought holds that the world view is based on the idea that governments derive their legitimacy from the consent of the governed, and that governments should respect the human rights and the basic rights of their citizens. For most of American history, U.S. leaders focused primarily on the implementations of these values at home, saying that the U.S. should be the "standard of freedom and independence" but the "champion and vindicator of its own." (Adams, Independence Day Address to the U.S. House of Rep, 04/07/1821) To this end, in the wake of WWI, U.S. President Wilson attempted to ultimately banish war by creating a comprehensive international system of collective social and economic interdependence among constitutional democracies.

The theory of idealism is, thus, closely associated with Wilson. He championed an idealistic American foreign policy dedicated to building "a world safe for democracy.. His rhetoric was moralistic in his calls to make the world safe for democracy. When Wilson

finally made the decision to enter the WWI, he justified his action in highly idealistic terms that enabled the American people to come to regard the war as a crusade. The rhetoric that accompanied intervention made it clear that the U.S., in keeping, with its strongest tradition, was taking a stand against autocratic tyranny, much as it had against Britain in the American Revolution. Wilson's vision of peace requires a democratic foundation that would assure the necessary fusion of policy and purpose. In his war message to Congress in April 1917, Wilson declared that "a steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations." and argued that no "autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants." Wilson believed the League "must be a league of honor, a partnership of opinion...only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own.(War Message to Congress, 2 April 1917, Senate Doc, 3-8)

Wilson's faith in a concert of democracies presumed a common interest that would eliminate conflict and war. In his advocacy of a world order, Wilson identified the interests of humanity with the interests of the United States. To Wilson WWI was, therefore a war of American concern. No longer could the citizens of the U.S. consider themselves above or beyond the concerns of other nations. "We are participants...in the life of the world. The interests of all nations are our own also. We are partners with the rest. What affects mankind is inevitably our own affair as well as the affair of the nations of the world." (Cronon 419) Wilson's Fourteen Points speech to Congress in January 1918 called for an end to the old balance of power system of international politics in favor of a new collective security system grounded in the League of Nations. Wilson brought America out of isolationism, placing her as a world power. Gone was the confining tradition of the Monroe Doctrine. Gone too was the equally restrictive emphasis on the Pacific Rim. Wilson also

maintained that the U.S. could succeed where other nations, less virtuous, had failed. His rhetoric called for a crusade to win over evil (evoking the good v evil dichotomy which would pervade forever in U.S. foreign policy rhetoric). Wilson also argued that a peaceful and harmonious postwar international order based on the principle of universal freedom and democracy could not be established unless autocratic imperialism that sought dominance in Europe was finished with.

Idealism stresses threats to global rather than national security. During the Cold War, idealists sought to universalize the humanitarian ideals and moral principles to which the U.S. aspired. They advocated support for international organizations, international law, arms control, human rights, and above all democratic governments. Idealists believe in the possibility of creating a more secure, more prosperous, and just world order, one compatible with American values. Idealism can also be seen as the application of morality to foreign policy. One could argue that most American foreign policy rhetoric is idealistic. Idealism is used to sell foreign policy to Americans and the world. The Truman Doctrine, for example, was a plan to formulate a safer democratic world in which people could live free of communist tyranny, its realist content was to contain the Soviet Union and keep the balance of power favorable to the U.S.

This brand of Idealism may command vigorous interference in affairs of other nations not only when American interests are threatened , but also when innocent people or communities face inquiry or aggression ; ideally this would impose on the U.S. the duty of policing the entire globe. This, however, is beyond the capacity even of a super power like the U.S. today. Does this mean that America should ignore all the world's iniquities which do not affect its interests? Not necessarily! To be sure, it would be foolhardy for the U.S. to interfere militarily to prevent flagrant abuses of human rights in China or the Soviet Union, which are powerful states, although the U.S. might apply some less aggressive and less

effective measures in such cases. But this does not mean that the U.S. should not get involved at all.

1.5 The Realist Critique of Idealism

Critics have frequently attacked Woodrow Wilson and those of his disciples as being idealistic and asynchronous, somehow outside the interests of the United States. Isolated by their fate in international law and the cooperation of nations they were divorced, the argument goes, from the realities of balance of power politics. The chief Republican critique was that President Wilson was giving away something extremely valuable, which was American sovereignty. But, in fact, what he was trying to do was to create a collective arrangement, which required all parties to give up a certain amount of sovereignty to make the new arrangement work. It was a tiny amount of sovereignty, and no serious person thinks that the U.S. would have been threatened in anyway by this. But the way he talked about it, and the way Republicans talked about it, allowed to be perceived him as articulating a weaker position than he actually had. The U.S. gave up some of its sovereignty in 1949, for example, when it entered NATO and is giving up sovereignty every time a new country was allowed in NATO because Washington is obligated by treaty to go to their defense.

Critics from the “realist school”, including Hans Morgenthau, George Kennan, and Robert Osgood, criticized Wilsonianism’s divorce from realism as the principal reason that diverted the U.S. away from the true national interest. In a paper presented to the Mid-America Conference on History at Topeka, Kansas, Historian Emily Hill observed that prominent interpretations of U.S. foreign policy commonly represent the focus on geopolitics during the Truman administration as a dramatic shift away from the “Wilsonian reveries” of the interwar period. She asserts that the emergent “Morgenthau-Kennan” thesis of the late 1940s, early 1950s guided critics of idealism for the fifty years; (2-3) George

Kennan expressed that thesis in his 1985 foreword to the expanded edition of his book *American Diplomacy*. Kennan lamented the “excessive legalism and moralism” of American foreign policy and asserted that during the first five decades of the twentieth century, United States foreign policy lacked an “accepted, enduring doctrine for...achieving real, and desperately needed results in our relations with others;” (*American Diplomacy*, vii). Hans Morgenthau wrote in 1951 that Americans tended to “conceive of our actions in non-political, moral terms,” thus preventing us from “seeing problems of international politics as they are” and subsequently developing an appropriate foreign policy. (In Defense...7).

The realist critique of idealism, or the “Morgenthau-Kennan” thesis, in foreign policy springs from the observation that states cannot be bound by the same moral rules that bind individuals. Kennan goes so far as to deride “the assumption that state behaviour is a fit subject for moral judgement.”(*American Diplomacy* 63) Morgenthau contends that within states individuals are subject to “supra-individual moral principles” but that between states “relations are not controlled by universal moral principles concrete enough to guide the political actions of individual nations.” Thus the attempt to apply moral principles beyond the bounds of one’s own nation is itself a form of “immortality” that reaches its apotheosis “in the contemporary phenomenon of the moral crusade.” To Morgenthau, bolshevism represented the “full bloom” of the immoral impulse to engage in moral crusades, but Woodrow Wilson’s democratic idealism displayed “an inkling” of the same thing”. (In Defense of ...8)

In drawing a sharp distinction between the morality of individuals and that of states, the realists speak as if morality and self-interest are incompatible. But what form of ethics demands complete self-abnegation? Any major religion, creed or ethical system recognizes self-preservation as a legitimate goal of the individual. Idealism or morality insists only that

self-interest is bounded, that is not infinite. Legitimate self-regard must be balanced against sensitivity to the well being of others and must be pursued through honourable means. Why should the same not hold for the nation? Why can't national policy attempt to combine respect for the requisites of self-preservation with adherence to honorable means and with respect for the legitimate claims of other nations? Perhaps the mixture between regard for self and for others differs somewhat in countries and individuals. National policy may require more caution than some individuals choose in governing their own lives. If individuals are obliged to abide by certain moral codes can they be exempted from the rules when they act collectively with others in the name of the nation.

The prime exhibit in the realists' indictment of idealism is Woodrow Wilson's entry in and handling of peacemaking after World War I. Realists did not oppose U.S. intervention in 1917. Instead they argued that the only mistake the U.S. made was its delay entering the war . Kennan argued that American leaders, especially President Wilson, were slow to appreciate the impact an allied defeat would have on U.S. national interest. Citing a passage from Wilson's speech to the League to enforce peace in May 1916, Kennan argued that Wilson's declaration that Americans were not "concerned" with the causes of the war was a betrayal of his failure as a statesman. Once America entered the war, though, Kennan observed that "we had no difficulty in discovering -and lost no time in doing so- that the issues involved in it were of the greatest significance to us." (American Diplomacy, 65). But Kennan failed to provide the context of the speech. In the same passage , it is clear that Wilson was correct: as a nation, it was too late to be concerned with the origins of the war. What Wilson said was that the "interests of all nations are our own also. What affects our mankind is inevitably our affair as well as the affair of the nations of Europe and Asia." (Cronon 419).

Morgenthau was equally critical of Wilson. According to Morgenthau, Wilson's failure to recognize that the European balance of power was the "traditional guarantor of American security" led him to temporize in his response to World War I; even when the United States entered the war, Morgenthau decried the fact that it was for the wrong reason. Wilson sought not to "restore a new, viable balance of power, but to put an end to the balance of power once and forever." (*In Defense...*26). What Wilson actually said was that the United States was not interested in a "new attempt" to maintain the peace through "nothing" but the balance of power. Wilson knew that balance of power alone could not maintain peace. Balance of power politics inevitably led to war because some nation always challenges the balance. Furthermore, the United States would not join a combination of exclusively European powers. The United States was interested in more than just the peace of Europe; the United States sought world peace. (An Address to the League to Enforce Peace, 27 May 1916, the Papers of Woodrow Wilson, 113-16)

So entrenched had the Morgenthau-Kennan thesis become that few questioned its validity. It was so amorphous in its definition of national interest that proponents of the realist school could criticize anyone whose interpretation of the national interest differed from theirs on any given issue. Only recently have scholars begun to assail this principal assumption of the realist school. In a review essay in *Diplomatic History*, Regina Gramer observed that "not just realist but also revisionist scholars in diplomatic history and international relations uncritically mix factual and normative conceptions of national interest," obscuring the origins of those policies. Gramer calls for a critical analysis of that uncritical mix.(518) . An another scholar asked why scholars have not examined the roots of modern international relations studies instead of accepting as an act of faith the realist interpretation. (Baldwin 119)

A study of the theories of Quincy Wright, and Denna F. Fleming reveals the roots of international relations studies and exposes several weaknesses in the realist critique of Wilsonianism and “idealism”. These two political scientists carried on the work of Wilson for sixty years. These scholars were in the vanguard of their discipline. They held the highest positions in their professional guilds. They advised John Foster Dulles, J. William Fullbright, and many other influential statesmen and politicians. They were called to testify before UN committees, Congressional committees, and other prominent organizations. Each served on the influential Committee to Study the Organizations of Peace.

1.6 Wilson’s Disciples and criticism of American Foreign Policy

As Wilsonians, Quincy Wright and Dean Fleming believed in the need to organize the world around a common body of law. They recognized the efficacy of collective security, international organizations, and the rule of the law as the best means for maintaining peace. But they did not hold these to be the only means, nor even the most desirable means under given sets of circumstances. These scholars not only understood balance of power, matchpolitik, and any other variable of the “realist” approach, they advocated such frameworks in the absence of meaningful international organization. Their mentor, Wilson, practised balance of power politics diligently. A variety of evidence exists that demonstrates Wilson’ affinity for power politics. Morgenthau observed that Wilson and Alexander Hamilton were “one” when it came to maintaining the European balance of power (In Defense...6).

Wright believed that the two big errors of post-World War II U.S. policy were to call “Kremlin imperialism” Communism, and to call the policy of preventing Kremlin expansion “containment”. By accepting the Kremlin thesis that it spoke for and led all Communists, Wright thought that the U.S. had fallen into a Kremlin trap: because the U.S. thought the Kremlin was committed to the overthrow of capitalism, all Communists were

necessarily the enemies of the capitalist world. Such framework prevented the U.S. and its policy makers from exploiting future Titos. It was only as an instrument of Kremlin imperialism that the West should have feared Communism, not as an indigenous manifestation of self-determination in a sovereign state. "I doubt whether we know how much of the Communism in Asia and Africa is Kremlin inspired and how much is a local reaction against the sense of unequal treatment and conditions of low economic standards." (Wright to Dulles , 9 February 1953)

Like Kennan and Morgenthau, Wright maintained that the U.S. did not possess the resources to contain the Soviet Union along all its frontiers. Plausibly, the U.S. could "provide an adequate force so that if a war should occur, the Soviet Union would inevitably be defeated," but the best defense, he believed, was a strong UN with a genuine police force. Containment doctrine was the product of a "Maginot mentality." (*American Policy*, 477) . As well, he feared the costs and increased potential for confrontations that attended containment. For Wright, the question was whether the West could build a power so overwhelming that the Soviets could not hope for victory in any confrontation and thus "gradually fade into their orbit ," or whether the West should concentrate on the development of " a more stable equilibrium" through a strengthened UN. He believed that although the first alternative was desirable if possible, it increased greatly the risks of World War III (Wright to Dana Bakcus, 11 December 1952)

By 1961 Wright had concluded that the pursuit of containment had caused American military and economic power relative to the Soviet Union to decline, and undermined America's reputation in the underdeveloped world (*Western Diplomacy...* 144) W He had developed a new appreciation for the potential of underdeveloped nations to contribute to or detract from a stable world order, and of the potential for an unsophisticated U.S. policy to aggravate problems in those areas. In this context, Wright declared that the U.S. was

squandering its “great and deserved reputation” by maintaining racial discrimination at home and favoring colonial powers over people seeking self-determination (The U.S. Position...13-17). Clearly, Wright now believed that support for colonial regimes was outside the interest of the U.S., of the UN, and of peace.

In a letter to Walter Lippman, Wright agreed that it was difficult to judge the real intentions of a nation. He noted that, although, many believed that Russia was “guided entirely by expansionist motivations, entirely by fear of attack, or entirely by Communist ideology,” the influence of these and other factors was relative to circumstances. (Wright to Lippman, 29 January 1948). Wright had stated in a previous letter to Lippman that it was safe to assume that the Soviet government had alternative policies, one of which was to “establish normal relations and develop mutually beneficial trade.”(Wright to Lippman, 20 January 1948)

These convictions about Soviet behavior remained substantially unchanged for the rest of his life. In some of his writings, Wright alluded sympathetically to the evolving New Left interpretation of Soviet Communism. U.S. policy makers, Wright believed, would benefit from a study of Soviet policy makers that sought to answer whether they intervened around the globe from a conviction that such interventions were a defensive necessity or whether they were reacting spontaneously to acts they interpreted as hostile. Too often, and without sufficient evidence, U.S. policy makers assumed that Soviet actions were inherent characteristics of the Soviet state and /or that the ambition to dominate and convert the world motivated its leaders. (International Conflict...40)

Wright believed that the universal nature of Marxist ideology gave cause to hope. The faith of Marxists that Communism would ultimately and inevitably triumph over capitalism kept the Soviets from experiencing a sense of urgency to spread their program across the world. He contrasted the confidence of the Marxists to the decline that was infecting

Western democracy and concluded that should the advocates of liberal democracy recapture the confidence they once held, their cause would triumph in the long run. (Improvement of...18) Wright also insisted that Marxism might not have been the monolithic entity that the administration portrayed it to be. It would be wise if the West and the U.S. rejected the Soviet thesis that all Communist states follow the Kremlin lead; for it might then discover “that states other than Tito’s Yugoslavia have within them strong nationalist roots and resist the Kremlin.” (The Nature of...209). Perhaps nonaligned states, like India, which harbored no wish to become a satellite of either Moscow or Washington, might “in time establish third, fourth, and fifth forces in the world,” which would have the effect of stabilizing a bipolar system. (209). Wright continued to adhere to what basically a balance of power system for maintaining stability and order.

This framework of conflict and progress led Wright to advocate the concept of peaceful coexistence. He had little doubt as to the outcome of the peaceful confrontation between the two ideologies. In his mind, democracy would always prevail over the long run. But Wright greatly feared the consequences of a prolonged conflict. Ideological wars were historically insoluble , he believed , and he provided as evidence the wars from the seventh to the seventeenth centuries between Christians and Muslims, and those between Catholics and Protestants from the sixteenth through the seventeenth centuries. In neither instance was one side able to overcome the other. Wright believed that the best means of resolution would be to adopt the formula of the Treaty of Westphalia, where each country was free to adopt its own ideology. The only constraint he would impose would be the adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (Wright to Dulles, 9 February 1953)

Wright intended, if not to replace them, to offer a counterbalance to the ideologies of capitalism and communism with an ideology of internationalism. Wright believed a “middle way” between Western capitalism and Kremlin socialism, was the best solution. Wright also observed that international law recognized a state’s right to deal with ideological problems without external interference but note, too, that both technology and the development of international standards of human rights had qualified that freedom of action.(International Law...625)

Wright’s sympathies in the confrontation between Marxism and democratic capitalism were clear. He believed that democracy’s greatest advantages over communism were its respect for human liberty, and that under conditions of peace, democracy can advance materially , socially, and intellectually with greater speed than any other form of society. (Western Diplomacy 112). But he was equally adamant that the UN should adopt a neutral role in the contest between democracy and totalitarianism. What he sought was, as John Kennedy put it, a “world safe for diversity,” because a world safe for democracy, in the phrase of Wilson, did not necessarily imply a democratic world. (Wright to George Ball, 27 May 1970)

The United Nations must be ideologically neutral to prevent it from perpetuating the status quo in the face of needed change. Wright asserted that because the UN represented all ideologies , it must provide an opportunity for all ideologies to expand by legitimate means in order to maintain stability. Those means would include what Wright referred to as “genuine self-determination of peoples and legitimate transnational communication..He concluded that, if an ideology expanded through legitimate methods, “this would be evidence that it deserves to expand according to Jefferson’s idea of the testing of ideas in a free forum of opinion.” (Wright to Richard Falk, 5 April 1963)of course the UN’s advocacy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights tempered any such neutral position; for

presumably a people could, through self-determination abandon the democratic principles Wright and the UN held so dear.

In an address delivered at Washington and Lee University, 14 February 1956, Denna Fleming assessed ten years of collective security and arrived at similar conclusions. As usual, he praised Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, and Cordell Hull, as visionaries, but observed that that in 1945, the Allies did “merely what should have been done in 1920.” They had created another league that retained many of the strengths and flaws of the old one. What was needed in 1945 was a “real advance toward the organization of a world community, but by this time there was no community.” (Woodrow Wilson... 617) .The UN could not discipline either the U.S. or the USSR and the “chance to organize the world which we lost in 1920 had not been reigned.” (618). He declared that the Geneva Summit of July 1955, a summit that led the United States to declare publicly its opposition to atomic war and renounce the policy of liberation, a success even though Eisenhower and Nixon retained a recalcitrant posture afterwards.(619-620). But Fleming observed that U.S. support of colonial regimes propelled “most of the Asian-Arab world away from us and into neutralism.” This led to the UN vote of 14 December 1955; which admitted sixteen new states over heavy U.S. opposition and was a great defeat for U.S. diplomacy and U.S. efforts to lead the UN.

The big governments, Fleming insisted, had learned little about collective security and regarded the UN as a “tool for their own purposes,” one “just as expendable as the League was.” To counter this, he called for the U.S. to support the UN in efforts to aid underdeveloped countries or U.S. leadership would be rejected just as it had been on the vote for universality of membership. The UN, he concluded, would not have the power to enforce peace, but it would be a forum where “the organized opinion of mankind’, a force

he believed the great powers could not disregard in the atomic age, could find expression. (619-623).

Fleming's conclusions were based largely on his negative assessment of U.S. policies, both foreign and domestic, since 1917 U.S. policy makers had failed to maintain the balance of power, failed to suppress Bolshevism, failed to maintain isolationism, failed to appease the dictators, failed to contain communism, failed to roll-back communism, failed to limit the demands the military made on the American economy. (The Failure of... 36-41) These failed policies all indicated to Fleming the need to negotiate from mutual recognition of legitimate regional defense interests.

Eastern Europe was, according to Fleming's logic, a legitimate defense zone for the USSR as was Western Europe for the United States and eastern Asia for China. The former Axis Powers of Japan and Germany, he stated, must come to terms with both East and West or they might serve as the nucleus of a future conflict. No sphere could dictate terms to the other two, a situation that demanded that the UN be developed to assist cooperation. To facilitate that goal, the UN, Fleming insisted, should be moved from the U.S., and a relief and rehabilitation type program for the underdeveloped world should be designed and funded.

Fleming declared that the nations of the world must welcome diversity and evolution and promote freedom of trade as well as civil liberties, especially in the already free world where McCarthyism had taken hold. In a telling observation, he declared that the creation of deterrent strength was "indispensable" in an international system of anarchy. "There must be," he wrote, "arms sufficient to deter our opponents from any attempt at world conquest, and vice versa." (The Failure of... 45). Here again is a demonstration of his commitment to balance of power politics.

Fleming also feared a resurgent isolationism in the United States. The immediate evidence for this fear was public opposition to a treaty concerning race relations and human rights in the UN. This indicated to Fleming that it would be difficult for the United States to engage a “responsible , long-sighted leadership of the non-communist world” because only the U.S. feared the” comparatively feeble efforts of the United Nations to establish some common standards of human rights.” (*The Failure* 46)

Fleming continued to express this fear of neo-isolationism during the fifties. He thought that what he perceived as the failure of containment would generate pressure for a “Fortress America.” The pressure of the Communist bloc against the “ring of containment”; the desire of U.S. allies to distance themselves from the Cold War and U.S. “erratic leadership”; and the “costs of global containment “ would all feed the demand for isolationism . He criticized what he labelled as the “mad rush” to join alliances after World War II, but he did not oppose alliances per se. He noted the irony; though, of a country that had rejected the League as an entangling alliance yet now had so many alliances it was difficult to keep track of them. (Needed, *A Purge of Obsession*, 163)

Fleming also claimed that U.S. suppression of the United Kingdom and France during the Suez Crisis “turned loose long-term impulses toward unification and neutralism in Western Europe.” In that context, he wrote that the U.S. must repair relations or face imposed isolation. (*Are We Moving...14*) Yet his other remedies included a call for the United States to withdraw from most of its” nearly 900 overseas bases.” (17). He called for the UN to become a “permanent place for negotiation, co-operation, and for getting the world’s work done” and warned “peace will be precarious until a functioning world community is organized.” (20).

The publication of *The Cold War and Its Origins* in 1961 provided the medium for Fleming's criticism of U.S. foreign policy. His analyses of the fifteen years that followed the end of World War II asserted that because the U.S. had failed to accept the lessons of the Second World War, its policies reacted to, rather than created, the dynamics of world politics. Roosevelt was a leader who really understood Soviet politics, but Harry Truman was confused and therefore botched relations with the Communist world.

Fleming urged the United States to retake the initiative for positive, not negative goals, and remember that the people of the USSR and the PRC wanted what U.S. citizens wanted peace, a better standard of living, and more personal freedom. (*A Diplomacy...*384-386). Furthermore, the U.S. he believed, must purge itself of a series of false assumptions in order to change the direction of its foreign policy. Americans needed to relinquish their belief that Communists sought to conquer the world and embrace instead the idea of peaceful coexistence. They should reject the notion that Communism, if not actually worse, differed very little from fascism, or risk an inadequate understanding of the enemy. They must divorce themselves from the domino theory and its unfounded assumptions. Equally important, Americans had to realize that rapid and constant economic growth was not essential to maintain their values. (*Needed...*118).

Fleming insisted that to move beyond the Cold War, the U.S. must account for the trend of counter-encirclement and growing Soviet arms: U.S. encirclement of the Soviet Union had "generated the very power we feared." (*Beyond the Cold War*, 115). Containment was based on the faulty interpretation of a Soviet ideology of world revolution which excluded from "the defensive category any action that the Soviet Union... could take;" This also contributed to the fear of appeasement, which Fleming claimed was a false analogy, for the USSR and Nazi Germany were, he observed, very different. (117-119).

In what was clearly a rejection of the global scope of U.S. military policy, Fleming called for the United States to disengage. This was a rejection of Truman's policy of universalism, a policy Fleming would later condemn as the "disastrous decision" for globalism. (Fleming to *New York Times*, 11 January 1969). In the absence of an effective world organization, the basic means to accomplish universalism was unilateral action in pursuit of balance of power. Both Wright and Fleming believed isolationism had killed the League of Nations, global imperialism had nearly killed the UN.

Conclusion

Ambivalence between idealism and realism has been a perennial feature of U.S. foreign policy, but the dominant school is still realism covered with a dash of idealism. Although the dichotomy between idealism and realism, like all dichotomies, is false because U.S. foreign policy must be firmly rooted in both national interests and values, it still continues to be the dominant framework for debate.

President Wilson represented American foreign policy central dilemma. Since Wilson's the rhetoric of world democracy has been the attractive packaging of often realistic U.S. foreign policies pursued in the world. The U.S. has historically posed as a champion of democracy while pursuing pragmatic policies in pursuit of leadership's narrow perceptions of its national interest. At home and abroad, this has often opened the U.S. government to charge of hypocrisy and cynicism. U.S. officials are, of course not any more hypocritical than other government officials around the world .But when words and actions fall widely apart, the charge gains greater credibility in the public eye.

This dramatic chasm between idealism and realism was most evident during the Cold War and after when the U.S. time and again pursued counter-democratic policies in the Third World in defense of its short term economic and strategic interests. Many of these

policies have been pursued in the name of realism. While the U.S., like any other nation, has the right to focus on the national interest, an adequate foreign policy strategy must incorporate idealism's emphasis on ideals and values. In fact there are those who would draw a sharp line between power politics and a principled foreign policy based on values. This polarized view – you are either a realist or an idealist may be just fine in academic debate, but it is bad for American foreign policy because the real issue is to establish a sense of proportion between idealism and realism and rebalance these two elements of foreign policy. If either realism or idealism has their limits, the alternative is not crude and one dimensional brand of foreign policy realism or idealism. Adopting either idealism or realism as an overriding foreign policy framework is not an adequate policy. Instead both should be used as framework for conducting foreign policy because it is in the U.S. general interest to promote freedom, markets and peace. In sum, realistic idealism is an alternative that would make American interests consistent with American values.

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CHAPTER TWO

The Historical Framework

The Past as Prologue: American Foreign Policy from 1945 to 1975

There are two now two great nations in the world, which Starting from different points, seem to be advancing towards the same goal the Russians and the Anglo-Americans.... Each seems called by some secret of Providence one day to hold in its hands the destinies of half the world.

Alexis de Tocqueville,

Democracy in America (1835)

Introduction

The American experience in the decades following the World War II is one of the most complex and controversial experiences in American history. Almost every facet of the period is the subject of intense debates in which scholars present new historical interpretations. Almost as soon as WWII ended the U.S. found itself entangled in a somewhat subtler and more complex Cold War with the world's only other superpower the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Cold War was a driving force in shaping American foreign policy. Indeed the ideological conflict between the two superpowers had a tremendous influence in the formulation of American foreign policy in the years 1945-1975; it redefined America's historical role in the world community. American foreign policy that was founded upon George Washington's warning "beware of foreign entanglements" soon found itself involved in different parts of the world.

Since the United States emerged as the only great allied power not devastated by the war, it became the leader of what was called the “free world”- phrase that came into use with the rupture of the Grand Alliance. Assuming the leadership of the “free world” meant that the U.S. had to play a pivotal role in deciding, or helping to decide, or shaping the great foreign policy and geopolitical issues of the postwar era. America’s role as “leader of the free world”- whether self-assumed or by default, was a driving force behind its foreign and defense policies. Beginning with Harry .S. Truman’s containment policy and doctrine and continuing through Détente, the U.S. presidents during that era developed their unique foreign policy dealing with the Soviet Union. Truman proposed to contain the Soviet Union, provided economic aid to war-torn Western Europe, organized the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, carried the Berlin airlift, and led the United Nations efforts in the Korean conflict. Dwight Eisenhower, after him, opposed the Israeli-British-French war against Egypt , attempted to cope with Third World nationalism, provided low key support to South Vietnam and organized the South East Asia Treaty Organization. His successor, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, went ahead with the Bay of Pigs operation against Cuba, confronted the USSR in the Cuban missile crisis, and moved American support for South Vietnam from low gear to high gear. Vice president, Lyndon Baines Johnson, who became president at Kennedy’s death escalated and Americanized the war on Vietnam. But Nixon vietnamized the war and, along his national security advisor, Henry Kissinger adopted a new approach toward the Soviet Union and China called Détente.

2.1 The Historiography of the Origins of the Cold War

Explaining the origins of the Cold War has been one of the most contested topics in the study of American diplomatic history for there are considerable differences in approach by academics and historians when looking at the origins of the Cold War. The

historiography of the origins of the Cold war passed through three chronologically defined and ideologically distinct perspectives which can be called 'Traditionalism' or 'Orthodoxy', 'Revisionism', and 'Post-Revisionism' which appeared in succession roughly in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Each reflected the cultural and political attitudes prevailing in the wider contexts of the particular era in which it flourished. (Hammond 3-26)

The Orthodox view that held sway in the 1950s and much of the 1960s was marked by a consensus among American historians on the nature of Soviet threat and on American firm response to it. Orthodox scholars saw the Cold War as primarily caused by Joseph Stalin's attitude toward the West, the intransigence of Leninist ideology, Soviet aggression and expansionism in Eastern Europe and other parts of the world. The Orthodox historians were the defenders of U.S. policy of containment and emphatically laid the Soviet Union responsible for the onset of the Cold war by undermining the Second World War alliance between East and West, increasing the level of military confrontation between America and Russia, and acting aggressively to promote the imposition and spread of communism in Europe and elsewhere. Traditionalists firmly believed that the Soviets together with their communist allies were bent on world revolution and would sooner or later eliminate capitalism and create a monolithic communist world under their tutelage.

The Orthodox approach was first and probably best expressed by William Mc Neill and Martin F Herz. Mc Neill (1957) was one of the first to posit that Stalin was fundamentally responsible for the beginning of the Cold War because he supported the spread of communism throughout the world and that Stalin could not be trusted because he did not keep his promise of ensuring popular-elected governments in Eastern Europe. Mc Neill pointed to the fact that after the war Stalin, not only broke his promises, but reverted to Bolshevik slogans and ideology for he was intent on expanding their influence even

beyond Eastern Europe. According to him, the Cold War thus became inevitable because one state wanted to impose its totalitarian ideology on the rest of the world and that state was Russia not America which demobilized immediately after the war and that ideology was totalitarianism not democracy.

In a similar vein, Martin F Herz in his *Beginnings of the Cold War* (1966) clearly blamed the Cold war on the Soviets. By contrast to Mc Neill, Herz emphasized not ideology in his explanation of the Soviet attitudes but the thesis or tradition of the 'Great Powers'. Herz contended that the Soviets' desire to plunder and establish a sphere of influence undermined the possibility of cooperation between the two emerging superpowers. Herz depicted Poland as the critical state where the United States and the Soviet Union clashed in the early stages of the Cold War. He believed that if the Soviets had permitted Poland and Eastern Europe to retain some semblance of independence or autonomy, there would have been no Cold War. Even though Mc Neill proposed an ideological interpretation of the Soviet attitudes, and Herz explained them in terms of the "Great Powers' tradition, both agree that Stalinist Russia was unquestionably responsible for the shift from the climate of wartime cooperation to one of postwar hostility and suspicion. They contended that the West could not trust Stalin to cooperate on the vital postwar issues of Europe and global security because he had made clear his intentions of tightening his grip on Eastern Europe and expanding the Soviets influence elsewhere.

Within the framework of orthodoxy one can identify 'ideologists' and 'realists'. The former, such as Columbia political scientist Zbigniew Brzezinski (later National Security Council under president Jimmy Carter), saw the Soviet Union as driven by militant ideological expansionism which could be met only by vigorous American countermeasures.

He argued that there was little prospect of moderation in Soviet goals and hence little chance of peaceful existence with the Kremlin. (Communist Ideology...46-59)

A strand which is also generally grouped with traditionalist accounts is realism. This approach takes a deeply critical view of American foreign policy as being overly determined by moralistic and universalist ideals and unduly attentive to the ideological element in Soviet foreign policy at the expense of balance of power considerations. The Cold War, the Realists argue, was inevitable because of the expansionist needs of both the Soviet and American political systems. They did not only believe that Soviet actions arose as much from the desire for security as from ideology, but that America's own tradition of moralistic diplomacy was ill-suited to cope with postwar world. The classical statement of realist interpretation of Cold War origins is that by H.J Morgenthau *In Defense of National Interest* (1982).

The weakness of the Traditionalist historiography of the origins of the Cold War is that it was heavily influenced by contemporary views of the Soviet political system and a conservative bias which predominated in the intellectual circles in the immediate postwar period. Traditionalist historians are human beings, and their approach to subjects like the Cold War was colored as much by subjective factors, such as cultural background, political views, religious beliefs as by an objective interest in interpreting past events and understanding them on their own terms. The traditionalist historiography offers a rather one-sided view of the Cold War. By minimizing American culpability for the conflict and placing the blame exclusively on the Soviet Union, McNeill and others seem to ignore the fact that the Cold War originated because of a conflict between two states competing images for peace and security in the postwar world. Soviet ideology could not have caused the Cold War if it did not come in conflict with American values and beliefs. In fact the

problem is not with the Soviet ideology but with the irreconcilable nature of the ideological conflict that separated America and Russia. Another weakness of the Traditionalist approach was that it exaggerated the focus on the Soviets' expansion and influence in Eastern Europe and ignored the influence that the Americans had in Western Europe. The Americans had expanded their influence in Europe just as the Soviets had.

During the 1960s, as the United States became involved in the war in Vietnam, the Orthodox historiography came under serious challenge from the Revisionists who took a different view of the origins of the Cold War as they came to question the motives of the U.S. government and the American business system. The experience in Vietnam played an important role in promoting disillusionment with U.S. diplomacy and foreign policy, and a tendency to see the Soviet and American 'empires' as morally comparable. Far from being perceived as the defender of freedom against Soviet aggression, the U.S. was increasingly seen as an aggressive imperialist and militarist nation itself sustaining the Cold War for selfish economic and strategic reasons rather than doing so in the cause of liberty in a world so threatened by totalitarianism

Revisionists came, thus, to correct the weakness of the exclusive concern in Orthodox writings on politics and diplomacy by emphasizing the economic factors. In their dissent from the Traditionalists, they turned the issue related to the causation of the Cold War on its head, attributing it not to Soviet expansionism in Europe and elsewhere, but to American efforts to establish U.S. global economic hegemony. They deny that the Cold War resulted simply from Soviet territorial expansion or the objectives of international communism to which the U.S. responded defensively in order to preserve freedom and democracy, that the U.S. had instigated the Cold War and that Soviet policies had been fundamentally defensive and limited in scope. The Soviets were merely reacting to what

the Revisionists considered the ideology of American and imperialistic foreign policy and the allegedly insatiable requirements of capitalism. In sum, these scholars began to question the assumption that the U.S. system was morally superior, and the view that American foreign policy was essentially and inherently benign. It should be noted that some of the moderate revisionists preferred to emphasize personalities rather than structures / institutions.

Revisionists argue that the U.S. was committed to the ideal of an open door capitalist system that it would not comprehend any other settlement. Cohabitation with the Soviet bloc on the basis of mutual acceptance was thus ruled out. The most articulate exponent of the 'Revisionist anti-thesis to the Orthodox school, William Appleman Williams published *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1962) in which he blamed the U.S. for the Cold War. He argued that America's chief aim in the years after the war was to make sure that there was an "open door" for American trade. Williams, thus, emphatically, asserted that the pursuit of an open door and American demands for business markets for American goods were the determining forces behind American post-war diplomacy. In a similar vein Gabriel and Joyce Kolko in *The Limits of Power: The World and The United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954* (1972) rejected the standard version of the origins of the Cold War, which holds that Soviet-American distrust basically grew out of conflicting interests and views of the two nations after the Second World War. Instead, they argued that the primary American aim was to remold the world so that American business could profit everywhere. Political and business leaders wanted to foster capitalism on a world wide scale so that the United States would have free access to raw materials.

Not all Revisionists followed Williams along this line of interpretation. Some played emphasis on factors other than economic. In *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Nagasaki*

(1975) Gar Alperovitz, another noted Revisionist historian, placed the blame for the Cold War on the Americans, but not for their economic policy but use of the atomic bomb. He contended that Truman decided to drop the bomb as a means to intimidate the Soviet Union. The atomic bomb, in Alperovitz's view, did help seed the Cold War and was not meant to buckle Japan into surrender but was used as political statement toward the Soviet Union. Even though the Americans trusted that the bomb would prove an effective diplomatic weapon, the bomb had little actual effect on Soviet behavior.¹

If Revisionists can be thanked for drawing attention to the economic dimension of the struggle between capitalism and communism, their conclusions have proved to be contentious. Their accounts exaggerated the economic concerns for American policy makers, though they could not be ignored, but tended to neglect the political, military and strategic considerations. The 1970s saw the emergence of what was labeled the 'Post-Revisionist's school which has been markedly diverse in its approach and conclusions because new archival sources became available. This school of thought eventually produced a series of counter arguments to the Revisionist line of argument. These historians did not necessarily refute every one of the Revisionist claim at once. Post- Revisionist scholars argued that to seek the blame on one side or the other was misguided. Instead they attempted to go beyond placing blame on either side and contended that misperception, miscalculation and mutual incomprehension accounted for the beginnings of the Cold War. This mutual suspicion had long existed between the U.S. and the USSR. Friction was sometimes manifest in the Grand Alliance during the WWII but intensified after the war as the West felt threatened by, what it considered, the expansionist policy of the Soviet Union and the Russians by, what they regarded as, the traditional Western incursions of their territory.

The 'Post-Revisionist scholars, despite their different assessments and conclusions, offered a better documented approach than their Orthodox and Revisionists predecessors. John Lewis Gaddis, the leading Cold War historian, in *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (1972) argued the Revisionists have relied too heavily on economics, ignoring the influence of domestic politics on the conduct of American foreign policy. While he acknowledged the value of the Revisionists attention to economic factors he did not consider American economic determinism the primary cause of the Cold War but might be some part of the explanation. Instead Gaddis believed that both America and Russia wanted to keep the peace after the war, but the postwar conflict was caused by mutual misunderstanding, reactivity and above all the inability to understand. Gaddis acknowledged that Americans and Soviets had developed contradictory postwar peace schemes which led to intensify the suspicion and misunderstanding between the two powers. America, he contended, wanted to guarantee post-war peace by promoting self-determination and guaranteeing the unity of the Grand Alliance by creating a new collective security organization to ensure the peace. Americans believed that Soviet cooperation would be necessary but the Soviets could not agree on this American made peace as it was perceived as an American victory over the East. Gaddis explained the U.S. failed to understand Stalin's fears and need to defend himself after the war, and were unable to accurately assess Stalin's motives, desires and goals. While Mevlyn Leffler in *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration and the Cold War* (1992) saw the Cold War as a clash of military establishments both seeking world domination. Leffler explains the Cold War was not caused by Soviet expansionism for the Soviets were not concerned with promoting worldwide revolution, as believed by U.S. officials. Instead they were concerned mostly with their country's immediate periphery and security and preserving their rule

In 1997 Gaddis published a landmark book entitled *We Know Now: Rethinking Cold War History*. In his arguments, Gaddis became engaged in what could be described as a post-revisionist/orthodox interpretation reverted to the orthodox reasoning for he can be said to have restored an element of this interpretation in his view that the Cold War's origins were to be primarily found in Stalin's paranoia toward the U.S. and in the Soviet actions. He emphasized the role of democratic values and the disparity between how the United States treated its allies and how the Soviet Union dealt with Eastern Europe as important factors in the outcome of the Cold War.

However the main thrust of recent Cold War historiography has been that the confrontation had its origins in ideological confrontation. In the late 1980s Kieln (1989) and Thomas(1986) produced important studies stressing the role of ideological incompatibility between East and West in producing a climate of hostility not amenable to a resolution, a theme that was picked up in the 1990s by, among others, Powalski (1998), Ball(1998) and Davis (1999). However while focusing on the importance of ideology, this recent scholarship tends to be more concerned with eastern ideology rather than that of the West .(Leffler 501-524). This can be seen in an important work of the new scholarship of Gaddis, the leading Cold War historian. Gaddis continues the theme already established by his earlier work and summarized above: an emphasis on the importance of geo-politics and power balances in driving the confrontation. The new element, and one which reflects important trends in modern Cold War scholarship, is a concern with factors such as the personality of Stalin, the nature of authoritarian government, and the character and content of Communist ideology. (*We Now Know...*285-289).

It can thus be seen that the historiography of the Cold War origins, as it has developed in parallel with the rise and fall of the Cold War itself, has incorporated a very wide range

of approaches. Cold War scholarship has found expression in traditionalist accounts of an expansionist Soviet Union that needed to be restrained by American-led alliance, revisionist assaults on the policies and purposes of the U.S. and post-revisionist arguments that have sought to explain the confrontation without apportioning blame to one side or the other. These interpretations were themselves the product of ideological alignments that reflected the Cold War world. Since the end of the Cold War itself came to an end, a new consensus has emerged – a fourth phase, in the historiography of this vital period in modern history. This fourth phase emphasizes ideology and, in some ways, represents a return to the orthodoxies of diplomatic history, finding explanations in ideological alignments and great power politics.

2.2 Containment: From Theory to Practice

At the conclusion of World War II, U.S. relations with the U.S.S.R began to deteriorate. The perceived threat of Soviet expansion fuelled anti-communist fervor that affected both American domestic and foreign policy. With conflicting ideologies and mutual distrust, the two superpowers became rivals competing for power and each locked in an ideological struggle in which America saw itself as the progenitor of what was right. To do right was to halt Soviet expansionism. In this context, George Kennan, the U.S. Foreign Service's expert on the Soviet Union presented in 1946 "the basis of what was to be a new American policy that recognized the hostile character of the Soviet regime"(Spanier 37). In a wire to the State Department from Moscow, called the "Long Telegram"², he states the basis of his "containment policy". The containment policy describes how the United States should control the Soviet Union and not allow it to expand its ideology of communism outside its territory. To deal with the Soviet threat, Kennan called for a long-term and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies.

