SPREADING DEMOCRACY, SUPPORTING DICTATORS: PRAGMATISM
AND IDEOLOGY IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON
TERROR

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ABSTRACT

Almost a decade after the tragic attacks that changed the dynamics of power
and sealed the fate of millions around the world, the prospects for democracy in
Muslim countries remain grim. Despite tentative and superficial reforms undertaken
at low impact levels, human rights, the rule of law and freedom of expression and of
opinion have a long way to go on the trajectory of political evolution in Muslim
countries, especially those vulnerable to the Jihadist threat. Despite its pledge to
protect freedom and democracy worldwide, the United States' commitment to
democracy promotion is limited by its perceived interests in different regions of the
world.

President Bush linked extremism to tyranny; however, the tyranny practiced
by his newly de-demonized allies such as Pakistan, Egypt, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia,
and central Asian states, among others, has angered more than it has pleased and by
many accounts has exacerbated anti-American sentiments and the radicalization of
Muslim societies. Hence, the association of the United States with dictators often
accused of fanning the terrorist threat in order to remain in power has stripped the

democracy promotion project of its prospects to succeed despite the heightened rhetoric that has accompanied it. In a manifestation of good faith, the United States government has elaborated comprehensive plans to assist Muslim countries in reforming the systems widely designated as the main source of radicalism and by extension, terrorism. At the same time, the United States has made clear through contradicting decisions that any country that supports its anti-terrorism effort against Al-Qaeda will be exempt of any political or economic pressure to reform its undemocratic or tyrannical ruling.

The review of the history of the relations between the United States and the countries of Egypt and Pakistan and the analysis of the dynamics of power politics that have dictated the direction and the quality of those relations over time shows that the latter have consistently been delimited by strategies of balance of power and balance of threat. Evoking the noble values of freedom and altruism as a basis to promote democracy has only contributed a marketing significance to the project; the objective has been and remains focused on maintaining a certain level of stability in regions that are of strategic interest to the United States and its traditional allies.

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I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my mentor, Dr. William Douglas for

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In memory of my father;

To my mother;

To Scot.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks, the United States put a specific emphasis on promoting democracy as a means of fighting terrorism. The administration of President George Walker Bush insisted that terrorism could only be defeated and eradicated where freedom and democracy prevailed. His resolve was that the United States "will defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants … [and] will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent."[1] Free nations, it was contended, are not likely to engender terrorism, but are more inclined towards cooperation and peaceful cohabitation with other nations. The freedom agenda became the leitmotiv of United States foreign policy in the age of the Global War on Terrorism and the democratic peace theory its rationale. To win the war against terrorism, the argument went, it is necessary to stamp out the roots of the frustration that compel Muslim youth to embrace the radical ideology that fuels it.

The systems that produced individuals such as Muhammad Atta and his like were to be altered. A grand strategy of transformation was revealed, targeting particularly Muslim nations under the rule of dictators who were to be *converted* into

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1. George W. Bush, "Address to the American Legion National Convention," Salt Lake City, Utah, August 31, 2006, George Bush-White House, Office of the press Secretary, [on-line resource]; available from: http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/08/20060831-1.html ; Internet, accessed August 2008, February 2009.

1

democrats. A strategy, in the words of John Lewis Gaddis, that was about to show the failure of previous strategies and that was designed to refashion the United States approach to its traditional allies in the Muslim world.[2] Besides preemption, democracy promotion emerged as the warhorse of the United States in its quest to contain Jihadism and defeat Bin Laden and his hordes. Programs were elaborated to introduce reform into the dictatorial regimes of Muslim and Arab countries, with a specific focus on Egypt and Pakistan, both considered crucial allies in the war against Al-Qaeda.

In practice, however, the larger United States foreign policy in the wake of the Global War on Terrorism has been remarkably directed towards the strengthening of relations with authoritarian regimes in Egypt, Pakistan, Algeria, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Saudi Arabia, all considered strategic allies of the United States in its fight against the nebulous networks of Bin Laden's followers. After declaring, "The United States is not interested in finding partners that would help fight terrorism without welcoming change within their own societies,"[3] U.S. decision makers defined relations with dictators such as Pakistan's Musharraf and Egypt's Mubarak, both masters of human rights violations and un-democratic practices, as 'necessary alliances.' Those very tyrannies pointed out - by definition - for their

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2. John Lewis Gaddis, "Grand Strategy of Transformation," *Foreign Policy*, No. 133 (Nov.-Dec., 2002): 50-57.

3. Mathew Crosston, *Fostering Fundamentalism: Terrorism, Democracy and American Engagement in Central Asia* (Aldershot, Ashgate Publishing, 2006), 18.

responsibility in feeding obscurantist and terrorist ideologies were hailed as champions of freedom and democratic transition whenever they staged - and won - elections.

Rulers like President Hosni Mubarak and General Musharraf, among others, continued to justify their repressive policies by the fear of their countries toppling over to the 'radicals' side.' The threat of Jihadism was - and remains - the card brandished by those dictators in the face of the world in order to avoid questions regarding their human rights records or contested electoral results. They, too, adopted their own rhetoric that justifies mediocre governance by instituting national security requirements. Flawed elections - when held -, persecution of political activists, censorship of the media, restrictions of socio-political activities, and systematic harassment of civil society groups, opposition leaders and even ordinary citizens, constitute the background against which the United States has been praising the democratic progress achieved in the Middle East , Asia and Africa, with an intense focus on Egypt and Pakistan.

For their part, officials in Washington continued to express their satisfaction regarding the progress made by these two strategic allies in leading their respective countries towards democratic transitions,[4] at the same time, democracy had missed its rendezvous with the peoples of Egypt, and Pakistan is more unstable today than it

4. George W. Bush-White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Statement of the President Congratulating Egyptian President Mubarak on Election, September 10, 2005, [on-line resource]; available from: http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/09/20050910-11.html ; Internet, accessed December 2008, February 2009.

was before September 11, 2001. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has decreed the continuation of a State of Emergency, in effect since his accession to power in 1982. Pakistan's Pervez Musharraf declared the State of Emergency in November of 2007; an action that stirred up political and social upheaval, leading to his defeat and causative of further destabilization of the country's already precarious socio-political climate. To these actions, the United States stopped short of upholding its pledge to encourage free and open societies on every continent. Prior to implementing the freedom agenda, Al-Qaeda had to be defeated by any means.

Arguably, the United States and the world cannot afford the emergence of Jihadist regimes in the Middle East and other Muslim countries; such a prospect would not only upset the stability of entire regions in the world, but would also, and of more importance for the United States, jeopardize its interests throughout the system. Nevertheless, after its historic negative past experiences in Latin America, Vietnam and Iran, the position of the United States towards authoritarian regimes at present, remains selectively intriguing and confusing. Admittedly, great power politics do not subscribe to the book of rationality; they are shaped by the desire to assert, maintain and expand hegemony and the United States of America is no exception. There is no logic to great power politics, there is only calculation, often *mis*-calculations, and a persistent, ferocious struggle to secure and protect what is perceived as national interests.

Theoretically, as a quasi-hegemon, the United States could "offer positive and negative incentives to other states to agree to ongoing participation within the hegemonic order." [5] In other words, America's unchallenged position of power supposes a formidable capacity to successfully press for reforms that are likely to serve its long-term interests. Democratization was identified as one of the reforms that would facilitate cooperation among nations and secure America's interests and sphere of influence in the globe.