Clearly the Telegram served as an anti-communist manifesto and presented a strong prescription for American policy and a reasoned analysis of Soviet foreign policy, its motives and ambitions. Kennan underlined containment and patience as the means to meet and combat Soviet expansionism. He wrote: "The main element of any United States policy toward the Soviets must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies" which if unchecked and uncontrolled would "move constantly, whenever it is permitted to move, toward a given goal. Its main concern is to make sure that it has filled every nook and cranny available to it in the basin of world power." To that end he called for a policy that was "designed to confront the Russians with unutterable counter-force at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world." Kennan believed that with the Soviets in a state of weakness, it would be a good strategic time to "contain" them and not let them expand before they have time to regroup and strengthen. To Kennan the Soviet Union, exhausted and drained by war, posed no serious military problem to the United States or its allies, but was a strong ideological and political rival.

Containment was, therefore, the prescribed policy for it would not saddle the United States with unsustainable military obligations. So as long as the U.S.S.R. did not stage a military attack, the United States did not have to resort to a direct confrontation or a "general military conflict". Kennan believed that this was unlikely to happen because the Soviet leaders, unlike Hitler, were "neither schematic nor adventurist" in the sense that they were extremely "sensitive to the logic of force", and because the Soviet Union continued to lag economically far away behind the West (American Diplomacy, 107-128)). Instead of an emphasis on the military, containment's reliance on economic sticks and carrots, intelligence and diplomacy, and the promotion of the vitality of the capitalist democracies would guarantee peace.

The great difficulty with Kennan's analysis is that on the one hand, he did not believe that the Soviet Union, because of its weakness, represented any military challenge to the West and the U.S., on the other hand, he suggested that the threat was military and therefore was to be confronted by U.S. military power (Ambrose 97-98). This idea was confirmed by other critics who asserted that Kennan believed that what "the Soviets acknowledged was force and that the only remedy to the Soviet challenge was unrelenting struggle and confrontation." Walter Lippman, the containment's most reasoned critic, described the policy "a dangerous statement of policy" (qtd in Hixson 73). Lippman criticized Kennan for his failure to distinguish between what was vital and what was peripheral for America. He based his criticism on Kennan's idea of applying "counterforce at every point" which he claimed would exhaust the resources of America. In this context Lippman said

The policy is misconceived and must result in a misuse of American power. This policy would force us to expend our energies and our substance upon these dubious and unnatural allies on the perimeter of the Soviet Union, the effect of the policy is to neglect our natural allies in the Atlantic community, and to alienate them. (The Cold War... 47)

In a similar vein, Quincy Wright maintained that the United States did not possess the resources to contain the Soviet Union along its frontiers and asserted that Containment doctrine was the product of what he called "Maginot mentality" (American Policy... 477). Wright concluded that the pursuit of containment might cause the decline of American military and economic and would undermine America's reputation in different parts of the world (Western Diplomacy...144) Despite criticism, flaws and weakness, the containment policy provided the foundation for all subsequent geo-strategic policy doctrines for U.S.

military police actions around the world. Kennan's containment strategy found its first application in the Truman Doctrine of 1947. In March, 1947, President Harry S. Truman was preparing to launch a major foreign policy orientation that would define U.S. foreign policy in the post-Second World War era and beyond. This new policy would be based on active American involvement in world affairs and to contain, by force if necessary, the spread of communism around the globe. To secure the support of the American people for the dramatic sweep of the new policy, Truman was fully aware for the need to define his doctrine in terms of broad commitment for the purpose of defending American values of freedom and individuals liberties.

The Truman Doctrine was born from the U.S. President's speech delivered before a joint-session of Congress to deal with the situation in Greece and Turkey. In fact a bitter civil war was raging between the Royalists and the Communists who attempted to seize power in Greece. Those governments, backed by the British, resisted with military force, but in 1947, Britain informed the U.S. government that it could no longer maintain the expense of aiding those nations. Turkey was being pressured by the Soviet Union about access to the Mediterranean. This worried American policy makers who believed that a Western guardianship of the Eastern Mediterranean must continue. The region was strategically vital because the Suez Canal which connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean through Egypt, and because of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits in Turkey, which provide choke points that could have been used to deny free passage to the Soviet navy from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean. (Rourke 44)

In his speech Truman posed the policy in terms of the need to provide aid to the governments of Greece and Turkey, but the speech contained the clear implication that he was proposing a new global role for the United States. The U.S. president began by

describing the military and political pressures being applied to Greece and Turkey by “terrorists” and “communists” but did not mention the Soviet Union. In this context the U.S. president said that “ the very existence of the Greek state is today threatened by the terrorist activities of several thousand armed, led by Communists who defy the government’s authority” He linked the security of the United States to a broad anti-communist crusade “Totalitarian regimes.....undermine the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States” In response to the totalitarian threat, the U.S. must respond firmly but “primarily” through “economic assistance”. Emphasizing the seriousness of the crisis in Greece and Turkey, Truman, therefore, asked Congress for \$ 400 million in aid to those countries. This program of economic assistance combined with military aid, he believed, would help Greece defeat the heavily armed communists who were trying to topple the Greek government. Couching the conflict in ideological and moral terms, Truman proclaimed that people would have to choose between the alternatives of communist tyranny and democratic democracy.” Truman, then, proclaimed the new foundations of American foreign policy: “I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures”(Truman, 176, 178-180).

Although the statement was initially aimed at winning congressional support for U.S. aid to Greece and Turkey where the American administration feared Soviet penetration, it ultimately underpinned U.S. cold war policy. Indeed the Truman Doctrine was a de facto declaration of the Cold War. Truman’s address outlined the broad parameters of U.S. cold war foreign policy which was based on the assumption that the Soviet Union was the center of all communist activity and movements in the world and that the United States needed to provide military and economic assistance to contain it and protect nations from its penetration and aggression. Truman exaggerated the Soviet threat so as to exploit the

American people's fear of that threat and because he was conscious of the American people's desire to retreat into isolationism after a war. The Truman Doctrine was thus the impetus for a major shift in United States foreign policy from isolationist to internationalist. The policy of isolationism that had characterized America for most of its history was gone, and gone with it the tradition of non-involvement in European affairs. In other words, the Truman Doctrine had totally overturned the Monroe Doctrine, which stated that the United States would not interfere in European affairs and would oppose any European attempt to colonize the Americas, for not only America jealously defended its spheres of influence but went beyond that and had made sweeping commitments in different parts of the world for decades to come.

Ideological premises and geostrategic security concerns were inextricably linked with American economic interests. Becoming one of the most important initiatives in the early Cold war, the Marshall Plan of 1947 served these interests. As the war-torn nations of Europe faced famine and economic crisis in the wake of World War II, the United States proposed to rebuild the continent in the interest of political stability and healthy world economy that were believed to be the most effective barriers to contain Soviet expansion and to avert leftist political takeovers. In this context, on June 5 1947, speaking to the graduating class at Harvard University, Secretary of State George C. Marshall, for whom the European Recovery Program was named, laid the foundations for a U.S. program of assistance to the countries of Europe. The program pumped billions of dollars into Western Europe. Although the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were invited to apply for economic aid, Stalin, not only rejected the offer but countered it with the Molotov Plan, a series of bilateral trade agreements with eastern European countries. In total the United States government spent over twelve billion dollars from 1948 to 1951.³ This economic aid did spur significant economic recovery in countries receiving it. The Marshall Plan made it

clear that it was around economic strength that the U.S. should construct a basic containment strategy for many American policy makers came to recognize the importance of the economic assistance to alleviate the conditions of distress conducive to Communist expansion. In short this American economic policy finalized the division of the world into two hostile camps.

Soon after the Marshall Plan was launched, however, it became clear that the plan itself would not suffice. In February 1948, the Soviets engineered a coup d'état in Prague, thus furthering the Stalinization of Eastern Europe. A few months later, as West Germany revival proceeded under American auspices, the Soviets launched a blockade of West Berlin, the Anglo-American deep within communist East Germany, in an attempt to dislodge them from the city. The latter called this bluff with a successful airlift. Thus it became crystal clear that a prerequisite for Europe's recovery was military security. To counter what the United States considered Soviet aggression in Europe, they decided to establish a military alliance. This alliance formalized the policy of containment. In April 1949, the United States, Canada and ten Western European nations⁴ created the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The NATO treaty called for "continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid" among its signatories; an invasion of one "shall be considered an attack against them all." NATO marked an exceptional departure from American traditions of informal alliances that had preceded U.S. entry into both world wars. This alliance involved a legally binding treaty ratified by the Senate. "For America NATO set a precedent" because "for the first time in its history the country had committed itself to an alliance in peacetime. Instead of again allowing the balance of power to be upset and once more becoming drawn into a war after it had started the United States now expected to prevent this by committing itself to the preservation of the European balance

on a permanent basis.” (Spanier 53) In sum, through NATO membership, the United States enlarged the policy of containment beyond the economic realm.

In September, 1949 the Soviets tested their first atom bomb. This did not only end American atomic monopoly, but profoundly affected the calculations of American policy-makers. In conjunction with the loss of China in 1949 and the beginning of Joseph McCarty’s attack on the Truman administration’s weak response to communism, news of the Soviet test produced pressures for a fundamental reassessment of America’s strategic objectives and plans .Thus by 1950, the framework of the Cold War was firmly in place prompting both sides to enhance their military capabilities. In this context, the National Security Council, in April of the same year, drafted a planning document NSC-68 that was the most crucial Cold War blueprints to militarize the United States in opposition to the Soviet Union. It predicted an indefinite period of conflict with the Soviet Union, and called for a vast military buildup. The document identified the Soviet Union as an enemy with a growing potential threat to the security of the United States, seeking to maintain and consolidate its “absolute power” both in the Soviet Union and in the regions under its hold and control and attempting to eliminate any resistance to its authority and worldwide expansion. The document also explained that in this bipolar world the struggle was between “the idea of freedom under a government of laws, and the idea of slavery under the grim oligarchy of the Kremlin.” The document outlines what the US can do to alter this development. It called the United States to embark upon an internationalist foreign policy based on a “positive participation” in the world community” because the United States as “the center of power in the free world,” must undertake “responsibility of world leadership” in order to resist effectively and decisively to Russian expansionist tendencies.(NSC 68 51-108) Endorsing the view that the most important constituent of power was the military one, NSC-68 that emphasized the fact that the United States should

triple its military Spending so that it could prevent the Soviet Union from carrying out its “fundamental design” to “impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world “Whether or nor the US mobilized sufficiently would depend, Nitze argued on the recognition by this Government, the American people and all free peoples, that the cold war was in fact a real war in which the survival of the free world is at stake” (May 25-26). In the ensuing years, NSC-68 became the basis for American Cold War strategy.

Of central importance in converting NSC-68 from a blueprint for a massive arms build-up into practical policy was the outbreak of the Korean War in June, 1950. The division of Korea had followed the pattern of Germany since 1945-provisional partition following the removal of the Japanese wartime occupation forces, failure of the United States and the Soviet Union to agree on a means of reunification, and the establishment of separate governments in North and South. The Soviets backed a Stalinist regime under the authority of Kim II-Sung and the Americans backed the presidency of Syngman Rhee. After several years of increasingly bloody border incidents along the 38th parallel, North Korea invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950. Immediately after the invasion, Truman led America into the war despite objections from many U.S. military commanders who thought Korea was the wrong place to make a stand against Communism.

The quick and virtually complete collapse of the resistance in the South energized the U.S. to enter the war in force. Consequently the United States committed air and ground forces and even placed the Seventh Fleet of the U.S. navy in the Taiwan strait to prevent, it was argued, the Communist Chinese government on the mainland from invading the island of Taiwan, where the Nationalist Chinese government had retreated after the mainland fell to the Communists in 1949. To gain more support from American and international public opinions, the U.S. government pushed a resolution through the United Nations Security

Council which voted to repel the North Korean invasion and labeled the North Koreans as the aggressors. Militarily the course of the war fluctuated wildly in the first few months, but when General Douglas Mac Arthur, WWII hero, was placed in command of U.S. troops in Korea the tide of the war began to change in favor of South Korean and American troops. By early October 1951, he was successful in driving the North Koreans to dividing line at the 38th parallel. MacArthur's military success raised the question of America's political aims in Korea.

The USA faced a dilemma in Korea. On the one hand, it wanted to establish a precedent in order to show the world that it would under no circumstances accept an expansion of communism. On the other hand, it did not want to risk a total war in Asia against Communist China and the Soviet Union. A serious obstacle in the way of this policy was General Mac Arthur who evidently desired to extend the war into China. Consequently Truman ordered his recall and containment was re-established as the reigning orthodoxy. According to Bruce Cummings in *The Origins of the Korean War*, the US decided to intervene in Korea was driven by internationalists and containment advocates determined to sustain and expand a world-market system. This "global vision" prevented American policymakers from viewing the conflict for what it was: a Korean civil struggle with a history that predated 1950. Neither the Soviet Union nor China controlled Kim's decision to invade the South; rather, North Korea acted with minimal external involvement. William Stueck sees the conflict differently. In *The Korean War: An Internationalist History* (1995) Stueck emphasizes the multicultural nature of both its origins and evolution. American and Soviet involvement in Korea after WWII fueled the political tensions between the North and the South and the war was inextricably linked to wider Cold War considerations and Korea represented a "substitute for WWII".

The United States intervened in Korea because it saw that international communism had tried to expand step by step its sphere of influence to other countries. The loss of China and the invasion of South Korea were seen as a consistent aggressive strategy of international communism led by Moscow aiming at conquering the free world. Intervening in Korea was thus seen as being part of the Cold War setting and a damming strategy of containing communism and preventing its advance. American policy makers believed in the 'Domino Theory'-the loss of one country to communism would set up a chain of reactions in its neighbors. Truman believed that if Korea were to fall under Stalin's influence, then Japan would be next. Japan being a major trading partner with the USA caused Truman to react militarily to protect American trade. In one word, Korea provided a good example of how the United States used its military strength to contain communism and at the same time promote or preserve its national interests. If the causation of the American involvement in Korea is open to question and debate, there was a consensus that the Korean War was a decisive step in the militarization and globalization of containment.

In sum, the war ended after three years of fighting and four million dead and wounded (including 50,000 U.S. combat deaths). Korea remained divided into armed camps just as before the war. Furthermore, the war did nothing to bring the Cold War closer to an end. Instead, American-Soviet tensions were as high if not higher after Korea as they had been before.

.2.3 Eisenhower and Cold War Politics

Eisenhower was elected with the promise to bring the Korean War to a rapid and successful conclusion. Cease fire negotiations initiated in July 1951, continued to drag on. The war was a drain on the United States; it had to be ended. Whether because of this

threat of nuclear war or because the death of Stalin in March 1953 had given new flexibility to the Soviet policy, and an armistice was concluded on July 27, 1953.

Although during his 1952 campaign, Eisenhower attacked the Truman administration's containment policy as not forceful enough and having no end in sight, he made no attempt to "roll back" communism during his eight years of office. Instead he accepted the tenets of his predecessor's containment strategy but gave it a "New Look". Eisenhower worried about the financial and psychological cost that global containment entailed American society. Regarding military outlays as counterproductive, he emphasized the use of nuclear weapons because they offered more "bang for the buck". Devised primarily by Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, this so called New Look policy proposed the use of nuclear weapons and technology rather than ground troops and conventional troops to check the Soviet Union around the world.

The New Look policy would stress technology over manpower and relied on direct threat to use superior American strategic firepower against the USSR in case of an attack.. In a speech in January 1954, John Foster Dulles, the Secretary of State, announced that henceforth the U.S. would set the terms of its fights and would, in the event of communist aggression, retaliate instantly and massively.(107-110) Dulles appeared to be thinking that in the event of another Korea, the U.S. would launch nuclear strikes against the Soviet and/or Chinese heartland. This policy came to be known as "Massive Retaliation" and remained the official U.S. policy until John Fitzgerald Kennedy became president in 1961. In essence Eisenhower wanted to implement a cheaper containment policy and his policy was not really different from his predecessor's because it sought to contain communism but to extend containment beyond Europe by drawing a frontier around the Sino-Soviet periphery and supporting that frontier with nuclear air power. Essentially, the difference in

policy between the two administrations was that Truman had relied on atomic striking power to deter an attack on either the United States of America's first line of defense-Europe. But in Asia, when the communists had faced them with a limited aggression, the Truman administration had met the challenge with ground troops. But while Eisenhower also expected to deter an all-out war with the threat of massive retaliation he was reluctant to fight local ground wars. Instead his administration had planned to deter any future limited attacks by threatening to retaliate against the Soviet Union or China.

The doctrine of massive retaliation proved to be dangerously flawed, and had many critics, however because it left Eisenhower without any option other than nuclear war to combat Soviet aggression. The U.S., for example, would be unable to check a communist aggression like Korea as it would have to either accept defeat or resort to nuclear weapons. The dilemma surfaced in 1956 when the prospect of nuclear war over a peripheral interest prevailed. In 1956 the Soviet Union brutally crushed a popular uprising in Hungary. Despite Hungary's request for American assistance, Eisenhower's hands were tied because he was fully aware that nothing would stop the Soviets from keeping and preserving their control of Eastern Europe. Therefore he was very much reluctant to turn the Cold War into a nuclear war over the interests of a small nation such as Hungary. At any rate, the debate became moot since the Soviet Union finally caught up with the U.S. From 1957, the Soviets had the capability to deliver their nuclear weapons to the U.S. Massive Retaliation lost the credibility of the deterrence threat, since the Soviet Union could now threaten the U.S. cities with destruction; it became less likely that the U.S. would risk such destruction by launching a nuclear war over a minor crisis in Asia or elsewhere.

The danger of an over-reliance on nuclear power to further American interests committed America to seek a more practical and flexible response to what American

policymakers considered the challenges posed by the Soviet Union and communism in developing countries. The American response and attitude towards the newly emerging African and Asian nations were flawed in some respects. One fundamental deficit was the tendency to view internal struggles exclusively through the prism of America's ongoing Cold War with the Soviet Union or skirmishes in the larger Cold War. The other major flaw was that American officials regarded all right-wing governments however repressive and undemocratic at home, as valuable allies or friends. At the same time, they viewed leftist, even those elected undemocratic procedures, as Soviet puppets as serious threats to American national security.

The Third World thus became another arena in the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union and an increasingly important focus on the containment strategy because the domino theory which became well known during Eisenhower's presidency. Eisenhower firmly believed that communism should be contained and not permitted to expand in every inch of the developing countries because once one nation fell to communism, the others would fall like dominoes. This fear was expressed in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and in America's backyard- the Western Hemisphere .Despite his firm and open hostility to the Soviet Union and its ideology and his commitment to fight it all around the world, Eisenhower was a pragmatic realist for he understood the need to balance U.S. resources with its foreign commitments and recognized the limits of American power.

Eisenhower's realism was best expressed through the policies implemented by his administration. While supportive of democratic and economic reforms in principle, Eisenhower's administration often relied on repressive dictators, covert action, and military aid to secure short-term security at the cost of human rights, political freedom, and

economic opportunity .Although, the U.S. recognized that, after the Second World War, the era of classical colonialism was over and that nationalism now played a decisive role in the Third World, Cold War imperatives shaped American interpretation of the decolonization process in a way that was seriously misleading. As was the case with Egypt's president, Djamel Abdel Nasser, non alignment was the preferred policy. For Eisenhower's administration, this position was baffling because the threat of expansionist international Communism was an obvious given.

Eisenhower policy in the Middle East was thus to restrict Russian influence, to keep the oil supply open to the U.S. and other western countries, and to preserve the security of Israel. The first two ends were served in 1953 when a CIA coup overthrew Mohamed Mossadegh of Iran and restored the shah. In 1951 a nationalist movement headed by Mossadegh succeeded in undercutting the shah's rule and then proceeded to nationalize the Anglo- Iranian Oil Company whose tax remittances to the British governments had exceeded the income Iran was getting from its own resources. The British demanded compensation which Iran could not pay, and negotiations deadlocked as the Iranian economy heavily depended on oil revenue. The U.S. refused to help.

Dulles had concluded that it was an excellent moment to rid the Middle East of British and French colonialism and replace it with American "influence". The opportunity came in 1953 when the State Department became convinced that Mossadegh was moving toward the Soviets: rumors of a Soviet loan circulated. The U.S., which had already refused to help, now cut off all aid. It then provided the shah with guns, armored cars and communications.

The coup was successful and the new government quickly began negotiations with the oil company but this time under American guidance. When the dust settled, the shah (quite

unpopular in Iran) was restored, and a new international consortium controlled Iran oil, splitting profits 50-50 with the shah. The U.S. five companies had 40%, the British companies the other 40% and the French the rest 20%. This was a happy ending for the U.S. which, through the 1953 coup, set foot in Iran, succeeded Britain as Iran's western patron and extended its influence in that strategically important area.

The center of Arab nationalism was the new regime in Egypt, installed by revolution in 1952 and after 1954, under the purposeful leadership of Colonel Djamel Abdel Nasser. The Egyptian leader was a charismatic nationalist who dreamt of creating a huge pan-Arab state where Egypt could play the greatest deal. As any good nationalist, he soon found that he could exploit the U.S.-Russian rivalry to his own advantage. He opened arms negotiations with both sides and when the communists made a better deal, he signed an agreement with the Czechs in September 1955. The U.S. tried to regain some influence by agreeing to finance the Aswan Dam. Nasser's deal with the Czechs now looked ominous when in May, 1956 Nasser recognized Communist China. Dulles came under increasing pressure to halt financing the dam. On 19 July, he announced that the U.S. was backing out of the deal.

Dulles thought that this would reduce Nasser's prestige and force him to come around because he could not finance the project by himself and he would not turn for help to the USSR because that would make him too dependent on the communists. The U.S. had miscalculated. One week after Dulles declaration, Nasser seized the Suez Canal by nationalizing it. Nasser had maneuvered the U.S.: he had recovered prestige by a bold action, and he had gained an annual profit of \$ 25 million that he could use for the dam.

However, Nasser also now controlled a passage so vital to Europe: over 67 million tons of oil had moved through the Canal to Europe in 1955 alone. This put him in an influential position for his power made Britain and France uncomfortable. Although Nasser

compensated the shareholders (so the seizure was legally justified) and promised to keep the Canal open to all foreign users, Britain and France demanded shared control because they were unwilling to place such important imports in the hands of Nasser.

Britain and France worked a clandestine plan with Israel, which was getting jittery about the hostility of its Arab neighbors, and was looking for ways to diffuse the growing threat.⁵ On 29 October 1956, Israel attacked Egypt and conquered much of the Sinai Peninsula. The speed of their advance caught the British and French by surprise. In the confusion, the close coordination of the three came to light. On 5 November, the Anglo-French forces invaded Egypt and moved to secure the Canal. The Egyptians blocked the Canal by sinking ships in it thus disrupting oil shipments. Saudi Arabia, then, embargoed oil supplies to both Britain and France who soon found themselves at the mercy of the U.S: only American credit could ensure that vital imports continued to be bought.

The U.S., having been kept in the dark by its allies, had its problems. After crushing the Hungarian revolt, the Soviets turned to the Middle East by suggesting that a Russo-American settlement be imposed. They also warned that unless the Anglo-French forces withdrew, the USSR would squash them with force. While pressing the allies to compromise, Eisenhower put the U.S. forces on alert: Americans would neither tolerate blackmail nor weaseling his way into the good graces of the Arabs. While presenting façade to the Soviets, Eisenhower had a resolution passed by the UN General Assembly calling for a truce and then cut off all oil supplies to Britain and France from Latin America. He further threatened to undermine the British pound by selling all American reserves of that currency. The U.S. kept the pressure until the British, and then the French agreed to withdraw their troops.

Still, despite the power of Arab nationalism, Dulles and Eisenhower persisted in regarding Soviet penetration as the essential problem. "The existing vacuum in the Middle East," Eisenhower told Congress in January 1957, "must be filled by the United States before it is filled by Russia....Considering Russian's announced purpose of dominating the world, it is easy to understand its hope of dominating the Middle East." Eisenhower asked Congress to declare a vital American interest in preventing such domination and to authorize the commitment of American forces to aid Middle Eastern nations "requesting such aid, against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism." (Eisenhower, *A Message to Congress*, pp 83-87) Congress by joint resolution passed the so-called Eisenhower Doctrine in March 1957.

The Eisenhower Doctrine was a major commitment by the United States to the security and stability of the Middle East. Officially, then, it was aimed at protecting the Middle East from Soviet encroachment; in this sense it was merely a more specific application of the general containment doctrine with which the U.S. had waged the Cold War for a decade. But the Eisenhower Doctrine also sought to contain the radical Arab nationalism of the Egyptian president and to discredit his policy of positive neutrality. Through this doctrine, the Eisenhower's administration greatly advanced the belief that the U.S. had both the right and the obligation to intervene in any regions or nations whose domestic affairs were believe to have international significance. The basic assumption that America could arrogate to itself the authority to approve or disapprove the politics of any nation was, by the end of the 1950s, a firmly planted conviction and signaled a new level of U.S. resolve to exert influence in international affairs.

Latin America too was swept by nationalist ferment after the Second World War. The resulting revolutions often took authoritarian forms. By 1954 thirteen Latin American

presidents were military men. Consequently a counterrevolutionary chain set in. This region, though historically protected by the Monroe Doctrine, was believed to be under assault from communist revolutionaries trained, funded, and controlled by the Soviet Union. American officials assumed, then, that the situation presented serious and immediate threats to the security of the U.S. Therefore, they would increasingly seek to legitimize their approach through the use of stark Cold War imagery. Using Cold War rhetoric, as a justification for policy, the U.S. policy would continue to be appraised through a national security prism, the U.S. would only be deemed to be successful in Latin America if the region was perceived to be free from anti-American, nationalistic or, even communist factions. Washington officials believed that it was imperative to prevent international communist conspiracy from engulfing America's backyard. Like in any other parts of the Third World, America's inevitable policy was to accommodate with any regimes, irrespective of their credentials regarding democracy or human rights provided that it possessed sufficient anti communist credentials.

Nowhere was that policy better illustrated than in Guatemala. When Eisenhower came to office the relations between the U.S. and Guatemala were approaching boiling point. As a case study, Guatemala would be an issue of both national security and economic concern for the U.S. Guatemala's President-elect Jacobo Arbenz's willingness to advocate a developmental model other than prescribed by the U.S. and his potentially acting as encouragement for similar actions by other Latin leaders made his position untenable in the eyes of Eisenhower and Dulles.

American intervention in Guatemala became inevitable once Arbenz implemented his agrarian reforms. The election of Arbenz as president in 1950 accelerated the process of social and economic change in Guatemala initiated by his predecessor. The centerpiece of

Arbenz program was an agrarian reform law which resulted in the expropriation of 1.5 million acres of land uncultivated belonging to approximately 100 planters, including over 400,000 acres of land of the American United Fruit Company. By 1954, 100,000 families or approximately 400,000 individuals had received land, about 1.5 million acres (Schlesinger and Kinzer, 55) as well as access to bank credits and state technical assistance. Arbenz had the audacity to end the dominance of United Fruit and other American companies in the public utilities and transportation sectors (docks, railways, highways, electric power) of the economy. The government also fostered the development of industrial and agricultural labor organizations, increased the minimum wage, and began to elaborate an independent foreign policy within regional and global political reforms.

The land reform program was not well received by either the U.S. or by United Fruit. This comparatively modest challenge to American capital accumulation in Guatemala led the Eisenhower administration to define the popular nationalism of Arbenz threat to imperial regional hegemony and world stability and overthrow Arbenz. Although the takeover of United Fruit and the proliferating labor and agricultural laws were instrumental factors in the August 1954 White House decision to overthrow Arbenz by military force, the destabilization policy was consistently rationalized in terms of the ideology of anti-communism and the need to respond to an “external threat” that might lead to Guatemala’s withdrawal from the capitalist politico-economic orbit.

Though there was no evidence of Guatemala’s ties with Moscow, Eisenhower and Dulles were deeply convinced that such ties existed and accused the Guatemalan president of being “merely a puppet manipulated by communists” and his country, Guatemala, a nest for “the agents of international Communists [who] continued their efforts to penetrate and subvert their neighboring Central American states (Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 421-

426). Following the tenth Inter-American Conference of Foreign Ministers in Caracas, Venezuela, in March 1954 where the U.S. delegation led by Secretary of State Dulles twisted enough arms to secure passage of a resolution directed against Guatemala, calling for hemispheric unity and mutual defense against “Communist aggression” (Jonas 29).

The CIA received orders from the White House and NSC with an estimated \$ 20 million in regime. United Fruit and other American corporations with major economic interests in Guatemala were briefed on the project by senior administration officials on an ongoing basis until the ouster of Arbenz. Washington’s assessment of the Guatemala’s situation was simply confirmed by the nation government’s decision to purchase a shipment of arms from Czechoslovakia in May 1954. This ‘discovery’ provided a convenient pretext for unleashing Colonel Castillo Armas and his exiles training under the CIA direction on United Fruit plantations in Honduras. Before the end of June, Arbenz was overthrown and the social and economic experiment terminated, and a pro-U.S. right wing anti-communist regime installed in power. Through the skilfull use of anti-communist ideology, Eisenhower and his team were able to mobilize support for a policy of antagonism toward Arbenz;

The government that the U.S. overthrew was a democratic government. Arbenz was a left-of-center Socialist, Communists held only four of the fifty-six seats in the Congress. Shortly after, Armas, in power gave back the land to foreign investors, eliminated the secret ballot, and jailed thousands of political critics. More importantly, the reign of terror that was to afflict Guatemala for the next four decades began immediately, with as many as 8,000 peasants being murdered in the first two years of Armas’ rule. Communists were specially targeted for removal. The U.S. played a vital role in this action, with Dulles providing Armas with a list of names of individuals who were to be murdered (Jonas 29).

The consequences of this flawed simplistic and morally inconsistent strategy are highly unfortunate. America finds itself involved far too often in futile and mutually destructive confrontations with left-wing. Even worse is the evolution of a cozy relationship between Washington and a host of right-wing authoritarian governments. Warm official endorsements of autocratic regimes, combined with substantial material support produce an explosive mixture that repeatedly damages America's prestige and credibility; Historian Walter LaFeber warns that "many Central Americans have increasingly associated capitalism with a brutal oligarchy-military complex that has been supported by U.S. policies and armies." (14). Consequently, this pervasive perception of the U.S. as the sponsor and protector of such dictatorships has undermined America's credibility as a spokesman for democracy, caused Third World peoples to equate both capitalism and democracy with U.S. hegemony and established a milieu for anti-American revolutions. This approach creates a massive reservoir of ill will, in the long run, weakens rather than strengthens America's national security.

2.4 Kennedy: Crisis years

When elected president in 1960, John Fitzgerald Kennedy faced the tremendous task of shaping a foreign policy which would accommodate to a world in flux. The Cold war had entered its sixteenth year, yet the situation in 1961, differed so dramatically from that of 1945: the bipolar alignment of 1945 was breaking in both East and West. Within the West Camp, Europe no longer recognized the United States as the unchallenged leader of the free world and in the East the Soviet Union confronted the rivalry of China. The emerging nations of Africa, America, and Asia refused to get involved in the Cold War.

Kennedy comprehended the nature of these changes, and recognized that the United States had only a narrow range of options .President Kennedy had many international

problems to be concerned about: Laos, Vietnam, the Berlin conflict, and Khrushchev himself. However Cuba remained Kennedy's main concern due to two reasons: first, Kennedy felt responsible for the problems that followed the Bay of Pigs invasion; Second, Cuba remained a great territorial importance for the U.S. An invasion of Latin America by the Communists would have been very unhealthy for the U.S., and this would break down an important sphere of influence in the Caribbean. President Kennedy had to act promptly. Time was as important factor, as it was already confirmed that the USSR had placed missile warheads directed toward U.S. territory. Also the Cuban regime became more powerful within Cuba. Looking back into history, the Kennedy's administration could easily forecast what would happen in Cuba; the Communist regime would grow stronger, and would gradually expand into neighboring nations.

Cuba provided the Kennedy administration with both its greatest foreign policy failure and its greatest success. Tensions between the USSR and the U.S., which were already high because of Berlin and the construction of the Berlin Wall (August 1961) intensified in October 1962, when aerial photographs revealed that the Russians were constructing medium-range missiles sites in Cuba. After Kennedy had taken office, the plan to overthrow Fidel Castro, the Cuban President, began by training 1,500 Cuban exiles in the U.S. in guerilla warfare and then landing them on a beach in Cuba to quickly mobilize and take the island swiftly. The operation failed; Kennedy and his advisors met and decided that the only way to save the mission was to risk U.S. involvement. Kennedy decided to send in un-marked plane to Cuba, which would aid the invaders, but the air operation failed. Then an evacuation mission of the remaining exiles was planned. The evacuation mission failed too: only fourteen were rescued, and the one thousand one hundred and eighty-nine surrendered to Cuban forces. The Bay of Pigs invasion was significant because it made the

U.S. look terrible for sending exiles into Cuba massacred. President Kennedy took the blame for the poor planning of the mission and its failure.

After the Bay of Pigs invasion failed, Castro knew that he was being targeted by the U.S. and that there was a possibility of more attempts to overthrow his government and assassinate him. Castro, then, contacted Premier Khrushchev to help bolster the defense of Cuba from airborne attacks. The negotiations began and the Soviets first sent surface to air missiles. In May of 1961, Khrushchev and Castro made a preliminary agreement to send nuclear missiles to Cuba. This, it was believed, would eliminate the strategic imbalance of power and protect Castro at the same time (Fursenko 187). It was also designed to provide leverage to force political concessions in Europe.

Due to the armament of Cuba, Kennedy became suspicious of the numerous cargo ships arriving at the island and, therefore, prepared the military for operations against Cuba and ordered reconnaissance missions to monitor the situation. The high-level U-2 reconnaissance planes flew many intelligence missions over Cuba and photographed the areas that were identified as having nuclear weapons. The threat in Cuba was becoming greater due to the volume of ships that were arriving in Cuba's ports. When a reconnaissance mission flew and revealed that there were intermediate range missile launchers, President Kennedy met with a group of advisors, called Ex-Comm, to aid him with the policy and measures to take in Cuba. Then the U.S. President had a meeting with the Soviet foreign minister, Andrei Gromyko who said that the missiles in Cuba were only defense systems that only "pursued solely the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba and to the development of its peaceful economy (Qtd in Goldman 378)

Faced with the Soviet nuclear threat, Kennedy acted with a combination of determination and restraint. He took the resolve not to permit nor tolerate any European

power to violate the Monroe Doctrine and subvert the security of the U.S. and other nations in the Western Hemisphere. Kennedy called another Ex-Comm meeting that was split over whether or not to blockade Cuba, to prevent any more missiles from entering the island or to bomb it. After much deliberation, it was decided to blockade Cuba. Then Kennedy announced to the American public that there were nuclear missiles in Cuba and that the U.S. would blockade the island. After hearing Kennedy's speech and hearing intelligence that the U.S. might invade Cuba, the Soviet Premier, Khrushchev declared "They can attack us, and we shall respond.... This may end in a big war." (Fursenko 241). Then a statement from the Soviets was sent to the White House, it accused the U.S. of piracy, violation of international law, and acts of provocation that might lead to nuclear war (Welsh 130).

On 23 October, the naval blockade of Cuba was almost in place and a threat was imminent, the Soviets were pushing for a summit to prevent what seemed to be an inevitable war, but Kennedy declared that the U.S. was "currently discussing the matter in the United Nations. While your messages are critical to the U.S., they make no mention of your concern for the introduction of recent Soviet missile into Cuba. I think your attention might as well be directed to the burglars rather than to those who have caught the burglars." (Brugioni 405). The Soviets responded when Khrushchev sent a letter to Kennedy explaining that the USSR would be willing to resolve the crisis by accepting to dismantle and remove all offensive missiles from Cuba and that the Soviets would promise never to introduce offensive weapons in Cuba again on the condition that the U.S. would promise never to invade Cuba. (Blight 382).

However, the U.S. received Soviet proposals for ending the missile crisis, more reconnaissance missions photographed the Soviets' continuing build-up of weapons in Cuba. At a rapid pace missiles were beginning to be camouflaged. When a U 2 pilot was

shot down over Cuba, Kennedy gave the Soviets an ultimatum , the U.S. needed a commitment that the missile bases would be removed or that the U.S. would remove them.(Fursenko 383) Khrushchev took the threat seriously and the next day announced that the USSR decided it would dismantle the missiles in Cuba and return them to the Soviet Union , he said “We must not allow the situation to deteriorate but eliminate hotbeds of tension and we must see to it that no other conflict occur which lead to a world nuclear war” (Burgioni 486).

The Cuban missile crisis, which brought the world to the brink of war ended when the Soviets decided to remove their missiles from Cuba and return them back to the Soviet Union, and in return, the United States promised not to invade Cuba. Cynics might argue that Kennedy extracted little from the Soviets but the American President avoided nuclear war without sacrificing essential American interests. His administration’s image, tarnished at the Bay of Pigs, regained much of its luster. Of importance for the future, Kennedy and his inner circle of advisors became confident in their ability to manage crises in a rational, measured manner.

2.5 The U.S. Involvement in Vietnam: the Cost of Containment

The origins of American involvement in Indochina may be traced to the debate among the Allies on the future of Southeast Asia as World War II drew to a close. President Roosevelt advocated the independence of the former European colonies of Indochina and urged that the French possessions seized by the Japanese should be returned over to a an international trusteeship rather than returned to France, a position also endorsed by Chiang Kai-Shek of China and Joseph Stalin of the former Soviet Union but opposed by the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and General Charles de Gaulle of France. After Roosevelt’s death, U.S. policy continued to encourage France to move toward granting

independence to its colonial holdings, but the overall context of the Cold War shifted the previous anti colonial attitude of the United States.

As Cold War tensions escalated with the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, U.S. policy makers came to believe that the Viet Minh resistance to colonial rule was communist inspired and was part of a worldwide Marxist movement and overall Soviet and Chinese master plan to subvert existing governments and make communism prevail all over the world. It is worth noting that American diplomats agreed that Soviet links to Ho Chi Minh's nationalist movement could not be detected. By 1950, however, the American die had been cast in favor of French colonialism. The desire of the Truman administration and especially his Secretary of State, Dean Acheson to be seen in the face of domestic criticism to be applying the doctrine of communist containment clearly underpinned these decisions. Chinese and Soviet recognition of Ho Chi Minh's regime in Indochina worried American officials and in their eyes, removed any illusions as to the "nationalist" nature of Ho Chi Minh and reveals Ho's true colors as the mortal enemy of native independence in Indochina." ⁶

If there was a year to date the beginning of official American involvement in Vietnam it would be 1950 when the U.S. government recognized the Bao Dai government and began sending the French aid to fight off Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh .The decision to provide aid to France "directly involved" the U.S. in Vietnam, and "set the course for future American policy." (The Pentagon Papers XI). A policy to contain the Chinese occupied the Truman administration and Paris endeavored with some success to convince Washington that the French campaign in Vietnam helped sustain that policy. Consequently, France's position in Vietnam was now being described to the American public in terms of the Free world stance against communist expansionism, and Washington ceased to perceive

the war in Vietnam as strictly a colonial conflict. Now linked to the Cold war, Vietnam was regarded as an area of strategic importance for the U.S. Understandably, the immediate concern for the U.S. policy makers was the military containment because they believed that “the failure of the French Bao Dai experiment meant the communization of Indochina.” (Gareth 227)

The fall of the Dien Bien Phu seriously worried American policy makers. In an attempt to rally Congressional and public support for the increased aid to the French, and drawing on an earlier utterance of his predecessor, Truman, in comparing the nations of Southeast Asia to a row of dominoes, President Eisenhower, in a press conference held on 7 April, 1954 said “you have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly”. (Eisenhower, News Conference, 382-383). Eisenhower meant that a communist victory in Vietnam would lead to the disintegration in Southeast Asia with the fall of Laos, Thailand, Burma, Indonesia, and threaten the entire region. The so called “domino theory” dominated U.S. thinking for the next decade.

. As a result of the domino theory, U.S. policy makers began to see Vietnam as “an area of strategic importance” extremely important. If Vietnam became communist, domino theory logic held, all of Indochina might become communist. Since Southeast Asia has been linked to a “set of dominos” therefore it is in the high interest of the U.S., as a leader and a system of government, to risk much in stabilizing that tottering block (Scheer 76-77)

Following the French defeat and withdrawal from Indochina, an agreement was signed in Geneva in the summer of 1954 by France and Vietnam. The U.S reluctantly accepted the Geneva Accords terms. As a NSC paper reported, the U.S. should oppose any “solution to the Indochina problem short of victory” and that the U.S. might “commit air,

naval and ultimately ground forces to the direct resolution of the war.” (The Pentagon Papers 451-454). To that end Eisenhower and Dulles supported the creation of a counterrevolutionary alternative south of the seventeenth parallel. Indeed, the U.S. supported this effort at nation-building through a series of multi-lateral agreements that created the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954. The SEATO Treaty was signed by pro-western countries in East and Southeast Asia and provided for the mutual defense of all signatories, including the newly-created and U.S. supported, Government of the Republic of Vietnam, or South Vietnam. The SEATO purpose was to serve as a barrier against the further spread of Communist political power. It was specifically meant to provide a cloak of protection for Cambodia and Laos against aggression from communist power and inhibit the Vietminh from establishing control over the rest of Vietnam. However, Washington utilized SEATO negotiations to offset the results of the Geneva Accords. Through SEATO, the U.S. helped provide statehood for a territory that was in fact nothing more than one of two temporary zones, thereby ignoring the provision that Vietnam was to be reunified in two years time. America and SEATO encouraged Vietnamese with a vested interest in this artificial division to maintain it and transform the 17th parallel into a permanent political boundary. Of significance, SEATO was never embraced by the major neutralist states of Burma, India, and Indonesia. As a result it ended up as an arrangement dominated by the United States and its Western allies.