Whereas during the Cold War the threat of the Soviet Union offered a plausible explanatory framework for America's dictatorial connections, the new dynamics of world order seem to require a rather complex and innovative set of explanatory material at the theoretical level. Following the September 11 attacks, the policies pursued by the United States show that despite the United State's preeminence in every domain of power, with the reach to promote its interests in virtually every part of the world, [6] its capability to offer incentives for democratization and to influence the polities of its 'allies' appears to be limited. Those limitations continue to be defined by short-term and long-term interests perceived or real in certain countries or group of countries.

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5. G. John Ikenberry, Introduction to *America Unrivaled: the Future of the Balance of Power*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2002), 9.

6. Samuel Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower," in *American Foreign policy: Theoretical Essays*, G. John Ikenberry, ed., fourth edition (New York: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers, 2002), 586.

This thesis is an attempt to analyze the position of President George Walker Bush's administration towards democracy promotion in the wake of the Global War on Terrorism. I argue that the ambiguity surrounding the United States foreign policy and the gap that separated its democratic discourse from its actual policies on the ground was dictated by three major elements. The first consists of the promotion of democracy as a moral and idealistic value. Whereas this perception of democracy promotion as a value-based policy has proved to be useful in rallying the American people around official actions, it nonetheless undermines its success and renders its pursuit optional. Additionally, promoting democracy as a moral principle, a western value or an American ideal might be appealing to many in the world while it offers its detractors the means to resist its success. Although most human values enjoy a universal appeal, their interpretation is often determined within the cultural, religious and socio-political environments of different societies.

The second impediment to democracy promotion targeting dictatorial allies derives from the nature of the alliances per se. Unlike traditional alliances that usually involve comprehensive sets of interests and covering a large array of functions[7], incidental alliances such as those between the United States on one hand and Pakistan and Egypt on the other hand, are often characterized by a single-

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7. Robert E. Osgood, *Alliances and American Foreign Policy*, (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), 21.

dimensional interest such as the accretion of power of the weaker state against an internal or external threat[8].

The third obstacle considered in this thesis is often unspoken and is found at a rather practical level. It is defined by the challenges posed by the emergence of non-state actors such as Al-Qaeda as a global threat. The enlistment of dictators in the fight against Al-Qaeda is arguably a pragmatic approach suggested by the nature of the enemy the United States set out to defeat. In this regard, the United States' cooperation with dictators is explained by its choice of strategies and tactics against Al-Qaeda. Hence, balancing the threat of Ben Laden and his followers elevated the dictators in Arab and Muslim countries to the status of impromptu allies.

In the tragedy of great power politics, John Mearsheimer views the ambiguous attitude of great powers as a prioritizing mechanism. His claim is that when great powers face a certain threat, they trade ideological values for alliance partners. He provides two key examples where the United States has acted in counter-current with its core values, i.e. upholding democracy and promoting freedom. The first one is when the United States opted to form an alliance with the Soviet authoritarian regime in order to counter the rise of Nazi Germany during WWII, and the second, is when the United States opted to help overthrow democratically elected governments in favor of military regimes in order to contain communism, as was the case in Iran. This theory and the instances it was built upon

8. Ibid.

7

are more informative in a balance of power relationship between nations of equal or quasi-equal international influence, i.e. competing great powers. The question therefore is whether the United States is balancing the power of Bin Laden by strengthening relations with dictators.

It would seem quite disheartening to realize that the most powerful nation in the world postulates the power of a non-state actor to the point were it has to form apposite and incongruous alliances in order to balance its threat. Could the United States' engagement with dictators in the Muslim world reveal strategic balancing? Why would the greatest power in the world form alliances with leaders it had first pointed out as contributors to the expansion of the Jihadist ideology and the emergence of Al-Qaeda's threat? A review of the relations maintained by the United States with two of its strategic allies, Pakistan and Egypt, reveals balancing strategies on the part of the United States against Al-Qaeda's threat. Postulating that states form alliances to counter threat, just as they do in countering power,[9] and considering the serious threat posed by Al-Qaeda to the security of the United States and its interests abroad, the relations of the United States and the dictators are alliances against threat; therefore defined within the framework of balance of threat strategies.

9. Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, eds., Robert Jervis, Robert J. Art, and Stephen M. Walt. Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987), 5, 17, 28, 32.

The notion of balancing in its strictest meaning is to oppose and resist the power and the influence of a state or a hegemon. Whereas Al-Qaeda is a non-state actor, he contends, its behavior is defined within a political agenda aiming at undermining the power of the United States and its influence in the system.[10] The strategy of Al-Qaeda, he adds, has been to resist the influence and the presence of the United States on Muslim land. The very opposition of the influence of the United States by means of terrorist attacks against American targets locally and internationally, uncovers a strategy of balancing on the part of Bin Laden and his network. In return, the great power is likely to use balancing strategies against a non-state actor to contain its threat to the stability of a state or the interests of the great power in any given region of the world.[11] In other words, when faced with a serious threat, a great power is likely to balance against the source of that threat regardless of whether it is a state or non-state actor.

To support this claim, I argue in the next chapter that the George W. Bush administration has used democracy promotion as a means of national and global consensus in support of its overall foreign policy. Recognizing the religious nature of Al-Qaeda's ideology, the United States needed to place the conflict in a context of its values and principles, without triggering a war of religions. If the Jihadists are

10. Christopher Layne, "The War on Terrorism and the Balance of Power: Paradoxes of American Hegemony," in *Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century,* eds., T.V., Paul, James J. Wirtz, and Michael Fortmann (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 107.

11. T. V. Paul, "The Enduring Axioms of Power Theory and Their Contemporary Relevance," Introduction to *Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century*, 3.

moved by their belief in the just character of their antagonism, the United States had also to define the just character of its engagement against the Jihadists under the banner of its noble ideals. Without a grand mission, the American public and the rest of the world could only accept retaliation in so far as its targets are limited to those states directly involved in the September 11 attacks or in direct support of Al-Qaeda network.

In the third chapter, I argue that the democratization efforts of the United States in the Muslim countries have failed because its goal was from the onset of the conflict focused on balancing the threat of Al-Qaeda, not its capacity to offset the balance of power in the system. In other words, the United States is more concerned with the threat to its security than it is with Al-Qaeda presenting a Soviet-like threat. The Jihadist ideology could only appeal to a certain fraction of the world's community, and to an even smaller fraction within that community. If Muslims form a fifth of the world population, jihadists probably form less than that.[12] The prospects of Jihadism becoming the next challenger of liberal democracy are thin, given the religious nature of Bin Laden's ideology. Hence, the United States needs not balance against the power of Al-Qaeda, but balancing its threat is crucial to maintaining a certain level of stability in the system.

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12. There are no exact statistics as to the number of Jihadists in the world. The secretive nature of Al-Qaeda makes such statistics difficult to collect.