Below the 17th parallel, the United States had been applying its influence through a staunchly anti- communist and Christian Vietnamese named Ngo Dinh Diem who had become America’s new hope as an alternative to communism in Vietnam. In 1954 Diem’s government was formally organized, and this paved the way for a new phase of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Aware that his government could not survive without massive aid from the U.S, Diem based his appeal on anti-communism. Consequently the Eisenhower

administration began giving financial support and training to an army loyal to Diem. Committed to the logic of the domino theory, and well aware of the popularity of Ho Chi Minh and the VietMinh, U.S. leaders feared that the free elections promised at the Geneva Conference, which were scheduled to occur in 1956, would result in a unified Communist Vietnam. Therefore, they sought to forestall the elections in Vietnam and threw their support behind Diem in 1955 when he rejected the prospect of Vietnam wide elections as specified by the Geneva Accords. Instead he held a referendum limited to the southern half of the country. Using fraud and intimidation, Diem won over ninety eight percent of the vote, removed and proclaimed South Vietnam to be the Republic of Vietnam.

From his first days in power, Diem faced stiff opposition and was very unpopular among the common Vietnamese because of corrupt and oppressive government. Many considered him an American puppet and his government illegitimate. Opposition to Diem organized and joined in a broad-based united front. On December 20, 1960, the National Liberation Front was born. Anyone could join the front as long as they opposed Diem. The character of the NLF and its relationships to the communists in Hanoi had caused considerable worry among American foreign policy makers.

The creation of the NLF coincided with John Fitzgerald Kennedy's inauguration. The new American president was a committed Cold warrior and many expected him to increase the level of American military, technical, and economic involvement. But many of his advisers wanted him to withdraw from Vietnam. Instead, Kennedy chose a middle route: the U.S. would increase the level of its military involvement in Vietnam through more machinery and advisers but would not intervene whole-scale with troops. In 1962 the Kennedy administration established the Military Assistance Command of Vietnam (MACV), which true to its name, provided American tactical command assistance in the

training of South Vietnamese forces. The creation of the MACV meant that many additional American "advisers" were moved into South Vietnam.

Despite the presence of American advisers and their assistance to South Vietnamese forces, soon reports indicated that the NLF was increasing its control of the countryside. To counterattack NLF success and isolate it from the population, Washington and Saigon decided to establish "Strategic Hamlets" : peasants were rounded and placed into fortified like-concentration camps allowing American and South Vietnamese forces to easily identify the Viet Cong as anyone outside the Strategic hamlet. The Strategic Hamlet Program not only failed to achieve its objectives but had a negative impact between peasants and their government and increased the hatred in the hearts Vietnamese not toward Diem and his government only but also toward the Americans.(The Pentagon Papers , Strategic Hamlet Program, 128-129)

Diem was placed as leader of Vietnam by the U.S. to halt communist expansion but his repressive techniques, undemocratic and corrupt government had produced the opposite results. Consequently, it hoped to find an alternative to the unpopular Vietnamese ruler. Mounting dissatisfaction with the ineffectiveness and corruption of Diem's government culminated in a military coup engineered by the South Vietnamese generals with U.S. connivance on November 1, 1963. (Trager 179) Diem was killed. America had once again created and destroyed a monster. Soon after the same fate befell President Kennedy. The decision to overthrow Diem, after so long supporting him might have seemed a correct decision for the U.S. in that Diem had proved so terribly incompetent at battling Communists and winning the hearts of Vietnamese, but the coup itself revealed the U.S. was the true, operating power behind the scenes and robbed the South Vietnamese government of whatever vestiges of authority or sovereignty it still maintained. Diem's

removal raised the critical issue of how to contain and stop the spread of communism but at the same time encouraged possible peace talks on the international forum.

When Lyndon Baines Johnson succeeded Kennedy as president, he inherited a rapidly deteriorating situation in South Vietnam. Johnson was renowned for his domestic policies and success as a politician, especially as Senate Majority Leader in the 1950s; but he was not known for his skills in foreign policy. His main interest lay elsewhere, with the array of social welfare and economic development programs which he was to package as the Great Society. Few analysts or historians question the importance of legislation sponsored by Johnson in helping overcome the effects of racial discrimination and economic under development. But whatever success he enjoyed in the domestic arena was tarnished by failure in foreign policy.

Determined to continue and extend the Kennedy legacy, both at home and abroad, Johnson found himself escalating America's military role in Vietnam. He said he was not going to be the first American president to lose a war. Domestic considerations shaped Johnson's policy in Vietnam: he was afraid of hard-line anti communists in Congress whose help was necessary for him to get his civil rights legislation passed. In order not to lose Vietnam, Johnson had to forestall communist victory without appearing as the aggressor. His solution was to bolster the U.S. presence in Vietnam with discreet increment of air-power. At the same time Johnson hoped for something to happen that would rally the American people behind a more aggressive policy. He got it on the nights of 2 and 4 August when U.S. navy destroyers were sent into the Gulf of Tonkin to observe coastal shipping and help South Vietnamese forces to raid a North Vietnamese radio transmitter, they came under attack by North Vietnamese torpedo boats. Later, the credibility of the Gulf of Tonkin incidents were challenged. In any case the incidents gave Johnson what he

wanted, a point around which to rally public support for a more aggressive policy and bolster congressional support for an expanded military role in Vietnam. In a speech addressed to the American people, Johnson described the Gulf of Tonkin incidents as “deliberate attacks on the U.S. naval vessels” and added that “we must and shall honor our commitments...(and) determination that such attacks will be met, and that the United States will continue in its basic policy of assisting the free nations of the area to defend their freedom”⁷ Consequently, on 10 August, Congress endorsed Johnson’s actions against the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong by passing the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution by an overwhelming margin of 416-0 in the House and 88-2 in the Senate. The newly adopted resolution paved the way of a greater American involvement in Vietnam: the Americanization of the war.

Johnson ran for the presidency in the 1964 elections which produced a landslide victory for him over Republican candidate Barry Goldwater. This great electoral victory made that the newly elected American president could face the problems confronting him with renewed strength and confidence. One of the most pressing dilemmas was how he could handle the war without having to sacrifice his ambitious social program. On 7 April, 1965 President Johnson explained the U.S. role in Vietnam. In his speech, he explained that the United States’ “objective is the independence of South Vietnam. We want nothing for ourselves, only that the people of South Vietnam be allowed to guide their own country in their own way...We think that our ideas of democracy to be universally applicable”⁸

Like Kennedy before him, Johnson was caught, in the formulating of his policy toward Vietnam, between those who wanted him to expand the air power over North Vietnam quickly to help stabilize the new Saigon government and others who wanted to apply gradual pressure with limited and selected bombings. Once again circumstances

cleared the way for Johnson. As a result of the NLF's attacks on two U.S. army installations, Johnson ordered a massive bombing mission on North Vietnam.

The bombing mission, known as Operation Rolling Thunder, and the introduction of American combat troops in March 1965, completed the process of the Americanization of the war. With the new military American military commitment, however, the NLF came to reassess its war strategy. The front moved to a protracted war strategy. The idea was to get the U.S. bogged down in a war that it could not win militarily and create unfavorable conditions for political victory. They believed that they would prevail in a protracted war because the U.S. had no clearly defined strategy and therefore, the country would eventually tire of the war and demand a negotiated settlement. By 1968, things had gone from bad to worse for Johnson. On the home front, the Johnson administration met with the full weight of American anti-war sentiments. Protests erupted on college campuses and in major cities at first, but by 1968 every corner of the country seemed to have felt the war's impact. In Vietnam, on January 30, 1968 the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the NLF launched coordinated attacks against the major southern cities. These attacks, known as the Tet offensive, were designed to break the aggressive will of the Johnson administration and force Washington to the negotiating table. The NLF believed that the American people were growing war-weary and that Hanoi could humiliate Johnson and force a peace upon him. In late March, 1968, the U.S. president reaffirmed American purpose in Vietnam by stating that what "we are doing now, in Vietnam is vital not only to the security of Southeast Asia, but it is vital to the security of every American....under three different presidents, three separate administrations- has always been America's own security." (Johnson, Address to the Nation, 469-476).

Just as Johnson inherited the war from Kennedy, Richard Nixon found his presidency immediately besieged by the fighting in Vietnam when he assumed office in January 1969. Nixon had campaigned for president on a vague pledge to end the war, but once he became president he seemed as committed to attaining victory – that is, the survival of a non-communist South Vietnam- as Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson had been before him. It turned out that he was going to reduce the American casualties by having the South Vietnamese assume the responsibility of fighting their own civil war. This policy was termed Vietnamization. Its main goal was to create strong, largely self-reliant South Vietnamese military forces and also meant the withdrawal of a half-million American soldiers. Consequently American ground combat units would be progressively withdrawn from South Vietnam and the burden of ground war turned over to the South Vietnamese who, by way of compensation, would receive an injection of funds and equipment. Withdrawing US ground troops did not mean total American disengagement for the U.S. would continue its bombing operations. Militarily, these were intended to keep the communists off balance and to secure an end to U.S. involvement on acceptable terms in the long run.

With Vietnamization underway, Nixon and his national Security advisor, Henry Kissinger, had a few tricks up their sleeves. While reducing American personnel in Vietnam in 1969, they stepped up bombing campaigns. From 1969 to the end of 1971, the U.S. dropped 3.3 million tons of bombs on South and North Vietnam, on Cambodia and Laos, more than Johnson had dropped in five years, and more than three times the tonnage of bombs that had been dropped on Germany during the Second World War. Nixon was trying to bring the Vietnamese into submission , but it did not work. By widening the war at the moment American troops were starting to be withdrawn, he hoped to convince Ho Chi Minh that he might use nuclear weapons. This strategy, Nixon believed, would give the

U.S. extra negotiating leverage. Nixon did also expand the war into neighboring Laos and Cambodia, as the White House tried desperate to route out Communist sanctuaries and supply routes. The intense bombing campaigns and the invasion of Cambodia sparked serious protests all across America. Nixon became even more anxious to win the war; a war that was tearing the nation apart. Consequently, Congress began raising questions about the constitutionality of the invasion and repealed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution.

The expanded air war did not deter the NLF, the American public started to doubt the sincerity of Nixon's Vietnamization program. As Americans lost patience with their president, Nixon struggled to find a way to quickly withdraw American troops and yet achieve "peace with honor". In Nixon's mind, the question was not whether America would get out of Vietnam, but how it could do without being defeated. The U.S was eager to withdraw from Vietnam but not at the cost of imposing a Communist government on the millions who had cast their lot in reliance on the promises of his predecessors; Nixon's motives were a mixture of moral and geopolitical considerations as he sought to reconcile American's postwar foreign policy based on alliance and deterrence; Nixon feared for U.S. alliances if America abdicated in Vietnam, he was also concerned about the impact of Soviet restraint if the U.S. simply abandoned what four administrations had affirmed. Nixon also believed that a demonstration of American weakness in Asia would destroy the opening to China based in part on America's role in thwarting Soviet moves toward hegemony in Asia

Along with his national security advisor, Henry Kissinger, President Nixon pressured the North Vietnamese to enter negotiations to end the war, hoping that by alternately increasing and decreasing military force, he could bring the North Vietnamese at the bargaining table to conclude a successful end of America's involvement. To achieve this,

Nixon menaced the North Vietnamese to unleash uncontrolled force: the threat of “mad bomber Nixon”. The “madman strategy”, Nixon hoped, might force Hanoi see reason. The president instructed Kissinger in the early part of 1972 to tell them that “the president is a madman and you don’t know how to deal with him. Once re-elected I’ll be a mad bomber.” (Qtd in Hersh 568). The Nixon administration had been engaged in secret negotiations between 1969 1971 as Henry Kissinger made twelve trips to France to meet with North Vietnamese diplomats. The United States proposed a cease fire in advance of any political settlement and the preservation of the Thieu regime. The result was the signing of the Paris Peace Accords of 1973, the final withdrawal of American troops, and the return of the American prisoners back home

U.S. involvement in Vietnam was central to the Cold War foreign policies of Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon and Ford and has had profound consequences for American foreign policy. Furthermore the Vietnam War had done so much to bring about changes in the balance of power within American political institutions, and shape American opinions about American foreign policy and about the efficacy of military power .The post-Vietnam years were also marked by a loss of confidence that had to be met by a new look at American policy and a reaffirmation of the strengths on which American confidence had been founded. The decisions of all Nixon’s subsequent successors were influenced by their attitudes towards the legacies of Vietnam. A clear lesson for American presidents was: if you go to war, it shouldn’t, if manageable, be a long war and not one causing many casualties. Jimmy Carter, the first post-Vietnam president, was fully aware of what conservatives called the “Vietnam syndrome” in foreign policy: the alleged reluctance of Americans to see military means to secure their vital interests abroad

2.6 Nixon, Kissinger and Détente

The Vietnam War had bad consequences for the U.S. The U.S. had demonstrated a weakness that some considered fatal. It had waged an overt, brutal war, in which millions of soldiers and civilians died; it had a military, technological and economic superiority. The U.S. had fought a backward country, and it lost. But it was perhaps no big secret that the Soviets or Chinese both, more or less, assisted North Vietnam, so in some ways this was a Cold War conflict by proxy. The U.S. defeat and humiliation in Vietnam emboldened the Soviets who had been rapidly developing their own military capabilities in the aftermath of the Cuban Crisis of 1962. This could test new technology in actual combats, and they had succeeded in propping a friendly regime against the power of the U.S. By any account, the Soviets had done good for themselves, especially because the Americans, distracted by the war in Vietnam, found it necessary to lessen the tensions with Russia for the time being.

Nixon inherited a fragmented détente but he and Kissinger were determined to “manage” the Soviets as they emerged as a superpower; because the new strength of the Soviet Union meant that the old U.S. policies conducted from a position of military superiority were no longer tenable. Therefore Nixon and Kissinger decided to make a deal with the Russians: they could get economic help if they cooperated. However, Nixon was reluctant to deal with the Soviets in the immediate aftermath of the Czech invasion. Instead, Nixon and Kissinger sought containment on the cheap—the U.S. would retain its global obligations but with new policies.

The Nixon Doctrine stated that the U.S. would pull back some of its military commitments while at the same time it would help certain friends to take up the burden of

containment. This new American policy produced predictable results such as causing a tremendous surge in overseas of American military equipment, producing a dangerous build up in the Middle East, encouraging nations like Iran to raise oil prices to pay for expensive U.S. goods, straining relations with countries like Japan, that did not want to take up the burdens of containment.

But one of the things Nixon did best was to befriend China. Given his anti-communist credentials, Nixon could not be labeled an appeaser and so he easily overcame opposition from the China lobby at home. The Chinese were also ready to talk as the Sino-Soviet split was now gaping a hole; over one million Soviet troops camped their common borders, and clashes were common. Nixon visited China in 1972. The visit was a great success. The friendship treaty opened trade, the People's Republic of China entered the United Nations. These new perspectives in the American-Sino relations obviously made the Russians very nervous. Therefore, they were very eager to talk.

The new rapprochement between the U.S. and China revived the ancient Russian fear of encirclement because an anti-Russian U.S.-Chinese cooperation was a distinct possibility. The USSR began looking for ways to engage the U.S. so that Nixon would deal with Brezhnev rather than Mao. There was a lot to worry about after China acquired nuclear capability in 1964. Another problem area was the Soviet economy. The economic military program was taking its toll. Because of coercion and inefficiency inherent in the system, the Russians were lagging behind. For example, the country that had the best arable land in Europe was desperately short for grain.

Given the problems both Nixon and Brezhnev faced, it was not surprising that they moved toward détente. It was mostly to deal with the economic strains caused by the military commitments that the two superpowers engaged in a productive way. On 26 May,

1972 the two leaders signed the Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT I) which froze the number of missiles to 1,054 Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) for U.S. and 1,618 for the Soviet Union. In addition, SALT I indefinitely prohibited both sides from deploying ABM systems. The problem with the treaty was that it limited the number of missiles but not that of warheads. This meant that with the development of MIRV's sides could produce monstrous nuclear stockpiles; Since SALT I permitted unlimited substitution of newer weapons for older, this meant that once this technology became available, it would be utilized. This is exactly what happened. The arms race did not stop.

The Moscow summit was a huge success. Brezhnev carried the policy of détente through the Party Congress. Neither Russia nor China did want to retaliate for American bombing and mining in Vietnam when Nixon intensified it. Nixon's policy had worked. At home Nixon had won re-election. He was at the peak of his power. And then like a second –rate Greek tragedy, Nixon's presidency collapsed. In mid-1973, Congress began hearings on the Watergate break-in of 1972. Nixon tried to cover up his involvement but Congress had turned belligerent; it pushed for series of legislations designed to curb the imperial presidency. Nixon's troubles were far from over. The House, fed up with constant stream of lies emanating from the White House, prepared articles of impeachment. Thus Nixon was finally persuaded to resign on 9 August 1974.

Conclusion

The U.S. global strategy that developed in the post-war world was to surround the Soviet Union and its allies with American allies, alliances and military forces in order to deter the Soviet Union from initiating a military strike and possibly triggering a world War III. Containment of the Soviet Union and China was to be accomplished though the threat and use of conventional and, especially nuclear military forces. In the Third World, where

the US-Soviet confrontation tended to be fought more indirectly over the “hearts and minds” of the people, the U.S. relied on foreign assistance, counterinsurgency, and the use of cover paramilitary operations to promote friendly regimes. Containment of the Soviet Union was also pursued through the use of broad economic sanctions against it and its allies (such as in Eastern Europe and Cuba). Diplomacy and non-coercive instruments of policy were pushed to the side by the U.S. in East-West relations and superseded by the threat and use of coercion in responding to what American leaders saw as major challenges to American national security commitments and national interests.

The strength of conviction held in containment by the U.S. was tested in Vietnam. The United States’ containment strategy was unsuccessful in keeping South Vietnam an independent, noncommunist country. As a result of America’s failure in Vietnam, the policy of global containment of Soviet communism, which had prevailed since World War II, was challenged by competing foreign policy perspectives. Since Vietnam, each new administration brought a modification in the direction of U.S. national security. Although a policy of containment continued to have its share of advocates, other policy orientations gained legitimacy. Starting with Nixon, the U.S. national security changed from the cold war emphasis on containment of Soviet communism to ensure global security to a “realpolitik” emphasis on counterbalancing the Soviet Union as a traditional great power to promote global stability and order.

Although U.S. foreign policy during the Nixon and Ford years of détente represented a change from the Cold War policies of global containment, the real break in the cold war came in 1977 when Jimmy Carter rejected containment as the basis of its foreign policy and presented the first truly post-cold war orientation policy that replaced the threat and use of coercion by preventive diplomacy and negotiations as the essence of U.S. foreign policy.

Endnotes

- 1) Many other works support the notion that the U.S. sought to use the atomic bomb to influence the Soviets' behavior see Sherwin. A Worm Destroyed: The Atomic Bomb and the Grand Alliance (New York: Knopf, 1975), Greg Herken, The Winning Weapon: The Atomic Bomb in the Cold War, 1945-1950 (New York: Knopf, 1980), J Samuel Walker. Prompt and Utter Destruction: The Truman and the Use of the Atomic Bomb against Japan (Chapel Hill: U of NC Press, 1997).
- 2) The Long Telegram
- 3) Truman asked for 17 billion, which Congress to 13 billion. The amount actually used by the Economic Cooperation Administration between 1948 and the end of 1951, when the program ended, was \$ 12 billion.
- 4) Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal.
- 5) The plan would be as follows: Israel would launch a preemptive strike against Egypt and would seize the Sinai Peninsula to secure its borders. Then Britain and France would sponsor a UN demand for a cease-fire as soon as Israel achieved their goals. The demand would be issued to both sides and would be justified by the disrupting through the canal. Since Nasser was expected to refuse , Britain and France would use this as an excuse to invade Egypt and seize the Canal on the pretext of restoring peace.
- 6) For a full account of Acheson's attitudes toward Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh see Dean Acheson Papers at <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/hstpape/acheson.htm>
- 7) For a full speech, "The Tonkin Gulf Resolution" and President's Johnson's speech, August 7 1964 see www.sagehistorynet/Vietnam/docs/Tonkin.htm
- 8) For a full speech see Lyndon B; Johnson, Why America Fight in Vietnam, 1965 at www.sagehistorynet/VietnamLBJ

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CHAPTER THREE

Carter's Idealist Post-Cold War Foreign Policy: From Containment to Preventive Diplomacy

For too many years we have been willing to adopt the flawed and erroneous principles of our adversaries, sometimes abandoning our values for theirs. We have fought fire with fire, never thinking that fire is better quenched with water. This approach failed, with Vietnam the best example of its intellectual and moral poverty.

(Jimmy Carter 1977)

Introduction

Although the Nixon and Ford administrations, with Henry Kissinger as secretary of state, replaced a strategy of global containment with selective containment of the Soviet Union in their détente policies, the Carter administration supplanted the strategy of containment as the basis of its foreign policy when it took office in 1977. This position was made clear in President Jimmy Carter's first and most famous public address at Notre Dame University, on June 13, when he declared that

American Cold War policies “during this period were guided by two principles- a belief that Soviet expansion was inevitable, but must be contained, and the corresponding belief in the importance of an almost exclusive alliance among non-Communist nations on both sides of the Atlantic. That system could not last forever unchanged.”

Vietnam demonstrated the bankruptcy of that kind of strategic thinking. Since that time, “We've learned that this world, no matter how technology has shrunk distances, is

nevertheless too large and too varied to come under the sway of either one or two superpowers” (Presidential Public Papers: Jimmy Carter 1977, 945)

A belief in the end of the Cold War and the need to move beyond containment was not mere window dressing nor limited to solely to Carter. This was a perception that was widely shared among major officials early in the Carter administration. In an address before the American Foreign Service Association in Washington, D.C., on December 9, 1977, National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski reiterated the same themes: “We have witnessed perhaps the end of a phase in our foreign policy, shaped largely since 1945, in which preoccupation particularly with the Cold War as a dominant [concern] of U.S. foreign policy no longer seems warranted by the complex realities within which we operate.” (4)

Whereas Cold War administrations feared global change as a threat to international stability and the status quo, Carter officials were optimistic about the potential of change and stability to take a leadership position. They emphasized the importance of a strategy of adjustment to the inevitability of global change. Brzezinski communicated this sense of optimism about the future of global change and U.S. foreign policy in an address before the Trilateral Commission on October 25, 1977:

We have sensed that, for too long, the United States had been seen –often correctly–as opposed to change, committed primarily to stability for the sake of stability, preoccupied with the balance of power for the sake of the preservation of privilege. We deliberately set out to identify the United States with the notion that change is apposite phenomenon; that we believe that change can be channelled in constructive directions; and that internationally change can be made compatible with our own underlying spiritual values.(Congressional Record, h-11999).

A strategy of adjustment meant that U.S. foreign policy no longer could revolve around the Soviet Union and the maintenance of the international status quo. Instead, the Carter

administration emphasized the need to address a variety of national security issues and to take a preventive diplomacy approach. In this respect, the key was to address problems by working closely with the parties directly involved to resolve conflict and promote constructive change before they led to heightened conflict and war. The Soviet-American conflict, for example, was best addressed through the pursuit of arms control. More important was the perceived need to tackle regional conflicts by addressing their fundamental causes rather than seeing them in East-West terms and treating the symptoms by relying on containment and force. Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance was particularly active in addressing regional conflict. He explained the preventive diplomacy approach with respect to Africa: "The history of the past 15 years suggests that efforts by outside powers to dominate African nations will fail. Our challenge is to find ways of being supportive without becoming interventionist or intrusive." This meant that the United States needed to "work with African nations, and with our European Allies, in positive efforts to resolve such disputes....The most effective policies toward Africa are affirmative policies. They should not be reactive to what other powers do, nor to crises as they arise." (The United States ...166). Many initiatives were taken, for example, to lessen the tension between the two superpowers by working out an agreement on arms control, to bring to fruition the Panama Canal treaties, to address the Arab-Israeli conflict through the Camp David Accords, and to resolve the racial conflict in Rhodesia by promoting black majority rule in the new country of Zimbabwe.

In the minds of Carter officials, the policy of containment was anachronistic and counterproductive in a new world of great change and global complexity. Yet, members of the Carter administration understood that a strategy of adjustment and preventive diplomacy would be a difficult undertaking. As President Carter stated before the United Nations, "We can only improve this world if we are realistic about its complexities. The disagreements that we face are deeply rooted, and they often raise difficult philosophical and territorial issues.

They will not be solved easily. They will not be solved quickly.” (Peace, Arms Control...329)

This was why the Carter administration felt it was imperative to work with others in resolving problems and adjusting to the global change.

3.1 The U.S. The Soviet Union and Arms Control

Like other post-World War American governments, the Carter administration confronted the relationship with the Soviet bloc. However, efforts were made to build on prior administration's attempts to decrease the level of tensions between the two superpowers. The barriers consisted not only of the rigidities of a Soviet regime but also of the long-lasting suspicions and distrust among political leaders, built since the commencement of the Cold War. Jimmy Carter was a president who was committed to goals that clustered together, offered a new vision of a new world order. Carter's world views differed greatly from those of his predecessors. Rather than emphasizing the Cold War and East-West conflict, Carter's vision of global complexity downplayed the role of great powers, the utility of force, and a preoccupation with traditional security issues, and instead emphasized great powers cooperation.

Jimmy Carter set strategic arms control as a high priority for his administration. Carter made arms control a centerpiece of his foreign and military policies because he wanted to carry out U.S. foreign policy according to high moral standards. He charged that foreign affairs had drifted into disrepute during the Nixon and Ford administrations and blasted, in particular, the worldwide merchandising of American arms, repeated disregard of allied opinion, and the exclusion of Congress and the public from the policymaking process. To restore traditional ethics to foreign policy, Carter planned to curtail weapons sales, stress human rights, and vigorously pursue strategic arms limitations and reductions. (The Great Debates, 4776-77).

Ignoring the growing strain in American- Soviet relations, the Carter's administration mounted a diplomatic offensive to win a new arms reduction. With the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks I treaty set to expire in October, Carter was anxious to resume arms limitation talks, which had been stalled since 1974 when Ford and Brezhnev agreed at Vladivostok to impose a ceiling of 2,400 strategic missile launchers on both the United States and the Soviet Union. Carter remained dissatisfied with the accord since it did not reduce existing stockpiles but only created parity at a level beyond which either nation sought to build. He was worried about a new generation of Soviet ICBMs with enormous warheads and greatly improved accuracy. The U.S. president made it clear to Moscow that his desire for a comprehensive agreement would include a significant reduction in the nuclear arsenals of both sides.

Carter was fully aware that the complete elimination of nuclear weapons was not possible in the foreseeable future because the strategic relationship between the two superpowers tended to resist sudden alteration. Because the structure of strategic nuclear deterrence normally remained closed to rapid change, arms control between the Soviet Union and the United States in the 1970s often entailed a long and difficult process of negotiations and deliberations. Despite the difficulties, Carter was determined to proceed with reducing, if not eliminating, strategic nuclear weapons. Upon taking office in January 1977, Jimmy Carter established a second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) as one of his major foreign policy objectives and wanted to begin negotiations on substantial reductions of nuclear weaponry. Carter believed rapid progress was possible on a SALT II treaty, the achievement of which would set the stage for deep cuts in strategic arsenals.

Political, technological, diplomatic, and military obstacles all hindered Carter's ambitious plans and prevented him from making significant changes in the structure of

strategic nuclear deterrence. The Carter administration encountered trouble with SALT II, not only at the negotiating table but at home as well. Jimmy Carter's mounting problems with the ratification of SALT II during 1979 demonstrated the political hurdles that strategic arms control efforts confronted in the United States. Internal political debates over arms control occurred in both countries, but the scope of discussion remained far broader in America. The openness of American society encouraged intense public discussion of arms control and many voices both inside and outside of government were heard regarding the merits of SALT II.

For both superpowers, strategic nuclear weapons protected basic foreign policy interests. American political and military leaders had perceived Western Europe as an area of vital concern since the end of World War II and extended strategic nuclear deterrence over that region as part of the United States commitment to NATO. Deeming European economic and military strength crucial to American security, post-World War II U.S. Presidents considered the extension of strategic nuclear protection a way to ensure that Western Europe kept close ties with America. American leaders worried that a perception of insecurity in Western Europe might lead some nations, especially West Germany, to seek accommodation with the Soviet Union and to loosen connections with the United States. Such an event would reduce American access to Western Europe's sizable military and economic resources while exposing that key region to Soviet domination. To cement relationship with Western Europe, the United States strove to maintain a strategic nuclear arsenal that would not only deter Soviet aggression but convince Western European countries of the American political and military commitment to their defense.(Buckley and Warnke 2-3).

In the eyes of the Soviet leaders strategic nuclear arms functioned less to seal alliances and more to further political prestige. After suffering two major invasions during the twentieth century, the Soviets regarded Eastern Europe as vital to their security and, since 1945, maintained a firm military grip on the region. The substantial Soviet military presence

in Eastern Europe and apparent determination of the Kremlin to preserve a sphere of influence there insured loyalty. Rather than guarding the integrity of the Eastern bloc, strategic nuclear arms demonstrated the Soviet Union's stature as a superpower. The Soviets lacked the economic power of the United States and, instead, stressed their military might as a means to extend influence. A limitation or reduction of strategic arms, therefore, might lessen Soviet influence in international affairs. To Moscow, arms control needed not only to protect national security but also provide political benefits in the world arena as compensation from any weakening of military power (Halloway 89).

During his 1976 campaign, Carter claimed that he could trim the existing military budget by five to seven billions and still maintain "a tough, muscular, well-organized and effective fighting force." (Qtd in Turner 122-123). He promised to fulfil this pledge, by cutting "exotic" weapons systems like the B-1 bomber, streamlining the military bureaucracy, and reducing the American presence overseas (Qtd in Turner 123-124). The president would use resources saved from the military budget to combat unemployment, invigorate the economy, lower dependence on foreign oil, and hold down inflation (Carter, *Keeping Faith* 218).

To restore traditional ethics to foreign policy, Carter planned to curtail weapons sales, stress human rights, and vigorously pursue strategic arms limitations and reductions (Carter , *The Great debates*, 476-477). In quest for a SALT II pact, the President followed the channels that the Nixon and Ford administrations had established but planned to expand greatly upon their work. The SALT Interim Agreement had allowed the United States to retain launchers for 1,054 ICBMs and 656 SLBMs while permitting the Soviets 1,608 ICBM launchers and 740 SLBM launchers, but the accord was due to expire in October 1977 (Department of Defense, *Annual Report*, F.Y. 1979, 46). A SALT II treaty did not quickly follow this agreement, but the Ford administration had narrowed the remaining issues by January 1977.

The Vladivostok accords of 1974 laid the basic groundwork for SALT II by placing a cap of 2,400 on all launchers and a 1,320 sub-limit for launchers carrying multiple warheads (MIRVs) (Flanagan 12). Jimmy Carter reviewed these efforts and argued that previous administrations had not gone far enough. He would continue to work within the framework of the SALT talks but wanted deep cuts in the size of strategic arsenals and restraints on qualitative improvements.

Determined to substitute the power of persuasion and negotiations for the power of nuclear weapons. Six days after his inauguration, Carter made a truly Wilsonian gesture: he sent personal letters to Leonid Brezhnev, stating that his goal was to “improve relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of reciprocity, mutual respect and benefit. He expressed the hope that early progress in relations could be reached through a quick SALT II accord, early agreement on a comprehensive nuclear test ban, and agreement on MBFR. He also stated his desire for an early meeting. (Garthoff 565) (Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 146-50)

Specifically, Carter desired fundamental changes in the strategic nuclear arsenals of the two superpowers. At the outset of his term, he hoped that the Soviets would agree to far-reaching alterations in a SALT II pact. He sent Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to Moscow in March 1977 with new proposals on SALT II. Vance submitted two offers, both of which promised major cuts in strategic weapons stockpiles. The first proposition resembled the Vladivostok accords but sought a ten-percent reduction in arms. Carter’s second proposal was much more dramatic and would leave each nation with a minimal deterrent. This second plan would reduce the threat of a preemptive attack by sweeping cuts in nuclear arsenals and permit both countries just enough strategic weapons to deter the war. Without an adequate capability to knock out each others’ strategic forces, the Soviet Union and United States would possess means only to devastate the other’s society, an option neither country was likely to undertake

To ensure that neither side could develop a qualitative edge over the other, Carter proposed a comprehensive test ban to accompany the arms treaty. The test ban would prohibit all nuclear explosions for a period of five years and would complement SALT II restrictions on missile tests and new missile deployments. Carter hoped that his efforts would begin the process of eliminating nuclear weapons from the earth (Keeping Faith 217-18) The March 1977 proposals suggested that the President perceived negotiations as a mere formality standing in the way of a mutually desired goal. Arms talks built up their own momentum and logic, which he proposed to circumvent. Carter believed that the Soviets would readily accept a substantial cut of strategic arms if only the United States would make a serious offer. He presumed that the reduction and eventual elimination represented a worthy objective that responsible leaders could not refuse to embrace. The President's attitude indicated that he remained preoccupied with the idealism of his 1976 campaign and not fully prepared to deal with the realities of international power or the complexities of negotiations. Since Carter had recommended a major reworking of the structure of deterrence with his second proposal, quick agreement between the two parties was unlikely even if the Soviets accepted his general approach to arms control (Hodgson 23-24). Even though his first initiatives ran into a wall of Soviet intransigence, Carter never surrendered the hope of rapid progress on strategic arms control until the last years of his administration. He obtained a SALT II agreement but only after two years of hard negotiations.

At the signing of the arms pact in Vienna in June 1979, Carter revealed that he still believed in the possibility for significant reductions in SALT II. He sought a commitment from Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev to a five percent annual reduction of strategic arms over the five-year life of the treaty. Carter also asked the Soviet leader to agree that the SALT III talks would aim for limits fifty percent below the level of arms that SALT II allowed. Brezhnev rejected the five-percent yearly cut and remained noncommittal on the SALT III

Talks. He was not about to abandon incremental procedures and endorse Carter's program of liberal reductions. (Carter, Keeping Faith 246-47).

Carter encountered stiff political opposition to SALT II as he worked to complete the treaty and win ratification; the President's troubles demonstrated the decline of the chief executive stature in the 1970s. The Vietnam War and the Watergate Affair injured severely the credibility and influence of the chief executive. As a consequence, Congress and political interest groups assumed a greater voice in foreign affairs and complicated the President's task of concluding an acceptable peace treaty (Hodgson 13-14). From 1945 to the mid-1960s, the climate of the Cold War and a bipartisan coalition on Capitol Hill had permitted the President wide latitude in foreign affairs. Although the executive branch traditionally exercised the greatest influence on foreign policy, the President received even more discretion after 1945 because his office was best suited to respond to overseas crises. The maintenance of a consensus on foreign policy became harder when superpower tensions eased in the aftermath of the Cuban Missile crisis and with the coming of US-Soviet détente in the early and mid-1970s. Severe damage to executive authority resulted, however, from the Vietnam War and the Watergate Scandal.

As a consequence, Carter inherited an office that commanded less power to influence Congress. After Vietnam many Senators and Representatives were less willing to defer to executive leadership and stood ready to challenge foreign policy initiatives with which they did not agree. Legislators tried to take more of a lead in foreign affairs because they assumed that Capitol Hill would exercise greater prudence than the president and resist unwise foreign interventions and unfavourable bargains with the Kremlin. Reviewing the SALT II talks some charged that President Carter desired an arms control pact so strongly that he had jeopardized

the safety of the country, and they vowed to counter this danger by amending or rejecting the treaty. (Sorensen 7-8)

Stiff criticism of arms control negotiations actually came from both the left and right in American politics and within the Democratic party. Paul Nitze and Paul Warnke became leading spokesmen for the two distinct sets of criticism that were commonly made about superpower arms control negotiations. For Nitze, there was a growing suspicion that the Soviet Union was using arms control and détente to cover an effort to win the arms race by acquiring effective nuclear superiority. In January of 1976, an influential article by Nitze published in *Foreign Affairs* warned that the Soviet numerical advantages in missile throw-weight, combined with the improvements in missile accuracy that both sides would eventually achieve, would make American land-based missiles vulnerable to preemptive attacks; Such attacks would give the Soviet Union a greater chance of prevailing in a nuclear war or more importantly would give it the ability to put effective pressure on the United States in a crisis short of war(*Foreign Affairs* 54).On the left, the disillusionment with détente and arms control had a different sets of arguments and a different set of advocates. According to critics of the SALT II negotiations like Paul Warnke, arms control was failing to do enough to stem the quickening pace of an arms race driven largely by technological progress rather than by Soviet desires to achieve a war-winning nuclear capability.

Inside and outside Congress promised the Carter administration a tough battle on ratification. Whether Democrats or Republicans, most critics of the treaty tended toward the right on foreign policy issues. Through Congressional testimony and speaking engagements, critics would tip an eroding military balance in favour of the Soviet Union. They claimed that the pact left the Soviets too much room to augment their strategic capabilities through qualitative improvements, which the U.S. could not detect with confidence because of inadequate verification provisions in the treaty. Besides urging revision or rejection of the

agreements, critics demanded increased military spending and modernization of American strategic arms to counter Soviet military build up of the previous years.

The opponents of SALT II offered strong resistance because they perceived the treaty as part of an overall reduction of American power and feared the political consequences of that decline. The Committee on the Present Danger, formed in November 1976, just three days after Carter's electoral victory, was actively opposing the ratification of the SALT II even though it was not yet fully written, let alone signed (Caldwell 102). The newly formed committee was headed by Paul Nitze and Eugene Rostow, both democrats who had served in the previous administration and who believed that the United States was losing the will and military power to stop the Soviet Union. The criticism from Paul Nitze and the other committee members went to the heart of the SALT process. The Soviets they argued, were using arms control and *détente* to lull the West into a false sense of security while they continued the arms race and actively pursued a nuclear superiority that would be used for diplomatic advantage in future crisis confrontations. For many of the committee members the prominent critics in the Congress, like Senator Henry Jackson, almost no agreement with the Soviet Union, and certainly not one based on a modification of the Vladivostok accords, would answer these criticisms.

Rendering an assessment shared by many, General Daniel Graham, one of the fiercest opponents to the treaty, declared to a Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee that "as the Soviet strategic advantage grows, it will be the U.S. which will be deterred from acting to protect free world interests against even more adventurous Soviet initiatives (Committee on Foreign Relations, Strategic Options, 12). In essence, he argued that a direct correlation existed between strategic capabilities and political influence in international affairs. Graham and others believed that the Soviets accepted this thinking and might exploit a perception of strategic superiority to gain a military or political advantage over the U.S., especially during a

crisis. They worried, in particular, lest the Soviets might employ their strategic strength to have the U.S. retreat in confrontation similar to the Cuban Missile Crisis (61, 124)

After the passage in Congress of the Panama Canal treaties, getting two thirds of the Senate to bite another treaty bullet would not be easy. But abandoning arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union was not an option for Carter, who continued to believe that reducing the dangers of nuclear war was possible and could be made one of his highest foreign policy priorities. After two years of lengthy and complex negotiations, Carter and his team had reached an agreement with the Soviet Union. In June 1979, the Carter administration prepared to sign the SALT II treaty and present it to the Senate where a tough battle on ratification was awaiting the president. The administration should attain consensus within the executive branch and win strong congressional support. On the latter count, the outlook for Senate approval of SALT II was not good. Henry Jackson, the most influential senator on matters of defense and the most prominent irreconcilable opponent of the treaty declared war on the treaty and the administration three days before Carter went to Vienna for the signing ceremony for the SALT II treaty with the Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev. In a speech before a Coalition for a Democratic majority, a neo-conservative group related to the Committee on the Present Danger, Henry Jackson declared:

To enter a treaty which favors the Soviets as this one does on the ground that we will be in a worse position without it, is appeasement in its purest form.... Against overwhelming evidence of a continuing Soviet strategic and conventional military buildup there has been a flow of official administration explanations, extenuations, excuses. It is all ominously reminiscent of Great Britain in the 1930s, when one government pronouncement after another was issued to

assure the British public that Hitler's Germany would never achieve military equality- let alone superiority. The failure to face reality today, like the failure to do so then, that is the mark of appeasement. (Talbot 5).

Jackson and the other irreconcilable opponents worked against the SALT II Treaty even before it was concluded; a press release by Jackson of May 9, 1979, stated "From what I know of the SALT II treaty it is substantially unequal and unverifiable. It favors the Soviet Union. In its present form it is not in the security interest of the United States." (Press Release). Despite Jackson's opposition, President Carter had tried to win his support for the treaty, but by the time the treaty was sent to the Senate, Jackson's opposition was uncompromising.