In the fourth Chapter, I show that the relationships maintained by the United States and the dictators in Egypt and Pakistan are consistent with a pattern of client-patron relations marked with strategic balancing. According to Christopher Shoemaker and John Spanier, a patron state would be more intransigent in its demands from a client state if there is a balance of power at stake and if the patron intends to reshape the client in its image ideologically and economically. However, if the patron seeks only strategic advantage from his relationship with the client, the patron state would not deem it necessary to make extra efforts in order to impose its political and economic views on the client. To illustrate this view, it will be necessary to compare the United States efforts to promote democracy in the Muslim world against the deteriorated state of human rights and democracy in Egypt and Pakistan. This exercise will show that the United States reluctance to pressure its allies in the Global War on Terror stems not from its intrinsic inability to do so, or the client's inability to fathom the meaning of democracy. It is rather the natural product of a policy, of which the main and more important goal is to balance the threat of Al-Qaeda and contain the Jihadist ideology. The resistance of the two dictators, Mubarak and Musharraf, to any calls for reform from the United States displays a behavior of a confident client; their use of the radical's threat is reminiscent of their predecessors' threat to join the Soviet Camp.

To conclude, the last chapter will offer a synthesis of these theories and hypothesis to highlight the validity of   the argument I make throughout this thesis.

11

The scarcity of theoretical work on the notion of balance of power with respect to the emergence of non-state actors will require a combination of theories constructed in the context of the Cold War and an adaptation of the concepts into the Global war on Terror. Journal articles, media reports and opinion papers constitute the primary sources for this work.

CHAPTER 1: DEMOCRACY PROMOTION, A COLLECTIVE GOOD

The quest for finding a plausible explanation of President Bush's freedom agenda engendered a great number of opinions among scholarly, media and political circles[1]. Many hypotheses have been devised to explain the motives behind the Bush administration's assertive and insistent rhetoric of democracy promotion. Instead of positioning the Bush administration's foreign policy style – and its rhetoric - in the context of the American identity and the ideology that sustains it, scholars and commentators strove to explain the transformation that had taken place within the Bush administration after the September 11 attacks.[2]

In an attempt to uncover the rationale behind the centrality of the freedom agenda to the Bush administration, Thomas Carothers refers to the changed stance of President Bush towards democracy promotion and nation building as "split personality."[3] He stresses the stark opposition between the foreign policy views of candidate George Walker Bush and his electoral team with those of President Bush and his national security team. After running the 2000 presidential campaign on the promise to shift the focus onto domestic policies and refrain from reducing the American military to "a force of chaperons to protect foreign children on their way

1. Philip H. Gordon, "The End of the Bush Revolution," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 4 (July-August, 2006): 75-86.

2. Thomas Carothers, "The Place of Democracy Promotion in Bush's Foreign Policy," in *Democracy Promotion during and after Bush*, (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2007), 3-11.

3. Thomas Carothers, "Promoting Democracy and Fighting Terror," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 1 (January 2003): 85-97.

to school,"[4] the administration of President Bush, made democracy promotion, multilateralism and neo-liberalism its war horse in the Global War on Terrorism. Evidently, electoral speeches are seldom indicative of the direction an administration would take, but this matter is of a different order and needs to be discussed in a separate work.

It suffices to say that, like his predecessors who attempted to return or reinvent the isolationist aspect of American identity, President Bush would have found reversing seventy-five years of America's engagement in the world a rather difficult task, if not impossible. President Bush's change of position regarding democracy promotion and its centrality to the foreign policy of the United States should not come as a surprise for anyone closely reviewing the rhetoric that accompanied the decisions of successive American presidents to engage in conflicts. The surprise should rather come from a failure to connect democracy, freedom and human dignity, evoked every time the United States faced a global challenge to the American identity.

Exceptionalism Revived

The consensus surrounding the connection between American identity and its foreign policy offers ample grounds for understanding the Bush administration's insistent rhetoric on democracy promotion, the fate of freedom and America's

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4. Carothers, *The Place of Democracy Promotion in Bush's Foreign Policy*, 3-11.

obligation to protect it home and abroad. Since the birth of this nation, freedom has been the leitmotiv of every conflict in which it has engaged. The two greatest wars fought by the United States in the twentieth century were fought in the name of liberating people from militaristic and fascist regimes. President Wilson's decision to engage in WWI was indeed justified by the need of the United States "to serve mankind through leadership in moral purposes and in advancing peace and world unity."[5] Similarly, the United States came out of WWII not only as victorious, but also and more importantly as the leader of the free world with the mission and ambition to liberate the nations trapped in the net of the Soviet Union. During the Cold War, democracy promotion was presented, at different degrees of commitment, as the antidote for communism.

The emphasis on freedom versus slavery in the political speech of the Cold War[6] was probably the strongest element that maintained the American people in the mood of supporting their government's actions throughout half a century of conflict. The Korean War, the interventions in Vietnam and Central America, were conducted under the premise of the defense of freedom around the world, making the world safe for democracy, defending the peace and liberating the 'captive nations'. Americans mobilized for the war in Korea and Vietnam with the conviction of a noble mission

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5. Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson: Revolution, War and Peace* (Arlington Heights, Ill: Harlan Davidson, 1979), 6-7.

6. Dean Acheson: "A Report to the President Pursuant to the President's Directive of January 31, 1950", *Teaching American History* [On-line resource]; available from: http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=450; accessed March 2009.

15

at heart. People in the United States were willing to make the sacrifices required from them as long as they knew that they were on the right side of history. Without the resolve and the determination of a nation to engage in conflict and win it, governments alone could not sustain the battles, let alone secure victory. That resolve, for the American public, derives from the core values of the nation and the principles it stands for. As Joshua Muravcick puts it, "Right makes might as it enhances the state's ability to rally its citizens and to summon the best efforts of its leaders, officials and soldiers."[7] Although it is not the objective of this paper to examine the behavioral patterns of nations at war, it is clear that for the United States - or any other nation – 'to stand as one' facing an external threat, it has to find or rediscover the values and the principles that define its oneness. For a nation as diverse as the American society, that oneness happens to be confined within the concept of freedom that gave it birth, maintained its existence, and assured its successive triumphs.

The United States being a democracy, the will of the people cannot be *entirely* ignored. However, in good use of political skill, the will of the people has also to be encouraged in a direction that secures support of the government's decisions. For the United States public, no other argument can be more convincing than the values that made them a great nation. As expressed below, to win the trust

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7. Joshua Muravchik, "The New Great Debate: Washington Versus Wilson," in *Readings in American Foreign policy: Historical and Contemporary Problems*, ed., David Bernell, (New York: Pearson Longman, 2008), 63.

of the American people, politicians have to address them in a language they understand.

> The deliberate transposition of policies decided on grounds of power or national interest into the language of principle thus corresponds to two characteristic assumptions: that this is the language that best moves the American people because it is its own; and that it is likely to be the most effective abroad.[8]

Without this political maneuver on the public's belief in the principles of freedom and democracy, the United States would have found it difficult to sustain its involvement in many conflicts that cost it thousands of lives over the course of half a century during the Cold War. The largest part of the American society accepted and supported the decisions of the successive administrations to enter conflicts in the name of protecting freedom and defeating evil.

Admittedly, from colonial Spain to Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan to autocratic Soviet Union to Al-Qaeda and its satellite groups, the enemy has always been ideologically opposed to the United States. However, it would be facile to argue that freedom and democracy have been utilized throughout America's involvements in conflict only because its challengers have historically been undemocratic, Fascist, totalitarian and now, *obscurantist* Jihadists.[9] There is certainly merit to such argument in the context of comparative analysis of the ideologies of parties in a conflict. Yet, from an inward exercise of policy assessment, which is the purpose of

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8. Stanley Hoffman, "The American Style, Our Past and Our Principles," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 46, No. 2, (1968): 362-376.

9. The term obscurantist was widely used by the Algerian media during the 1990s to refer to the Islamist Fundamentalists.

this paper, it is essential to understand that any nation facing a crisis needs to consolidate its internal stability and secure the convergence of purpose from all its social components first, before engaging an external foe. For the United States, the social stability and the coherence of purpose have been historically found in the precincts of the American ideals. President Bush, like many of his predecessors, understood that for the American people to support his foreign policy plans, he needed to define them in accordance with their highest values and principles. He recognized the importance of rallying the American people around the standards that set them apart from other nations.[10]

The patriotism displayed by the American people after the September 11 attacks and their mostly unconditional support of the government's actions, in Afghanistan and later on in Iraq, was undoubtedly triggered by the September 11 attacks. However, the focus of the debate on values and principles in the public sphere provides evidence of the efficiency of the strategies constructed around the ideological fiber.[11] Those attacks not only reinforced the determination of the American people to work together to defend the nation and its ideals,[12] they also

10. Michael Ignatieff, "Who Are The Americans to Think that Freedom Is Theirs to Spread?" *The New York Times Magazine* (June 26, 2005), [on-line resource]; available from: http://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/26/magazine/26EXCEPTION.html ; Internet; accessed March 2009.

11. Mathew Hirshberg, "The Self-Perpetuating National Self-Image: Cognitive Biases in Perceptions of International Interventions," *Political Psychology,* Vol., 14, No. 1 (March 1993): 77-98.

12. Deborah D. Shildkraut, "The More Things Change… American Identity and Mass and Elite Responses to 9/11," Department of Politics, Oberlin College [on-line resource]; available from: http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p65137_index.html; Internet; accessed March 2009.

boosted their support of their government in its ad hoc reactions as well as long-term policies.

As the conflict that ensued from those horrific attacks was announced to be lengthy and pricey, sacrifice and endurance were required from the American people.[13] There seems to be no other way to engage the American public in another long conflict except by the invocation of the "deep-rooted belief in the greatness of this nation, its uniqueness, its essential goodness";[14] and its obligation to protect freedom and peace, not only at home but also abroad. It was vital to refer the public to that same freedom for which generations of Americans sacrificed their lives in foreign lands, from Flanders fields to the jungles of South-East Asia. None of those conflicts was ever interpreted in any other way than in the opposition of the forces of good against the forces of evil and the struggle of freedom to overcome tyranny. In its longest conflict, the United States has always avoided placing the proxy wars between the Soviet Union and the United States in the context of hegemony or balance of power or extending free trade and preserving markets.

As stated by John Mearsheimer, most Americans would recoil at the interpretation of the cold war being a competition of power, because they believe the

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13. George Walker Bush, "speech delivered at the National Endowment for Democracy," October 6, 2005, The White House, Office of the Press Secretary [on-line resource]; available from: http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/10/20051006-3.html; Internet; accessed February 2009.

14. David Forsythe, "Human Rights and American Foreign Policy," Journal of Human Rights, Vol. 1, No. 4 (December 2002): 501-521.

United States was motivated by good intentions and the Soviet Union was not.[15] Thus, the interpretation of the conflict had to be one that opposed freedom to slavery. "The idea of slavery can only be overcome by the timely and persistent demonstration of the superiority of the idea of freedom." [16]

Similarly, President Bush and members of his administration were careful not to associate any grievances with Al-Qaeda's hostility to the United States; the conflict with Al-Qaeda was not to be placed in the context of opposed interests or the attempt of a non-state actor to offset the power of a global hegemon.[17] As the question of 'why do they hate us,' arose, President George W. Bush was prompt to answer, "Because we stand for freedom and they hate it. We are rich and they envy us. We are strong and they resent this." [18] The *Huntingtonian* theory of Clash of Civilizations helping, the debate in the United States shifted immediately from the nature of the conflict to the nature of the enemy. In a sort of a 'neo-orientalist' spree, intellectuals, commentators, and television talk-show hosts, all joined in to stress the ideological gap between the United States and the enemy it faces. As if Ben Laden were the prophet of Islam, the Koran has never been more rehashed and ruminated in over the West as much as it has been since September 11, 2001. Middle East experts

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15. John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, University of Chicago, (New York, London: W. W. Norton, 2003), 24.

16. Acheson, Report to the President Pursuant to the President's Directive of January 31, 1950.

17. Layne, *The War on Terrorism and the Balance of Power,* 110-112.

18. Fareed Zakaria, "Politics of Rage: Why Do They Hate Us?" *Newsweek* ,October 15, 2001.

proliferated overnight; dissident Muslims became TV stars; even the Algerian war of liberation - in some sort of revisionism - was re-interpreted in a religious context.[19] Anything that could pass passed in order to state the exception to American *Exceptionalism.* In the end, the ideology of 'the other' was re-born only to revive the white man's burden. Bin Laden's ideology had to be defeated with that of Thomas Jefferson. Speaking in Westminster College in 2007, congressional representative Skelton stated that the conflict against Jihadism was "a war of ideas [that] will not be won on the battlefield; to say a geographic place is the central front in the war on terror is to misunderstand its nature entirely." [20]

The essence of the message was that the United States is engaged in an ideological conflict that might not end with the end of hostilities against Al-Qaeda and its supporters. Protecting the nation militarily against another attack was a matter of security, but preventing it from being subjugated to the threat of a tyrannical ideology was an existential issue. There is no freedom without security and to secure America's freedom, the world must be free of *evil*. For the United States, the burden is eternal and President Bush did not miss out an opportunity to remind Americans of their natural duty.

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19. Paul Starobin, "The French Were Right" in *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in American Foreign Policy*, eds., Andrew Benett and George Shambaugh, third edition (Dubuque, Iowa: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, 2006), 63-71.

20. Ike Skelton, House Armed Services Committee Chairman, "Beyond Iraq: America Must Remain the Indispensable Nation," Policy Address and Student Led Forum on Iraq War, Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, April 3, 2007 [on-line resource], transcript available from: http://www.westminstermo.edu/news/lecture/Documents/skelton.pdf; Internet; accessed March 2009.

Our Nation's cause has always been larger than our Nation's defense. We fight, as we always fight, for a just peace — a peace that favors liberty. We will defend the peace against the threats from terrorists and tyrants. We will preserve the peace by building good relations among the great powers. And we will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent.[21]

This emphasis on the values that set the character of America as nation above all others has fueled more than a debate domestically and internationally.[22] It has been alternatively blamed for the failure of United States foreign policy and credited for its successes.[23] Notwithstanding the rhetoric or the style, the United States has always found in democracy promotion a strong argument to earn the endorsement of the American public and the support of its conventional allies. President Bush and his administration were not to fail this tradition. Regardless of the nature of the enemy, the United States' government has consistently placed its conflicts in the framework of America's destiny to defend freedom and to promote democracy for a peaceful world. Ironically, the moralizing democracy has been an impediment to its success. Ascribing idealistic and moralistic values to democracy render its promotion optional and relative to economic interests and national security exigencies. Since the September 11 attacks, scholars and politicians often justified the ambiguous

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21. George W. Bush. Graduation Speech at United States Military Academy, West Point, New York , June 1, 2002, White House, [on-line resource]; available from: http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html ; Internet, accessed August 2008.

22. Rosemary Foot, "Exceptionalism Again: The Bush Administration, The Global War on Terror and Human Rights," *Law and History Review*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Fall 2008): 707-725.