Supporters of the treaty developed a case that was based on the premise that SALT II Treaty would increase the national security of the United States rather than on the idea that arms control was inherently good or that it would contribute to détente. Supporters of the treaty invited twenty senators to form a group to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the treaty and to win supporters within the Senate so as to be ready to deal with counterarguments. Nevertheless, by the end of the summer 1979, the treaty proponents appeared to have won the battle. In its lead editorial of August 20, 1979, *The Los Angeles Times* predicted: "it appears probable that the agreement will be ratified by the Senate (The Shadow of Soviet Might, 6). But at the end of August, the chances of SALT II ratification were not very high even at the moment when it was signed. They were harmed by Senator Frank Church's fiasco of an alleged discovery of a Soviet combat brigade in Cuba that caused great concern and a delay in the consideration of the treaty. In addition, the Iranian hostage crisis diverted the attention of President Carter, the Senate, and the American people from

SALT II. At the end of December, a third external event, the invasion of Afghanistan, made it politically impossible to proceed with ratification efforts in the Senate, and president Carter withdrew the treaty from the Senate rather than risk its rejection, or the imposition of amendments, which in all likelihood would have been unacceptable to the Soviets.

The failure to ratify SALT II signified the collapse of U.S.-Soviet détente, which by the early 1980 was already undermined by the Soviet assertive foreign policy and domestic developments in both countries. But SALT I and SALT II treaties became the key agreements that for the first time put limits on nuclear arms race between the superpower rivals in the Cold War. The importance of the treaties lies in the fact that they provided a conduit for a political and military dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union. The treaties should also be seen as the first set of comprehensive accords, which allowed the Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (START) negotiations to begin and succeed under Gorbachev.

Jimmy Carter achieved only limited success on arms control because of the inflexible nature of strategic deterrence. By the late 1970s, the structure of deterrence between the Soviet Union and the United States had become increasingly impervious to change as it became more complex. A broad range of interrelated military and political questions was needed before an accord on strategic arms race could be reached. On the other hand,, the difficulties that accompanied SALT II were products in part of American domestic opposition. In a period in which American power and influence appeared in decline, a treaty that left unanswered some questions about national security remained vulnerable to serious political challenge. Soviet intentions also seemed suspect as the Kremlin actively pursued SALT II but still intervened in the Third World and pushed ahead with a military build-up many American critics interpreted this behavior as part of a general Soviet strategy to weaken the U.S. and demanded revision or rejection of the treaty. Jimmy Carter confronted this hostile climate with the presidency weakened from the turmoil of previous years.

Finally, it might be asked why rapid progress was possible on more recent strategic arms control agreements, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I, START II), if such progress was not possible for Jimmy Carter. The simple and obvious answer is that a dramatic shift took place in the entire context in which strategic arms control occurred. In a rapid succession leading to the end of both the Cold War and the Soviet Union, the complex web of issues that hindered arms control a few years before melted away. The political and diplomatic climate of the late 1980s and early 1990s placed the emphasis less on competition and more on cooperation, a policy Carter advocated for so long. This shift allowed the quick completion of START I and START II.

Whatever its merits, the idea of a post-nuclear age belonged more to the realm of fantasy when Carter suggested it in the 1970s, a time when threat and deterrence were more the order of the day than reduction and cooperation. Ultimately then, Carter's greatest misfortune, perhaps lay in the fact that his vision applied more to the future than to the times when he governed.

3.2 The U.S. and The Panama Canal Treaties

The President and his advisers in 1977 did not see Soviet involvement in Latin America as large or purposeful enough to warrant concern. They hoped to reduce that involvement further by repairing relations with Cuba, the one Soviet client in the Western Hemisphere. Their highest priority, however, was to conclude an agreement with Panama which would restore Panamanian sovereignty over the Canal Zone. They saw the Panamanian settlement as the foundation for a new day in the hemisphere, a demonstration that the United States had truly abandoned outmoded colonialism, an achievement which would earn so much goodwill that other Latin American problem could be readily solved.

President Carter decided that a settlement with Panama over the future status of the canal would be the Administration's first objective in Latin America because he quickly learned that permanent retention of American control and a settlement were absolutely incompatible. Panamanians were not pleased with the American presence in a broad waterway through the middle of the country since 1903, when the United States imposed a treaty giving itself near-sovereignty in perpetuity over the canal and the surrounding the canal zone zone. The 1903 treaty provided a small, ungenerous payment to Panama. Since 1964, a year of riots and loss of life in the zone, the discontent had been acute; the riots were followed by three-month suspension of diplomatic relations. In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson ordered negotiations to begin. Presidents Nixon and Ford continued them. In 1973, General Omar Torrijos, the shrewd head of the Panamanian government, scored an international political victory by persuading the United Nations Security Council to meet in Panama City. Torrijos then manoeuvred the United States into vetoing a resolution calling for fulfilment of Panama's "just demands" (Jorden 185-186). In 1974, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Panamanian Foreign Minister Juan Antonio Tack agreed to a set of principles. The 1903 treaty would be abrogated and a new treaty would be negotiated with a fixed termination date and substantially increased revenues for Panama. The Canal Zone would be returned and Panama would assume full responsibility for the operation of the canal at a date to be determined, and Panama would grant the United States the right to protect the canal (Jorden 696-697).

Domestic politics in both countries then produced an impasse. Panamanian nationalists wanted enormous cash payments from the United States, a treaty of short duration, and the complete renunciation of the United States of every special privilege. In the United States, opponents of concessions to Panama rallied behind Ronald Reagan and his efforts to win the Republican nomination from Gerald Ford. In 1976, Reagan made the canal a central issue.

“We bought it, we paid for it, it’s ours and we’re going to keep it” was a rousing line which Reagan used in speech after speech (Dugger 362).

Also in 1976, the prestigious commission on Latin America chaired by Sol Linowitz, called the canal the most serious problem facing the United States in the region. Seven Latin American presidents also warned Carter of potential trouble, in a letter sent on the eve of his inauguration (*The New York Times* 16 January 1977). The Administration had no difficulty deciding to move immediately. Vance persuaded Linowitz to join Veteran diplomat Ellsworth Bunker as co-negotiator, and ten days after the inauguration the Secretary of State officially reaffirmed American commitment to the Kissinger-Tack principles as the basis for negotiation. (Vance, *Hard Choices* 144-145).

William Jordan, the United States ambassador to Panama and an important participant, has described the diplomacy of the canal settlement in fascinating detail. The substantive problems of how much money Panama would receive, how long the United States would retain some control over the canal, and precisely what words would be used to describe rights the United States would retain once Panama gained full control were soluble- although only with great patience and through enormous efforts deployed by diplomats on both sides. Progress was facilitated by the wise decision to draft two treaties- one lasting until 1999 and providing for mixed U.S.-Panamanian operation of the canal; and the second, called the Neutrality Treaty, defining American rights to defend the canal thereafter. The treaties were completed on August 29 and signed in Washington at an elaborate ceremony on September 7, 1977. Brzezinski accurately described the President’s state of mind: “For him, this occasion represented ideal fusion of morality and politics; he was doing something good for peace, responding to the passionate desires of a small nation, and yet helping the long-range U.S. national interest.” (*Power and Principle* 137). But there was no time for euphoria; ahead lay

the battle for approval-by a national vote in Panama, and two thirds of the United States, required for ratification.

An ultimately insoluble problem involved conflicting domestic political expectations and perceptions in both countries. General Torrijos had to present the settlement to the Panamanian people as smoothing which would restore full Panamanian sovereignty and would end forever the possibility of American intervention in Panama's internal affairs. But President Carter had to convince the Senate and the American public that the United States had the right and power to defend the canal for all time and keep it open in all circumstances. Carter and Torrijos tried to close the wide gap between the two perceptions by issuing a formal joint statement on October 14 that the Neutrality Treaty gave both countries the right to keep the canal open against any threat-but: "This does not mean, nor shall be interpreted as a right of intervention of the United States in the internal affairs of Panama." (American Foreign Policy, BasicDocuments, 730) The contradiction remained as sharp as ever.

During the next six months President Carter, Secretary Vance, and dozens of other officials devoted more time to explaining the treaties to the public and to persuading senators to vote favourably because what counted was the favourable opinion of sixty-seven senators. In March and April 1978, the Senate approved the treaties by identical 68- 32 votes. A shift of only two votes would have meant defeat. Ordinarily, a president grows stronger by winning a hard political fight. But Carter's narrow triumph gained him no credit at home. Ronald Reagan, his most likely challenger in 1980, stayed on the attack: "To the Communists and those others who are hostile to our country," he wrote in February 1979, "President Carter and his supporters in Congress seem like Santa Claus. They have given the Panama Canal away, abandoned Taiwan to the Red Chinese, and they're negotiating a SALT II treaty that could very well make this nation NUMBER TWO." (Dugger 276) As Carter himself sadly noted, of twenty pro-treaties senators scheduled for reelection in 1978, six did not choose to run, but

seven were defeated. In 1980, another supporting senator was defeated, “plus one President” (Keeping Faith, 184)

3.3 Carter and the Camp David Accords

Among the places in the world where American foreign policy had been called upon to exert extraordinary efforts, the Middle East must surely rank near the top, if it is not actually at the apex. The Middle East was a policy arena upon which President Carter had left his most distinctive marks. Carter most significant foreign policy success in his first two years as president occurred at Camp David during early September 1978 when President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel agreed to a framework of peace in the Middle East that promised to end thirty years of hostilities between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Even more than the signing of the Panama Canal treaties, Camp David was hailed throughout the world as a monumental diplomatic accomplishment. For Carter who had brought Sadat and Begin together and had been instrumental in hammering out an agreement, the accords reached by the Middle Eastern leaders were a personal triumph and his administration’s crowning achievement.

Carter’s interest in the enormously complex and seemingly endless Middle East crisis was demonstrated during his electoral campaign. Carter’s interest in that troubled region was motivated by his concern for the security of Israel, the rights of the Palestinians, the possibility of the Soviet influence in the region, and the West’s dependence on Arab oil. Carter’s campaign statements on the region had been unexceptional. Very early in his candidacy, he had urged Israel to withdraw from most of the territories it had seized during the Six Days’ War of 1967 and had later endorsed the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank of the Jordan River. But in an obvious effort to court the Jewish vote, he increasingly emphasized the importance of strengthening ties with Israel and came out in

support of Israel's demands for "defensible borders", a term generally understood to mean continued occupation of the areas taken in 1967. Carter also stated he would not recognize the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) "or other government entities representing the Palestinians" until he was convinced that they acknowledged Israel's right to exist (The Presidential Campaign , 1: 56-57)

Once in office, President Carter launched a major initiative to reorient America's Middle East policy away from superpower confrontation to that of cooperation. To that end he decided to wield American influence to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict by bringing Israel, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and Israel's immediate neighbors, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, to a renewed Geneva Conference at which the United States and the Soviet Union would try to work out a comprehensive peace agreement among their clients. From April to August 1977, Carter and his aides overcame procedural problems involved in reconvening the conference. The sticky point, then, was the PLO, or Palestinian representation. Israel opposed separate Palestinian representation at Geneva, and adamantly opposed the establishment of a Palestinian political infrastructure which, in the Israeli opinion could endanger Israel's survival. Ultimately, by the end of September, Israel accepted the concept of Palestinian representation in a unified delegation at Geneva. After the opening session at Geneva, bilateral talks between Egypt and Israel were to take place. How the Palestinian question was to be resolved was an outstanding issue.

The Geneva Conference had met only once before. In December 1973, just after the October War, the United States had consented to it as a means of placating the Soviets and resolving the tense confrontation between Washington and Moscow that had accompanied the end of the war. It had been a dead letter ever since. Now Carter, who had taken office less than a year earlier, seemed to be prepared to let Moscow back into the Middle East peace process at Geneva. Until Sadat announced his initiative on November 9, only Israel had

actively opposed Carter's plan. American-Israeli tensions over the issue had peaked in early October, after the United States and the Soviet Union issued a joint statement that appeared to the Begin government to present Israel with a *fait accompli* regarding P.L.O participation and American-Soviet cooperation on a new Middle East peace process to be decided at Geneva.

The major hurdles in dealing with these critical issues at a Geneva conference "chaired by the two cold war rivals would have been substantial and cause considerable anxiety in Israel and within the American Jewish community" (Strong 185) In an emergency move, Israeli Foreign Minister, Moshe Dayan made a trip to Washington where he alternately threatened and cajoled Carter and Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, into distancing the United States from the joint statement with the Soviets. Dayan enlisted massive pressure from the American Jewish Community, which had overwhelmingly backed Carter for president. Dayan insisted that a separate Egyptian-Israeli track was preferable. His American interlocutors thought he was fantasizing, but they agreed to back down temporarily. When Sadat announced he was going to Jerusalem, scarcely three weeks after Dayan's visit to Washington, the Carter administration understood the move as yet another attempt, this time by an Arab leader, to scuttle its scheme to bring everyone together in Geneva. Obviously, Carter wanted a comprehensive process. Now not only Dayan but Sadat seemed to prefer a bilateral one.

With suddenness, Egyptian president did the unexpected. On 19 November 1977, he flew to Israel. Speaking from the Kennest podium with Herzl's picture behind him, he accepted Israel as a reality and told an attentive world that if Israelis wanted peace, they had to withdraw from all of the territories taken in the June 1967 Middle East War. In fact, Saddat's primary goal was the return of Sinai to Egyptian sovereignty.

During his first year in office, Carter tried to resolve the conflict with bare fists not velvet gloves. These efforts frustrated, shoved, threatened, befriended and alienated Arabs and

Israelis alike. After Kissinger's step-by-step diplomacy, Carter tried to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict in a comprehensive manner. He invited the Russians to be the co-conveners at a Middle East conference and defended a way for a low level Palestinian Organization Liberation members to be part in a unified Arab delegation. Though impressed with the U.S President's commitment, Sadat grew impatient with the details involved in arranging for a conference and especially the dilly-dallying of his Arab contemporaries.

By December 1, 1977 three weeks into the Sadat's peace initiative, the Carter's administration had offered only the faintest approval for the Egyptian president's visit to Israel and "tried to catch up with the Egyptian leader's imaginative initiative and its significance for the prospects of peace in the Middle East" (Strong 186) but had not yet abandoned its support for Geneva in favor of the bilateral Egyptian-Israeli process that Sadat, Begin, and Dayan were actively proposing. Try as he might, Carter could not thwart the Egyptian-Israeli peace push. Within days, Israeli journalists were allowed into Cairo, breaking a symbolic barrier and from there the peace process quickly gained momentum. An Egyptian-Israeli working summit was scheduled for December 25 in Ismailiya, near the Suez Canal but no formal agreement was reached.

By then, Carter bowed to the realities and accepted to "set aside his plans for a Geneva conference and emerged as the active mediator helping Sadat and Begin reach a settlement in their negotiations for a separate peace between Egypt and Israel (Strong 186). Indeed Carter went on to play a crucial role in producing the Camp David Accords in September 1978. Half a year later Carter himself shuttled between Cairo and Jerusalem for two weeks to nail down a peace treaty.

Not since Woodrow Wilson attended the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 had an American President thrown himself so deeply and personally into diplomatic negotiations (Smith165). The pivotal point of the peace process came in September 1978 when Carter

brought Sadat and Begin to the table and helped hammer out the Camp David Accords. Camp David was a gamble for Carter. In an August news conference, Carter acknowledged that Camp David was “a very high risk thing for me politically” (American Foreign Policy: Basic Documents 1977-1980, 650). Although Begin and Sadat almost immediately accepted the invitation, chances were not that they would see eye to eye to anything. Failure of the Camp David talks would add to the public perception of an ineffectual president. In addition, Carter faced numerous opposing interests from widely varying constituencies. The influential Jewish community would only support an agreement that met all of Israel’s needs. In fact, there was a long-standing tradition of active interest on the part of Jewish American voters and lobbyists in Middle Eastern foreign affairs policy issues. The energy sector cared more about the U.S. relationship with the oil exporting Arab states. Corporate America in general wanted merely to avert future conflict for economic reasons. (Stein 84).

However, Carter’s major interest was in salvaging his presidency. Having already sunk much political capital into the Middle East process with the next presidential election just over the horizon, Carter needed to produce results. Sadat was in no better position than Carter. In coming to Camp David, the Egyptian leader was at a disadvantage. Although Begin could leave the summit at any time without penalty, Sadat incurred the wrath of the other Arab nations that considered his unilateral peace move an abandonment of the Palestinian cause and Arab nationalism that was presumably required to advance that cause. He risked his own political future by his peace initiative; he could not return home empty handed. His hope was that Carter could force Begin into a crucial of Israeli demands.

The negotiations at Camp David lasted for almost two weeks. The first two days consisted of each side establishing its positions in separate meetings with the American delegation. President Carter was not surprised to hear an extreme position from the Israelis, but was dismayed when Sadat also presented him with a very uncompromising stance. The

role that the U.S. delegation would play became clearer throughout days three and four. The first trilateral meeting occurred on the third day, and personality conflicts were immediately obvious. Begin and Sadat did not get along because of the mistrust and animosity that had developed between them. The meeting quickly devolved into shouting matches between Begin and Sadat, and the Americans realized that the Egyptian and Israeli leaders “could not interact constructively on a personal level” (Tehhami, Pew Study 7). From then on, the two leaders were kept apart while Carter and his aides proceeded with a kind of “shuttle diplomacy”, constantly moving between cabins to speak with each delegation separately. It was at this point that the Americans truly took on the role of mediators: their job was to bring the two sides together while being only able to talk to each side individually.

During day five through seven, the U.S. delegation played its part well. Carter and his aides began by developing a draft proposal that addressed many of the major issues at stake. Each consecutive version would be critiqued by both sides and then rewritten by the American drafters to reflect the comments (Telhami, Pew Study 8). This process achieved some initial progress on the sticky issues of the Sinai and the future of the West Bank and Gaza, but Begin proved to be intransigent. Needing a way to galvanize the negotiations, Carter revealed to the Israeli that he had given the Egyptians fallback position. Knowing that Carter needed an agreement and that he would offer Sadat’s concession to keep the negotiations on track, Begin was in a powerful position. For the remainder of the negotiations, he would offer inconsequential concessions and expect Carter to respond with larger concessions on behalf of Egypt.

The process reached a stalemate between days eight and ten. The iterative drafting process had achieved as much accord as possible, and it became an exercise in clearing up the language on smaller issues that had been settled. Having eliminated many of the issues, the fundamental gap between the two sides became clear. The parties had reached an impasse on

the Sinai and on the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, and everyone was discouraged. After another discussion, Dayan fell short of resolution, Carter “seemed to be convinced that the Camp David talks were headed toward failure.” (Quandt 234)

On the morning of the eleventh day, Sadat’s delegation packed their bags to leave in frustration. Though Carter was pessimistic about finalizing an agreement, he realized that his presidency would be jeopardized without one. He convinced the Egyptians to stay and “demonstrated considerable diplomatic skill in making sure that the negotiations kept going” (Strong 187) and at times threatened to end the U.S.-Egypt bilateral relationship as well as his personal friendship with Sadat (Quandt 225-239). Carter then lifted his strategy to be proactive in offering incentives to overcome sticky points. The Sinai issue was at an impasse. Carter proposed that Egypt would recover full sovereignty in the Sinai, but Begin, as expected, flatly rejected the proposal and stated that he would never agree to abandon Israeli settlements and air bases there. Events then moved quickly. Israeli officials raised the possibility that Israel might give up its airfields in the Sinai if the United States would help build new airfields in the Negev desert. Carter indicated that he would go along with such a deal provided that Israel relinquished the settlements in the Sinai. Finally Begin accepted the proposal but made it clear that he would submit it to the Knesset for vote and that he would abide by its decision. Carter, then, persuaded Sadat to accept this arrangement. Consequently, the major obstacles to a Sinai agreement had now been cleared.

By day twelve, only one major hurdle remained outstanding the future of the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. It was clear that no definitive resolution of this question was possible. Sadat wanted a commitment from Israel to withdraw from the territories by a specified date and to grant the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza autonomy. Begin refused. Instead the two leaders finessed the matter by agreeing to an ambiguous “framework for peace”, which Carter had prepared. This second accord provided

for a transitional period of no more than five years, during which Egypt, Israel, and Jordan would determine the final status of the territories on “full autonomy and a “self-governing authority” for the inhabitants of the two areas. Their negotiations would also be predicated on the principles of UN Resolution 242- though the pact did not spell out what that actually meant (Quandt 386-87). After a long negotiation session that night, Carter failed to receive a firm commitment from Begin even on the vague undefined language. But Carter forged ahead despite the lack of clarity on settlement because he feared derailing the negotiation process just when a deal was in sight. Having bypassed the final hurdle, the parties finalized the deal on the thirteen day, September 17, 1978, and returned to the White House for the official signing ceremony.

Indeed after thirteen days, Carter was able to announce publicly that a consensus had been reached at Camp David calling for the signing of a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel and providing the basis for a Middle Eastern settlement. The signing of the Camp David Accords was a glorious moment for Carter. With Sadat and Begin present, he declared to a joint session of Congress: “Today we are privileged to see the chance for one of the sometimes rare, bright moments in human history.... We have a chance for peace...” (Public Papers, 1537) The signing of the Camp David accords at a White House ceremony carried by all major television networks, represented a high point of the Carter presidency. The summit was hailed as a shining triumph, and Carter was singled out for plaudits. Begin, Sadat, and the news media covering the summit, and all the American public all acknowledged what the president had accomplished.

But even as Carter was acclaimed, some observers expressed reservations about the pacts. Many commentators pointed out that the Accords failed to solve the disputes on the future of Palestinian self-determination. Sadat and Begin could not concur on language to address this issue, so the final document used the construction favored by both parties, calling

for the creation of a “self-governing authority (administrative council) in the West Bank and Gaza.” (Camp David Accords, 93) This vague wording did not solve the underlying disagreement; furthermore no timetable was specified for the development of the authority, so the Israelis were given the ability to block the process from going forward. By failing to decide the future of the Palestinians, Camp David merely perpetuated the status quo (Eisenberg and Caplan 289). In addition, nothing was said in “the framework of peace” about the building of new Israeli settlements on the West Bank and Gaza.

Between September 1978 and March 1979, the U.S. tried to convert the accords into a treaty and Carter, once again, in one further intense burst of negotiations helped the two sides to hammer out the text of a treaty. The crisis in Iran, accelerated Israeli intransigence over West Bank settlements and evidence of Sadat’s isolation in the Arab world all impacted dangerously on the prospects of resolution. In this context, Brzezinski informed Carter in 1979 for “the good of the Democratic Party we must avoid a situation where we continue agitating the most neuralgic problem with the American Jewish community (the West Bank, the Palestinians, the PLO) without a breakthrough to a solution” (Quandt 308).The final treaty, signed in March 1979, was again the product of personal intervention by Carter. Both Egypt and Israel were promised new military assistance. Israel was assured oil supplies would be guaranteed by the U.S. if oil from the Sinai was for any reason cut off. As Carter admitted in 1985, Begin was determined to “finesse” transitional arrangements for the West Bank and Gaza. (The Blood of Abraham, 45). As White House adviser Hedley Donovan noted in January 1980, there was little prospect of keeping even ‘moderate Middle East regimes ‘ behind the treaty: “If we are willing or unable to budge Israel...it calls into question our capacity to conduct an independent foreign policy based on national interest.” (Memo to the President from Donovan, 7 February 1980) .In the end, the Carter Administration was forced to accept a peace treaty rather than a comprehensive settlement.

But in fairness to Carter, it is worth noting that he was the first American president to make a positive statement about the Palestinian future when in March 1977 he spoke about the necessity to establish a Palestinian homeland and was also the first U.S. president to declare publicly that settlements in the occupied territories were illegal. Furthermore, Carter said that any solution must “enable Palestinians to participate in the determination of their own future.”(Quandt 161) (Brzezinski 239). Carter had clearly accomplished his primary purpose at Camp David to establish a basis for future negotiations. The Egyptian-Israeli accord was possible because it did gloss over many of the issues blocking peace in the Middle East. Once these two enemies had agreed to a conciliatory framework, Carter hoped the other Arab nations, particularly Saudi Arabia, would join the peace process. When that happened, Carter believed, the remaining obstacles in the Middle East settlements could be resolved. Perhaps Carter was idealistic and naïve to think that peace was attainable in that troubled region, but what better alternative was there? Given the depth of historical animosity between Arabs and Israelis, it was remarkable that an agreement-however imperfect- was reached between Egypt and Israel. The accords proved that negotiations, not only belligerency, can begin to characterize Arab-Israeli relations. The legacy of the accords is their durability in the face of severe criticism and enormous political change in the Middle East.

Based on the evolution of bargaining, it is not surprising that the agreement ultimately favored Israel. The two leaders signed a formal peace treaty and agreed to a phased normalization of relations that would culminate in the exchange of ambassadors. Israel’s withdrawal from the Sinai settlement was linked to the timetable for this normalization. In addition, much of the Sinai territory would be demilitarized and a UN force was created to implement this process (Eisenberg and Caplan 36). The outcome of the negotiations was much closer to Israeli’s initial position than to Egypt’s. Begin accomplished his major goals of securing a peace treaty and demilitarization of the Sinai without sacrificing much ground on

the Palestinian issue. Sadat, in contrast, gained an Israeli's withdrawal from the Sinai and some other small concessions but failed to establish Palestinian self-determination.

Carter saw himself as a facilitator, and he approached the talks from both moralistic and problem-solving standpoints. First, Carter's strong religious background caused him to see the Middle East process as the responsibility of the United States. America held the moral obligation to use its power to find a resolution to what Carter considered a solvable problem. He believed in the goodness of human nature and that the actors that perpetuated the situation to be well intentioned and felt there existed a possible settlement that would satisfy them all. Second, his training as an engineer led Carter to approach the bargaining process as a problem solver. All the components for an agreement were on the table and as a mediator his job was to assemble them correctly and propose a workable solution (Princen 58-62)

Finalizing the treaty was simultaneously working in the best interest of himself and the United States. As previously stated, Carter had sunk a large amount of political capital into the peace process and he needed to demonstrate results to save his presidency. U.S. national interest revolved around promoting stability in the Middle East to shore up its relationship with Israel and the Arab world, as well as to ensure future access to oil resource.

Afraid of renewed conflict in the Middle East, Carter sought to bridge the chasm between Egypt and Israel. At the beginning of July, Vice –President Walter Mondale visited Israel and then travelled to Alexandria where he conferred with Sadat. Both Begin and Sadat agreed to a personal request from Carter to send their foreign ministers to London later that month for a meeting arranged and presided over by Vance. However, the London session did not produce any concrete proposal for resolving the core issues separating Israel and Egypt. Then a secret meeting in Vienna between Sadat, Shimon Peres (the leader of Israel's opposition Labor party), and Israeli Defense Minister Ezer Weizman backfired. Although Begin had given his approval for the discussions, the Israeli cabinet censured Peres and

Weizmen for allegedly negotiating without authority and for using the peace process to further their own ambitions. Sadat was stung and retaliated by ordering out the Israeli nine-mission man that had remained in Egypt since official talks had been broken off in February.

For Vance and his staff, the London episode confirmed that the United States would have to change its role in search for a Mideast accord. “We felt that there was no use in continuing to try to mediate [an] Egyptian-Israeli agreement on the principles of peace,” Vance later remarked. Instead, he began to think in terms of an American proposal for a comprehensive settlement that would include an Egyptian-Israeli peace and an autonomy plan for the West Bank (Hard Choices,216) After Sadat’s expulsion of the Israeli mission , Vance and President Carter decided that the secretary of state should go to the Middle East once more. Despite a vitriolic public exchange between Sadat and Begin, Sadat still seemed anxious to bring the United States into the negotiating process. Faced with a cabinet sharply divided over the occupied territories, Begin also seemed to welcome a new American initiative. Although Carter and Vance originally conceived of the Middle East trip as a “rescue mission” to breathe new life into the negotiations, Carter decided to take the bold move of inviting both Begin and Sadat to a summit meeting at Camp David. The president concluded that the only way an agreement between Israel and Egypt could be reached was to bring the principals together for as long as it took to work out their differences. Once that was achieved, the door would be open to a general Middle East settlement.

Carter prepared for the Camp David meeting with the same diligence with which he approached any major undertaking. Vance and Brzezinski thought the president’s main task should be to persuade Begin to make concessions on the Palestinian question, but Carter believed that he should concentrate on achieving an Egyptian-Israeli accord without linking it to progress on this perennial stumbling block. Consequently, he directed the American team

accompanying him at Camp David to “assume as our immediate ambition” a peace agreement between Egypt and Israel.” (Carter, Keeping Faith 322-23)

3.4 Carter’s Approach to the Rhodesian Problem

The Carter Administration devoted more attention to improving the relations of the United States with the nations of Africa than any of its predecessors. The President and his advisers believed that it was right in principle and was also in the nation’s interest to commit the U.S. wholeheartedly to racial justice and majority rule. Moral ideals, the domestic political advantage of the administration, and broad American national interest all seemed congruent in calling for a new activism and for a new deliberate effort to depart from the accommodational approach of the Nixon-Ford administration toward white regimes in Africa.

In 1953 faced with the independence of African states, the United Kingdom attempted to create the federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, which consisted of the current nations of Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi which at the time were called Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland respectively. The Federation of Rhodesia was dissolved on January 1, 1964 upon the independence of Malawi and Zambia. When Northern Rhodesia was granted independence by Britain in 1964, it changed its name to Zambia. Southern Rhodesia remained a British colony and came to be known as Rhodesia. The British government adopted a policy known as NIBMAR (No Independence Before Majority African Rule), to the consternation of the white minority Rhodesian Front (RF) government, led by Ian Smith. On November 11, 1965, Smith unilaterally declared the country independent from the British rule, in what became known as the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) by the Rhodesian government. This was internationally condemned and Rhodesia was put on international sanctions from 1965 to independence as Zimbabwe in 1980.

A long armed resistance campaign by ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) led by Robert Mugabe, and ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union) led by Joshua Nkomo began to organize. The Rhodesian government struggled and failed to control the two African nationalist liberation movements' armed campaign, which had developed into a full scale war covering the whole country.

Carter came to the White House hoping to emphasize civil rights in his domestic policy and human rights in his foreign policy. Reflecting this emphasis, Carter appointed Congressman Andrew Young as his ambassador to the United Nations. A veteran of the civil rights movements, Young used his experience to redirect American policy at the UN to be more sensitive to the Third World majority in the General Assembly. Policymakers in the Carter administration viewed a Rhodesian settlement as a cornerstone of the president's policy.

While serving in Congress, Young had worked to undo the Byrd Amendment which allowed the U.S. to break with UN sanctions against Ian Smith's Rhodesia and to resume importation of Rhodesian chrome until early 1977. During his confirmation hearings Young stated "I think a repeal of the Byrd Amendment is important in giving a signal to Ian Smith that he cannot count on U.S. support regardless of what he does." Young felt that America showed that it had placed short time self-interest above moral considerations (Bartlett 60). In March 1977, just two months after Carter took office, the Byrd Amendment was repealed (250-146 in the House; 66-24 in the Senate) Carter went to New York and told cheering UN delegates that the U.S. supported sanctions against Rhodesia (Ibid. p. 61.)

The repeal of the Byrd Amendment was part of a broader strategy to develop closer ties to African leaders and to come to a clearer understanding of common interests. Jimmy Carter became the first American president to travel to Africa where he emphasized " African

solutions for African problems”. In a speech in Lagos, Nigeria, Carter explained his administration’s policy to Africa saying:

We share with you a commitment to majority rule and individual human rights We share with you a commitment to economic growth and to human development We share with you a commitment to an Africa that is at peace, free from military Interference by outside nations, and free from inevitable conflicts. (Qtd in Dejenas 256)

Carter accepted a regionalist perspective that argued that issues in Africa are unique to the region and should be evaluated accordingly. The Regionalists in the administration urged special attention to the continent. They believed that Black Nationalism is the dominant force; economic development is the major goal to be supported by the United States; and far as possible, Cold war competition should be excluded from Africa. The Regionalists rejected the idea that African issues should necessarily be judged on the singular fact of a Soviet presence in the region. The Kissinger conception of linkage, which tied Africa to other “peripheral” regions to the central questions of U.S.-Soviet bipolar relationships, was rejected as an abstract geopolitical theorizing that ignored the local realities (Dejenas 258). They were concerned about the presence of Cuban troops and Soviet arms but felt that dramatizing the East-West factor did more harm than good. The surest barrier to external intervention was African nationalism and economic development (Lake 44). The cause of majority rule was the way to prevent Cuban and Soviet exploitation; however, a commitment to majority rule, self-determination, and racial equality must be matters of basic human rights, not just a strategy to combat external intervention (Vance, *Hard Choices*, p257).

Furthermore, globalists argued that Kissinger’s notion of “linkage” applied to internal African politics; however, U.S. policy goals were directed not only toward the Soviet-Union

and Europe, but other international issues should, if possible, be linked to such a focus. Cuban troops in Angola, as a matter of fact, therefore, became tied to questions of a general improvement in U.S. –Soviet relations. Regionalists pointed out that such a position poisoned with longstanding and rigid Cold War hostilities the entire framework of bilateral relationships with potentially friendly African states. Globalists, instead, argued that a regionalist focus and a serious interest in specific issues such as apartheid could sink the United States into the mire of localized civil conflict. Deeper American involvement in local African issues would weaken the U.S. resolve at some critical future time when the stakes might be much higher. They argued for a recognition of the U.S. role as a great power with the primary security concern of containing expansionism; The Soviet Union and NATO demanded far more attention than the nations of Africa and other regions of the world. Too much attention to specific issues such as Apartheid would mire the U.S. in a series of local civil conflicts and divert it from its primary goal of containing the Soviet Union. (Dejanes 258-259) The policy battles between the regionalists and the globalists continued throughout Carter's term in office, with the former tending to dominate policy discussions in the first two years and the latter in the last two years.

In the early years of the Carter's administration the U.S. was an equal partner with Great Britain in search for a peaceful resolution to the Rhodesian problem. On September 1, 1977, the Anglo-Americans announced their new proposal for a settlement; this plan called for an interim British administration and UN peacekeeping forces, a constitution providing for universal adult suffrage, for guerrilla units to be incorporated in the Rhodesian army, and finally for a Rhodesia Development Fund of at least \$ 1 billion; and independence under majority rule in 1978. Over the six next months all discussions on Rhodesia centered on these proposals.

The Anglo-American plan was an anathema to Ian Smith. However, he realized that the growing intensity of the guerrilla war and domestic economic difficulties caused by UN sanctions left him little room to manoeuvre. In an effort to capitalize on divisions between African nationalists inside and outside of Rhodesia, Smith announced an internal settlement on March, 3, 1978. (Davidow 22). Smith's internal settlement plan put the Americans and British on the defensive and set the parameters of the debate for the next year. Smith was successful in persuading internally based nationalist leaders to agree to the internal settlement plan. The external leaders of the Patriotic Front were invited to participate if they agreed to lay down their arms, in effect surrender (Ibid 22-23).

The internal settlement centered on a new constitution that provided for universal suffrage but reserved twenty eight seats in a one hundred seat parliament for whites, enough to provide whites with a veto over any constitutional changes. In addition, whites were to remain firmly in control of the civil service, judiciary, military, and other levers of power (Clough 21). The new constitution was promulgated in January, 1979, and the elections were held in April 1979. The United African National Council UANC party won a majority, fifty one of seventy two African seats, and its leader Abel Tendekayi Muzorema, a United Methodist Church Bishop, became the country's prime minister. Smith's party had no problem winning all twenty eight seats. (Davidow 25). While these elections were described by the Rhodesian government as non-racial and democratic, they did not include the two political parties within the African nationalist liberation movement, ZANU and ZAPU. Muzeroma's government did not receive international recognition. The international community, including the United States, recognized that the resolution of the war in Rhodesia must include Mugabe and Nkomo in order to be successful because the two were critical factors in the armed conflict.

In June 1979, Carter faced a choice: bow to Congress and accept the Rhodesian elections or defy Congress and declare them invalid. Carter chose the latter explaining that the elections were not acceptable because the Patriotic Front had not participated. The Patriotic Front and most African nations denounced them as sham. In the United States, black leaders showed their support for the Patriotic Front by arguing against lifting sanctions. Carter agreed. On 7 June, he stated that he would continue to pose sanctions indefinitely. Although the elections were “reasonably fair”, Carter noted that they still fell short because blacks were not allowed to participate in the new constitution and because whites continued to occupy the top government positions. In Congress, congressional supporters of Rhodesia lashed out at the president. The Senate even attached an amendment to a Defense Department authorization bill requiring the immediate removal of sanctions. Lobbying hard against the provision, the administration was able to work out an acceptable compromise, whereby the president would lift sanctions against Rhodesia by 15 November unless he determined it was in the interest of the United States to do so.

The fall of 1979 saw both a desperate British effort to arrange a settlement and a triumph of pro-Ian Smith forces in the United States. Andrew Young was no longer in the government Secretary Vance’s influence on all questions was declining. The Iranian hostage crisis, beginning on November 4, would monopolize the president’s time and diminish his ability to act creatively on many issues. The British effort was successful. After three months of talk in London, involving Muzerowa, Nkomo, and Mugabe, agreement was reached. In September, the two sides agreed on the temporary restoration of British rule over the Rhodesians free elections, and the establishment of independence for Zimbabwe, as the new country would be called. In April 1980, Robert Mugabe became Prime Minister and proceeded to govern with far more moderation than had been predicted by those who feared him as a communist –backed extremist. On 15 December, President Carter responded to this

development by withdrawing the sanctions against Rhodesia and extended economic aid when Zimbabwe became independent. In August 1980, Carter received Prime Minister Mugabe in the White House. In that summer of the hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; it was a rare occasion for optimism. (Smith 140-142)

Conclusion:

Carter attempted to implement the first post-Cold War policy instead of developing a foreign policy revolving around a strategy of containment and an ideology of anti-communism, Carter's administration officials shared a post-Cold War foreign policy approach based on a strategy of adjustment and preventive diplomacy. Carter's task was not easy for his new policy and approach met considerable resistance throughout much of the national security bureaucracy. This is a problem that all presidents face when they enter office, especially if they want to promote policies different from those the bureaucracy has been implementing for some time. In president's Carter's case, he presided over a huge national security bureaucracy born out of World War II and the Cold War that for thirty years had been in the business of implementing Cold War policies based on containment and anticommunism.

Despite the difficulties and hurdles, Carter left a legacy of achievements including a negotiation of a complicated SALT II treaty with the Soviet Union, the Panama Canal treaties, the Camp David Accords, and the peaceful majority rule in Rhodesia. Indeed Carter talked to the Soviets and worked closely with them. He was determined to resolve conflicts and promote constructive change before they led to heightened conflicts and wars between the United States and the Soviet Union. He fundamentally changed the American relationship with Panama, and by doing so changed America's reputation in Latin America and among developing nations. In the Middle East, he served as an instigator, and then a mediator, in the

peace process that transformed the relationship between Egypt and Israel. In Africa, he attempted to arrange new machinery to reflect the new interest in that continent and became the first chief executive to be attentive to day-to-day policy toward Africa and events on the continent. His approach bore fruit in the Rhodesia/Zimbabwe settlement.

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CHAPTER FOUR

The Carter Human Rights Policy: Political Idealism and Realism

Introduction

Jimmy Carter did not discover human rights with his presidency. Concerns with a moral tone, if not policy, can be traced back to colonial times when the concept of certain individual and collective rights-as “natural” or “inalienable” reflected the influence of John Locke and other political theorists and made part of American culture. The concept was clearly set forth in the Declaration of Independence and was codified in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Historically, the human rights issue remained at the periphery of American foreign policy. Even during the time of its isolationist policy, the U.S. did not hesitate to use gunboat diplomacy in Central America to serve its national interests. It justified its actions in the guise of morality and by invoking the 1823 Monroe Doctrine with full knowledge that this behavior was in contradiction to its tradition of respect for human rights.

In his foreign policy pronouncements vis-à-vis the European colonial powers, President Woodrow Wilson advocated for the pursuit of democracy and human rights conceptualized within the context of self-determination for the colonized peoples. In his view the realization of individual freedom, limited government, and the legitimacy of power held the key to both international peace and the emancipation of humanity (Hoffmann 159-177). It was within this philosophical context that Wilson advocated the need to “make the world safe for democracy.

With the beginning of the Cold War in the 1940s, the Truman administration (1945-1952) offered limited support for human rights. It supported some mention of human rights in the United Nations Charter and signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Support was limited, however, in that the U.S. emphasized only its non-binding obligations. Even this limited support for human rights ended in 1953 and a period of neglect of that issue dominated U.S. foreign policy from 1953 to 1974. For example, during the Eisenhower administration, it was believed that containing Soviet-led communism was a way of contributing to human rights since Communism was viewed by most American officials as the greatest threat to the fundamental freedom of both individuals and states. Under Kennedy and Johnson the priority of fighting communism continued with scarce attention to human rights, and under the Nixon-Kissinger team, the human rights issue was incorporated into the calculus of U.S. geostrategy and realpolitik that dominated American foreign policy.

It was, however, during the presidency of Jimmy Carter that an unprecedented emphasis on human rights was displayed. Even before Carter entered the White House, the human rights issue was taken up by Congress. By the late 1970s, Congress started reacting against what was perceived to have been amoral or immoral foreign policy of the Nixon administration. As the greater perceived threat of communism expansion decreased, greater attention was drawn to the internally repressive actions of governments that the U.S. was assisting. Critics increasingly challenged U.S. support of authoritarian regimes. They argued that the U.S. policy of containing communist expansion did not justify the repressive practices of allied dictators. Human rights were, thus, the focus of much congressional debate and legislative action during the 1970s. The result was enactment of legislation to assure that the human rights practices of other governments were considered in foreign policy

decisions. Between 1973 and 1980 Congress enacted a series of laws mandating that the U.S. government take punitive action against governments which engage in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights. Human rights provisions were written into bilateral economic and security assistance laws, including requirements for annual reports on the status of human rights in all other members of the UN. Congress also called for the creation of a human rights bureau in the State Department.