23. Michele Durocher Dunne, "Integrating Democracy Promotion into U.S. Middle East Policy," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, No. 50 (August 2004)

stance of the United States towards democracy promotion in the Muslim world in general and the Middles East in particular with the primacy of national security over idealistic objectives. [24] The exclusionary choice between strategic alliances and democracy promotion has become conventional wisdom and has contributed to slowing down the progression of the democratic project. The rich and varied literature produced during the Cold War with regard the United States' dilemma face to the emergence of communist groups in undemocratic regimes in Central America, South East Asia and Africa, has contributed to viewing democracy promotion and America's interests as fundamentally opposing objectives. The emergence of the Jihadist ideology and it becoming a central element of international politics after the September 11 attacks seems to have reinforced that vision.

A Nation with a Mission

Thus, in recognizing its particularity, its uniqueness, added to its unchallenged position of power, the American public embraces what it sees as its obligation towards peace not only for itself but also for the rest of the world. This self-image, in Henry Nau's words, "is constant in its core although it evolves over time; it influences how the United States organizes its own power to pursue foreign

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24. Francis Fukuyama, "Liberalism versus State-Building," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (July 2007): 10-13.

affairs."[25] The American people could not support policies that do not coincide with their ideals. In an opening statement at the National Committee on American Foreign policy, Secretary Barry Lowerkon assured that democracy promotion is not only an integral part of U.S. foreign policy that aims at serving the purpose of protecting its interests in the world, but also an essential component of America's identity.

> We cannot and dare not separate American diplomacy from our democratic roots. In the long term, the American people will not support and the U.S. Government cannot sustain policies that contradict democratic principles.[26]

In the collective reasoning of the American nation, foreign policy needs to be morally justified within the framework of the American ideals. As stressed by Samuel Huntington, for most Americans, their values and principles should not only characterize the way foreign policy is conducted but they should also define its goals.[27] President Bush could not wage wars against countries he associated with the terrorists if the outcome of those wars did not serve the purpose of what has become the central element of debate in foreign policy: democracy promotion.[28] As fighting for a purpose other than protecting freedom worldwide is unconceivable for the American public, debating foreign policy without referring to the spread of

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25. Henry Nau, "Identity, Democracy Promotion and National Interests: Beyond Realism, Beyond Idealism," in *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies and Impacts*, eds., Michael Cox, G. John Ikenberry and Takashi Inogushi (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 138-139.

26. Barry F. Lowenkron, "Realism: Why Democracy Promotion Matters," *American Foreign policy Interests*, Vol. 29 (2007): 201-206.

27. Huntington, *American Ideals versus American Institutions*, 219.

28. Jennifer L. Windsor, "Democracy and Development: The Evolution of U.S. Foreign Assistance Policy," *The Fletcher Forum,* Vol., 27, No. 2 (2003): 141-150.

democracy and the protection of human rights is unconceivable for politicians and academics alike; "Since 1984, democracy promotion became officially a bipartisan fixture in US foreign policy."[29] Hence, while alternative policies of containment and isolationism are sometimes advocated,[30] the general trend in the United States - government and governed - is that the promotion of democracy is just as necessary as the universal consumption of McDonald's[31]. Any action undertaken by the United States in the world had to be connected with its "noble" democratizing mission.

Even the most outspoken skeptics of the necessity and style of America's engagement in democratization efforts point out the contribution of the United States to promoting and enhancing democracy as a preferred form of governance around the world. Paraphrasing Abraham Lincoln, when he declared that this nation is the best hope for earth, Michael Ignatieff wrote in 2005 that, "If the American project of encouraging freedom fails, there may be no one else available with the resourcefulness and energy, even the self-deception, necessary for the task." [32]

In the same context, Tony Smith, an advocate of selective democracy promotion, acknowledged the role of American democracy promotion in moving the international community away form archaic forms of governance.

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29. Ibid., 141-150.

30. Ian Shapiro, *Containment: Rebuilding a Strategy against Global Terror* (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007), 89.

31. Thomas Friedman, "The Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention," in *Understanding Globalization: the Lexus and the Olive Tree*, newly updated and expanded edition (New York: Anchor Books, 2000), 261.

32. Ignatieff, Who Are Americans to Think that Freedom Is Theirs to Spread? *The New York Times Magazine*.

If for the moment, democratic government is the only unchallenged form of state legitimacy virtually everywhere in the world, if social questions such as the rights of women and minorities are so widespread on almost everyone's political agenda … then surely it is because of the worldwide impact of the ideological conviction that mobilized American resolve to win the struggles against fascism and communism, not only on the battlefields but also in the organizational principles for domestic and international politics to guide world order after the defeat of fascism in 1945 and of communism in 1989.[33]

Hence, democracy promotion is viewed as a central element of the United States' leadership in the world and a non-alterable element of its very identity.[34] In the collective memory of the American public, images of liberated Europe after WWII and of East Germans answering the call of President Reagan to tear down the wall live on. The victory of the United States over the Soviet Union and the third wave of democratization that ensued seems to have engendered an increased sense of obligation to carry out America's mission, and in the context of the new world order, it has taken on the shape of a manifest destiny of democracy promotion.

The emergence of the United States as the sole standing superpower and the sweeping wave of democratization in Eastern Europe, Latin America and to some extent parts of Africa offered theorists and political scientists ample room and material to cogitate on democracy promotion and savor the triumph of capitalism over communism and of liberalism over totalitarianism. This trend was principally reinforced by Francis Fukuyama's powerful and controversial treatise on the

33. Tony Smith, "Making the World Safe for Democracy in the American Century," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Spring 1999): 173-188.

34. Ignatieff, Who Are Americans to Think that Freedom Is Theirs to Spread? *The New York Times Magazine*.

evolutionary nature of political thought and its inevitable ascension to liberal democracy as the ultimate ruling system. [35] A contagious outbreak of free democracies was announced and tyranny was said to be counting its days.

While terrorism in general and Jihadism in particular has been a constant threat since before the September 11 attacks, it did not prevent the United States from pursuing a foreign policy that was at least partially in line with its democratic principles. Although those policies differed in scope and consistency, there was a seemingly genuine effort on the part of the United States to stand in front of the world as the defender of democracy and human rights.[36] Democracy was 'on the march', optimism was the tune and the United States was the maestro. As the scientific methods of Rene Descartes and Francis Beacon gained universal acceptance, so was the idea of liberal democracy to be embraced by all humankind.[37]

During the interlude between the Cold War and the so-called era of terror, the U.S. government did take actions against tyrannical regimes in order to avoid discrediting its own ideals of freedom and democracy,[38] with the hope that a *de facto* reversal of the domino theory would assert its standing as a benevolent superpower.

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

36. Sheila Carapico, "Foreign Aid for Promoting Democracy in the Arab World," *Middle East Journal,* Vol. 56, No. 3 (Summer 2002): 379-395.

37. Fukuyama, Afterword to *The End of History and The Last Man*, 343-344.

38. Lowell Dittmer, "Chinese Human Rights and American Foreign Policy: A Realist Approach," *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (Summer 2001): 421-459.

Countries such as Pakistan, Indonesia and China were all targets of economic sanctions due to violations of human rights domestically and violations of international law at a regional level. In some sort of history break, the renewed mission of the United States was defined by the creation of a new world order that no longer focused on great power competition but on consolidating the economic, security and political institutions it had developed throughout the Cold War and expanding their reach to the rest of the world. The focus was no longer on curbing the expansion of a challenger, but on rallying the nations around the American idea, globalizing its trade system and where necessary, its political system as well. Without delving into the subject of globalization, one could safely state that the successes marked by the globalization of trade and capital-based economic systems has also contributed to the entrenchment of the idea of a successful globalization of democracy in general, and of the American ruling system in particular.[39]

During that period, scholars such as John Ikenberry and Tony Smith were prompt to rebuke any claims placing democracy promotion in some idealistic bubble. They both maintained - and continue to maintain - that democracy promotion is a consistent and enduring element of America's grand liberal strategy, aiming at the creation of a stable international political and economic order coupled with a congenial security environment that would allow for the protection of its interests

39. Barry Gills, "Democratizing Globalization and Globalizing Democracy," *American Annals of Political and Social Sciences*, Vol. 581, Globalization and Democracy (May 2002): 158-171.

and its own [*Physical*] security[40]. Despite the controversial association of the United States with dictatorial regimes in Iran, the Philippines, the Middle East and Central and Latin America, the only enduring image was that of the triumph of democracy over its archenemies of the twentieth century.

Nevertheless, in the midst of the post-Cold War euphoria, some scholars warned against overreaching ambitions and saw the democracy promotion project as too grand an enterprise for the United States to tackle. Many remained skeptical as to the capacity of the United States to undertake it, despite its unparalleled military, economic and ideological power. While recognizing that democracy promotion has always been an integral part of America's mission in the world, Tony Smith recommended that Washington should learn to resist the illusion of its capacity to expand democracy and should be realistic about what it can accomplish in that domain. Even though he believed that, "The expansion of democracy is unquestionably in the interest of its national security, the United States should maintain a selective approach to democracy promotion in the world."[41] Smith's skepticism of the capacity of the United States to expand democracy did not derive from a lack of trust in the capability of the United States *per se*, but it was clearly defined within his own cultural-deterministic assumptions of the limits of non-

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40. G. John Ikenberry, "America's Liberal Grand Strategy," in *American Foreign policy: Theoretical Essays*, 275.

41. Ibid., 340-342.

western nations to embrace democracy.[42] His logic rests on the supposition that only countries to whom democracy has been handed down by a western power could aspire to a true democratic transition. He puts forward the case of India that *learnt* to appreciate the benefits of democracy from the *teachings* of the British Empire and refers to the cases of Japan and Germany, where democracy took root, for the former, and was reinstated, for the latter, after WWII under the tutelage of the United States.

Undoubtedly, in the latter two cases, the United States had a vital interest at stake in assisting those defeated powers to transition towards democracy. In the context of the Cold War, the democratization of Japan and Germany was mainly driven by the heightened competition between the United States and the Soviet Union.[43] The Taylor philosophy was to be adapted to states, beyond individuals.[44] Helping those two countries transition toward democracy and assuring their successful reconstruction had to serve as an appealing illustration of freedom and success for the countries in South East Asia and Eastern Europe that were under the influence of the Soviet Union. This logic of exemplary 'nation' has dominated the political speech of the U.S. Government since the beginning of the Global war on Terrorism. It has been repeatedly presented to assert America's commitment to

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42. Ibid.

43. Aaron Forsberg, *America and the Japanese Miracle, The Cold War Context of Japan's Post war Economic Revival*, 1950-1960, Luther Hartwell Hodges's Series on Business, Society and the State (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000) passim

44. In reference to Noll, Frederick Taylor's exemplary worker.

democracy and freedom, which differentiates it from other nations and especially from Al-Qaeda and its supporters. It has been used as a justifying argument for its engagement with the dictators in countries vulnerable to Jihadism, such as Egypt and Pakistan. This approach was coined Grand Strategy of Transformation in the region (in fact, several regions that found themselves amalgamated by some tectonic manipulations).[45]

The trend was to leading by example, but not by a distant shining city on the hill, rather by a live, close and palpable neighborhood showcase. The administration of President George W. Bush continued to sustain this view, first by presenting Iraq as the future powerhouse of democracy in the Middle East, then by shifting the focus towards the countries considered as 'key actors' in the Global War on Terrorism, such as Pakistan and the "proud nation of Egypt." [46]

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45. The official jargon of the U.S. Government includes, Afghanistan, Pakistan and North African countries as part of the Middle East.

46. George Walker Bush, "State of the Union Address," February 1, 2006 [on-line resource]; transcript available from: http://msnbc.msn.com/id/11115162/ ; Internet, accessed February 2009.

CHAPTER 2: DEMOCRACY PROMOTION IN THE AGE OF TERROR

The nearly romantic aspiration of President Bush's administration to win 'the hearts and minds' of the world in general, and the Muslim communities in particular, through a Grand Strategy of Transformation[1] was aimed at establishing democracies in the Middle East and protecting U.S. interests in the region. As the argument goes, the Middle East and by extension, all Muslim countries, would be less threatening to the security of the United States if they were to democratize their ruling systems. President George W. Bush stressed this position from the beginning of the war on terrorism to the end of his mandate. He repeatedly expressed the conviction that, "Democracies replace resentment with hope, respect the rights of their citizens and their neighbors, and join the fight against terror. Every step toward freedom in the world makes our country safer, so we will act boldly in freedom's cause." [2] The rationale of this approach was that democratic reform and economic development would assuage the frustration of the Muslim youth and would encourage them to embrace life instead of yearning to die.[3] The emphasis on democracy promotion in the Muslim world was presented by the Bush administration as a central element of

1. John Lewis Gaddis, *Grand Strategy of Transformation*.

2. George Bush, State of the Union Address, February 1, 2006.

3. Richard Haas, "Freedom Is Not a Doctrine," *Washington Post*, January 24, 2005, A15.

its foreign policy strategies and as a vital move towards the winning of an announced ideological war against Al-Qaeda.

To critics and supporters alike, the administration of President Bush consistently attempted to convey the message that it is in the interest of the United States to promote democracy as the only reliable alternative to the Jihadists' ideology of death. Many scholars, who held the belief – rightly so - that the lack of democratic institutions, and the repression pushes people towards extremism, embraced this stance and argued in defense of the new orientation in U.S. foreign policy that set out to stamp out the root causes of terrorism.

It is in this context that a shift in perspectives was said to have taken place in the United States' foreign policy under President George Walker Bush. It seemed for many that "This administration recognizes, more than most of its predecessors have, the dangers of relying on authoritarians as friends."[4] Interpreting the National Security Strategy of the United States, John Lewis Gaddis affirmed that the new administration has grasped the nettle and understood that the origins - or at least the expansion - of Jihadism were not far from the "door steps of the dictatorial palaces."[5]

Before changing his stance on the issue of democracy promotion in U.S. foreign policy, Richard Haas, director at the time of the Policy Planning Staff at the U.S. Department of State, saw in the democracy promotion an opportunity for the

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4. Gaddis, Grand Strategy of Transformation.