Building upon the wave of congressional and public interest of the mid 1970s, President Jimmy Carter unquestionably gave human rights great rhetorical prominence and drew greater attention to the human rights practices of other governments than did his predecessors. Carter's actions also, however, raised doubts about the wisdom of the government vigorously and publicly promoting human rights. He was, moreover, criticized for inconsistent policy application. The outspokenness of Carter's officials about violations of human rights in particular countries allied or friendly was viewed by critics as detrimental to U.S. national security, economic, political, and other interests. While many accept the promotion of human rights as a serious moral concern, there is considerable disagreement as to the priority such concerns should be given in U.S. foreign policy. In the view of critics of a vigorous and open human rights policy, U.S. strategic interests were not served by intervening in the domestic affairs of friends and allies.

Carter, like President Wilson, brought to the White House religious and moral virtues which translated into his foreign policy making process (Clough 42). If Carter did not discover human rights, it was during his administration that a real qualitative leap in the prominence of American human rights foreign policy was reactivated. Indeed from the outset of his presidency, Jimmy Carter set out to fundamentally

change the direction of American foreign policy. Coming to office in the wake of the disillusionment brought about by the Vietnam War and Watergate, Carter promised a new direction of American foreign policy based on the principles of human rights. This policy of human rights was meant to mark a break with Cold War diplomacy. That was not an easy task for Carter faced the challenge of developing and implementing his new policy in opposition to the continuing Cold War axiom of containment of the Soviet Union. The tension between the quest for a more human foreign policy and the old imperative security concerns have led most commentators to criticize Carter's foreign policy as naïve and simplistic. A close examination of the Carter Administration development of a foreign policy based on human rights, and the complexities it faced in implementing its policy, demonstrates that those critical accounts were not very accurate.

4.1 Congress and Human Rights Legislation

Contemporary congressional interest in human rights was activated by the civil rights movement of the 1960s, the backlash against the Vietnam War and a reaction to the Nixon's unscrupulous foreign policy behavior. Consequently a foreign policy based on American values, human rights was emerging in Congress (William 247). and the American public believed that U.S. foreign policy should reflect the moral principles of America. Human rights became very popular in Congress in the 1970s. There existed a coalition of those concerned with human rights, those that were looking for any reason to cut the foreign aid budget and foreign commitments, and those that simply wished to attack the Republican Party (Forsythe 1988). For liberals, human rights provided a moral and ethical component to U.S. foreign policy was a

response to Watergate, the Vietnam War, and CIA excesses. For conservatives, human rights were a useful tool for condemning the Soviet Union.

It was during the mid-1970s that Congress took action to ensure that human rights were given priority in decision-making in foreign policy issues. In 1973, Representative Donald Fraser began promoting human rights through hearings of his House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements. The Senate established the Frank Church Committee in 1975 to investigate numerous allegations of CIA covert operations against foreign governments. Senator Frank Church, the Committee Chair, saw the Vietnam War as a symptom of larger problems that beset American foreign policy stemming from the lack of certain fundamental moral and political values as guides for American diplomacy. The investigations documented American covert involvement in the overthrow of governments of Guatemala, Iran, and most recently Chile, attempts to oust from power Sukarno in Indonesia and Castro in Cuba from power and numerous assassinations plots by various administrations against foreign leaders. For Church, the solution to the misguided American policy that led to these actions and the Vietnam War was that “American foreign policy must be made to conform to our ideals, the...fundamental belief in freedom and popular government.” (Schmitz 457).

Congress wrote into law formal requirements for the restriction or denial of foreign aid to countries that consistently violate the human rights of their citizens. The most important of these acts are Sections 502B and Section 116 of the Foreign Assistance Act. The intention of the legislation was to distance the U.S. from the morally reprehensible behavior of foreign aid recipients. No longer would U.S. foreign aid automatically be given to a country simply because it professed anti-

communist or pro-American sentiments. Foreign aid would be directed to democratic regimes that respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

By joint action, Congress amended the 1974 Foreign Assistance Act to include Section 50 2B, also known as the Humphrey-Cranston Amendment, as a “Sense of Congress”, requesting that security assistance to governments that grossly violated human rights be restricted. In 1976, Congress deleted the “Sense of Congress” language from 50 2B and mandated that the President be legally obligated to deny or restrict aid to countries violating human rights of their citizens, unless “extraordinary circumstances” existed which made it in the America’s interest to continue military aid . Section 50 2B was intended to prevent foreign governments from using U.S. military aid to violate the human rights of their citizens and to distance the U.S. from repressive regimes.

If security assistance was to be granted despite a country’s practice of gross violations the president was required to submit to Congress a detailed explanation of the “extraordinary circumstances.” Yet presidents have been able to get around Congressional directives due to several defects written into the legislation. The weakness of the legislation has allowed each American president to follow his political agenda with little or no concern for the human rights records of aid recipient countries.

The primary defect of Section 50 2B of the Foreign Assistance Act was Congress’ failure to define the meaning of “extraordinary circumstances”. The inability of Congress to give a precise meaning to what is it called “extraordinary circumstances” opened the door for executive abuses. This broad interpretation of extraordinary circumstances made no distinction between vital or minor American security interests.

The result was that the president could provide foreign assistance virtually to any country due to some real or imagined national interest.

The imprecise phrase “gross violations” of human rights also allowed the United States executive the opportunity to circumvent U.S. law. American presidents, willing to provide aid to governments that violate human rights, simply determine that the violations do not constitute gross violations. The legislation mandates that the violations must be significant in their impact. Detentions without charges for weeks, months, or even years, are not considered gross violations because of the relatively brief period of confinement.

Another major limitation of the legislation is “consistent patterns”. Presidents simply fail to find patterns or declare the patterns of human rights violations inconsistent, and, thereby, aid can be granted to abusing countries. For example, in 1979, in the case of Indonesia Carter found that there were no consistent patterns of human rights violations because there was a plan to someday release the political prisoners. So in spite of the fact that approximately 100,000 people were murdered and another 30,000 were still incarcerated, Indonesia was not denied U.S. security assistance.

In 1975, Congress passed the Harkin Amendment, named after Congressman Tom Harkin, and the international Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act in 1976 which stated that the United States should withhold assistance from any nation whose government consistently violated human rights to avoid the identification of the U.S. with such governments. The secretary of state was required to “provide ‘full and complete’ reports on human rights practices of each country receiving security assistance”. (Guidelines on U.S. Foreign Policy for Human Rights, 2 February 1977). The Harkin Amendment (Section 116) was added to the Foreign Assistance Act. For

its part, the Harkin Amendment prohibits the continuation of economic assistance to any country which “engages in consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights including torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, prolonged detention without charges, and the security of person, unless such assistance will directly benefit the needy people in such country.”

The Harkin Amendment or Section 116 suffers from the same defects of language found in 50 2B. Regrettably, it encounters, an additional ambiguity, that of the needy clause. Critics refer to this as the needy-people loophole. The clause was included to pacify those in Congress who argued that there were more appropriate methods of promoting human rights than cutting off aid to the poor. Advocates of aid wondered why should the poor be penalized twice, once by their government torturing and repressing them, and then by the U.S. by depriving them economic aid. Nevertheless, it became a loophole because the U.S. Agency for the International Development (USAID), the bureaucracy charged with the arrangement and distribution of U.S. aid, depicts all projects to be funded in such a way as to appear to direct the benefit to the poor. Not only do few projects fail to be funded, but most are not, even scrutinized for their human rights impact. Thus, U.S. economic aid can be used to prolong the staying in power of repressive regimes.

4.2 Carter’s Concerns for Human Rights

The idea of a foreign policy framed around human rights publicly emerged first in 1976 as part of the Democratic Party’s election platform. It was conceived by Carter and other Democrats as a way for America to return to its “fundamental liberal principles that all too often had been ignored or even ridiculed by Cold War foreign policy professionals”. In Carter’s eyes, recent foreign policy makers, notably Richard

Nixon and Henry Kissinger, had promoted a policy that defended America's interests at the price of disregarding morality and America's duty to uphold a high standard in the world. This doctrine of "realpolitik" was based on the assumption that the U.S. must set aside its moralistic policies and instead pursue a careful, pragmatic, and realistic foreign policy. American foreign policy crafted around morals and idealism, according to the doctrine, only agitated nationalism and communism in the Third World, and would lead to more violence and upheaval, thus compromising American interests abroad.

However, Carter believed it was unnecessary for American foreign policy makers to choose between morality and interests; both could be achieved if the overall moral standard in the world was raised. Carter believed it was the duty of American leaders to construct a foreign policy "rooted in our values" that could properly "serve mankind". In addition Carter and the Democrats believed America's realpolitik was playing directly into the hands of the Soviet Union. According to this thinking, the U.S. was in no position to call attention to the "deplorable repression" sponsored by the Soviets, since the U.S. itself was supporting authoritarian dictators for the sake of its interests. To Carter, the lack of morality in foreign policy exemplified a broader trend of amoral foreign policy that culminated in the Watergate scandal. By reinstating morality at home and abroad through the promotion of global human rights, Carter believed he could resolve the standing of Americans' political institution, both in the eyes of the world and in the eyes of the American people.

The motives behind Carter's decision to restore morality and promote human rights went much deeper than politics. His personal experience as a southerner growing up in Georgia influenced his future decisions as a foreign policy maker; Carter's Christian background and his mother atypical beliefs heavily affected the

mindset of the budding politician. Young Jimmy had been an anomaly in the American segregated south because he spent a considerable amount of time interacting with African Americans at school. In addition, his mother had participated in the Peace Corps in India and believed very strongly in desegregation. These experiences and ingrained beliefs would profoundly affect Carter's mindset toward race relations and human rights. When Carter served as a member of a local school board as a young man, he refused to join the White Citizens' Council that strongly opposed integration in public schools. Although he did not always publicize his beliefs for fear of political backlash, Carter's human rights policy was derived from an upbringing in which he witnessed the dilemmas of an unequal society. As president, Carter would draw upon these experiences as he attempted to bring human rights and equality to the political limelight.

Carter entered the Oval Office in January 1977 believing that the Cold War had neared its conclusion and that the traditional fight against the Soviet Union and communism had become outdated. In recent years, Nixon and Kissinger's foreign policy, no matter how morally bankrupt, had brought about a *détente* between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and the Cold War seemed to be burning itself out. As Historian H. W Brands remarks, Carter "strove manfully to refashion the national interest to suit the new post-Cold War era".(258-259) New methods and ideologies had to be implemented in order for America to restore its standing in the world and make amends for the ill-conceived war in Vietnam". As Carter stated "an inordinate fear of communism" drove American foreign policy makers to "fight fire with fire" in areas of the world that otherwise were unimportant to the U.S. The "tragic experience of Vietnam", according to Carter, had shown America that "fire is better quenched with water". (Commencement Speech at Notre Dame University, June 1977)

Although it would soon be proven that the Cold War was far from being over, a “soft” foreign policy promoting human rights initially appeared to be the solution for the new global picture that Carter envisioned.

Demonstrating that his determination to change the fundamental basis of American foreign policy was not merely campaign rhetoric, and displaying a will from the outset to move beyond traditional power politics, Carter determined to promote a foreign policy that put human rights at the front. In his inaugural address, the new president stressed that the nation’s “commitment to human rights must be absolute.” He called upon the Americans to “take on their moral duties which, when assumed, seem inevitably to be in our best interest,” and let the “recent mistakes bring a resurgent commitment to the basic principles of the Nation.” The best means to defend freedom and the national interest, Carter believed, was to “demonstrate here that our democratic system is worthy of emulation.... We will not behave in foreign places as to violate our rules and standards here at home.” The U.S. was “a proudly idealistic nation” whose moral sense dictates a clearcut preference for those societies which share with us an abiding respect for human rights.”(Inaugural Address, 4-5).

The president provided his most complete statement of his new policy on 22 May 1977 Commencement address at the University of Notre Dame. Carter declared that the U.S. should have a foreign policy “that is democratic, that is based on fundamental values, and that uses power and influence...for humane purposes. We can also have a foreign policy that the American people both support and, for a change, know about and understand.” Carter was convinced that continued support for repressive regimes was not only against American ideals but harmed the nation’s self-interest. The U.S. needed to overcome its “inordinate fear of communism which once led us to embrace any dictator who joined us in that fear,” and place its faith in its

democratic system and principles. The basic problem with the containment policy, Carter added was that “for too many years, we’ve been willing to adopt the flawed and erroneous principles and tactics of our adversaries, sometimes abandoning our own values for theirs. We’ve fought fire with fire, never thinking that fire is better quenched with water.” This approach, he noted, failed with Vietnam, the best example of its intellectual and moral poverty.” Therefore, Carter asked for a foreign policy based upon a commitment to “human rights as a fundamental tenet of American foreign policy.” Carter believed that following a policy based on human rights did not dictate a policy conducted by “rigid moral maxims.” But it did demand a belief in the power of ideas and a toleration of change and diversity internationally. American power was to be based on “a larger view of global change” rather than bipolar Cold war prism. It also needed to be “rooted in our [America’s] moral values which never change.” (Address at Commencement Exercises at University, 945-960)

Ideas need to be supported by a coherent policy designed to implement them. The administration, therefore, immediately began developing the necessary guidelines and framework to turn Carter’s view into a workable policy. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance sent a memorandum to all assistant secretaries noting that the president “has stressed the Administration’s strong commitment to the promotion of human rights,” and to carry out this policy the department needed “an overall human rights strategy and internal mechanisms for helping assure balanced decisions in this area.” To this end, he asked Deputy Secretary, Warren Christopher to establish a committee, the Interagency Group on Human Rights and Foreign Assistance (IGHRFA) to coordinate policy, and requested the State Department Planning Staff “to formulate a broad human rights policy” (Memorandum for All Assistant Secretaries, “Human Rights,” 2 February 1977)

If the human rights policy presented opportunities, it raised a host of concomitant difficulties. Many problems clusters stand out: problem of definition, problem of consistency and problem of reconciling ideals and interests. To overcome these difficulties, Vance's memo was accompanied by a preliminary outline for a human rights strategy and guidelines for developing a policy. The State Department recognized that the numerous differences among nations made it difficult to develop only one set of human rights positions and responses. It, therefore, set out general principles to be followed and several questions to be used in determining whether there were violations of internationally recognized human rights as defined by the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. It was essential that the policy be developed with the long- range objective of a "gradual rising of world standard," that recognized the complexities of issues involved" and the "impossibility of uniform automatic responses to specific violations and consequent need for case-by-case responses." In formulating policy, the U.S. had to consider if the abuses were part of a greater pattern, what role the government played in perpetrating these actions, and whether there are any "special circumstances" that needed to be taken into consideration in "formulating policies for achieving progress on human rights". These considerations included other U.S. interests in the area, American influence in the region, the expected reaction of the government in question, possible responses by other nations, and the legal and cultural features of the nation in question. A range of potential responses by the U.S. to human rights abuses were set out , starting with quiet diplomacy and symbolic actions or statements of disapproval to punitive actions, such as withholding aid and other means of assistance. These would be determined by

the specific violations in each case. (“Guidelines for U.S. Foreign Policy for Human Rights,” 2 February 1977).

In the early weeks and months of 1977, Carter, along with several key members of his administration, set out to articulate what exactly he meant by “human rights”. Although there were other key elements to Carter’s foreign policy-such as scaling back armaments and nuclear weapons, improving relations with America’s allies, and assisting developing nations-human rights was the administration’s top priority. In a speech delivered by the new Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, in April 1977, Vance explained that all persons of the world possessed “the right to be free from governmental violations of the integrity of the person.” This meant that America must treat harshly those governments that sponsored “torture, cruel inhuman or degrading treatment or punishments and arbitrary arrest or imprisonment.” In addition, Vance stated that “civil and political liberties” must be upheld and that “vital needs” such as “food, shelter, health care, and education” must be ensured for all citizens. (Human Rights...505)

In order to enforce the human rights policy, the Carter administration realized that clear consequences had to be established for violating nations. The leverage for this was American humanitarian aid and financial assistance. To ensure that nations were in compliance with the human rights standards set by the administration, as well as those of the United Nations and Amnesty International, the Carter administration dangled the carrot of the American dollar. By stating that human rights violators would no longer be American aid recipients, the Carter administration was hoping to force nations into compliance. The nations that did comply were supposed to receive considerable amounts of humanitarian and economic assistance. Since many of the nations were poor and politically unorganized, they were also extremely dependent on

American assistance. Carter believed that not receiving American aid was a choice most countries would not dare to make. However, some nations would challenge Carter's resolve. The policy's greatest tests would come in countries where the U.S. possessed historic mutual interest-based relationships.

4.3 The Christopher Group and the Presidential Review Memorandum

Christopher and his staff began preparing speeches for the deputy secretary and the secretary of state to deliver on human rights. Speaking to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 1977, Christopher explained that human rights would no longer be a separate issue from the rest of foreign policy, considered only after other objectives had been met. Rather, it would be "woven into the fabric of our foreign policy. If we are to do justice to our goals, we must always act with a concern to achieve practical results and with an awareness of the other demands of our diplomacy." The challenge was to reconcile the goal of a foreign policy based upon human rights with the more pragmatic aspects of international relations. This meant that the administration had to do more than just focus on gross violations of the rights of individuals- torture, murder, and imprisonment of political dissenters -but extend its concern to basic human needs and civil and political liberties. The policy, therefore, would have to be flexible and based on a "country by country basis balancing a political concern for human rights against economic or security goals." (289-291).

The IGHRFA (Christopher Group) was the most solid attempt to consistently and systematically integrate norms of human rights into American foreign policy. Composed primarily of members of the State Department, the National Security Council, and the Pentagon, it was authorized by an explicit Presidential Directive

within weeks of taking office, to review all existing bilateral and multilateral relations the United States has abroad in the light of human rights goals. The Christopher Group considered every facet of American foreign policy for integrating principles of human rights with all relevant actions, including the conduct of diplomacy, commercial transactions, the distribution of aid, and strategic cooperation.

In this context, the Group held its first meeting on 6 May with representatives from various bureaus of the State Department, the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, and Labor, the National Security Council and the Export-Import Bank. In all, over forty people from various offices were in attendance. Without a formal policy on human rights yet adopted to guide the deliberations, the Christopher Group's main function was to carry out the appropriate reviews of specific aid proposals for nations as called for in Congressional legislation, but not to attempt to formulate a general policy or long-term policies to promote human rights in specific nations. For various reasons, security assistance, food aid, development assistance, and actions by the International Monetary Fund for Agricultural Development were placed outside the review of the Christopher Group, but not from overall human rights policy. This left the group to oversee the extension of loans and aid through Multilateral Development Banks, and the questions of overall policy and authority open. (Memorandum, Cyrus Vance and William Christopher to the President, 27 March 1978)

By early July, a final draft of the "Presidential Review Memorandum/NSC 28: Human Rights" was completed. Eighty-five pages long, it was distributed throughout the administration on July 8 by Warren Christopher. The PRM cautiously defined "US objectives in the area of human rights." It contended that the overall U.S. policy objective was "to encourage the respect that governments accord to human rights."

The reasons for such policy were numerous. The U.S. human rights policy was not only based “in national interest but that “the moral and ethical values of our people to be reflected in that policy”. It is clear that the drafters of the document believed that the best way to protect U.S interests was through the promotion of American values of individual freedom and human dignity in contrast to totalitarianism and mark an effective means to combat communism and promote democracy everywhere in the world mainly in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Human rights policy objectives should also achieve “other broad or particular goals, such as greater credibility in the Third World.” (Presidential Review Memorandum/NSC-28: Human Rights, 7 July 1977 (hereafter) PRM: Human Rights), 1,8-11)

The PRM derived its definitions from the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and set out the most fundamental and important human rights which were compartmentalized into three groups. The first group concerned the integrity of the person. People have the “right to be free from governmental violations of the integrity of the person.” The character of the second group was more problematic. It stressed basic needs in the purview of “economic and social rights” of the individual to “food, shelter, health care and education.” The emphasis was on general issues and on personal needs rather than on a collective agenda. Solving celebrated cases might garner international prestige. By contrast, diagnosing and solving fundamental problems would necessitate concerted, prolonged interventions in troubled countries, challenging class divisions and allocation of resources. And that was not an easy task. The Christopher group admitted that the fulfilment of such rights depended, in part on a “national particular economic and social circumstances” (PRM 1-2)

The third group of rights embraced civic and political liberties such as freedom of ideological and religious expressions, of participation in government, and of physical

movement. The PRM authors supported these rights in strong terms because they believed that any policy that ignored these issues “would be untrue to our heritage and basic values” (1-3). To preempt controversy with those critics who feared that this would be an effort to impose Western values and ideas on the non-Western World, the authors strongly justified these rights as “formally espoused by virtually all governments and are of worldwide significance and a matter of practice”. Furthermore, they contended that their goal was “the enhancement of basic human rights in diverse societies” and that they did “seek to change governments “or remake other countries in the image of the United States (3-4)

Turning to the implementation of human rights policy, the PRM again noted the limits of the American ability to change human rights practices in other countries. Consequently American officials came to realize that their expectations “must be realistic, and that they “must concentrate on encouraging the maximum possible evolutionary improvement.” Although there might be exceptional cases where drastic improvements were made in a short period of time, and “certain exceptional circumstances” in which they will seek dramatic improvements, like “their efforts to promote majority rule in Rhodesia”, these should not be expected. The human rights policy would not be a failure if violations continued, “or are reduced in intensity or frequency very slowly or evenly despite our best efforts.” The objective was one that had “to be pursued over the long term.” (7-8)

In addition, it had to be kept in mind that there were “other major objectives of U.S. foreign policy that are of equal- and in some situations greater- importance “than human rights. These included the fundamental security of America, NATO solidarity, strategic arms limitations and other aspects of improving relations with the Soviet Union, peace in the Middle East, and normalization of relations with the People’s

Republic of China. Hence, there would be “situations in which efforts to achieve our human rights goals will have to be modified, delayed or curtailed in deference to other important objectives.” Still, it was stressed that the “clear implication of making the promotion of human rights a fundamental tenet of our foreign policy is that there will henceforth be fewer instances when promotion of human rights will be viewed as a marginal objective.” (12-13).

The administration was fully aware that its human rights foreign policy could create a backlash from other governments, thereby straining relations and worsening human rights conditions. There was also the concern that the inconsistencies inherent in any effort to implement a policy based on an abstract concept such as human rights would provoke criticism. Furthermore, unique cultural and social elements had to be distinguished from human rights violations. “Failure to recognize cultural conflicts,” the document cautioned, “can damage our human rights and objectives. We must constantly reassess our own standards to ensure that we are not confusing truly objectionable conduct with unfamiliar traditional patterns of relationship or conduct.”

Finally, a human rights policy dictated that military assistance to and cooperation with repressive regimes be reduced or terminated. As this was done, it was expected that relations with those nations would deteriorate, and that this might “adversely affect U.S. security interests.” Yet, there were greater costs from a failure to take action. If the human rights policy was not fully implemented, there was sure to be “a backlash of public cynicism and Congressional impatience and distrust, which may have an inhibiting or detrimental effect on the whole range of the Administration’s foreign policy.” (13-16).

American officials were conscious that all of these concerns had to be balanced and no single program, goals, or standard would be effective in promoting human

rights throughout the world. There were too many factors to take into consideration to effectively make a mandated response to each, making a flexible policy within certain guidelines the best option. As the report noted, “there are vast differences among human rights conditions in various countries, and what may rise to the level of highly egregious in one country may not be properly so characterized in the setting of another country with different circumstances”. American policy must, therefore take such differences into account. It would be a problem if the United States was “required to take the same action...with respect to different countries, even though our own best assessment of the circumstances...might indicate that the mandated action would be inappropriate or that other actions should be taken instead. (25)

Due to its “pivotal importance”, the Soviet Union merited particular attention. The administration acknowledged that the Soviet response to American human rights initiatives was “uniformly negative and increasingly sharp, explicitly suggesting that détente is threatened by our policy.” Yet, the administration believed that the objective of Soviet complaints was to reduce American advocacy of human rights in order to decrease the “most embarrassing aspects of them,” and did not pose a threat to other interests. Rather, Moscow would “continue to pursue its perceived interests in arms control, trade, scientific and cultural exchanges and other areas of our bilateral relations, regardless of our advocacy of human rights,” because of the numerous gains and materials it received. Soviet leaders, under the “inevitable strain of a massive arms race” and “a need to take increasing consumer demands into account and potential unrest in Eastern Europe,” could not easily abandon détente “because of U.S. human rights advocacy.”

Ironically, the main problem in carrying out this policy came from domestic sources. Congressional and public demands for immediate changes in Soviet policy,

particularly regarding Jewish emigration, made carrying out a policy focused on the long-term objectives of Carter's policy difficult to implement. There would be continued pressure, and possibly more legislation, such as the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, that was designed to set rigid standards of human rights behavior by the Soviet Union with automatic penalties. In the end, however, the administration believed that "security interests and human rights concerns can both be accommodated" in relations with the Soviet Union, and that it could manage the problem. Indeed, it had no choice because a "failure to execute an appropriate human rights strategy without proper balance will detract from the political value of human rights policy elsewhere in the world." (18-20)

Conversely, with regard to relations with the People's Republic of China and the normalization of relations, considerations other than human rights would take priority. There could be human rights initiatives, mainly concerning family reunification, after formal relations were established. Until then, the administration decided not to focus on human rights in conducting relations with China. As the PRM declared, " we should recognize that with respect to human rights we will have little if any leverage with the PRC at this stage in its development." (20).

Turning to the Third World, the overall concern of the policy was to "reinforce positive human rights and democratic tendencies in the Third World, particularly in states that already demonstrated good or improving human rights performance," and to "discourage the arbitrary use of power and promote a more equitable and humane social and economic order" in states where human rights values have yet to take root. American "relations with countries that systematically violate human rights" should be correct and in line with other interests, but not close. "The tone we set in our relations is important to the credibility and thus to the success of our overall policy

objectives.” To achieve success, the focus would be on the “promotion of economic and social rights.” The administration believed it would evoke the most positive responses from the various governments and people and demonstrate “a responsiveness, in human rights terms, to their most immediate goals.” (21-22)

It was the last group of nations, the Gross Violators of Human Rights that presented the most problems. They required a flexible strategy to first identify them and then to address the governments that showed “a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.” On the one hand, the Harkin Amendment and the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act both called for a cessation of assistance to any consistent violators of human rights, but provided no guidelines for assessing which nations fell into this category. Trying to develop a single measure pointed up “the limitations in the human rights context of requiring uniform actions pursuant to a statutorily-prescribed standard of conduct.” Again the PRM emphasized that policy had to take into account the “vast differences among human rights conditions in various countries, and what may rise to the level of highly egregious conduct in one country may not be properly so characterized in the setting of another country with different circumstance(s) and a different history.” That is, the determination that human rights violations were taking place did not necessarily answer the question of what action to take. On the other hand, there was the danger of the perception of inconsistency that demanded some uniform questions and manner of evaluating the conditions in different nations. These were divided into three groups: the nature of the case, the potential effectiveness of any actions considered, and the impact of any actions on the other aspects of American foreign policy. While these criteria did not provide an absolute formula for determining the

appropriate action, they would serve as a guide to the implementation of effective measures to improve the human rights situation in different nations. (23-31)

A specific dilemma was posed by how to develop a policy toward friendly and allied nations guilty of various and consistent human rights problems. During his presidential campaign and at the University of Notre Dame, Carter had criticized previous administrations for supporting authoritarian regimes in the name of national security and forming alliances with any anti-communist government. The president was determined to “combine support for our more authoritarian allies and friends with the effective promotion of human rights within their countries. By inducing them to change their repressive policies, the United States “would enhance freedom and democracy, and help those who suffer from persecution.” That could be accomplished “without replacing a rightist totalitarian regime with a leftist one of the same oppressive character.” (Keeping Faith,143). In these states the report noted, “We have considerable influence, especially where the regime does not feel overwhelmingly threatened by internal security problems,” and the human rights policy “will offer reform-minded elements a viable alternative to communist rhetoric.” It was also critical to remember that a “failure to express human rights concerns would give real support to the continuation of repressive regimes.” Yet, when these nations were linked to American security interests, there was a conflict of priorities that raised a whole new set of questions. (PRM 76-77)

This difficulty was combined with a further frustration noted in the conclusion of the PRM. “In inaugurating our human rights policy,” the report observed, “we have been faced with the anomaly that the human rights advocates on the Hill who should be our greatest supporters have been frustrated because our actions fail to meet their optimistic expectations.” They were joined by those who sought to use human rights only as a means to hamper détente with the Soviet Union. As a result, the inevitable inconsistencies of the policy would bring criticism from both the Right and the Left. Simultaneously, the administration expected others in Congress to use human rights

“for publicly pillorying the Soviet Union and Eastern countries.” This meant that the administration, as it fully implemented its policy, needed to review the military aid program and make sure that the administration bolstered its policy “with examples of the positive results” achieved. (82-85).

Given the complexity of the human rights policy, it was difficult to effectively explain all its nuance to the public. Still, it was seen as a necessary undertaking. Zbigniew Brzezinski, the National Security Advisor, often categorized as an opponent of the policy, believed that Carter’s direction was essential. While Brzezinski put a stronger emphasis on the notion that strengthening American power was the necessary point of departure for American policy than Carter or Vance did, he fully supported the human rights policy. He was “convinced that the idea of basic human rights had a powerful appeal in the emerging world of emancipated but usually non-democratic nation states.” Moreover, the NSC advisor thought that the previous administrations “lack of attention to this issue had undermined international support for the United States.” Brzezinski, therefore, felt strongly that a major emphasis on human rights as a component of U.S. foreign policy would advance America’s global interests by demonstrating to the emerging nations of the Third World “the reality of our democratic system, in sharp contrast to the political system and practices of our adversaries.” (*Power and Principle*, 49, 124).

4.4 Case Studies in Carter’s Human Rights Policy

A) Carter’s Foreign Policy and Human Rights in Romania

Romania's human rights record did not bear much significance in U.S. foreign policy until Romania and the United States signed a trade agreement on August 3, 1975. The agreement legally bound U.S. trade policies to Romania's emigration policies, by in fact waiving of the emigration clause on the requisite in the hope that emigration policies would improve. Prior to 1975, the U.S. could not legally make insinuations about Romania's human rights policies without taking the risk of damaging its relations with Romania, as Bucharest would have viewed that as interfering in its internal affairs. However after 1975, the U.S. government could legitimately discuss and convey concerns when it chose to look into human rights practices in Romania because the 1975 trade agreement between the two countries technically bound Romania to respect basic human rights such as free emigration, freedom of religion, and non-discriminatory policies toward ethnic minorities.

The granting of most-favored nations (MFN) treatment from the United States in the hope that it would improve Romania's human rights record, and particularly promote open emigration became an essential component of U.S.-Romanian relations. While the administration decried this provision, known as Section 402 (more commonly called the Jackson-Vanik Amendment), the White House did manage to get one concession. Jackson agreed that if a communist country could annually give the president assurance that its policies would lead to freer emigration, the president could convey this assurance to Congress and request the waiver of Section 402. Congressional approval would mean that the products of the country in question could receive, or continue to receive, MFN treatment. Section 402 required that this waiver request process be annual, permit hearings in both houses of Congress, and enable either house to deny MFN by passing a resolution of disapproval. If neither house

took any action to disapprove the waiver request, MFN would automatically be extended for another year. (Destler 173)

Romania's interest in MFN was evident. Romania was a developing country that sought rapid industrialization and, therefore, needed advanced technology from the West. However, in order to buy from the West Romania needed to sell to the West to get hard currency, and selling to the West was difficult because of the discriminatory tariffs imposed on socialist countries. The MFN status relieved Romania from the economically harmful discriminatory trade barriers.

Undoubtedly, the most obvious reason for the U.S. granting MFN status to Romania was to encourage its independence from the Soviet Union. The MFN status was viewed as a reward for Romania's independence which despite Soviet disagreement, continued relations with Israel in 1967 after the war with Egypt, and condemned the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Romania was also the only Warsaw-Pact country to refuse pact-members' military movement on its territory and refused to allow its own military to act beyond its territorial boundaries; it joined the GATT, the IMF, accepted credits from the World Bank, and agreed to sign a trade agreement with the United States, that included changing its emigration policies, after the Soviets backed out of similar talks. American foreign policy promoted independence from Moscow and wanted to reward such actions. It would have been impolitic for the U.S. to verbally promote independence from the Soviet Union and then, leave the independent parties out in the cold. If Romania could not look to the US for trade and help it would have had no chance but to submit to the Soviets.

Human rights, thus, became a give –and- take situation. If Romania wanted trade benefits and credits, it had to give human rights assurances and improve its record on

that issue. Indeed, Bucharest assured Washington that it would act to improve its emigration policies and accept the newly established guidelines. President Gerald Ford relayed the assurances to Congress and requested a waiver of Section 402 of the Trade Act. Congress approved the waiver, and an annual process that continued through 1988. Though Congressional concerns regarding Romania's human rights soon evolved into minority-rights concerns about the Germans and mainly the Hungarian-minorities of Transylvania, the emigration issue became a symbol in the American pursuit of international human rights by channelling through other human rights concerns.

Romania's domestic situation during the 1970s suffered from Nicholas Ceausescu's disregard for human rights. His reputation began to suffer internationally because of his brutal regime. Within the first few months of the Carter presidency, stories emanated from Romania detailing a number of human rights abuses. The Romanian writer dissident Paul Goma sent an open letter to the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) criticising Ceausescu's indifference to human rights. The letter was signed by many others. When its content was leaked, it caused a stir in the West and more importantly among American congressmen, most notably Representative Edward Koch of New York who wanted the administration to do something. (Mastny 195). However Koch's efforts went for naught. On March 4, 1977, a devastating earthquake struck Romania and quickly diverted congressional attention from human rights violations to humanitarian assistance. By mid-April, Carter had signed legislation providing \$ 20 million worth of aid to Romania (U.S. Senate, Humanitarian Assistance to Earthquake Victims in Romania, 4)

In May, the Senate Judiciary Committee sent a staff team to visit Romania and made a firsthand report on the earthquake devastation. The team travelled extensively

throughout the affected area. They talked with American Ambassador Harry Barnes, and discussed with the earthquake and other elements of American-Romanian relations with Ceausescu and Minister of Foreign Affairs, George Macovescu(5). Without question, they told Ceausescu of Congress' growing concern about Romania's human rights practices. They particularly stressed the importance of the issue since Congress would soon consider extending MFN for another year. Ceausescu understood the warning. Within a week, he issued an amnesty providing full pardons for individuals serving less than five years in prison and partial pardons for those interned from five to ten years. The amnesty affected about twenty-eight thousand persons, including political prisoners and dissidents, such as Paul Goma. (Letter from Brzezinski to Stuart Eizenstat, May 16, 1977,)

Meanwhile the State Department and the Treasury gathered data and recommended that the president ask Congress to extend the waiver of Section 402 of the Trade Act of 1974. On June 2, Carter submitted his first waiver recommendation. In his request to Congress, the president noted the increased trade between the two countries, and emphasized Bucharest's relative independence from Moscow. Further, the waiver extension would provide Washington with continued access to Romanian officials who could facilitate family reunification and improve emigration practices. Carter did indicate that his administration would monitor Romanian emigration, and if Bucharest's performance did not comply with the intent of the waiver, "I would want to reconsider my recommendation." Further, the President promised to bring to the attention of the Romanian government "any actions or emigration trends" that did not conform to the assurances they had made in the past to "treat emigration in a humanitarian manner." (Public Papers of the Presidents, 1977, 1055-1077). These Carter's statements were the first of their kind in which a president had shown a

willingness to reconsider the waiver request in the event of Romanian non-compliance.

The presidential waiver request meant that Congress had until September 3 to disapprove the recommendation, otherwise the waiver would continue for another twelve months, and, with it, Romanian MFN. Ceausescu totally understood this legislative timetable, and over the years developed an annual summer ritual between Washington and Bucharest. The high point of the ritual normally was a significant increase in the number of people permitted to emigrate from Romania to the United States, Israel, and elsewhere.

Congressional approval of the president's waiver request was due to a number of factors. First, the earthquake had produced a humanitarian response to Romania, that of sympathy rather than of punishment. Second, Carter's identification with human rights gave greater credibility to his assurances to Congress that the waiver would lead to freer emigration practices. Third, the President's pledge to monitor Romania's behavior and his willingness to reconsider his position if Bucharest failed to keep its assurances won support for his recommendation. Fourth, American-Romanian trade continued to expand. Fifth, Romania's foreign policy appeared to challenge Soviet's efforts to control Eastern Europe's behavior, and Congress wanted to reward Bucharest for her autonomy. And sixth, the need for an annual renewal of the emigration waiver, and therefore continued MFN, appeared to many to give Washington leverage to negotiate improved emigration and human rights practices in Romania.

In continuing to set its own mark on government, the Carter administration reviewed its foreign service postings and decided to appoint a new ambassador to

Romania. On September 27, Carter nominated O. Rudolph Aggrey to replace Harry Barnes as ambassador. (Public Papers of the Presidents, 1977 1673-1674) Aggrey's appointment made a statement that, if a defector's story is to be believed, did not please Ceausescu. According to Ion Papeca who fled Romania in 1978, the fact that Aggrey was black infuriated Ceausescu (11). The Romanian president ignored the fact the he was a career diplomat who had already served as envoy to Senegal and Gambia (22). Undoubtedly, one reason Carter chose Aggrey was to remind Ceausescu that the White House believed in human rights and human equality. Congress approved Aggrey's appointment unanimously.

In January 1978, Karoly Kiraly, an ethnic Hungarian and former member of the Romanian Communist Party hierarchy, wrote a memo in which he claimed the Communist Party discriminated against Hungarians and other minorities. A copy of the memo reached the West and appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*, and the *Washington Post*. Kiraly accused the government of fraudulent behaviour. According to him, it preached noble principles but pursued discriminatory practices that limited educational, cultural, and employment opportunities of non-Romanians. (Staar 65).

To counter the Kiraly memo and other stories circulating in the West about Romanian discrimination, Ceausescu invited Amnesty International to visit the country in February 1978. The government cooperated with the human rights monitoring organization, and the subsequent report did not indicate any particularly abnormal discriminatory practices. (U.S.Congress, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1979, 656). In March, Ceausescu told a Joint Plenum of the Councils of Working People of Magyar and German Nationality that a "number of shortcomings still exist in our activity, that mistakes are still made," but he assured the delegates that the Communist Party would "eliminate" those errors. (501). He also alluded to

Kiraly and other dissidents, describing them as people who had to “cover up their helplessness...by...speaking ill in every way” of those who were able and willing to sacrifice to continue the struggle toward communism.(514).

Meanwhile human rights continued to be a major topic of discussion in Washington. The Carter administration had struggled for over a year to develop a human rights policy, as distinct from human rights statements. Finally on February 17, 1978, Carter signed Presidential Directive 30, which defined America’s policy, the elements of which were not new, but for the first time they were combined into a single statement. The United States set priorities in its human rights objectives, foremost being no support to governments guilty of gross violations of human rights, unless there were “exceptional circumstances.” Further, Washington would work on a global scale to reduce government violations of people’s civil, political, economic, and social rights. Finally, America would reward those countries which improved their human rights practices with generous aid programs. (Brzezinski 126)

In practice, Carter viewed human rights violations differently when they occurred in a country governed by a rightist dictatorship and in a state under communist control. He believed that American condemnation of human rights violations in conservative regimes could be more effective “than in Communist countries, where repression was so complete that it could not easily be observed or rooted out.” (Keeping Faith, 143).And therein lay the basis for Carter’s annual renewal of Romania’s emigration waiver. He saw the waiver and MFN as one of the few means America had to effect human rights changes in Romania. Whether the mechanism worked was not the issue. The fact that the waiver and MFN kept alive a means for change was the purpose of annual renewal.

Meanwhile, the administration prepared for a White House visit by President Ceausescu. Carter's invitation stemmed from President Ford's visit to Romania in 1975. On April 12, Carter officially welcomed President and Mrs. Ceausescu. The opening remarks of both presidents mentioned human rights, which was one of the recurrent themes throughout Ceausescu's six-day visit. In the afternoon, Barbara Walters, an ABC Television commentator, interviewed the Romanian President. In response to a question concerning human rights, Ceausescu praised his country's efforts and reiterated his view that he saw human rights in a broad context that included disarmament, the right to work, and the right to an education. (President Nicolae Ceausescu's Visit to the USA, 87). Within days after returning from his Washington visit, Ceausescu took action to show Carter that his promises were not set on sand. On April 18, he granted forty-seven Romanians passport and exit visas. (Christian Science Monitor, 18 April, 1978, 10). Considering that that this number was nearly equal to a winter's month's emigration, the gesture carried weight.

On June 2, President Carter sent Congress his second annual request for an emigration waiver for Romania, which began the summer ritual of MFN hearings. In his recommendation to Congress, the president noted the overall increase from Romania, especially to West Germany. He was still concerned about the decline in Jewish emigration, but noted that a number of high-level talks had "led to the favorable resolution of many emigration and humanitarian problems." (Public Papers of the Presidents, Jimmy Carter, 1978, 1031-1032)..