5. Ibid.

United States to help Muslim countries adapt to the requirements of a globalized

world. His assessment of the relation between democracy promotion and U.S.

security was summed up in the following statement:

> By failing to help foster gradual paths to democratization in numerous important U.S. relationships — yielding to what might be called a "democratic exception" in parts of the Muslim world — the United States has missed an opportunity to help these countries adapt to the stresses of a globalizing world. Continuing to make this exception is not in U.S. interests; as clearly conveyed in the 2002 National Security Strategy, U.S. policy will be more actively engaged in supporting democratic trends globally with no exception for the Muslim world.[6]

This statement implies an acknowledgement of the direct, if not causal relation

between Muslim dictatorial regimes and the emergence of the Jihadist ideology. It

also places the threat of Jihadism in the context of the United States' relations with

many Arab and Muslim authoritarian regimes. Although the Jihadists are by no

means seeking to replace the dictatorial regimes with democratic ones, it is clear that

the lack of democratic rule, and the restriction of people's political participation in

their societies, have contributed to the emergence of extremism and to the expansion

of Jihadism.

The discourse of the administration was constructed around the argument that

the 'democratic exception' approach vis-à-vis the Muslim world could no longer be

sustained. It could no longer disregard the growing discontent among Muslim

societies towards those regimes and by extension, the powers with whom they

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6. Richard N. Haas, "Toward Greater Democracy in the Muslim World," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol., 26, Issue 3 (Summer 2003): 137-148.

associate. After all, the old saying is '*the friend of my enemy is my enemy'*. Ignoring the human rights abuses and the restrictions on liberties in the Muslim world in exchange for economic dividends and stability in the region was recognized as a failure on the part of previous administrations. [7] President Bush and his administration announced their resolve to remedy that failure. Addressing the National Defense University in 2005, President Bush reinforced this position when he stated the following:

> It should be clear that decades of excusing and accommodating tyranny, in the pursuit of stability, have only led to injustice and instability and tragedy. …
> … and our duty is now clear: For the sake of our long-term security, all free nations must stand with the forces of democracy and justice that have begun to transform the Middle East. [8]

The implication was that the United States would re-design its democracy promotion project to respond not only to the new challenges emerging in a world of fast and global communications, but also and with a specific focus, to the fast *Jihadization* of the global Muslim society, especially in the Middle East and West Asia. The administration of George W. Bush has planned its response to such challenges based on the premise that winning the hearts and minds of young Muslims is imperative to the winning of the Global War on Terrorism; its proposed project was fashioned around the following principles:

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7. Ibid.

8. George W. Bush Discusses War on Terror at the National Defense University Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C., March 8, 2005, Presidential Rhetoric, [on-line resource]; available from: http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/03.08.05.html ; Internet, accessed, January 2009.

- Speak out honestly about violations of the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity;

- Use our foreign aid to promote freedom and support those who struggle non-violently for it, ensuring that nations moving toward democracy are rewarded for the steps they take;

- Make freedom and the development of democratic institutions key themes in our bilateral relations, seeking solidarity and cooperation from other democracies while we press governments that deny human rights to move toward a better future;

- Take special efforts to promote freedom of religion and conscience and defend it from encroachment by repressive governments.[9]

In its fashion and ambition, that plan reached beyond innovation; it was revolutionary. It stated clearly that democracy promotion was central to the United States foreign policy for the protection of its long-term interests and that the United States, after its traumatic experience with terrorism, would not continue to ignore the dictators' tacit agreements with the Jihadist movements. A U.S. administration that tells the Saudi King that his *Wahhabist* ideology is at the origins of the terrorist attacks of September 11 and that it should stop financing the international Islamist networks[10] was unprecedented and was certainly hopeful in its outlook, especially for the democratic and secular movements in the countries of interest.

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9. National Security Strategy of the United States 2002, The Bush White House, [on-line resource]; available from: http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/index.html ; Internet, accessed August 2008, February 2009.

10. It is widely agreed that Saudi Arabia has contributed to the expansion of Wahhabism and that it financed radical Islamist groups throughout the Muslim world. In an interview with the Algerian newspaper, *Le Matin*(Algiers, Algeria, 1992), Saudi Crown Prince (current King), Abdullah Al-Saud admitted financing the Algerian Extremist group Front Islamic du Salut [Islamic Salvation Front], whose members created the GIA [Groupe Islamic Armé, i.e. Armed Islamic Group], which is now known as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb [AQIM].

On the ground, however, that plan was supplanted by a grand strategy of cooperation with tyrants as long as they pledged to join the fight against terror on the side of the United States. Those whose ruling styles were initially identified as responsible for breeding the hatred and frustration that produces 'walking explosive devices' transformed in a sort of *Kafkaian* metamorphosis into strategic allies without whom the winning of the Global War on Terrorism would be compromised. President George Bush and his administration embraced almost every dictator in the Arab and Muslim countries, with the exception of Syria, Iraq and Iran. While in the National Security Strategy, the administration of President Bush maintained that, "Nations that seek international aid must govern themselves wisely, so that aid is well spent," [11] Congress was requested to lift oversight on all the nations that pledged cooperation in the Global War on Terrorism.

Hence, in parallel to its grand rhetoric of right and wrong, good and evil, freedom and subjugation, the U.S. government swiftly welcomed any regime that condemned Al-Qaeda, including countries with appalling records of human rights violations, repression and corruption. [12] Relations with China were mended; economic and military aid was extended to dictatorial regimes in Central Asia, arms transfer and aid were resumed with Pakistan and Indonesia, and Russia revealed its *soul*. The rational behind such action was that as long as terrorism is declared a

11. National Security Strategy of the United States 2002.

12. Hilton L. Root, *Alliance Curse: How America Lost the Third World* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), 10.

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common enemy, dictators receive *carte blanche* as far as their human rights policies were concerned and democracy became a matter of an exercise in eloquence. This course of action has been widely debated but rarely placed in the framework of the balance of power. Looking back into the recent history of the United States, one can detect the shadowy spots that have marked it and they consist of its cooperation with dictators of all calibers.

> [In the past,] the US government found itself in alliance with a great many unsavory states that in no way shared its commitment to liberal democratic principles, but rather its abhorrence of communism. Today, it is similarly prepared to overlook the domestic abuses of regimes that are willing to join in the war against terror.[13]

This reversal of posture, or at least the incongruity of the rhetoric with the practice, provoked serious questions as to whether the United States is genuinely intending to promote democracy and whether its declared goals were the same as the ones it set out to achieve. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 has only contributed to skepticism as to whether the democracy promotion project and the 'freedom agenda' represented the true intentions of the United States. It is not the subject of this paper to examine the war against Iraq or to detail its relation to the democracy promotion agenda. However, referring to some views such as those holding that the democracy promotion project was designed to prepare – and justify - the Iraq invasion, stresses the difficulties associated with explaining democracy promotion as a foreign policy

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13. Louise Richardson, "Terrorist Rivals, Beyond State Rivalry," *Harvard International Review*, Issue No. 6.

choice in general and as a remedy to terrorism in particular. The reluctance of scholars – with a few exceptions[14]- to acknowledge the United States' approach as one based on the balance of power seems to be mostly driven by an aversion to grant Al-Qaeda with such status that it would require balancing strategies to fight it. Instead, the focus shifted onto questions on the suitability of democracy as a foreign policy and to whether democracy promotion is an effective weapon against Jihadism.