Congress showed little opposition to renewing the emigration waiver. Ceausescu's April visit, coupled with Carter's pledge to monitor Romania's emigration practices, silenced most critics. In fact, no member of Congress introduced any resolution of disapproval before or during the hearings. During the last two years of the Carter

administration, the relative importance of American-Romanian relations declined. Washington's attention in 1979 focused on recognition of the People's Republic of China, Ayatollah's Khomeini's Islamic revolution, the SALT II agreement, the seizure of the American embassy in Tehran and the ensuing 444-day hostage crisis, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The administration's support of Romania carried over into Congress at the beginning of 1979. In January, Senator George McGovern of South Dakota reported to the Committee on Foreign Relations on his summer visit to Romania. The ten-page summary gave a historical overview of Romania, emphasizing her nationalism and desire for economic and political independence. McGovern credited Romania with "pioneering détente" since Nixon's 1969 visit, and noted Ceausescu's continued willingness to take foreign policy initiatives quite independent of Moscow. While the report noted that emigration procedures were lengthy and burdensome, the fact was that "there has been dramatic improvement "in the number of people permitted to leave Romania during the past several years. McGovern met Ceausescu, whom he described as "among the world's leading proponents of arms control," and without question was impressed by the Romanian president. In sum, the report gave evidence that America's policy with regard to Eastern Europe, designed to encourage political independence among the Warsaw pact countries, had made measurable gains in Romania. Washington should continue to expand relations with Bucharest. (U.S. Congress, Senate Committee, Perspectives on Détente, 1979, 2)

The growing importance placed on human rights in Washington was seen in the number of special congressional hearings devoted to the topic. On May 2, the House Subcommittee on International Organizations began hearings on human rights and American foreign policy. The principal administration spokesman was Warren

Christopher, deputy secretary of state. He told the subcommittee that “human rights are a central facet.” He described the administration’s approach to human rights as a “dramatic” change from the past. Human rights issues, such as the fate of political prisoners were now discussed “face-to-face” between diplomats, forcing governments to confront the issue rather than letting it be “conveniently ignored” as it had been done by previous administrations. (U.S. Congress, Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy, 16).

On June 1, Carter sent his annual recommendation to waive the freedom-of–emigration requirements in Section 402 of the Trade Act of 1974. In his letter to Congress, the President based his decision on the successful resolution of “many emigration and other humanitarian problems” as a result of high-bilateral talks. (Public Papers of the Presidents, 1979, 979) While there would be some opposition to the president’s request, Congress was ready to extend the emigration waiver and Romania MFN for another year. The primary reason for this attitude was the status of the American economy. In the last year of the Ford administration, America had a trade deficit of nearly \$9 billion. In 1977, the deficit leaped to \$29 billion and in 1978 to \$31 billion (U.S. Bureau of Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 494)

On June 14, Richard Schulze of Pennsylvania, Larry McDonald of Georgia, and Robert Dornan of California introduced a resolution in the House, disapproving the waiver extension for Romania (U.S. Congress, House Committee on Ways and Means, Waiver of Freedom of Emigration...10) They argued that Romania had consistently violated human rights institutionalized emigration obstacles, persecuted Hungarians, and operated forced labor campus to construct the Black Sea-Danube River Canal. The resolution went to the House Ways and Means Committee for consideration (U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Finance, 53).

Eight days later the House Subcommittee on Trade began two days of hearings on the president's request for emigration waivers for both Romania and Hungary, which had just received MFN status. On June 22, administration witnesses appeared before the subcommittee, Charles Vanik chaired meeting, and in his introductory remarks supported the waiver for Romania. Emigration figures showed that the former cyclical pattern had ended, Monthly numbers no longer showed an increase during the months immediately preceding and during the waiver hearings. Romanian emigration to America showed a consistent pattern (U.S. Congress, Trade Waiver Extension, 46-47). Vanik noted that emigration to Israel had again declined, but justified this on the on the basis that the remaining Jews in Romania, approximately thirty-five thousand, were mostly elderly people who did not to leave their homeland. Further, Romanian authorities had assured Washington that "all Jewish applications in 1979 have been resolved." (Waiver of Freedom...266-269).

The dramatic decline of Jewish emigration from Romania to Israel greatly concerned the American Jewish community. In an effort to resolve the problem, representatives from the Conference of Presidents of major Jewish Organizations went to Bucharest in June to talk directly with the Romanian authorities . As a result of negotiations between the two parties, Bucharest agreed to permit any Romanian Jew to emigrate to Israel an assured the Conference of Presidents that Jewish applications would be proceeded expeditiously.

On July 6, the Conference of Presidents sent an aide-mémoire to Congress indicating the settlement. Three days later, Vanik resumed the House Subcommittee on trade's hearings on the emigration waiver. Without question, the success of the Bucharest negotiations undermined much of the opposition's position; nonetheless, Congressman Richard Schulze maintained his position and focused on Bucharest's

continued persecution of Hungarians.(House Waiver, 1979, 266-269) On July 25, the House voted down Schulze's resolution of disapproval by 271-126. (Congressional Record, 96th Cong, 1st sess, 1979, 20660).Since there was no resolution of disapproval in the Senate and neither house took any further action on the Romanian emigration, the waiver authority automatically extended through July 2, 1980.

However, on August 3, seventy-six members of the House signed a letter and sent it to President Carter with a copy to President Ceausescu. The congressmen urged the president to ensure that Romania kept its promises to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. This was the primary reason that the House had supported the president's waiver. The letter indicated that if Bucharest did not implement its assurances , MFN renewal would be jeopardized. Further, the letter indicated that Congress was also concerned about Romania's human rights practices; (Letter from Representative Ted Weiss to President Carter, August 3, 1979)

This was the first time Congress had indicated in writing that it viewed emigration as part of the larger issue of human rights. This theme was repeated and made more specific by the Senate Finance Committee on August 23. Russell Long, chairman of the committee, sent President Carter a statement that the committee had adopted. While urging the administration to be more aggressive in its monitoring of Romanian emigration, the statement's last paragraph made a leap from the Jackson-Vanik emigration requirement to human rights concerns. The committee noted that :

Within the human rights framework, though not always directly related to emigration, the Committee had continued to receive allegations of cultural repression and violations of individual human rights against ethnic minorities...The Committee is deeply concerned about these charges and wishes to indicate its intent to carefully

monitor this situation, reviewing the record in detail next year. (Letter from Russell B. Long to President Jimmy Carter, August 23, 1979, 2)

Carter did not want to expand the Jackson-Vanik criteria to include all of Romania's human rights. He knew that Bucharest could not meet the standards Congress wanted to impose. He further knew that demanding these new criteria would end Romania's MFN and, in the process, end Washington's primary source of leverage to affect Romania's human rights practices; consequently, the administration response was bland and noncommittal. (Letter from Nelson C. Ledsky to Ted Weiss, August 31, 1979)

In May 1980, Carter submitted what proved to be his last waiver request to Congress. He based his May 28 recommendation on Bucharest's improved emigration record. He also cited the success of high-level bilateral consultations that he believed would continue to ensure favorable resolution of emigration and humanitarian problem. (Public Papers of the Presidents, 1980-1981, 980-982)

The waiver request began the review process. The House Subcommittee on International trade held theirs on July 21. Most witnesses at both hearings supported the president's recommendation. The opposition rarely mentioned Romanian emigration because Carter's policy had worked. Through "quiet diplomacy" the White House had convinced Romania to increase its emigration so that by 1980, it was no longer an issue. Romania complied with the Jackson-Vanik waiver requirement. In 1979, 2,886 Romanians came to the United States and nearly 13,000 went to West Germany. (U.S Congress, House, Disapproval of Extension...4). The Jewish emigration issue, too, played a smaller role in the hearings, in part because of

the arrangements made in the summer of 1979 between the Romanian government and the Conference of Presidents of major American Jewish organizations.

Opposition to MFN renewal now focused on Romania's discrimination against religious and national minorities. However, since neither of these issues was an MFN criterion under the Jackson- Vanik Amendment, no member of either house took any action on the president's recommendation until August 27, when Richard Schulze introduced a resolution to disapprove the waiver extension. The resolution never left the House Ways and Means Committee, and the president's authority automatically extended the waiver through July 2, 1981. (Pregelj 18).

B) Carter and Human rights Violations in Cambodia

Cambodia achieved its independence from France in 1953-1954 under the leadership of its young king, Norodom Sihanouk. Sihanouk continued to lead the country until he was deposed in 1970 by Lon Nol and Sirik Matak. Sihanouk had mostly managed to keep his country out of the war that was ravaging Vietnam, although the North Vietnamese did infiltrate personnel and supplies through the Cambodian border region , and Viet Cong forces sometimes retreated into Cambodia. American and South Vietnamese forces regularly launched attacks across the border, sometimes killing innocent Cambodians. In 1963, Sihanouk ended all American aid, and in May 1965, he broke diplomatic relations with the United-States, primarily due to the continuing cross-border raids.

In 1969, President Nixon ordered the secret bombing by B-52s of the so called Cambodian sanctuaries, but he also restored relations with Sihanouk's government. The bombing did not end the communist's use of Cambodia, and so the administration

took advantage of Sihanouk's ouster in March 1970 and the installation of the new pro-American government to invade Cambodia in an effort to destroy their enemy's headquarters. This action expanded the war and brought Cambodia fully into the Vietnam imbroglio. For the next five years a brutal war ensued, as the Lon Nol government fought a losing battle with the North Vietnamese and then increasingly with the insurgent Cambodian communist rebels, the Khmer Rouge, to whom Sihanouk had lent support (although he had little command on their actions). Hundreds of thousands of Cambodians perished. In April 1975, the Khmer Rouge came to power, drove the city-dwellers into the countryside, and established a government, Democratic Kampuchea (DK), so brutal that an estimated 1.7 million Cambodians died-this out of a population of about seven million- before the Vietnamese drove the Khmer Rouge from power at the end of 1978.

Carter administration officials were all aware of the vicious nature of the Khmer Rouge. Even before Pol Pot took over Cambodia, the government had substantial evidence of Khmer Rouge brutality. In February 1974, for example, Foreign Service officer Kenneth Quinn (who would serve as ambassador to Cambodia in the 1990s) wrote a lengthy and chilling report about Khmer Rouge governance in areas of Cambodia they then controlled.(Department of State, 20 February 1974) Nor was the general public unaware of events in Cambodia. In March 1975, shortly before the Khmer Rouge took Phnom Penh, Sydney Schanberg, writing for the New York Times, reported an American official as saying that the Khmer Rouge would "kill all the educated people, the teachers, the artists, the intellectuals and that would be a step backward toward barbarism." Schanberg himself reported that the Khmer Rouge had already displayed "battlefield brutality," had "burned whole villages, murdered

unarmed peasants and even sometimes mutilated their bodies.” (The Enemy is Red....New York Times, 2 March 1975)

Nor was Congress was silent on the Cambodian developments. In 1975, several representatives made speeches deploring the violence and genocide. On the right, Representative John M. Ashcroft (R-OH) flayed the “liberal media” for downplaying the bloodbath in Cambodia. But in fact, much of the information about the atrocities came from the same media, and more liberal members of Congress also spoke out condemning Khmer Rouge rule. Senator Alan Cranston (D-CA), for example, who had been highly critical of American policy in Cambodia, credited reports of “brutal deaths in the tens of thousands” and condemned the new tyrannical regime. (Congressional Record, 94th Cong, 1st sess, 6 May 1975, 13096).

When Carter took office in January 1977, he immediately addressed issues remaining from Vietnam. The new president pardoned those who had resisted draft and began the process of restoring diplomatic relations with Vietnam. But Cambodia received little attention. The administration’s inattention to the tragedy in Cambodia soon caused a growing number of people to point out that its silence belied its rhetoric about the centrality of human rights to its foreign policy. “ I am especially amazed that you, with your important policy of defending human rights , have not found it ‘proper’ to speak up in defense of thousands of defenceless Cambodians who are being brutally beaten to death for merely having existed in the middle class,” wrote one citizen to the president. (Kristen Lund to Carter, 11 June 1978). Representative Norman Dicks (D-WA) also implored Carter to condemn the Khmer Rouge, whose atrocities, he wrote, rivalled “those perpetrated by in Nazi Germany during World War II, and which make-human rights violations in Chile, Uganda, and the Soviet Union pale by comparison.” (Dicks to Carter 24 March 1977).In response, Carter

insisted that the United States would “continue to speak out against this or any other nation which systematically denies the right to enjoy life and the basic human dignities.” (Carter to Ronald M. Ellsweig, 11 May 1977) But in fact little was done

Outrage at the lack of response to the disturbing developments in Cambodia resulted in the first congressional hearings on Cambodian developments since the victory of the Pol Pot forces in 1975. The very fact that these hearings took place suggested that the administration was not providing leadership in responding to the Cambodian holocaust. In July, the committee heard from Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Richard Hollbrooke and a Khmer-speaking Foreign Service officer, Charles Twining, who, had been watching the Cambodian situation from Bangkok (and who later served as the first American ambassador to Cambodia when relations were restored in the 1990s). Both testified about the flagrant Democratic Kampuchea human-rights violations, including systematic executions that numbered in the tens or hundreds of thousands. But neither Hollbrooke nor Twining thought that the United States could do much to change the situation. “I am not sure that the Cambodian leadership would care a hoot about what we or anyone else would have to say,” Twining remarked. He doubted that even, the Chinese, who had provided the Khmer Rouge with diplomatic, technical, and material support, could influence Kampuchea’s behaviour. In the end, the committee, noting that the Carter’s administration “high priority” given to “human rights conditions around the world,” approved a resolution protesting Khmer Rouge brutality and urging the administration to work with other nations to try to bring about an end to the “flagrant violations of internationally recognized human rights now taking place in Cambodia.” (U.S. Congress, Human Rights in Cambodia, 15,24). But little happened.

However, by the end of 1977- in response to growing pressure – the administration was forced to take more interest. Late in 1977 and early in 1978 the National Security Council (NSC) staff reviewed the Cambodian situation, which led Brzezinski to call for a more aggressive American posture. The United States “should do more to call attention to Cambodia violations of human rights and generate international condemnation” of the Cambodian government, he said. (Paul Hentze to Theodore Shackley, 9 January 1978) On 17 January 1978, Acting Secretary of State Warren Christopher publicly reiterated the American condemnation of Democratic Kampuchea, but the State Department once again insisted that it had “no leverage to affect the human-rights situation in Cambodia.” (Douglas Bennet to Romano Mazzoli, 31 January 1975)

Such expressions of impotence did not assuage the critics. On 28 February 1978, for example, Solarz wrote directly to the president condemning the flagrant violations of human rights, and Carter then ordered that a strong condemnation of Democratic Kampuchea be prepared. (Chrisitne Dodson to Pater Tatnoff, 14 April 1978) The State Department’s draft statement, however, was inadequate. It unaccountably focused on Indochinese refugees and made no distinctions among Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia as generators of refugees. “For balance,” the draft also included a condemnation of the human-rights practices of Vietnam and Laos Cambodia was said to be “among the worst violators of human rights in the world today.”(Draft Statement on Cambodia, 1978).

The NSC staff rewrote the statement, largely eliminating “balancing” comments about human-rights abuses in Vietnam and Laos. But it still began with the statement that “since 1975, more than one-third of a million people have fled their homes in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.” Brzezinski considered the NSC rewrite “too timid”

and amended parts of it himself. Thus, instead of referring to people fleeing “the loss of basic political and economic freedoms,” the National Security Adviser substituted simply “mass murder”. Instead of the Cambodian government merely being “certainly among “the world’s worst violators of human rights, DK became simply “the worst violator of human rights in the world today” Instead of the government “causing unparalleled misery,” it was accused of “inflicting death on hundreds of thousands”-and perhaps one to two million (Draft Statements on Cambodia, Carter Papers).

This watered-down version of the condemnation of Kampuchea earned Carter much applause from human-rights organizations and ordinary citizens. Carter soon asked for recommendations on “additional actions which would encourage the Cambodian Government to improve its human-rights record.” (Brzezinski to Cyrus Vance, 28 April 1978) However, attention soon shifted to the plight of the Cambodian refugees who had escaped to Thailand. (There was virtually no interest, it might be noted, in the tens of thousands of Cambodian refugees for whom Vietnam was caring.). Congress again took the lead, with both houses passing resolutions urging that 15,000 Cambodian refugees be allowed to come to the United States. In October 1978, the Dole-Solarz bill authorizing such admissions sailed through Congress.

The special refugee legislation did not, however, address the plight of the millions of Cambodians still living under the Khmer Rouge government. Although some, like Senator George McGovern (D-SD), eventually called for armed intervention to end the suffering in Cambodia, most of those who wanted stronger action believed that the United States should persuade the People’s Republic of China, the Khmer Rouge’s only real ally, to end Cambodia’s reign of terror. In 1978, this seemed more realistic than it had been the previous year, since both the United States and China hoped to establish diplomatic relations. “Hope that you have had [or will have] a chance to

mention the impact around the world of the Khmer Rouge behavior to the PRC,” wrote one of the Brzezinski’s friends at the Center for Strategic and International Studies at Georgetown University. “Surely they have an interest in moderating it.” (John Richardson to Brzezinski, 30 May 1978).

President Carter himself instructed Brzezinski to read this statement of 21 April 1978 condemning DK to the Chinese, which the National Security Adviser did in May. But again , it was congressional opinion that pushed for stronger action . In July 1978, a bipartisan group of eighteen congressmen urged Carter to make Cambodia a part of the discussions aimed at normalizing relations with China because the U.S. have “demonstrated to the Chinese our willingness to act in a spirit of cooperation to reduce the tensions that plague that sector of the world.” And that “Cambodia provides the most visible area for such a demonstration” (Michael Harrington, James M. Hanley et al. to Carter, 6 July 1978).

The representatives’ suggestion did not commend itself for Brzezinski. The national Security Adviser was freely anti-Soviet and consequently a strong proponent of improving relations with Soviet Union’s bitter antagonist, China. Just as he had ended talks on restoring relations with Vietnam because he feared it might complicate normalization with China, so, too, he did not want to make China’s intervention with Pol Pot a condition of normalization. The State Department explained why. “We believe...it would be a serious mistake to inject the Cambodian human-rights violations into future US-PRC bilateral negotiations on normalization,” Assistant Secretary of State Douglas J. Bennet wrote to the congressional representatives. To do so, he went on, would seriously complicate this process without significant positive impact on the situation in Cambodia.” (Bennet to James M. Hanley et al. 17 August 1978)

The general opinion is that giving advantage to the geopolitical advantages inherent in normalizing relations with China, however, belied the Carter's administration's insistence that concerns for human rights was the primary determinant in its foreign policy. Too many, the policy of seeking to normalize relations with China without calling on its government to pressure the Khmer Rouge seemed hypocritical. China was the only country in the world that might be able to influence a regime that Carter himself had accused of being the world's worst violator of human rights. By not linking the two issues, American policy appeared to be based purely on realpolitik calculations and, in particular; a desire to play the China card in the strategic battle with the Soviet Union.

Relief for Cambodia finally came in December 1978, when Vietnamese troops-along with some Cambodians who had fled from the Khmer Rouge and taken refuge in Vietnam,invaded Cambodia and quickly drove the Khmer Rouge out of Phnom Penh. The Vietnamese installed Heng Samrin as the new prime minister of the Peoples' Republic of Kampuchea (PRK). To the Carter administration, and especially to Brzezinski, the Vietnamese action had the deleterious effect of expanding Soviet influence in Southeast Asia. Pol Pot's regime was despicable, but it was allied with China, which the United States now supported. It quickly became American policy to get Vietnamese troops out of Cambodia.

The diplomatic calculus quickly became more complicated, for during his visit to Washington at the end of January, Deng asked Carter how the United States would respond to "a punitive strike against Vietnam." Brzezinski had expected something of this sort and was worried that Secretary Vance would persuade Carter "to put maximum pressure on the Chinese not to use force." But Carter's response was fully acceptable to Brzezinski. For the record , Carter personally told Deng that there were

a number of disadvantages to taking such action. "I strongly urge you, not to approve it." (Carter to Deng Xiaoping, 30 January 1979).

The Chinese soon amassed 170,000 troops and a substantial number of combat aircrafts on the Vietnamese border. Feeling little pressure from the United States to desist, the Chinese armed forces invaded Vietnam on 16 February 1979. At that point, Carter apparently sympathized with the Chinese, for only on the day of the invasion he reportedly told the National Security Council that "the Soviet-backed...Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia gave the Chinese little choice but to invade Vietnam." (Michael Oksenberg and William Odom to Brzezinski, 19 February 1979). This remained at the heart of the American view of Indochina. As one official put it, the "Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea is the root cause of tensions in the region." (B.Lynn Pascoe to Edward F. Snyder and Gretchen, 5 April 1979). Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the Chinese invasion Brzezinski met almost daily with Chinese ambassador and provided him with intelligence reports on Soviet troops deployments.

In all of this, there was almost no thought given to what was best for the Cambodian people- those who had suffered severely under the Khmer Rouge and who were now for the most part free of that scourge. Once again, it was up to Congress to try to force action on behalf of the Cambodian people. On 22 February 1979, Solarz and eight members of Congress called the administration on its failure to address the issue of the possible return of the Khmer Rouge to power. "The need to prevent the restoration of the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia seems to have been overlooked by the Administration," they wrote. "If the Vietnamese withdrew from Cambodia without an international force of some kind in position", they stated, "the genocidal Pol Pot

regime would re-establish itself in Phnom Penh, and the suffering of the Cambodian people would continue, as would regional instability". Instead of simply condemning the Vietnam, they wrote, the administration ought to devote its energies to getting the superpowers to accept an international force that would replace the Vietnamese in Cambodia and , at the same time, prevent the return of Pol Pot. (Solarz et al. to Carter, 22 February 1979).

The administration responded that the letter contains many of the elements that we are exploring with others in our search for a solution and it may be that Vance asked the Chinese whether they would support an international conference on Cambodia. But there is little evidence that the Carter administration devoted much energy to trying to prevent the Khmer Rouge from returning. This was evident on 1 March 1979, when Holbrooke, in testimony before the House subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, called for the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia but said nothing about the Khmer Rouge would be prevented from resuming control if the Vietnamese withdrew. It was left to Solarz to make the point that the administration had no plan to prevent Pol Pot returning to power if the Vietnamese left (U.S. Congress, Hearings and Markup before the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, 69, 96-97). The administration's major goal was to get the Vietnamese to leave Cambodia, because their presence there, and the regime they had installed and supported, represented, in the administration's view, a gain for Soviet influence in the region at the expense of the Chinese. From this perspective, keeping Pol Pot's forces in the field where they could fight the Vietnamese was in the administration's interest, despite the embarrassment of supporting it, if only indirectly. The interest of ordinary Cambodian people was of little concern.

Attention soon shifted toward the plight of the hundreds of thousands of Indochinese refugees. Tens of thousands of Cambodians were fleeing to Thailand to escape the Khmer Rouge and the continued fighting in their country. But the simultaneous exodus of large numbers of “boat people” from Vietnam complicated the international situation for the Cambodian refugees. It was more comfortable for the American government to focus attention on the boat people than on “the land people” (the Cambodian refugees). Not only were they more immediately visible, but it was easy to blame the allegedly pro-Soviet government of Vietnam directly for causing the problem.

But the U.S. administration could not ignore Cambodian refugees altogether. Stories about their harrowing lives under the Khmer Rouge and traumatic accounts of escape through minefields into Thailand began to appear in American publications, and letters from ordinary citizens and from members of Congress urged a strong American commitment to alleviate their suffering. When in June 1979, Thailand forced 45,000 refugees back into Cambodia with tragic results, there was a strong outcry. “I cannot bear to think that either I personally or the American people can sit back silently while this tragedy continues,” wrote a businessman from New York (Claiborne Pell to Carter, 14 June 1979). Carter unconvincingly blamed the People’s Republic of Kampuchea and the Vietnamese (Neuringer 60), but the United States began to work with the Thai government and voluntary organizations to deliver food and other relief supplies to the border, where they were simply left to be picked up by needy refugees on the Cambodian side.

Attention to the Khmers soon increased dramatically when reports of imminent famine inside Cambodia itself began to appear. It was estimated that tens of thousands perhaps as many as 200,000—were starving every month. Despite the apparent

emergency, the Carter administration was hardly in the forefront to get aid into Cambodia itself. It criticized Heng Samrin and his Vietnamese supporters for insisting that all aid be channelled through the PRK, claiming that the regime was hindering distribution. But what most concerned the United States was that food shipments through Phnom Penh might be diverted to the Vietnamese soldiers in Cambodia or be used in other ways to bolster the PRK.

Faced with mounting domestic pressure, the administration decided to undertake a major effort on behalf of the suffering Cambodians. On 23 October, Carter met with Congressional leaders to get their assent to a large increase in funding for Cambodian relief. Then, at Carter's request, Hesburgh and about thirty-five other religious and humanitarian leaders met with him at the White House. The president told them that he was directing that an additional \$ 3 million in aid be made available immediately to UNICEF and the International Committee of the Red Cross, and that he was going to urge the Congress to approve sending an "additional \$ 20 million in commodities to Cambodia, subject only to assurances that it will reach the needy" (Statement by the President, 23 October 1979). All told, the administration was now proposing to spend \$ 30 million for Cambodian relief, with an additional \$ 9 million going to Catholic Relief Services and United Nations programs that were assisting Cambodian refugees in Thailand. Hesburgh and others were gratified. The next day, they issued a press release supporting Carter and urging the Congress, as well as the public, to increase assistance to Cambodia, a country that, they said, "has already lost half of its former population of eight million." (Press release, Presidential Commission on Hunger, Cambodia 2)

Although the administration had taken important steps to increase assistance to Cambodia, its willingness to address the tragedy in a forceful way was obstructed by

suspensions of Vietnam and the PRK. The United States continued to accuse the Vietnamese of preventing aid from getting to the starving people. Brzezinski led the charge. The NSC staff drafted a militant statement accusing Vietnam, with Soviet backing, of “conducting a war of conquest” in Cambodia, a war designed “regardless of human cost” to put its “puppet regime” in control of “the entire country.” Because the Vietnamese were denying the relief agencies access to hundreds of thousands of Cambodians, they would “carry a heavy burden before history for this callous and inhuman disregard of human life, bringing a new version of genocide to their tragic victims.” Brzezinski sent the draft to the State Department, telling Vance that they would “be under great criticism if we [Americans] do not react more publicly to the Soviet –Vietnamese impediments to more massive aid to Cambodia.” He hoped the Secretary would agree and issue the draft statement (Brzezinski to Vance, 27 November 1979). On 6 December, the White House issued “Statement on Kampuchea” which reflected Brzezinski’s tough approach. The Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia had brought to Cambodia “a new wave of oppression, hunger, and disease, the statement read. The Vietnamese and the Heng Samrin authorities had “deliberately blocked and obstructed” the flow of aid to Cambodia. They were charged with not disturbing supplies, exacting taxes on relief goods, diverting aid to the military and PRK officials and supporters, and even mining fields so that the crops could not be harvested.” (The White House, “Statement on Kampuchea,” 5 December 1979).

By May 1980, Vance, who had served as a cautionary force in the administration, was gone, having resigned in protest over the attempt to rescue American hostages in Iran. Brzezinski was pleased. Vance, he informed Carter, had never spoken out strongly on behalf of Carter’s policies, and “the people around Cy continuously conspired either to dilute your policy or to divert it into directions more to their own

liking.” Brzezinski suggested that some of them be reassigned.(Brzezinski to Carter, 1 May 1980)

With Vance out, Brzezinski became an even more dominant figure in the administration, which meant that Cambodia would be viewed even more firmly through the geopolitical Cold War lens. Carter’s anger at the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979 not only gave Brzezinski a freer hand in places like Cambodia but doubtless hardened the administration’s approach to any issue that involved the Soviet Union. Softer approaches, such as an emphasis on human rights or a willingness to accept ambiguity in Vietnam or Cambodia, were increasingly distant from the administration’s thinking. This was seen in two interrelated issues that re-emerged in the summer and fall of 1980: who should represent Cambodia in the United Nations, and whether support is to be given to the remnants of the Khmer Rouge in their resistance to the PRK.

In 1979, the United States had reluctantly voted to allow DK to retain its United Nations seat. Within the administration, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights Patricia Derian had argued passionately against the vote, as had Donald McHenry who represented the United States at United Nations. Those who favored seating DK argued that it was important not to alienate China and American friends in the Association of Southeast Asian Association (ASEAN), who also opposed Vietnam’s actions in Cambodia. “We made the only decision consistent with our overall national interests,” wrote Vance (*Hard Choices*, 126-127) . It was, however, an embarrassing position, clearly at odds with Carter’s professed devotion to human rights. As Bloomfield put it, “The technical grounds for our role have proved extraordinarily difficult to explain to the concerned lay public. U.S. policy toward

Kampuchean representation in the UN has become highly controversial in U.S. domestic politics.” (Bloomfield to Brzezinski, 16 June 1980)

Now the issue was about to emerge again. This time, there was even more sympathy within the administration for a change in policy. With the UN vote scheduled for September, important humanitarian and religious organizations lobbied for a change in American policy. They sent letters to President Carter and other administration officials admonishing them not to vote again to seat the Khmer Rouge. All of them threw back at Carter his famous words that the Pol Pot regime was the “worst violator of human rights in the world.” Several congressional representatives echoed such sentiments, as did Sam Brown a Carter appointee who directed ACTION (the domestic peace corps). Brown sent appeals to the president and Secretary of State Edmund Muskie imploring them to reconsider the decision to support the Khmer Rouge at the United Nations.” It is wrong substantively and can only further alienate many people who are already concerned about the consistency in U.S. policy,” he wrote. “This decision is the most fundamental test of our commitment to human rights. In a broader sense, it is a test of the morality and integrity of all our actions abroad.”(Sam Brown to Edmund Muskie, 8 October 1980). The NSC did not forward Brown’s letter to the president nor did Brzezinski sign a proposed reply to Brown. A few days later, the United States joined ASEAN and China in voting again to seat the Khmer Rouge in the United Nations.

The United States was engaged in a worldwide geopolitical struggle with the Soviet Union, which had raised international tensions to the boiling point by invading Afghanistan. The Soviet Union supported Vietnam, and thus the administration –in particular, Brzezinski- viewed the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia as an extension of Soviet influence detrimental to the interests of the United States. Consequently, the

Carter administration decided to encourage China, which was engaged in a bitter ideological struggle with the Soviet Union, and Thailand to support the remnants of the Khmer Rouge and to use the Pol Pot's forces as a counter to the Vietnamese, who had liberated Cambodia from their clutches. Although the administration could not and did not ignore the humanitarian outcry and thus provided significant assistance and help to the Cambodians, its fundamental orientation was geopolitical. All in all the defense of human rights was a significant feature of Carter's foreign policy. But it was not a primary concern for Brzezinski, and, to extent that Carter allowed him to formulate foreign policy, the defense of human rights faded as a central administration concern. Nowhere was this more clearly seen than in Cambodia.

C) Carter's Fighting for Human Rights In Argentina

Argentina was one of the countries where the Carter Administration applied its human rights policies most vigorously. Probably the most important reason for such emphasis comes from the fact that such policy did not collide, at least in the way in which it was implemented, with other "major objectives of U.S. foreign policy that are of equal...(or) greater importance" than human rights. The firmer stand toward Latin America contrasted with the low-level priority given to the subject when dealing with the Soviet Union, China, or Cambodia among others (Kacowicz 8). Considered in this context, the Argentina dictatorship was considered "an easy target" due to its marginality from the centers of power, its historical records of hostility to U.S. hegemonic plans in the continent, and the fact that the regime's normative standards were perceived by the Americans as the exact opposite of what the U.S. is supposed to stand for.(Kacowicz 8). It is precisely because of those considerations that the Argentina's case is especially relevant for the analysis of the Carter's human rights

policy, since it is in relations with this country that changes and continuities vis-à-vis previous administrations are more evident.

General Jorge Rafael Videla emerged as a leading theorist for international anti-communist strategies in the mid-1970s. Videla rose to power amid political and economic unrest in the early- to mid- 1970s. On 24 March, 1976, Videla led the military coup which ousted President Isabel Peron. A military junta was formed. Two days after the coup, Videla formally assumed the post of President of Argentina. The military junta took power during a period of extreme instability, with attacks from the Marxist groups, who had turned underground after Juan Peron's death in 1974n from one side, and violent right-wing kidnappings, tortures, and assassinations from the Argentine Anticommunist Alliance led by José Lopez Rega, and other death squads on the other side. The coup marked the sixth time that the military ended democracy in Argentina since 1930, and another change in the state's attitude toward human rights. This return to military rule would not be like others. Citing the need to protect Christian values from the spectre of the communists and Peronism, the military junta authorized the armed forces to do whatever possible in the name of national security.

The new military junta took advantage of the political turmoil in Argentina to arrest, detain, torture, and kill suspected terrorists and political opponents. As a result, human rights skyrocketed and human rights violations became commonplace. Politically, the Junta dissolved the legislature, the judiciary, imposed martial law and ruled by decree. For the first few months after the military takeover, terrorism remained rampant, but it waned somewhat after the Videla's government launched its own terror campaign against political opponents.

Until the 1976 coup, and for months afterward, the U.S. relied to a large extent on the armed forces as its main interlocutors in Argentina's turbulent politics. A pro-military bias blinded American officials from grasping the seriousness of the abuses that began within the days of the coup. In a cable to Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, Ambassador Robert C. Hill described the 24 March coup as "probably the best executed and most civilized coup in Argentine history (Telegram, March 29, 1976). For months, Ambassador Hill and his aides continued to describe Videla as a "moderate".

A nationwide campaign of torture and abduction, "disappearance" and murders by the March 1976 junta was well under way when the Carter government came into office. The U.S. did not emphatically denounce the systematic nature of the abuses until the beginning of the Carter administration in 1977. Thanks largely to two officials, Assistant Secretary of State for human rights, Patricia Derian, and a political officer at the embassy in Buenos Aires, Franklin "Tex" Harris, Washington's policy changed from a tacit support for the Junta to a far more critical stance. Derian and Harris maintained close contacts with people directly affected by the repression including relatives of the victims. Not only did the administration's information notably improve, but the contact with U.S. officials was a lifeline to human rights at constant risk of government reprisal.

In her recent book on *U.S. Human Rights Policy and Latin America*, Kathryn Sikkink describes the decision-making process through which the Carter Administration carried out its human rights policy toward Argentina (122-147). This study, drawing upon recently declassified U.S. documents, details the process that starts with the February 24, 1977, Secretary Vance's announcement of the reduction of the projected military aid to Argentina because of the country's record of human

rights violations, and ends with the “disenchantment” phase during 1980, where “pressure on human rights front seems to have been relaxed, although the ban on sales continued” (Sikkink 134). Sikkink concludes that, in spite of the “mixed signals” the military government received from U.S. sources, the Carter Administration’s human rights policy did succeed in achieving a progressive improvement of the Argentine government human rights practices. President Carter agreed with this assessment (Keeping Faith, 150). The Administration’s human rights policy had been applied through public denunciations of the President and his aids, an embargo on the sale of military material which included training of the military, the negative vote in the multilateral development banks concerning loans to Argentina, in the refusal of Export-Import financing, and through the support of sanctions against Argentina in the UN Comission on Human Rights (Kacowisz 9-10)

Early in 1977 the human rights policy of the new administration set up a clash with the Argentine junta. The first contact between State Department officials and Junta diplomats in early February took a new critical tone. “We [Americans] cannot accept that people with different views are persecuted, tortured, and murdered.” (U.S.-Argentine Relations, Feb, 2 1977). Incredulous Argentine diplomats were also told that the new administration was serious about its human rights policy and that the issue would be critical in U.S.-Argentine relations. There is evidence in the documents collection that the Department of State had to work to ensure that the Pentagon and the CIA were on the same wavelength as the State Department regarding human rights policy toward Argentina (Human Rights: “The Key to Our Relations” May 4, 1977).

In late February 1977, the Carter administration cut in half, but did not eliminate, the Ford administration request for military aid in the upcoming fiscal year. (Fiscal

year 1978 beginning on October 1, 1978 and ending September 30, 1979) The administration's request was accompanied by criticism of Argentina's human rights record and as a result the Argentine junta refused to accept the aid package. Negotiations over military credits involving previously approved funds to Argentina were stopped, and the actual transfer or delivery of military credits, sales, and training that had been previously agreed-upon was slowed under strong pressure from Congress and the newly created Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs in the Department of State. The Carter Administration also began using its voice and vote in international financial institutions such as the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank to oppose loans to Argentina, and slowed the issuing of bank credits provided by the Export-Import American Bank (U.S.-Argentine Military Relations, August 1, 1977)

Simultaneously, alongside U.S. sanctions and more open criticism of the Argentine generals' human rights practices, the door was opened to Argentina's President Videla, who met high-ranking American officials, Secretary Vance, and President Carter himself. When Videla was granted a meeting with President Carter, he promised the U.S. President that many of the 4,000 detainees being held under Argentine executive power decree would be released that other improvements in human rights would be implemented. During the meeting it was decided that Secretary Vance would visit Argentina before the end of 1977 and that he would deliver a list containing the names of those who disappeared, a list that human right groups had made available to the Department of State

However, human rights did figure predominantly at the meeting in the foreign ministry between Secretary Vance, U.S. ambassador to Argentina, Assistant Secretaries, Katz, Todman, and Derian, Robert Pastor, of the NSC, and Argentine Foreign Minister Oscar Montes. They discussed such issues as access to prisons by

the International Committee of the Red Cross, the publication of lists of prisoners, the imprisonment of Argentine journalist and outspoken Jacobo Timerman, the right of dissidents to opt for exile. In an unprecedented move, after Vance's visit, the U.S. delivered to the Argentine government a list of 7,500 disappeared people compiled by U.S. human rights organizations.

But in mid-1978, negotiations between the U.S. and Argentina came to the verge of collapsing and U.S.-Argentine relations dropped to one of the lowest points. The human rights situation had not only failed to improve but continued to deteriorate, as evidenced by the shocking assassinations of a group of activists affiliated with the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo by unknown units of Argentine security forces in December 1977. In response the U.S. government moved to freeze numerous loans involving hundreds of millions of dollars and to stop negotiations of contacts for previously approved military assistance. Congress passed the Humphrey-Kennedy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act, which prohibited all military sales, aid, or loans or training to Argentina. The administration also voted against or abstained from twenty-three loans to Argentina from international financial institutions (Brown 99-100).

The debate about how much, if at all, U.S. policy in the late 1970s contributed to human rights and democratization of Argentina under the military dictatorship will linger for years. Was there too little done to save lives and open political spaces? Was there too much done? Were there other methods appropriate or were there other methods to be applied? What was the proper balance between engagement and sanctioning of a regime that committed well-documented abuses?

U.S. policy evolved, pushed by congressional pressures from a double message sent under the Ford administration to a significantly more coherent and forceful policy

on behalf of human rights under the Carter Administration. From 1977 onward, the U.S. used public and private channels, as well as sanctions and rewards, to prod the Argentines to respect human rights. The declassified documents seem to indicate that, for all the inconsistencies and contradictions of U.S. policy, overall the U.S. made an important contribution to open political spaces for dissent and save lives.

Conclusion

Unquestionably, Carter intended to give more prominence to human rights than any recent previous administration. Many members of his administration sought to elevate human rights considerations in policy-making. While Carter's interest in human rights was legendary, it was not perfect. Cold War constraints and a recalcitrant opposition more comfortable with a realpolitik philosophy that nations should only look to their own self-interests interfered with Carter's attempt to make the promotion of human rights the centrepiece of U.S. foreign policy.

The outlines of the Carter's human rights policy are not in dispute. The promotion of human rights was part of larger emphasis on a new post –Cold War policy for human rights presented an attractive alternative because it promised to realign the nations' actual policies with its professed beliefs while still opposing communism and protecting the nation's interests. Carter implemented and gave force to the ideas and legislation of Congress on human rights and developed the criteria used for cutting off aid, no votes on loans by international agencies and public condemnation that have become standard practice. The human rights policy also influenced the internal political dynamics in nations with military dictatorships by protecting democratic opponents of those regimes.

Critics may have a point when they charge that the human rights policy was applied inconsistently. In Asia and Eastern Europe, for example, Carter's policy fell victim to the administration's perception that it had to decide between humanitarian and geopolitical concerns. In Cambodia, the White House downplayed the significant abuses. In that country, human rights did not seem to be the primary consideration for Carter and his team, in particular, Brzezinski, the defense of human rights was shaped more by geopolitical than moral considerations. Since the Soviet Union supported Vietnam, the U.S. saw the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia as an extension of Soviet influence detrimental to the interests of the U.S. and its allies. On the other hand, U.S. normalization with China, which engaged in a bitter ideological struggle with the Kremlin, made Washington play the China card. Despite gross violations of human rights by the Khmer Rouge, the U.S. added her support to China in favor of that "genocidal" regime with the aim of using it as a bulwark against Soviet extension of influence by eventually wiping the Vietnamese out of Cambodia. In sum the desire to oppose the perceived expansion of Soviet influence in Southeast Asia won out over human rights in Cambodia.

In addition to the geopolitical considerations, the administration's failure to elevate human rights concerns in its policy toward Cambodia may be also attributed to the recent traumas caused by the debacle in neighboring Vietnam, most Americans and Carter himself wanted to forget about Southeast Asia. There was also a sense that the U.S. could exert no influence on the secretive and genocidal Khmer regime. Of great significance, major issues of immediate importance, name a few, also deflected U.S. attention from Southeast Asia.

Latin America was just the only place where it was possible to pursue human rights without significant costs. It was there that Carter made his greatest effort, loudly chiding dictators and cutting military aid, and, there, too that he probably had the greatest success. U.S. leverage was more significant in Argentina than in Cambodia, for example or anywhere in the world. Carter's efforts were effective in Argentina and other Latin American countries,

but it would have been impossible for Carter to reorient American national security doctrine and support for right-wing dictators in just one term in office.

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Chapter Five

Carter in Crisis: The Collapse of the Post-Cold War Presidency

Introduction

In the last half of Carter's presidency, Carter's restraint in foreign affairs and appeals to universal standards were followed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, a broad-based nationalist revolution in Nicaragua, and a nationalist anti-American revolution in Iran. Revolutionaries in both countries saw themselves as opposing the agents of American imperialism. These three concurrent events seemed to offer strong testimony to the limitations of Carter's vision of world-order politics.

The events of 1979 changed Carter's ideological notions of foreign policy into a more realistic approach by the end of his term; his hopes for deterrence –based peace and democracy in the Third World were shattered by the hostile intentions of the Soviet Union and anti American sentiment in the Third world. The unrest in both Iran and Nicaragua and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan demonstrated the Carter's limitations to redirect American foreign policy despite his best efforts to focus on areas of cooperation instead of confrontation between, on the one hand, the United States and the Soviet Union, and on the other hand, the U.S. and the Third World.

5.1 Confronting the Revolution in Iran

In the late 1940s and early 1950s Iran emerged as an important point on the Cold War containment line. American policymakers came to regard internal stability and economic development in that country as an indispensable check on Soviet thrust

southward. Strategically, Iran was an important regional strong point to the United States, and American industry had a significant interest in Iranian oil. Indeed, American influence in Iran dated back to World War II. In 1941, Britain and the Soviet Union divided the country into two virtual spheres of influence, installing Mohammed Reza, the young son of the recently exiled shah, as the head of a new Iranian government. It was this de facto rule by the United Kingdom and the USSR that prompted Iranian leaders to ask for American help in gaining independence. During the 1943 Tehran conference, the American Franklin D. Roosevelt promised the Iranians that he would support their independence as soon as the war was won. He got Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin agree that all Allied forces would be withdrawn from Iran six months after the Axis powers surrendered. President Roosevelt thereby wanted to make Iran an example of great power cooperation.

However, with the dawn of the Cold War, Iran became one of the tension points between the U.S. and the former USSR. Soon after the Allied victory, the Soviet Union appeared reluctant to withdraw. It created “friendly republics” in the north and increased its troops. In response, the United States began to plunge into internal Iran internal affairs by sending economic and military aid to the Iranian government. Also, it warned the USSR that it intended to guarantee, by force if necessary, Iran’s independence. In late 1946, the Soviets finally withdrew. Soon after, the Iranians asked the U.S. to mediate in their dispute with the British over the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). While the U.S. put some pressure on the British to compromise, it did not want to challenge them in an area that was traditionally acknowledged as their sphere of influence. The resulting stalemate over the nationalization of oil production gave rise to the radicalization of Iranian politics. In 1952, the strong nationalist tide in the Madjlis, the Iranian parliament, forced the shah to appoint the leader of the

National Front coalition, Mohammed Mossadegh, as the new prime minister. Mossadegh was supported by a large popular outcry against British colonialism. When he demanded full control over the Iranian army, the U.S. feared that Mossadegh would oust the shah, and turn Iran into a republic. The Eisenhower administration, perceiving this as a move which would enhance Soviet influence and possibly convert Iran into a communist satellite, instructed the CIA to support a coup to oust Mossadegh. (Roosevelt 102)

The fear of Soviet expansionism, combined with Iran's geographic position on the Soviet Union's southern border, aroused fear in Washington to plot a replacement to Mossadegh's government. Also the "loss" of China in 1949 and the war in Korea beginning in Korea heightened concerns that other nations in Asia and the Middle East would quickly succumb to communism. Additionally, an unfriendly Iranian government could have devastating consequences for Western economies heavily reliant on important Iranian oil. The end result of the coup was a puppet regime in Iran, and the Shah legitimized his government through authoritarianism and repression. (Gasirowski 152). A mutual alliance was established in which the U.S. and Iran defended one another's interests . The U.S., through the Shah, could contain communism and ensure access to Iran's oil, and the Shah could maintain authority and power in Iran through U.S. military aid and technical assistance. In 1955 the Shah even signed his country into the Baghdad Pact, which stated that its purpose was "the containment of the Soviet Union" in the region's affairs. (Christos 3)

With increased American assistance, the shah now took firm control of the government. As his powers grew and American military and economic advisers began to enter the country, many Iranians believed the British presence had simply been replaced by American influence. Yet American military aid remained quite small

during the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations (Rubin 128). The Johnson administration continued the Kennedy administration's support for the shah and its emphasis on buttressing Iran's internal security by encouraging a far reaching program of political, social, and economic reforms: land distribution, greater freedom and rights for women, and rapid improvements in education. These programs, it was felt, had to accompany Iran's rapid drive for industrialization and military strength. The shah's power was known to be autocratic and at times arbitrary. But the overall strategic value of Iran and the shah to the United States was appreciated by every American administration from Eisenhower to Ford. U.S. policy makers, who argued on the strategic importance of Iran, which was on the southern periphery of the Soviet Union, remained concerned over potential threats to the long-term stability and viability of the shah's regime. Iran was also valued as one of the most dependable U.S. allies in the region.

However, an upsurge of anti-Americanism and opposition to the government came in October 1964, however, when the Iranian Parliament passed a status of forces bill granting U.S. military personnel stationed in Iran and their dependents full diplomatic immunity, as the U.S. had been requesting since March 1962. Dissident religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini attacked the status bill because "if some American's servant, some American's cook, assassinates your marja' in the middle of a bazaar, or runs over him, the Iranian police do not have the right to judge him. The dossier must be sent to America, so that our masters can decide what is to be done." (Qtd in Algar 181-182, 184-186). The shah, exasperated, sent him into exile to Turkey. In his exile, Khomeini maintained contact with opposition groups inside Iran as well as abroad. He offered encouragement and guidance, and a fresh political vision of an Islamic state taking the place of a discredited monarchy. Khomeini's

views were symptomatic of widespread popular opposition to the government and to American policy in Iran.

President Nixon, like previous U.S. presidents, regarded Iran, under the shah, as a stable pillar of U.S. security in the Middle East and was ready to arm the shah at a rapid pace. In fact the shah received *carte blanche* to buy whatever he wanted. Between 1973 and 1977 the outlays of modern U.S. military equipment came to over \$ 15 billion. With those weapons Nixon and Kissinger expected Iran to keep in check regional radicals and be used as a crucial buffer against Soviet expansionism in the Middle East. Furthermore, it was now America's most important link in the protection of the oilfields of the entire gulf region. Finally, in the era of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), Iran became a valuable location for American intelligence gathering concerning Soviet missile testing in Russia. This considerable military and economic cooperation depended heavily on the shah

By the mid-1970s, however, several voices in Washington started to question the good relationship between America and the shah. In spite of having achieved overwhelming military superiority in the gulf region by 1975, the shah did not reduce his program of purchasing American weaponry. Some critics argued his superiority was destabilizing on the ground that the shah not only developed grander concepts of Iran's military role as the major power of the Middle East, but perhaps as a world power. (Chubin 51-80). While others feared the sensitive military technology might some day fall into the hands of the Soviets.

Several critics in the United States became more outspoken about the lack of political reform under the shah and the alleged human rights abuses of the secret police, SAVAK. The civil rights and political freedoms in Iran were generally regarded as deplorable. The historic liberal opposition to the shah, the National Front

was almost completely shut out of the political process. The Iranian secret police, the SAVAK, would arrest political opponents without cause, imprison them, and sentence them without trial. Traditional political uprisings and protests through the media were also ruthlessly suppressed. Much of the equipment used by the SAVAK to repress political opponents was supplied by the U.S. As the shah's power waned in the 1970s, SAVAK became increasingly violent; assassinations, bombings, staged fires, and torture were all used to discourage Iranians from acting in opposition to the shah. This led Amnesty International to declare in 1975 that "no country in the world has a worse record in human rights than Iran." (Gasiorowski 157)

For many years, the Shah got away with brutal governing tactics because the U.S. supported his regime. However, by 1977, this era appeared to be coming to an end as Carter's human rights policy spoke directly to the type of humanitarian and civil rights violations that the shah had relied on for years to maintain authority. In 1975 the shah reduced the parliamentary process to a one-party system, thereby further consolidating his autocratic rule. It is in this context that Carter assumed the presidency in 1977. When Carter entered the White House, Iran was peripheral to his foreign policy concerns. In a major address in May 1977 he warned against any longer letting "inordinate fear of communism" lead the U.S. to embrace dictators. Instead he called on his countrymen to follow a policy consistent with "our essential character as a nation "and confront "the new global questions of justice, equity and human rights." (Commencement Address at Notre Dame, 22 May 1977, 955-957). In that speech Carter passed over Iran in silence.

The Carter administration had no initiatives in Iran and expected to continue the close strategic relationship established during the previous administrations (Sick 24). Carter agreed with the assessment that Iran was a strategic stronghold in the Middle

East, worthy of American support. “I continued, as other Presidents had before me, to consider the shah a strong ally” (Keeping Faith, 435). Besides the strategic importance of Iran to the United States, Carter had other reasons not to alienate the shah, who had offered to support one of Carter’s prized projects- a Middle East peace accord. Moreover, the shah was willing to help Carter establish an overall energy policy for the United States by reducing sudden price hikes in crude oil. When Carter asked the shah to moderate an expected OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) price increase in 1978, he indeed seemed instrumental in avoiding a steep price rise (Vance 322). However, human rights and arms transfer policies soon became the testing ground of his relations with the shah. In the early months of his presidency, Carter did not publicly address the shah’s human rights violations, saving his concerns for private conversations. Carter realized that he had to choose his public announcements carefully, lest he jeopardize America’s considerable interest in Iran. However, the shah took notice that Carter was dissimilar in many ways to most of the Cold-War era U.S. presidents. Carter’s vow to promote human rights in every corner of the globe signalled to the shah that his relationship with the U.S. might be affected. The first major sign of this change was the decision to restructure arms sale to Iran. To help ensure that his government’s relationship with the U.S. did not wane, the shah began to relax political prisoners in the spring of 1977. The relaxation of repression due to Carter’s human rights policy allowed the liberal opposition a chance to grow and flourish. The major goal of this opposition was to force the shah to put an end to his despotic practices and uphold Iran’s 1906 Constitution.¹

In addition to relaxing repression and allowing for some measure of peaceful protest, the shah also responded to Carter’s private pressures that International Red Cross volunteers be allowed to inspect Iran’s human rights situation. In the summer of

1977, as the shah allowed the Red Cross access to Iranian's prisons and courts, the Carter administration began to take notice (Siavochi 131) and State Department officials noted that the shah had made "significant and important developments in the field of human rights" (Kurzman 19). It is clear that the shah was at least trying to meet the human rights principles that Vance articulated in his April Speech. For Carter this was an indication that the shah was moving in a liberal direction, and that it was safe to work out a new arms deal with Teheran. Carter, who in his presidential campaign announced his new directive which stated that his administration would consider the sales of arms in the light of the purchaser's human record, approved nearly all the shah's requests for sophisticated American weaponry, short of atomic weapons (Vance 317).

The warming of relations between Carter and the shah allowed both leaders to go ahead with the shah's scheduled visit to Washington in November of 1977. Although the shah's visit was marred by anti-shah demonstrations held right outside the White House by angry Iranian students, the two leaders met for talks that mainly focused on oil, weapons delivery, and the economic issues of the world (Kurzman,19-21) (Dumbrell 162-64). The shah's human rights practices were touched upon but were in no way the main focus of the talks. This agenda was hardly in line with Carter's public pronouncements that human right was his top foreign policy priority. Following the November talks, the White House released a statement to the press indicating that "The two men had reviewed the positive steps Iran was taking on the matters of human rights." (Kurzman 20)

In a show of support Carter paid a return call the next month. Much of the same sentiments were expressed during Carter's his visit to Teheran. Carter made only pro forma references to human rights. Even as Iran's human rights situation was once

again deteriorating by the end of 1977, Carter was encouraged by State Department officials not to pressure the shah on the issue for fear that he would not “prefer it” (State Department Paper,II: Setting, Nov 1977, National Security Archive).The toughest action Carter was urged to take in regards to human rights in Iran was to “encourage the shah to continue the positive steps” established in the spring and early summer 1977. During the talks, Carter gently broached the subject of human rights and was again reassured by the shah that his regime was very much concerned with human rights for all its citizens. This appeared to be good enough for Carter, who at a state diner that night toasted the shah by claiming that “Iran because of great leadership, is an island of stability.” Carter continued by stating that the Iranian people loved and admired their leader, and that a “remarkable” transformation had taken place in Iran due to the shah’s great “wisdom”, “judgment”, and “sensitivity”.(Toast at a State Dinner, Public Papers of the Presidents, 2221-2222). This represents nothing less than Carter’s explicit reinforcement of his commitment to the shah. Just after his departure Iran entered the prolonged cycle of violence that would give the lie to its vaunted stability.

While some analysts have claimed that Carter’s human rights policy undermined the rule of the shah, a careful study of Carter’s words and actions concerning this issue shows that he went out of his way to exempt the shah from harsh criticism allotted to strategically less important countries. (Bell 52). The human rights policy remained a rather vague directive that could be applied strictly or loosely, depending on the administration’s other priorities and interests. Briefly, the policy directive stated that the United States intended to emphasize civil and political rights and that it would consider these factors in the allocation of economic and military aid, as well as in arms sales. These human pronouncements were usually directed at the USSR and

strategically less important right-wing dictatorships such as Paraguay (Brzezinski 126-7). In spite of the publicly charged debate on human rights, the first two years of the Carter administration show that the president made a considerable effort to have good personal relations with the shah and to seek the shah's cooperation for his own projects. There is ample evidence that Carter did not want the regime of the shah to fall. (Stempel 91) (Bill 338). The fear of being responsible for losing Iran, what Historian Frank Ninkovich would define as the fear of a "terrible failure", moved Carter to continue America's support for the Shah²

However, by the middle of 1978 the fall of the shah was in sight. It became clear that the shah's strategy had backfired as the many resistance factions began to join together in order to achieve the common goal of ousting the shah³ The latter's violent tactics especially encouraged the poor masses of Iranians to join the emerging Islamic movement. State sponsored repression had encouraged many Iranians to collectively rally around the Islamic opposition which preached its simple message to the large numbers of poor Muslim Iranians that the shah was degrading "Islamic standards of behavior and belief" and thus had to be replaced (Ladeen and Lewis 105). Religion was thus used as an effective vehicle for channelling the revolutionary mood among the masses. The liberal opposition did not possess this advantage. The outcome in 1978 was that the Iranian liberal movement weakened while the Islamic movement gained strength. The result for Carter was a nightmarish scenario as his "island of stability" was about to crumble.

In spring 1978, Iran witnessed massive riots and demonstrations such as had not been since 1963 when massive riots led by Khomeini were put down violently by the shah and his newly formed intelligence and security agency, SAVAK. Khomeini was exiled. The riots were spurred by mix of economic dissatisfaction and religious

opposition to the shah's social and economic policies (Ramazani 102). As in 1963, the shah reacted initially by a suppression of the rioters killing hundreds of them. Some estimates put the number of dead as high as two thousand . Carter, who was in the midst of the Camp David meetings, became "aware for the first time of the enormity of the problem." (Gaddis187) but was charged by critics of not responding to the unrest in Iran until fall 1978. (Brzezinski 357). A combination of facts explains Carter's slow reaction. First, all intelligence reports, including reports from the embassy in Tehran, were so inadequate and concluded that the riots did not pose a real challenge to the shah. In August, the CIA reported to Carter that "Iran is not in a revolutionary or even a pre-revolutionary situation." (US Congress, House of Representatives, permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Iran: Evaluation of US Intelligence Performance Prior to Nov 1978) Second, the administration during this time was preoccupied with three of its major policy initiatives: the Camp David talks, the normalization of relations with China, and the SALT negotiations. During summer and fall 1978, rapid progress on all these issues overtaxed the resources of the decision makers in the administration. (Brzezinski 358) (Vance 129)

As events in Iran moved so fast and the revolution gathered momentum by the fall of 1978, the Carter administration was perplexed and uncomprehending but most American officials believed that the situation could be handled and American interests preserved. Once Washington began to recognize the depth of the crisis, echelons in the Carter administration debated and wavered but still found it difficult to fashion a response. It was hard to accept a political movement led by clerics seeking to restore Islamic values after a quarter of a century of westernization sponsored by the shah and the United States and generously funded by the U.S. aid and oil revenues. It was also

hard to abandon hope that the shah would survive this challenge, as he had earlier ones.

With the shah in serious difficulty by the fall, the Carter administration struggled to find its way between the hostile revolutionaries and the collapsing regime of the failed shah. Washington divided over how this might be done, foreshadowing the increasingly sharp clash between Vance and Brzezinski. On 24 October, the Department of State produced the first memorandum on how the United States should deal with the crisis. (Vance, 328) It argued that the shah was in for a very challenging period unless he moved rapidly toward political reforms. It also proposed that the United States should be steadfast in its opposition to a military takeover in Iran and finally recommended that the United States step up contacts with the opposition forces including the Mollahs led by Khomeini. The memo was sent to the NSC as well as to Ambassador William H. Sullivan who agreed with all its points, except the recommendation for increased contacts with the opposition and concluded: "Our destiny is to work with the Shah, who is prepared to accept a truly democratic regime if it is achieved responsibly." (Brzezinski 362) (Carter 439). Brzezinski did not believe that additional concessions by the shah would improve the situation. Instead of calling a meeting to discuss the memo or sending it to Carter he shelved it permanently. Sick reports that "Carter never saw it" and observed: "Strange as it may seem, by the end of October, there still had not been a single high-level policy meeting in Washington on this subject." (63).

Unexpectedly, U.S. Ambassador Sullivan dropped the bombshell that set the decision-making in motion. On November 2 he sent a cable asking for instructions within forty-eight hours. (Brzezinski 362). The shah wanted to know what the United States wanted him to do. After briefing Carter on the cable, Brzezinski called for an

emergency Special Coordination Committee (SCC) meeting.⁴ (Brzezinski 363-364). Vance was too busy with the Middle East negotiations to attend. Brzezinski opened the meeting by stating that the United States should send a message of full support for the shah, urging him to stay on. He continued to convince the other participants that the shah should be given the green light to crack down the opposition and restore order by force. However, Warren Christopher, representing the State Department's view, believed that the shah could best enhance his position by further political reforms. The meeting ended with the decision to write up a message that constituted a compromise between Brzezinski's option and that of others. In four points, the message stated American support for the shah, recognition for decisive action to restore order, agreement with either a civilian or military government under the shah, and, finally, the hope that liberalization efforts would continue. (Brzezinski 364) (Vance 329).

Brzezinski continued to disagree with the others on the extent to which the U.S should become involved in the crisis. Vance, Christopher, and Mondale all believed that the United States could not assume the responsibility for a bloodshed in Iran. Brzezinski, however, argued that since the shah appeared so weak, the United States "had no choice but...to make the decision for him." (397). Carter was much closer to the Vance group than to Brzezinski. Yet he also wanted the shah to survive. In essence, Carter was faced with a difficult set of contradictions. Carter's was a moral presidency. A bloody and forceful use of foreign and military policy to further American interests was repugnant to Carter. In fact, the only time he resorted to this was during the desperate and failed rescue attempt of the American hostages in Iran. Vance was also opposed to such use of force on principle and that many of his

assistant secretaries agreed with him (Rosati 112-113) Yet Carter could not afford to lose the shah.

The shah was soon out. In December 1978 in desperate bid to save a deteriorating situation, he announced that he asked a prominent National Leader, Shapour Bakhtiar, to form a civilian government. Bakhtiar accepted the shah's offer on 2 January 1979. At the same time other National Front Leaders broke with Bakhtiar and joined the Khomeini camp. Khomeini reacted to the news by attacking Bakhtiar as vehemently as he had attacked the shah. As a result, January saw only some riots and strikes. The U.S hoped that the shah's new appointment might hold the government together. The frantic U.S. effort to maintain a friendly, stable government in Tehran proved unavailing. Riots and strikes paralyzed the country. The shah soon fled and Khomeini arrived in a tumult of celebration. The Bakhtiar government fell in the middle of February (only two weeks after Khomeini's return), with Bakhtiar going into exile (he would be stabbed to death in Paris in 1991). By then any military resistance to the revolution had ended, scotching Brzezinski's lingering hope that a military coup would save the day.

As the Iranian revolution turned more radical, Washington was caught in the trap of doing too little too late to stabilize relations. Mistrust on one side and resentment on the other way may in any case have made accommodation impossible. American officials contemplated possible overtures, including the unpleasant but necessary first step of a meeting with Khomeini. In assessing the pros and cons of contacts with Khomeini, Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders said: "...Clearly a first meeting would be a bruising affair. A meeting with Khomeini will signal our definite acceptance of the revolution and could ease somewhat his suspicion of us" but Saunders at the same time worried that "we would risk appearing to cave in a man

who hates us and who is strongly deprecated here and by Westernized Iranians. Thus we want to be careful not to appear to embrace Khomeini and the clerics at the expense of our secular friends.” (Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, Briefing Memorandum of 5 September 1979). Such a move would in any case have stirred up a hornet’s nest of opposition in Congress and the public.

The United States and Iran were unable to turn the page in their relationship. Carter finally insured that it stayed stuck when he decided in October 1979 to admit the Shah into the U.S. for cancer treatment. The seriously ill former monarch had wandered from Egypt to Morocco, the Bahamas, and Mexico seeking a permanent home. A circle of influential supporters built up during the glory days of his reign including the banker David Rockefeller and Henry Kissinger, applied pressure to let the exile into the United States. Consequently, on 21 October Carter ordered the door open on humanitarian grounds.

The shah landed in New York on 22 October, and on 4 November predictions of attacks on Americans in Iran were realized. Some five hundred militants took the embassy in Tehran. Fifty-two Americans became hostages. For fifteen months Carter was himself hostage to the crisis. As the American media began to count one by one the 444 days of captivity, the hostages became a virtual obsession for the public and Carter himself. At first, the president followed Vance along the path of negotiations and caution to preserve the lives of the hostages and made it clear that the United States “hope the exercise of diplomacy and international law will bring a peaceful solution, because a peaceful solution is preferable to the other remedies” and added “We obviously prefer to see our hostages protected and released through peaceful

means. And that's my deepest commitment, and that will be my goal." (Carter, press conference comments, 28 November 1979, on Hostage Taking ,2167-68, 2172-74.)

By early April 1980, international efforts to work out with Foreign Minister Sadeg Ghotbzadeh and President Abul Hassan Bani Sadr some basis for freeing the hostages had made no headway. Then Carter decided to try the option that Brzezinski favored. Carter had already built up the U.S. naval presence in the Persian Gulf. He broke diplomatic relations on 7 April and two weeks later launched a military rescue with the hope that it would save not only hostages but also the U.S. reputation. The operation turned into a fiasco. Vance, away on vacation when Carter had made the rescue decision, had sought a reversal and then after the mission's failure resigned in protest.

Carter was now back to negotiations, putting the new secretary of state, Edmund Muskie, in charge. Unexpected events in the course of the summer of 1980 improved the prospects for success. In late July the death of the shah rendered moot demands for his return to his country for trial. Following medical treatment in the U.S., he had moved on to Panama, and then to Egypt where he died. In September clashes along the border with Iraq, a prelude to war raised concerns in Tehran about its isolation. Even if Washington was behind the Iraqi attack, Tehran could not allow the lingering dispute with the United States to cost Iran much-needed international sympathy and support. That month Khomeini announced new terms for a settlement: a U.S. pledge of non-interference in Iran's internal affairs, the release of frozen assets, the cancellation of American claims against Iran, and the return of the shah's wealth.

Talks about the release of the American hostages began to make progress, with Algeria serving as intermediary between Tehran and a U.S. team led by Warren Christopher- but too late to save Carter's presidency. Carter faced an electorate soured

by the daily televised exposure to revolutionary militants denouncing the United States and holding American citizens captive with complete impunity. Finally, the hostages gained their freedom on 20 January 1981, just after Carter vacated the White House to Ronald Reagan. A deep bitterness and incomprehension had come to infest relations between Iran and the United States, an outcome that the architects of the earlier era of honeymoon could have hardly imagined. For many Iranians the United States remained a satanic force committed to the support of Israel and conservative Arab regimes. Americans for their part continued to see Iran as a land of fanatics who condoned the taking of hostages and fomented unrest throughout the Middle East.

Carter did neither create nor “lose” Iran. It is true that the Carter administration’s efforts were hampered by a lack of understanding of Iranian history, and society, and especially of the political character of the Shiite clergy. The Carter’s administration acted in a confusing way to a very confusing situation and did not speak with one voice but was exposed to the clash between the Vance and Brzezinski and others. But even if American officials had possessed the ability to see in the future, had understood the Shiite clergy, had spoken with one voice and coordinated their efforts, and had decided precisely how to back the shah even if all these conditions had been fulfilled would the outcome have been fundamentally different? The answer is almost certainly no. When the Carter administration took office in 1977, too much had occurred over too many years. The shah could not have retained his throne, except temporarily, through the use of force. The United States could not have escaped identification with the shah no matter what American officials said and did in 1977. Those who boiled over with accusations and criticized Carter for “losing” Iran and believed in the might-have-been approach to history must go back at least to 1953, when the Shah first became an authoritarian ruler blindly supported

by the U.S., if they want to argue plausibly that Iran was “lost “ by American not Carter’s error. Gaddis Smith observed that “The Iranian Revolution [was] the product of three decades of the Shah’s rule and American policies going back to the 1950s happened to erupt on Carter’s watch». He added that “nothing the Carter Administration could have done would have prevented the revolution or squelched it” (244). Carter was in no way responsible for creating the revolutionary powder keg that exploded in 1979. Carter inherited an impossible situation. His wrong was he and his advisers had made the worst of it (184).

5.2 The Carter Policy Toward Nicaragua

Nicaragua was victimized early in twentieth century by the new “Manifest Destiny” which guided American hemispheric policy during those years. It became a virtual American protectorate of the United States in 1912 when the Marines were dispatched to protect American property and citizens during a period of civil strife. In fact, U.S. interest in Nicaragua was primarily strategic. Considered for a time as a possible site for the canal across the isthmus, Nicaragua’s location remained strategically important for defense of the canal in Panama.

Throughout the two generations of dictatorship in Nicaragua, there were complicated relationships between the U.S. and Nicaragua. In the 1930s the policy of the U.S. was to be a “Good Neighbor” in Latin America, which meant that it would refrain from carrying out the kind of military interventions that had been commonplace earlier in the century. The U.S. did this even if some of its Latin American neighbors, like Nicaragua, were governed by military dictators. As American attention was increasingly drawn toward the much more dangerous

dictatorships in Europe and the Far East, the good neighbour was often an indifferent neighbor preoccupied with problems elsewhere in the world.⁵

After the Second World War, U.S. relations with Latin America were again secondary to the global challenges of communism and the Cold War contest with the Soviet Union. The highest priority in the hemisphere was to prevent the spread of communism; the most important nation was Fidel Castro's Cuba. In Nicaragua, the U.S. was involved in the challenges that confronted the Somoza dynasty, which because of its staunch anti-communism and record of considerable cooperation with Washington's anti-communist interventions in Central America and the Caribbean, was uncritically supported through U.S. economic and military aid (Brown 475). The Somoza dynasty rested upon two pillars of support: the National Guard, transformed by patronage into a personalistic instrument of political repression, and the backing of the U.S.

When the Carter administration unveiled its new human rights policy in 1977, Nicaragua became one of its principal targets, constituting a near-perfect showcase for the policy. The absence of any security problem in Nicaragua meant that U.S. policy there, unlike policy toward Iran, could be safely guided by moral imperative of human rights undiluted by national security concerns. But that was wrong because in the case of Nicaragua, the conflict between human rights policy advocates and national security advocates are said to have affected the coherence and consistency of U.S. policy (Hoffman, *Dead Ends*, 71-73) (Rubin, *Secrets of State*, 179). The former allegedly believed that the United States should support human rights before all other concerns, while the national security group preferred traditional containment of the Soviet Union and opposed any form of stability that might favor the Soviet Union politically. Either one supported human rights, which meant opposing pro-U.S.

dictators of the right as well as repressive left-wing governments, or one supported national security goals, which meant supporting pro-U.S. right-wing dictators regardless of their human rights record. The administration believed in the human rights policy but would never place it above security goals; it therefore shifted between the two. (Bennet et al, 297)

When Carter was inaugurated in 1977, opposition to Somoza became broadly based and Nicaragua plunged into civil war during Carter's first year in office. In response to the opposition and guerrilla attacks, Somoza's National Guard launched a reign of terror in the countryside. Bombings of villages, mass arrests, torture and executions had become commonplace. But instead of emphasizing "Somoza's violations of human rights", the Carter's administration deplored "Cuban support for the Sandinists" (Smith 119). To demonstrate its seriousness of purpose on human rights Carter's initial policy toward the Somoza's repressive regime was using diplomatic pressure and economic aid sanctions to push Somoza toward political democratization and the elimination of abuses. Congress held hearings in April 1977 concerning human rights and economic aid and accepted cuts in military assistance in late May 1977. This proposal was opposed by some powerful friends that Somoza had in Congress (Strong 85). But the liberals in Congress led by Senator Edward Kennedy urged Carter and his administration "to hold back on some economic aid". This was a mere slap on the wrist to the Nicaraguan dictator's atrocities. But this aid was not held back for long: Whenever Somoza made a gesture toward easing repression, aid was immediately released. (Lafeber 229)

The human rights policy that the administration wanted to implement was not endorsed by all members of Carter's administration. For members of the human rights group, the goal of terminating human rights abuses required the complete

implementation of aid sanctions. They objected to any signal that might be interpreted to mean that Somoza was making satisfactory progress; including requests for aid. The traditional cold war warriors saw the whole notion of imposing human rights-based sanctions on Somoza as dangerous and outrageous. They articulated the importance of containment as a general strategy. They argued that security concerns necessitated continuing aid to Somoza, including limited aid for training and supplies. They said that if they lost access to aid funds, they would lose leverage. Security concerns were important, because containment was necessary, Assistant Secretary of State Terence Todman argued in favor of such aid in 1977 for fiscal year 1978 when he said:

U.S. security concerns in Nicaragua and the rest of Central America relate directly to our need for secure flanks and our commitment to hemispheric collective security under the Rio Treaty. Our objectives include prevention of the introduction of hostile influences, protection of lines of communication and maintenance of regional stability ... Further attenuation of our influence in the region as a whole would weaken our security position in the hemisphere.(Congressional Record 39363)

For these officials, Somoza was a loyal friend who provided a bulwark against the communist forces perpetually trying to take advantage of any U.S. weakness. Murphy argued that “Nicaragua ...is a blocking position in Central America against the spread of Communist subversion. This is why it is a target for Communist infiltration from Cuba (Congressional Record 16345)

The Somoza dictatorship’s repression of civil liberties and the lack of representative institutions led to the consolidation of the opposition and armed resistance. The Somoza regime continually threatened the press, and this culminated in the assassination of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, the liberal’s editor of Nicaragua’s

leading newspaper, *La Pensa*, and a critic of Somoza. The opposition held Somoza and his guards responsible for the murder, thus provoking mass demonstrations. On 23 January 1978, a nationwide strike began; supporters of the strike demanded an end to the dictatorship. The National Guards responded by further increasing repression using force to contain and intimidate all government opposition.

As violence increased, U.S. policy was caught in the pull of opposing imperatives. Should the U.S. stand by its advocacy of human rights and democratic reform in the face of Somoza's deteriorating political position? Or should human rights be subordinated to the political stability long provided by a brutal but reliable ally? The Carter administration was by now deeply divided about how to handle the situation. Some believed that even if Somoza violated human rights and his governing was not a model of democracy, the communist security threat imposed on America policies that helped "steer developments towards a moderate, independent course which will avoid Marxist or revolutionary excess" (Letter to L. Hamilton from D. Bennet, 24 Oct. 1978). Others like human rights representatives like Patricia Derian vied with those who were now preoccupied with the 'security threat' raised by the radical Nicaraguan opposition, the Sandinists or FSLN, and believed that the only way to improve the situation in Nicaragua was to stress the U.S. implementation of an effective and serious human rights policy.

The U.S. reaction to events in Nicaragua pushed the Carter administration to demonstrate its seriousness about human rights. The situation was now worse than in the previous year. The result was that the Carter administration decided to reimpose sanctions. In February 1978, the U.S. suspended all military assistance. But when surface calm returned to Nicaraguan cities and countryside, the Carter administration decided, by summer 1978, to reduce the sanctions. In addition Carter sent a letter to

Somoza which caused a great deal of controversy in both the U.S. and Nicaragua. On August 1, an article appeared on the front page of the *Washington Post* under the headline, "Carter Letter to Somoza Stirs Human-Rights Row." In the opening sentence of the article, the letter was described as "congratulating" Somoza for promises to improve human rights in Nicaragua.⁶ This infuriated Carter who "ordered the State Department to find and punish the source for the inaccurate story." (Strong 92). The White House press issued a correction which was printed in the *Washington Post*. The damage was done because the administration "could not escape the false impression that it was giving Somoza more credit and more support than was actually the case" (Strong 92)

A number of events combined to change the administration's perception of the growing crisis in Nicaragua. Although still fragmented, opposition to the Somoza regime continued to grow during 1978. In May, different opposite groups joined in creating the Broad Opposition Group (Frente Amplio de Oposicion-FAO) The FSLN responded to the FAO in July by establishing a political arm, the United People Movement (Movimiento del Pueblo Unido-MPU). The MPU promoted armed struggle and a nationwide insurrection as the only means of overthrowing the Somoza dictatorship. The FSLN strengthened its position on 22 August when its members staged a dramatic successful takeover of the National Palace and held almost two thousand government officials and members of Congress hostages for two days. This audacious action captured the popular imagination and with it the leadership of the anti-Somoza struggle. The palace assault was followed swiftly by a general strike, and in September the FSLN repeated its action of the previous month by attacking the National Guard in several cities. However, by the end of the month Somoza was successful in restoring order and establishing his power but at "cost of totally losing

his authority”, (Brown 478). Moreover, the governments of Venezuela, Costa Rica, and Panama were now openly hostile toward Somoza.

The increasing violence and chaos compelled the U.S. to reevaluate its policy toward the situation in Nicaragua. The Carter administration decided to become more directly involved in Nicaragua’s revolution. The events of September 1978 convinced U.S. policymakers that a change of policy was more than needed. Carter’s advisers debated about what course of action would be appropriate in dealing with the situation in Nicaragua in the light of the new developments. Should America absolutely follow the course of human rights at the risk of ‘losing’ and deposing Somoza or that of pressuring him to step down in favor of a constitutional regime that would be used as a bulwark against communist intrusion in the region. In a discussion with presidents of Panama, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia and Venezuela, President Carter expressed this mixed feeling of “how to constrain Cuban and other communist intrusion in the internal affairs of Caribbean and Latin American countries, and how to encourage freedom and democracy in Nicaragua and minimize bloodshed there.” (Keeping Faith 178).

Whatever their differences, U.S. officials decided to use a multilateral approach to deal with the situation in Nicaragua. The multilateral mediation between Somoza and his opponents with Panama, Costa Rica, and Venezuela failed. The U.S. then took on the role of mediator itself. Now the fear was that civil war could not be avoided as long as Somoza remained in power. The U.S. insisted that the main opposition groups in the FAO be included in the negotiations, but it did not include the Sandinists. The hope was to create a transitional government quickly enough to preclude a Sandinist victory or make role in the post-Somoza government. The U.S pursued its role as mediator from October 1978 through February 1979. A number of twists and turns

took place in the U.S. position. Somoza refused to resign, the FAO was difficult to deal with due to its internal diversity, and the U.S. negotiators did not speak to the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN), who did not trust Americans and disapproved of the mediation in principle. Negotiations commenced about the possibility of elections. The FAO's proposal included Somoza's resignation, the reorganization of the National Guard, elections for a Constituent Assembly, and a new government with a Council of State.

Somoza played the mediation masterfully. By stalling for time, he was able to rearm and reinforce the national Guard, demoralize and fragment the moderate opposition, and give the U.S. the impression that he was negotiating in good faith. When he rejected the final mediation proposal for an internationally supervised plebiscite in January 1979, his position appeared much improved. His gamble, in essence, was that if the U.S. faced a clear and unequivocal choice between Somoza and the Sandinists, it would eventually come to his aid. He was not completely mistaken for the major goal of U.S. policy from the fall of 1978 onward was to prevent the succession of an FSLN-dominated government.

Somoza's response to the FAO proposal was to offer one of his own, a plebiscite. Negotiations regarding this option continued through December. Throughout this period the FAO was disintegrating, yet the Carter administration doggedly pursued the idea that an election could be held and would produce a centrist government. On 19 January 1979, mediation collapsed completely with the withdrawal of military and Peace Corps personnel, termination of all military aid, which had been suspended anyway, and a suspension of economic aid.

The United States became involved again in June 1979. By then the momentum of the revolution had shifted to the Sandinistas. The FAO was replaced by the newly

formed National Patriotic Front, which was dominated by the Sandinists. The U.S. had minimized contact with the opposition and did not recognize the tide of popular support for the Sandinists. No plan was devised for maintaining communication with the opposition or establishing contacts with the Sandinists, despite the fact that during the spring the FSLN was endorsed by all the major opposition groups.

In late May and early June 1979 the Sandinists launched their final offensive. In the U.S., top level policy makers were called upon to formulate a response. The containment-based goal was clear. By this point, threat perceptions were high. Although there was no evidence that the Soviet Union was directly involved, it was believed that if the U.S. did not stop them the Sandinists would win, and Cuba would use the FSLN to extend Soviet influence. Consequently, the Carter administration realized that a quick and coercive course of action was needed. Brzezinski came up with the first plan for trying to prevent a Sandinista victory. The plan called for a multilateral Organization of American States (OAS) peacekeeping force in which the U.S. would play a major role. Somoza would be ousted. The plan also called for direct efforts to shape the future government of Nicaragua. On 17 June, the Sandinistas announced a provisional government composed of a five-member junta two of whom would be from the FSLN and three from the moderate opposition. The U.S., on the other hand, proposed the formation of an interim government acceptable to all opposition groups. This provisional government was to be composed of a junta appointed by the Nicaraguan congress and composed of representatives of the major opposition groups. The Sandinists would have had to negotiate with that junta to form a new government. The U.S. proposal also intended to point out the Cuban role in the conflict.

As events unfolded, Washington's response degenerated into a confused panic reminiscent of policy in Iran only a few months previously. Brzezinski promoted unilateral American intervention with the hope that this was "the way to influence a flood of events that surged far ahead of Washington's real power or even understanding" (Lake 263). Carter disagreed and instead stuck to his multilateral approach. He supported the multilateral force idea, and Vance was ordered to present it to the OAS, which in turn rejected it. In a meeting of the OAS held in Washington on 21 July 1979, Vance presented the U.S. plan which proposed that the "meeting insist on a cease fire within Nicaragua and on its borders and a halt to all shipments of arms and ammunition into Nicaragua." and added that there was an urgent "...need for a peacemaking force, to help restore order and to permit the will of Nicaraguan citizens to be implemented in the establishment of a democratic and representative government", the "formation of an interim government of national reconciliation acceptable to all major elements of the society," and "a major international relief and reconstruction effort." (Statement before the Seventeenth Meeting Consultation of the OAS Foreign Ministers, June 21, 1979). The OAS peacekeeping force was the crux. Not a single other American nation supported it, and the Vance plan died the moment it was presented. Neither the Administration nor the U.S. Congress was prepared to send a purely American "peacekeeping force" to do the job, not while memories of Vietnam still lingered.

Moreover, the Nicaraguan opposition endorsed the FSLN's proposed junta. At this point, Brzezinski and the Cold War warriors adopted the classic war strategy: Brzezinski urged Carter to intervene, a recommendation that echoed the views of the cold warriors in Congress which Brzezinski strengthened by warning that the U.S. had to demonstrate that it remained the "decisive force" in Latin America. (Qtd

in Pastor, 162). Vance, Brown, and Carter all opposed the idea. A new search was launched for a diplomatic approach, and the policy makers ultimately embarked on an effort to get the OAS to approve the external mediation in the Nicaraguan crisis. This they did get, and it was interpreted as permission for the United States to arbitrate a transition government. With this new mandate, the Carter administration continued to press for the creation of an executive committee that would negotiate with the junta. The objective was to broaden the junta before Somoza was forced out, in order to diminish Sandinists power and ensure that the National Guard not be dismantled after Somoza's departure.

This was the final concern of the Carter administration during the Nicaraguan revolution. On 17 July 1979 Somoza resigned and fled the country, eventually ending up in Paraguay, where he was assassinated in September 1980. The Sandinists took Managua, and the National Guard surrendered. The Carter administration had to accept to work with the new junta, controlled by the Sandinists but including some non-radical opponents of Somoza. Diplomatic relations were established on July 24 and the United States sent emergency food and medical aid. For the remaining eighteen months of the administration, while Washington was preoccupied with events in Iran and Afghanistan, Nicaragua received little attention. American policy was, in President Carter's words, "to maintain our ties with Nicaragua, to keep it from turning to Cuba and the Soviet Union." (Keeping Faith, 585). The Sandinists had their own agenda. Pleasing the U.S. was not on the list. They followed a Cuban model of politics, accepted Cuban advisers, alienated many Nicaraguans who had once cooperated with them, and helped set the stage for the limited covert war which the U.S. would initiate in the Reagan administration. (Smith 122)

By trying to find a middle way between Somoza and the Sandinists, the Carter administration incurred the criticism of both sides in Nicaragua and of the right and the left in the U.S. To the dismay of American liberals, Nicaraguan policy was dominated by Cold War considerations more than by the protection of human rights. After the Sandinists' victory, the Carter administration accepted that it was unable to prevent and extended economic aid. And yet, to critics on the right in the United States, the episode was another defeat, another consequence of weakness and ill-advised human-rights. One prominent critic, for example, accused the Carter administration of bringing down both the Shah and Somoza, staunch anti-communists and friends of the U.S. She wrote:

The Carter Administration not only failed to prevent the undesired outcome, it actually collaborated in the replacement of moderate autocrats friendly to American interests with less friendly autocrats of extremist persuasion ... [It] brought to the crises in Iran and Nicaragua several common assumptions each of which played a major role in hastening the victory of even more repressive dictatorships than had been in place before. (Kirkpatrick np)

5.3 The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the Carter Doctrine

Afghanistan's history has, in fact, been characterized by endless foreign aggressions. The country has been an incessant jockeying for a security foothold and influence over the region. From the period beginning in the 1840s and ending in 1919, Afghanistan was the unfortunate victim of the competing imperialist ambitions of Great Britain and Russia. Viewing Afghanistan as a buffer state against Russian

expansionism, Britain invaded and occupied Afghanistan for close a century before finally being driven out in 1919.

The years from 1979-1988 marked the second period of outside occupation in Afghanistan's last century history. This time, it was the Communist Soviet Union which, in the Cold War climate of the times, sought to wield its influence over the country. During these years, the U.S. engaged in a proxy war against the Soviet Union, its long-standing Cold War opponent.

Historically speaking, the U.S. involvement in Afghanistan really began in 1934 when Washington officially recognized Afghanistan's independence. Since then, the U.S. demonstrated interest in the country's development providing it with economic support; it was, nevertheless, interest that was limited in scope. However, it was not until the 1970s that the U.S. estimate of Afghanistan's importance dramatically changed. Two factors contributed to this dramatic reversal of American policy toward that country. The Cold War culture of the times and the fall of Iran's shah in 1979. In the Cold war atmosphere of the time, any gain by the Soviet Union or the United States was viewed as an evidence of triumph of one system over the other. The U.S. had always been suspicious of Soviet expansionist tendencies. All this played out in the case of Afghanistan in 1979, when the pro-American shah of Iran abdicated his throne. In exchange for massive military assistance, the shah had always safeguarded the U.S. interest in the Middle East, namely the oil interest in the region. For this reason, the increasingly friendly nature of Soviet-Afghanistan relations never posed a serious threat to U.S. officials before 1979. Department of State Records from the early 1970s testified the relative indifference, on the part of the U.S., to the developing friendship between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. A State Department record from 1976 reads: "[Afghanistan] is a militarily and politically

neutral nation, effectively dependent on the Soviet Union.” Its conclusion was that the U.S. “is not nor should it be committed to, or responsible for ‘the protection of Afghanistan in any respect.’” (Annual Policy Assessment, March 9, 1976)

This assessment changed dramatically with the fall of the shah of Iran, and his replacement with an Islamic and anti-American government. The U.S. power and influence in the region was no longer assured and the issue of Afghanistan suddenly became one of endemic concern for officials in Washington. The White House began describing Soviet policy toward Afghanistan the gravest threat to world peace since World War II.”(Digital National Security Archive) The concern of U.S. officials over the “Afghanistan issue” further increased when in April 1978, Mohammed Daoud, Afghanistan’s reigning king, was overthrown and replaced by Afghanistan’s new formed pro-Soviet, and Socialist- leaning People’s Democratic Party (PDPA).

Despite American accusations that the Soviet Union invasion of Afghanistan was a blatant show of expansionist force, the Soviet rationale behind the decision was in fact much more complicated. After the communist coup in Afghanistan in April 1978, the Soviets gradually increased their support for the Afghan communist party, the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), and not without hesitance. (Westad, *New Evidence...*129) The events surrounding the fall in Iran during the winter of 1978-1979 pushed the Soviets to become more committed to Afghanistan as fears grew that the U.S. would exploit it to replace their lost Middle Eastern foothold. This thrusts the Soviets into a precarious balance of power, in which maintaining a communist government in Afghanistan became crucial to preserving Soviet influence in the region. For the Soviets, the prospect of a communist Afghanistan was an unexpected boon, but the possibility of a United States-allied Afghanistan was dire.

The Afghanistan coup of 1978 resulted in a new government headed by Nur M. Taraki coming to power. While there is no clear evidence of direct Soviet involvement in the April 1978 coup, there is little doubt of Soviet support because the Soviet Union was a clear beneficiary of the coup. The new Taraki-led government, while not in the mould of a Soviet puppet regime, provided a definite pro-Soviet tilt to Afghan domestic and foreign affairs. In any case the coup d'état that brought Taraki's party- the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA)- to power, had been precipitated by the previous government's arresting of almost the entire leadership of the PDPA. This was an attempt to annihilate any viable opposition to the existing government, then led by Mohammed Daud. In fact, many of the leaders of the PDPA had studied or received military training in the USSR. Therefore the PDPA had been the principal Soviet orientated communist organization in Afghanistan. The USSR welcomed the coup because it had significant leverage over the PDPA and its activities and gave strong public endorsement to the new government. A twenty-year bilateral friendship and cooperation treaty was signed between Moscow and the new Afghan government on 5 December 1978. Afghanistan subsequently became exclusively dependent on Soviet aid, unlike previous governments which had attempted to play off the U.S. and the USSR against one another, refraining from exclusive alignment with either.

While the Soviets were no doubt pleasantly surprised by a communist coup in a country in which they shared a two-thousand mile border, they had reservations about the leadership and the potential for successfully upholding a communist government. The uncertainty of facing an unstable and untrustworthy regime coupled with the prospect of U.S. involvement with the aim of destabilizing the pro-Soviet PDPA and eventually installing a new pro-American regime led the Soviets to discuss the

possibility of introducing troops in March 1979 after a rebellion against the Communist regime in Afghanistan failed. The need to maintain a communist government in Afghanistan was stressed by Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko “Under no circumstances may we lose Afghanistan. If we lose Afghanistan now and it turns against the Soviet Union. This will result in a sharp setback to our foreign policy.” . KGB Chairman, Youri Andropov echoed Gromyko’s sentiments noting that “bearing in mind that we will be labelled as the aggressors, but in spite of that, under no circumstances can we lose Afghanistan.” (Committee Politburo Discussion on Afghanistan, 17-19 March 1979).

While the Soviets understood the importance of supplying and aiding the Afghan communists, the decision to invade Afghanistan was hard fought. The Soviet leadership was well aware of the reaction that the use of force would provoke in the west and the U.S. in particular. Gromyko warned that “serious consequences are to be expected from such an action.” (Discussion on Afghanistan, 17-19 March 1979). However, the circumstances in Afghanistan quickly deteriorated with the murder of President Taraki by Amin in October 1979 Soviet fears of betrayal by Amin and the new leadership were heightened. Thus some Soviet officials began advocating military intervention. The members of the Politburo who had so recently been unwilling to sacrifice the gains of détente and risk being labelled the aggressors were slowly being made to realize the crucial need of keeping Afghanistan as a loyal ally. In addition recent scholarship argues that the worsening of East-West relations in the field of arms control, and particularly NATO decision on 12 December approving a proposal for the installation of “new American medium-range missile and Pershing-2 missiles in Western Europe much handed the Politburo to meet on 12 December to formally ratify “the proposal to intervene” (Westad 231).

Although the USSR had been interfering in Afghanistan affairs long before the U.S., (prior to 1978, Soviet military aid to Afghanistan was substantial. Between 1956 and 1977, the Soviet Union supplied 95% of Afghanistan's weapons and military aid) it is worth noting that contrary to the conventional wisdom, the U.S. appears to have begun operations in Afghanistan before the full fledged Soviet invasion. Recently declassified documents reveal that the "official history record is false". Contrary to the "official record" that the U.S. involvement in the Afghan war began following and as a response to, the Soviet Union's invasion of the country-in truth, the U.S. involvement in the Afghan Civil War began a full six months before the Soviet Union ever invaded Afghanistan (Cooley 10) .

In an interview given to a French reporter in 1998, Brzezinski confirmed this "little known fact" of history, admitting that the CIA had begun providing covert aid to Afghan resistance fighters six months before the Soviet invasion ("Interview with Brzezinski", *le Nouvel Observateur*, 15 January, 1998 ,76). Even more revealing is Brzezinski's admission, later on in the interview that the U.S. intention in providing this aid was to "draw the Russians into the Afghan trap." When, in this same interview, the reporter shocked at having discovered that the U.S. "intentionally provoked the Soviet Union to enter into the war, asked Brzezinski whether he harboured any regrets for doing this, Brzezinski's reply was: "Regret what? The secret operation was an excellent idea...The day the Soviets crossed the border, I wrote to President Carter: We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam War" (*Le Nouvel Observateur*, 15 January, 1998)

Afghanistan, then, in a sense became the U.S. pawn. The country became the means by which the U.S. could demoralize and attempt to destabilize its long-standing Cold War opponent with little cost to no cost to the U.S. Indeed official documents

from the Soviet government reveal that the Soviets' entrance into the war was based on, in a large part, on the grounds that U.S. involvement in Afghanistan was undermining recent gains they had made in the country. Providing covert aid to Afghanistan resistance fighters (Moudjahedeen) seemed then, to the U.S. officials in the year 1979, an extremely strategic move. The U.S. would get other people to fight their war for them; it would require no commitment of U.S. ground troops and would thereby ensure no American casualties. Or at least this was the assumption that the CIA, Brzezinski, and other Washington officials were operating under.

It seemed that no one during this time stopped to consider the possible consequences that the training and equipping of Afghan Islamists could have later on. An interview with a former CIA agent attests to the fact that during this time U.S. officials, resolute on their one-track agenda of combating the communists, failed to foresee the sort of consequences which arming Islamist extremist could have. In describing the CIA-Islamist partnership the agent said. "We took the means to wage war, put them in the hands of people who could do so, for purposes for which we agreed" (Cogan 74). Even more telling were Brzezinski's reflections when asked if he had any regrets about favoring Islamist extremists and arming and training the world's future "terrorists". Brzezinski reported "which was more important in the world history? The Taliban or the fall of the Soviet empire? A few over-excited Islamists or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the war, (*Le Nouvel Observateur*, 15 January, 1998)

In other words, the U.S. appears to have been attempting to foster and manipulate unrest among various Afghan factions to destabilize the already unpopular communist regime and bring the country under the U.S. sphere of influence. This included the recruitment of local leaders and warlords to form mercenary rebel

groups, who would wage war against the Soviet-backed regime, to institute a new regime under American control.

Washington and Moscow had different perceptions of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. From the Soviet perspective, there was a real danger that Amin could fall and be replaced by an anti-Soviet Islamic government. Such an outcome would have meant the loss of substantial Soviet investment in Afghanistan and would have represented, from the Soviet point of view, a major setback to the Soviet position in Asia and the Persian Gulf. It could heighten the Islamic fervor sweeping Iran and other countries of the region, intensifying Soviet fears of Islamic engulfing the approximately 50 million Muslim inhabitants of the Soviet Central Asian Republics. The Soviet leaders decided to intervene in Afghanistan and replace the ineffective and unreliable Amin only reluctantly to eliminate these threats

U.S. officials considered the Soviet invasion offensive and opportunistic in a region that had been the target of traditional Soviet ambitions. At a time of unprecedented Soviet military strength, an exploitable situation of chaos and turmoil reigned in Iran, heightening the vulnerability of the Persian Gulf and Pakistan. It was obvious to the Soviets that the U.S., already hostage to its Iranian situation, would not be in a position to challenge the Soviet move into Afghanistan. U.S. policymakers believed that the Soviets might have speculated that the U.S. would be less likely to react since Afghanistan had little direct strategic importance for Washington. Success in crushing the Afghan rebels, American leaders argued, would leave Moscow in an unprecedented position to take advantage of Iranian instability and Pakistani's weakness to expand its influence in the Indian Ocean and Gulf areas.

Whatever the Soviet motives or U.S. interpretations, the Soviet move into Afghanistan, which marked the first direct Soviet military intervention abroad since

the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and the first direct Soviet military intervention in a country outside the Soviet bloc since the end of WW II, raised a number of serious issues and choices for the U.S. Should America continue the quest for an expanded détente with the Soviet Union in the areas of arms control and trade? What measures were needed to enhance U.S. security interests in the Persian Gulf region? and What kind of role, if any, the U.S. should play in supporting Afghan opposition forces?

As the Soviets had feared, their policy decision to invade Afghanistan was viewed by the U.S. and described by National Security Council Advisor Brzezinski “as ultimate proof of aggressive intent” (Westad 391). An American article in the *New York Times* dated December 31, 1979, highlighted the idea that the Soviet invasion was about to usher in a “Second Cold War”. Correspondent Bernard Guertzman assessed that “Moscow decision to intervene militarily in Afghanistan has deeply angered the Carter Administration and seems likely to send Soviet-American relations into another period of bitter recriminations, more reminiscent of the Cold War years of the 1950s than of the détente years of the 1970s” (“Afghanistan’s Impact: A New United States-Soviet Freeze,” *New York Times*, 1 January 1980). If anyone in the Carter administration smiled during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, it was Brzezinski, who has long been trying to get Carter to take a tougher stance toward the Soviets. Brzezinski had warned Carter of the grave threat the Soviet move could pose to the U.S. Echoing the pervasive Cold War paranoia, Brzezinski postulated that the Soviets’ intention was to use Afghanistan in order to extend its power and influence over the neighboring countries of Pakistan and Iran and eventually the entire region of South Asia. Facing these new conditions, Brzezinski sent a memorandum to Carter outlining his view on foreign policy on 26 December, 1979. In his memorandum

Brzezinski asserted that the U.S. should exploit the fact that world public opinion may be upset at the Soviet intervention and that the U.S. should support and aid the Afghan resistance movement. In summary, Brzezinski concluded by urging Carter to warn the Soviets “directly and very clearly” that United-Soviet relations are about to suffer greatly’ (Westad 552)

Carter was won over to Brzezinski’s aggressive and hawkish policy which complemented his “interpretation that the introduction of Soviet troops was the first step in an advance through Pakistan and Iran to the Indian Ocean” and his deep sense of personal betrayal from Brezhnev who had assured him that the Soviet Union would “behave uprightly (Loth 160). Consequently, the reaction of the U.S. was harsh and somewhat unexpected from a leader who may have been considered “soft”. In addition, in light of upcoming U.S. presidential elections, Carter perhaps felt a more conservative and aggressive approach was necessary. Carter embarked on an effort to “punish the Soviet Union for Afghanistan (Kort 105) which corresponded to Soviet leadership expectations of the American reaction. Carter was determined to impose as many sanctions and punishments on the Soviet Union as possible. In a National Security Council meeting on 2 January 1981, Carter was set on the fact that the U.S. should “try to do the maximum, short of a world war, to make the Soviets see that this was a major mistake (Record of NSC meeting, 2 January 1981)

Confronted by the new Soviet challenge, Carter was to figure out an immediate U.S. response. Neither verbal outrage nor diplomatic pressure would suffice. The first U.S. response to the Soviet intervention came in the form of strong unilateral protest against the move and an announced campaign to bring world pressure to bear against the Soviet Union. On 28 December, Carter told reporters that the Soviet invasion represented a “grave threat to peace” and a blatant violation of international law. The

following day, Carter sent a message to Soviet leader Brezhnev over the hot-line demanding that the Soviet Union remove its troops from Afghanistan or face grave consequences. He warned that the Soviet Union would “severely and adversely” affect U.S.-Soviet relations “now and in the future”. In his reply to Carter, Brezhnev defended the Soviet move as a legitimate response to a request by the Afghan government. In a televised declaration, Carter rejected the Soviet reply, saying that the Soviet leader had not told the truth. He stated that the Soviet action had changed his opinion of the Soviet Union more dramatically than any other event during his administration. (American Foreign Policy : Basic Documents , 1977-1980, 409)

A further U.S. response to the Soviet invasion was in the form of joint action with European and Third World nations to bring the matter of the Soviet invasion before the United Nations Security Council. The Council began its debate on Afghanistan at the request of fifty UN member nations. On 7 January the Soviet Union vetoed a Security Council resolution condemning the invasion demanding that Soviet forces be withdrawn. Following the Soviet veto, the question was brought before the United Nations General Assembly, where the Soviet Union has no veto. On 14, the General Assembly voted 104-18, with 18 abstentions to condemn the invasion and call for the removal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan.

The U.S. briefly recalled its Ambassador, Thomas Watson from Moscow on 2 January. On the same day, it was announced that the Carter administration had decided to ask the Senate to delay its consideration of the SALT II treaty. Other specific U.S. responses to Soviet actions in Afghanistan were announced in Carter’s message to the nation on 4 January, 1980. These included blocking grain sales to the Soviet Union, stopping the sale of high technology and strategic items (including computers and oil drilling equipment , curbing Soviet fishing privileges in U.S.

waters, delaying the option of a new Soviet consulate in New York and a U.S. consulate in Kiev, postponing new cultural and economic exchanges, holding open the possibility that the U.S. might not participate in the summer Olympic games of 1980, the final decision to boycott the games was taken on 20 February.

The Soviet Union dismissed those challenges in its first high-level official response. The Soviets warned that the U.S. actions would be at least as harmful to the U.S. as the Soviet Union and stressed that any attempt to influence Soviet foreign policy through such measures was doomed to fail. President Carter was said to have failed to consider the real international situation, overestimating the potentialities of the U.S. and underestimating the potentialities of the Soviet Union. They warned that the U.S. should not doubt the Kremlin's ability to defend its interests. The statement concluded with the expressed hope that a "far-sighted approach" to Soviet-American relations would eventually prevail in the United States. (Tass Agency, 6 January).

Other possible reprisals have been suggested. A number of bilateral agreements still in force could be cancelled or not renewed when they expire. The U.S. could abandon parliamentary and other high-level exchanges between the two countries. The U.S. could refuse to participate in the 1980 Madrid Conference on Security and Cooperation. Actions of this nature, however, raised some basic questions. Beyond dramatizing U.S. concern over Soviet behaviour, how could these actions promote major U.S. interests? Given the fact that such moves were not seen as likely to reverse the course on which the Soviet Union embarked in Afghanistan, would they be seen as demonstrating American strength and resolve or would they be seen as evidence of U.S. helplessness in the face of serious Soviet challenge, would such actions by the U.S. address the real issues in Afghanistan or would they instead serve more to detract them? Finally if the U.S. and the Soviet Union were entering a period of

heightened tensions, as all signs indicated, and if the U.S. were determined to face the long-term challenge-tough defense measures, regional alliances, would it be prudent to sharply curtail the lines of communication and exposure between the two countries?

All this done, the administration must now decide on a longer-range strategy to counter the Soviet Union's initiatives in Central and Southwestern Asia. The "Acts tough" and "Teach the Soviets" advocates made their voice heard. But overreaction could be as dangerous as retreat. Not only might too bellicose an American policy provoke a superpower confrontation, but it would greatly concern U.S. allies situated, near the Soviet Union and prompt them to seek their own accommodations with the Kremlin.

However, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan made a new policy inevitable. The image of a Soviet drive to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean dominated analysis by the Carter administration. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was widely perceived as an initial step to more lucrative targets at a time when U.S. power and influence were severely impaired by the loss of U.S. influence in the region by the downfall of the shah and the Iranian Revolution.

The new policy was articulated by Carter in his State of the Union Address on 23 January 1980 and became known as the Carter Doctrine which stated that the U.S. would use military force if necessary to defend its national interest in the Persian Gulf region. The doctrine was a response to the 1979 invasion of Afghanistan and was intended to deter the Soviet Union, the Cold War adversary of the U.S., from setting hegemony in the Gulf. After stating that Soviet troops in Afghanistan posed "grave threat to the free movement of Middle East oil", Carter proclaimed "let our position

be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain the control of the Persian Gulf region will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.”

Carter was the first U.S. President to state that the Persian Gulf was of “vital interest” to the U.S. The Carter Doctrine clearly established the U.S. as the protector power of the region and effectively gave the U.S. policy responsibility in the Persian Gulf. When Carter made the statement, it reflected U.S. interests rather than capabilities. Steps were taken to increase military power in the region to make America’s new policy creditable to the Soviets and among its allies. The implementation of the doctrine saw the creation of an 110,000-strong, fast moving hard-hitting Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) (Dietl 12), access agreements were signed with Oman, Kenya, and Somalia, and talks were instituted with Pakistan on countering the Soviet intervention.

The Carter Doctrine, though couched in the standard anti-Soviet rhetoric of the day, it was principally intended to ensure continued U.S. access to the Persian Gulf’s prolific oil reserve. And when Carter established the nucleus of Central Command (CENTOM) in 1980, its primary responsibility was the protection of the Persian Gulf oil flow, not containment of the Soviet Union. (Klare 2). In a similar vein, Paul Wolfowitz, who was then Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Programs declared that the U.S. “have a vital and growing stake in the Persian Gulf region because of our need for Persian Gulf region oil.” (Qtd in Schell, *The Nation*, July 2, 2007)

The Carter Doctrine promulgated by Carter was actually an outgrowth of the policies of his predecessors, for example, Eisenhower laid the foundation for a U.S. military presence in the Middle East and committed the United States to protect the security of all states in the greater Middle East against the threat of “international communism”. In a speech in Congress in 1957, he asked Congress to increase

economic and military aid of friendly Middle Eastern nations, and to authorize the direct use of the U.S. armed force to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of any Middle Eastern nation that might be attacked by communist forces. This policy became known as the Eisenhower Doctrine.

The Eisenhower Doctrine signalled the beginning of a U.S. military involvement of the area and laid the foundation for a subsequent U.S. policy in the region. In 1971, after the United Kingdom withdrew its small but important military forces from east of the Suez, President Richard Nixon relied on the Eisenhower Doctrine to increase arms sale to Saudi Arabia and Iran, in the name of ensuring regional stability. Nixon hoped that these friendly states would provide a stabilizing influence in the region.

The Carter Doctrine was, thus, an extension, of the Eisenhower Doctrine, and the Nixon Doctrine which all agreed that the U.S. would send military aid to countries which were threatened by Soviet communism. Specifically the Carter Doctrine was used to strengthen the security of Iran and Saudi Arabia. Both the Iran Revolution and the Soviet coup in Afghanistan prompted the restatement of U.S. interests in the region in the form of a doctrine, which stated that the Persian Gulf area, because of its vital oil fields, was of vital interest to the U.S., and that any outside force moving into this area should be met by force.

The failed nine year attempt to control Afghanistan, and the collapse of the Soviet Union have obviously altered the threats of U.S. policy in the region, but the underlying objective of the Carter Doctrine remains the same: to preserve the free flow of oil by creating a region of secure, stable, independent, responsibly governed states at peace with each other, unfavorable to violent extremists and hostile states in the region are now main threats. This was the justification for the Persian Gulf War

under President George H Bush in 1991 and for the policy of dual containment of Iraq and Iran throughout the 1990s pursued by the administration of Bill Clinton.

However, because of the current occupation by the U.S. military of Iraq, the United States ironically appears to many in the region itself to embody some of same ominous characterizations that the Carter Doctrine attributed to the Soviet Union. The United States is now viewed in the Persian Gulf states as attempting to consolidate its own strategic position within the region. While that perception varies within the individual states, the reality is that the U.S. must contend with the widespread belief across the greater Middle East that the only U.S. objective is to advance its own national interests at the expense of the region's inhabitants.

The future application of the Carter Doctrine must fit into a more comprehensive U.S. strategy in the region, one that recognizes that the challenges the United States faces are neither primarily from outside forces nor military in nature, takes into account the whole political and economic environment, and uses all the elements of national power. The challenges that arise from within the region itself are far less susceptible to military "cures" than threats from external factors, and dealing with them requires efforts in development assistance, humanitarian assistance, and diplomacy- values that Carter believed in. Carter would have thought, for sure, that relying too heavily upon military deterrence to ensure stability ultimately will mean that the underlying destabilizing issues of inequality, poverty, and lack of access to education will remain to fuel instability in the region, providing fodder for the recruitment of a new generation of extremists, and this will not make "the world safe for democracy".

Conclusion

The shocks of 1979- the revolutions in both Iran and Nicaragua and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan undermined Carter's attempt to promote world-order politics based on preventive diplomacy, universal standards of morality, human rights , and peaceful cooperation not wasteful confrontation. Along the way, these events dispelled much of the post-Vietnam malaise and led to a demand for a more vigorous American foreign policy. Thus the Carter administration was compelled to reinstate the strategy of containment based on a realpolitik orientation and a growing concern with anticommunism best symbolized by the Carter Doctrine- thus repudiating its initial post-Cold War orientation. Carter began his administration by declaring that the era of "inordinate fear of communism" was over and ended it with a traditional Cold War response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The result of this was a foreign policy that critics regarded as inconsistent and indecisive. The great morals that had driven Carter's entire life seemed lost by the end of his term as he was forced to go against his initial idealistic policy of interdependence, preventive diplomacy, cooperation and human rights and reinvigorate the Cold War. However, this did not mean Carter's policy was dictated by empty idealism. As biographer Peter Bourne states "Carter was guided by a consistent set of values and beliefs that remained with him for his entire life, including while he was a president." (508). To his credit, Carter was not a political "flip-flopper" nor did he hastily throw together different policies in the hope that something positive would result.(Strong 280).

Endnotes

- 1 . During the early 1900s , the only way to save Iran from government corruption and foreign manipulation was to make a written code of laws. This sentiment caused the Constitutional Revolution. The Mozaferedin Shah was forced to issue the decree for the constitution and the creation of an elected parliament (the Majlis) in August (1906). The royal power was limited and a parliamentary system established.
2. “The fear of the terrible failure” derives from Ninkovish’s idea of “Wilsonianism” . It states that American leaders have become involved in world affairs in the Twentieth Century primarily to protect against threats to U.S. interests and defend against “terrible failures” including ideologies such as Communism, world wars, and nuclear holocausts. For detail see Ninkovitch, *The Wilsonian Century: U.S. Foreign Policy Since 1900*.
3. For a comparative evaluation of the secular liberal opposition and the religious movement in Iran see Leeden and Lewis, Chapter 4 and Kurzman Chapters, 5, 6, 7
4. Besides Brzezinski, Warren Christopher, Deputy Secretary of State , Harold Brown, Secretary of Defense, General David Jones, Chairman Joint Chief of Staff, Stanfield Turner, CIA Director, and David Aaron , Deputy Director NSC, attnede the meeting.
5. For an excellent history of an early U.S.- Nicaragua relations see Richard Millet, *Guardians of the Dynasty*, Mary Knolln, New York: Orbis Books, 1977.
6. The article by John Goshko was apparently written on the basis of conversation with some of the officials in the State of Department who had been opposed to sending la presidential message to Somoza. Goshko did not quote the text of the letter, which he had not seen .

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Conclusion

American foreign policy in the postwar years came to be based on the strategy of containment, in which Soviet communist expansion was to be deterred and contained through the threat of force, first in Europe, then in Asia, and eventually throughout the world. The U.S. strategy was to surround the Soviet Union, and its allies in Eastern and mainland Asia, with American allies, alliances and military forces, thereby forming global commitments intended to deter the Soviet Union from initiating a military strike for fear of triggering World War III. Containment of the Soviet Union was to be accomplished principally through the threat and use of conventional and, especially, nuclear military force. In the Third World, where the US- Soviet confrontation tended to be fought , where the U.S.-Soviet confrontation tended to be fought more indirectly over the “hearts and minds” of local elites and peoples, the United States relied on assistance, counterinsurgency, and the use of paramilitary action. Diplomacy, and other non-coercive instruments of policy, were pushed to the side in East-West relations and superseded by the threat and use of force. Hence the U.S. used overt military force in Korea and Vietnam and relied heavily on covert operations in responding to what American leaders saw as major challenges to American commitments.

Differences in emphasis and policy instruments did occur with each new administration as Cold War policies evolved, but they were variations on the same containment theme. Under the Truman administration the initial focus was on the economic rebuilding of Western Europe through the Marshall Plan while the policy was in the process of being globalized in the Korean War. During the Eisenhower administration, containment was based on the threat of nuclear “massive retaliation” and the use of the CIA to maintain friendly Third World regimes. The Kennedy and Johnson emphasized counterinsurgency and nationbuilding fighting the Cold War throughout the Third World. All these variations were part and parcel

of the global strategy of containment, ultimately leading to the Americanization of the war in Vietnam.

Although the Nixon and Ford administrations, with Henry Kissinger as Secretary of state, replaced a strategy of global containment with selective containment of the Soviet Union in their détente policies, the Carter administration supplanted the strategy of containment as the basis of its foreign policy when it took office in 1977. A belief in the end of the Cold War and the need to move beyond containment was not mere window dressing nor limited solely to President Carter. This was a perception that was widely shared among major officials in the Carter administration. Carter administration officials saw a world of much greater global complexity than their predecessors. U.S. foreign policy at the beginning of the Carter years did not operate on the assumptions of realpolitik. Instead, it was much more consistent with an approach to international relations referred to as global interdependence. A complex interdependence approach to world politics is based on assumptions very different from the realpolitik tradition.

In accordance with the assumptions of complex interdependence, the Carter administration's vision of global complexity downplayed the role of great powers such as the Soviet Union, the utility of force, and a preoccupation with traditional security issues. Instead, Carter officials saw a world of great complexity in which neither the U.S. nor the Soviet Union could control the destiny of the planet. The traditional focus on the Soviet Union and the high politics of East-West security was deemed anachronistic by members of the Carter administration. Not only were the Soviets no longer the dominant priority, they were not seen in a particularly threatening light.

The post-Cold War policies of the Carter administration also differed from their Cold War predecessors in its promotion of human rights. For Carter human rights and democracy were

the essence of what America represented. He also saw American diplomacy not primarily in terms of geopolitical interest but as the external reflection of American values. Furthermore, Carter firmly believed that America's commitment to the goals of human rights, freedom, and justice would be the wave of the future.

The foreign policy issues that were reviewed in this study touch on some of Carter's major international accomplishments that reflected his idealistic world vision. The president fundamentally changed the American relationship with Panama, and by so doing so also changed the America's reputation in Latin America. In the Middle East, he intensely contributed to the successful completion of the peace process that transformed the relationship between Egypt and Israel. Carter was also largely responsible for the peaceful transition to majority rule in Rhodesia. Finally, and perhaps more importantly to him, President Carter advanced the cause of human rights on the American political agenda and in the world community.

Despite some notable foreign policy achievements why it is still common to refer to the Carter's as a failed presidency? There were some mutually reinforcing reasons that explained the collapse of Carter's idealistic post-Cold War foreign policy : resistance to a post –Cold War approach throughout much of the national security bureaucracy; the Soviet Union uncooperative behaviour, Carter's attitudes and bad luck concerning the international environment and, in particular the Soviet Union, and unpopular and controversial foreign policy goals that Carter set for himself . Each contributed to a growing perception among the American public of Jimmy Carter as a failed president, resulting in his inability to be reelected in 1980.

Indeed President's Carter effort to promote a post-Cold War foreign policy met considerable resistance throughout much of the national security bureaucracy. This is a problem that all presidents face when they enter office, especially if they want to promote policies different from those of the bureaucracy has been implementing for some time. In President Carter's case, he presided over a huge national security bureaucracy born out of World War II and the Cold War that for thirty years had been in the business of implementing Cold War policies based on containment, realpolitik and anticommunism. The bureaucratic resistance to many of Carter's post- Cold War policy initiatives also existed among his senior advisors, who tended to be more realistic as to what was achievable. There was indeed a subtle struggle between the President on the one hand, and his senior foreign policy advisors. Most of this early resistance by senior officials represented efforts to moderate some of the President Carter's more idealistic and optimistic inclinations. National Security Adviser, Brzezinski, for example, began, by 1978, to argue in favor of a more realistic approach and containment strategy to prevent threats to global instability posed by growing Soviet expansionism. Brzezinski from the beginning was not as deeply committed to an idealistic foreign policy based on preventive diplomacy ad human rights as were Carter and his Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance.

Another reason that accounts for Carter's failure is that the major foreign policy goals Carter set for himself and subsequently achieved were either consistently unpopular, like the Panama Canal treaties, or entangled in long-standing controversies, like those related to arms control, détente, and the Middle East. On those controversial issues, there were often interest groups whose members were hostile to Carter's policies or convinced that a novice statesman would be unable to make meaningful progress on the complex problems. When he was elected in 1976, Carter was largely unknown to prominent members of the foreign policy establishment . When he subsequently accomplished significant diplomatic feats, as he did at

Camp David, with the ratification of the Panama Canal treaties, or in the tortuous negotiation of a SALT II agreement, Carter did not receive the kind of praise that might have been to a president who had enjoyed a longer career on the national scene.

The Soviets also contributed to Carter's collapse of his post-Cold War initiatives. Suspicion, rigidity, and insensitivity are normal characteristics of the Kremlin's foreign policy, but in the waning years of Brezhnev, these qualities were particularly evident. Moscow automatically put the worst possible interpretation on every Carter's gesture and thereby undercut those in the administration who wanted to accommodate while strengthening those who were eager for confrontation. Soviet policy could scarcely have been better designed to provide arguments for those who wanted to discredit Carter's idealistic emphasis on human rights and global issues. For example, the completion of SALT II in 1977 would have been a triumph for Carter. But SALT II in 1979, after the negotiations had been carried on for thirty months and Soviet and American interests had collided on other issues, was an easy target for American hard-liners. Sometimes Soviet misdeeds were exaggerated or invented by those who wanted to portray the Soviet Union as viciously hostile. But on many occasions the Soviets did act provocatively. Soviet and Cuban behaviour in Africa was just what Brzezinski needed to advance his point. Soviet deployment of SS-20 missiles aimed at Europe stirred American and Western Europe fears and provided an excuse for introducing new American nuclear weapons. The Soviets' prudent reaction to hostile American gestures is quite understandable, but they had also in their power to react to conciliatory gestures at a time when Carter's approach aimed at taking both the United States and the Soviet Union beyond the Cold War world. By failing to respond to conciliation, they drove conciliation from the field, and did not help Carter implement his policy based on cooperation rather than confrontation between the two superpowers.

In fact whenever the Soviets acted opportunistically abroad and violated Carter's high expectations, he experienced periods of dissonance. Two events beyond Carter's control in particular overwhelmed his thinking: the taking of the American hostages in revolutionary Iran and the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. These two events compelled Carter to reassess his optimistic notions of the Soviet Union and the world; Carter revealed that the Soviet coup in Afghanistan profoundly affected his thinking and made a "dramatic change" in his opinion. This new realization about the Soviet Union made President Carter much more receptive to the containment policies that were being pushed by National Security Advisor Brzezinski. On the domestic level, with the onset of the Iran hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan combined with inflation and unemployment, and a growing perception that Carter was a weak and naïve leader, President Carter was attacked as he was placed on the political defensive was unable to counter the rise of conservatism in the late seventies

Bad luck and the uncooperative behavior of the Soviet Union are not the full explanation for Carter's perceived failure. Most critics agreed that Carter's approach of the Soviet Union was naïve and inconsistent. It is true that Carter began his presidency by declaring that the era of "inordinate fear of communism" was over and ended with it a traditional war response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The critics who focus attention on U.S.-Soviet relations in the Carter years are divided between those who favor the new idealistic international agenda of the early Carter years and wish that it had prevailed and those who prefer the Cold War realism at the end of the administration and wish that it had come sooner. Critics on both sides of that division agree that the key to Carter's failure was his management of the American relationship with the Soviet Union and the fact that he did not have a consistent approach to this fundamental foreign policy problem.

When he arrived in the White House, Jimmy Carter was genuinely committed to human rights, to the peaceful resolution of international disputes, to ambitious arms control agreements, to the use of military force only as a last resort, and to the spread of democratic institutions and values. He remained committed to these things before and after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. He has remained committed to them throughout his post-presidency. Carter's vision of the world, and the role the United States should play in it, were consistent with many of the conventional American opinions on these subjects and reasoned with a tradition of idealistic thinking about international politics that has deep roots in the American experience. Perhaps he did not give a high priority to the articulations of a grand strategy for the conduct of foreign policy in his administration because he thought that his strategic thinking was already in line with what most Americans believed.

If there is more consistency to Carter's basic thinking about international politics over time than his critics have been willing to recognize, there may also be fewer consequences to his mid-term shifts on U.S.-Soviet relations than has frequently been claimed. Now that the Cold War was over, the two Carter administrations foreign policy periods - the early one emphasizing human rights and an end to the exaggerated fear of communism, and the later one with its military buildup and sanctions against Soviet aggression in Afghanistan- may have more in common than was appreciated twenty eight years ago. The foreign policies pursued in both Carter periods and the Reagan administration decisions to build on those policies by accelerating defense spending and continuing public criticism of Soviet and Eastern European human rights practices , probably made real contributions to the eventual collapse of communism.

The intellectual adjustments that are still being made to the end of the Cold War may well lead to a less critical view of Carter's foreign policy toward the Soviet Union, but that new

view will not change the fact that while he was in office , President Carter acquired a reputation for indecision and weakness. Part of that reputation came from his statements and decisions concerning the U.S.-Soviet relations and from his inability to bring the hostages home for more than a year. But the president's reputed indecision had other sources as well. Carter's experience level and personality were such that his positive view of human nature and the future provided the guideposts by which he evaluated much of the world around him. Naturally, this led him to harbour optimistic impressions and to set high standards of behavior for many of the world's actors, most notably the Soviet Union.

Though Carter's thinking about world politics may have been consistent and conventional, it was never doctrinaire or ideological. He accepted compromises and tolerated contradictions when they appeared necessary; and he often changed his mind when new evidence became available. Carter expected that there can be both cooperation and competition in American relations with the Soviet Union and saw no reason, for example, criticizing the Soviet Union's record on human rights, while he was preparing a new arms control proposal for Soviet consideration. He was not uncomfortable raising serious human rights concerns with the shah in private while publicly praising him as the important American ally that he was. In these and other instances, Carter was criticized for each side of the compromise he chose to make. What he probably saw necessary steps to balance the complicated elements of his foreign policy agenda contributed to the emergence of a reputation for inconsistency and indecision. The problem was he allowed that reputation that to take hold in the public mind.

Carter also changed his mind about a number of important subjects but appears to be at his best when he was clearly in command of his own substantive issues. At Camp David and on the trip to the Middle East to finalize the Egyptian –Israeli peace treaty, Carter was energized, engaged, well informed, and willing to take risks. On those occasions he was capable of impressive accomplishments. When he had a clearly defined goal, like winning sixty-seven

Senate votes for the Panama Canal treaties, he could be dedicated, determined in pursuit of this objective. On other issues that seemed to come out of nowhere, Carter was much less effective. But in general, Carter was more interested in the substance of foreign policy problems than in how they would play out in media commentary or short-term shifts in public opinion. When he decided to finish with the problem of the Panama Canal, his advisors told him that he would pay a heavy price. Carter went ahead with the Panama Canal treaties and paid the price. Throughout the hostage crisis he insisted that the safe return of the American officials held in Tehran was his highest priority and resisted temptations that must have been present to use military force against Iran as either a demonstration of U.S. power status or as a way to relieve domestic political frustrations. Carter's one decision was to use military force in the hostage crisis was the risky, and unsuccessful, rescue mission.

Under the Reagan administration a Cold War foreign policy based on containment, realpolitik, and anticommunism, reminiscent of that during the Cold War years was instituted. Thus the effort by President Carter to engage in a post-Cold War foreign policy resulted completely collapsed. Certainly the Carters years have not helped to legitimize a post-Cold War foreign policy in the minds of many Americans. If anything, the perception of a failed Carter presidency has made it that much more difficult to circumvent the Cold War legacy that continues to permeate beliefs and institutions. Yet the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev as general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union opened up more opportunities for a post-Cold War U.S. foreign policy . Communism has collapsed in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; Germany has been reunified, and greater integration of the European Community becomes an important element of international politics. Clearly, the East –West conflict that had been the justification for a Cold War foreign policy based on containment, realpolitik , and anticommunism no longer seems to exist.

More and more Americans appear to have acknowledged the existence of a post-Cold War global era. In such a climate a post-Cold war foreign policy has a greater chance of being successful and gaining political support. Such a post-Cold War environment helps to account for the renewed public interest and admiration that Jimmy Carter has received for his post-presidential activities, such as his involvement in the promotion of human rights, the overseeing of foreign elections, the negotiation of regional conflicts, and his assistance in promoting Third World development. Therefore, Jimmy Carter may have been, in the area of foreign and national security policy, a man ahead of his time.

Historians and foreign policy scholars have a great deal to consider in evaluating Jimmy Carter's conduct of American foreign policy. For a little known presidential candidate who won a narrow a narrow electoral victory and who served only one term, Carter left a legacy of significant achievements including the Camp David Accords, the Panama Canal treaties, the formal recognition of China, and the peaceful transition to majority rule in Rhodesia, the negotiation of a complicated SALT II agreement, and the enhancement of both international and domestic attention to human rights. Yet there is a temptation to speculate that had he done his work differently- with fewer controversial initiatives, with a less complicated policy toward the Soviet Union, with greater attention to winning favourable media coverage- he might have been able to enjoy both substantive foreign accomplishments and sustained political success. Whether Carter could have done these things, and remained true to himself, is, of course, another question.

This study remains a part of a tiny but growing literature that sees the need for revisionism in the evaluation of Carter's performance in foreign affairs. The research has attempted to revisit and challenge some of the initial accounts of Carter's conduct of foreign policy that found him blindly idealistic, weak, indecisive and inconsistent. That is a portrait or an image that

has been distorted and does not conform to what the man is. The case studies in this research show us an active, committed and sincere individual in command of a complicated foreign policy agenda that often involve the conscious acceptance of substantial political risks. Whether the results of the risks that Carter willingly took will impress future evaluators remains to be seen. But what is important it may be enough to recognize that the time has come to begin the process of reassessing Carter's foreign policy accomplishments and international legacy.

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