Thus, the first view reflects President Bush's choice of words with regard to the compatibility of democracy promotion as an American value on one hand and the protection of U.S. interests on the other. It supports the administration's rhetoric on democracy promotion as a necessity to pulverize the anti-American ideologies rampant in the Muslim world and to win the hearts and minds of the potential suicide bombers. Convinced of the causal relation between dictatorial rule and Jihadism, the advocates of such approach contend the following:

> Foreign assistance is not only a charitable endeavor, but also an exercise in enlightened self-interest and the promotion of democracy — not some idealistic crusade, but rather quintessentially an exercise in *realpolitik*. Nothing better serves the interests of this country — economic, political, or ideological — than the promotion of democratic practices-… The notion that there should be a dichotomy between our moral preferences and our strategic goals is a false one. Democracy and human rights are not only ideals to be pursued by all nations; they are also pragmatic tools that are powerful weapons against extremism.[15]

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14. "Predicting the Next World Order: A Tilted Balance", *Harvard International Review*, Editorial, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Spring 2007).

15. Kenneth Wallack, "Democracy Promotion: Serving U.S. Values and Interests," *Northwestern University Law Review*, Vol. 102, No. 1 (2008): 433-436

In a way, this view was meant as a call on the administration of President George Walker Bush to join action to reflection in the domain of democracy promotion. It could be interpreted as a call to disavow 'friendly tyrants' and support Muslim societies against their despots. It sees in democracy promotion a pragmatic approach that would not only reassert the United States' moral authority in the world but that would also guarantee the emergence of democratic, peaceful and American-friendly powers in the countries vulnerable to the Jihadist threat. It also postulates the democratic peace theory and takes its principle at face value. With no intention to delve into the democratic peace theory, it will suffice to mention that, unfortunately, post-cold war conflicts that have broken out in Europe and Asia have partially discredited this approach and reinforced the assumption that the democratic peace theory is only verifiable among mature democracies with strong ties revolving around economic and security interests.

The second approach is rather focused on the means that are more likely to produce successful and effective outcomes in the domain of promoting democracy. It warns that democracy could only be built from within and that the United States can only assist societies that have made the decision to democratize, consciously and collectively. This view emerged especially in response to the administration's justification of the Iraq invasion. Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, among others, warns that there is no shortcut to democracy and that it has to bubble

from beneath.[16] The West's achievement of the highest expression of democracy does not mean that the rest of the world will transplant liberal democracy to an environment that has not yet reached the necessary maturity of political, social and economic thought; an environment that would, in time, permit the transplant to thrive.

Evidently, the proponents of this approach do not reject democracy promotion as a goal or as a concept; their skepticism was rather geared towards the means and channels through which democracy should be promoted. This view was further heightened in reaction to the Iraq war and to the United States' labeling of the invasion as a liberating mission. Their concerns stemmed from the ramifications of associating democracy promotion with regime change and occupation. Such association has, in Thomas Carothers' words, reduced the prospects of democracy in the Muslim world and diminished the outreach of democracy activists in their respective countries. In fact, it has contributed to heightening the pressure on the civil society more than it did on the dictatorial regimes.

Overall, skeptics of the democracy promotion project, although agreeing on the principle of the suitability of a global democratic world, disagree on the feasibility and practicality of the project or on its primacy over pressing security issues in general and anti-terrorism efforts in particular. In this respect, Arthur Goldsmith states that, "having the laudable purpose of furthering democracy is not a relevant reason for claiming that this goal is attainable. Despite its significant

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16. Zbignew Brezinski, et. all. , "No Shortcut to the End of History," *New Perspectives Quarterly*, Vol. 25 Issue 1 (Summer 2004): 46-47.

influence, the United States cannot consistently shape foreign political systems to its liking, particularly in the short term." [17] Goldsmith's stance on the issue of democracy promotion stems from the findings of research based on statistical techniques, which shows that dictators and 'semi-dictators' were not about to give up a ruling system that served their own interests and kept them in power for decades. He stresses the fact that countries in democratic transition are more violence prone than countries under authoritarian or totalitarian regimes, which suggests that the United States should observe caution as not to precipitate the fall of Muslim countries into a spiral of Jihadist driven violence by encouraging the introduction of large-scale democratic reforms. In some ways, the study conducted by Goldsmith reached the same conclusion as the ones put forward by Jane Kirkpatrick twenty years ago. i.e., democratic reform is not suitable when dictators face a threat that might pose a greater danger to the United States.[18]

In a slightly different bearing, i.e. in agreement on the principle and disagreement on the timing, the third view lies midway between the ones listed above: it portends that democracy promotion, although preferable, cannot constitute by itself the central element of United States foreign policy. Discussing the place of democracy promotion in the foreign policy of the United States in the midst of the

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17. Arthur A. Goldsmith, "Making the World Safe for Partial Democracy? Questioning the Premises of Democracy Promotion," *International Security*, Vol. 33, No 2 (Fall 2008): 120-147

18. Jeanne J. Kirkpatrick, "Dictatorships and Double Standards," *Commentary (*November 1979): 34-35.

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Global War on Terrorism, Richard Haas asserts that democracy is not likely to change the dogmatically driven threat of Jihadism.

> Whatever the promise of democracy, it is neither desirable nor practical to make its promotion the foreign policy doctrine of the United States. Too many pressing threats in which the lives of millions hang in the balance — from dealing with today's terrorists and managing Iranian and North Korean nuclear capacities to coping with trade protectionism and genocide — will not be solved by the emergence of democracy. Promoting democracy is and should be one American foreign policy goal, but it cannot be the only or dominant objective. When it comes to relations with Russia or China, Saudi Arabia or Egypt, other national security interests must normally take precedence over (or at least coexist with) concerns about how they choose to govern themselves.[19]

Although, it seems that Haas expressed these views in opposition to the administration's rhetoric on democracy promotion, it constitutes an explicit description of the implicit posture within the Bush administration. This view is revealing in the sense that it is an unnamed return to the concept of necessary alliances. If China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Egypt are friends for the occasion, then the threat that prompts them to that status needs to be recognized. Balancing the threat of Al-Qaeda seems to be the driving objective of the United States in its foreign policy dealings with countries that might otherwise be at odds with the United States. The administration's efforts to conceal the balancing strategies against Al-Qaeda were marked by a series of innovative - although tentative - proposals to introduce reforms into Muslim countries with the help of the dictators.

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19. Richard Haas, "The Case for Integration," *National Interest* (Fall 2005).

Promoting Democracy through Dictators

In its attempt to translate rhetoric into action, the United States government has designed plans and projects with the pretention to, gradually, introduce democratic reforms into the 'friendly dictatorial regimes' in the Muslim world in general and the Middle East in particular. As noted by Arthur Goldsmith, the federal funding for overseas democracy promotion activities jumped from $500 million dollars per year in 2000 to a budget request of $ 1.5 billion in 2008, excluding Iraq and Afghanistan. [20] A restructuring of American diplomacy and a re-conceptualization of its aid allocations was announced by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during her February 14, 2006 testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.[21] The new outlook of American foreign policy would shift the focus from government-to-government relations towards a comprehensive approach, simultaneously targeting civil society groups, businesses and government institutions.[22] according to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, the objective of the transformational diplomacy concept was, "to work with our many partners around the world to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international

20. Goldsmith, "Making the World Safe for Partial Democracy?"

21. Gerald F. Hayman, "Assessing Secretary of State Rice's Reform of U.S. Foreign Assistance," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Carnegie Papers: Democracy and Rule of Law Project, Number 90 (February 2008).

22. Ibid.

system."[23] Compared against the administration's record of engaging the dictatorial regimes of the Muslim world, only the second part of this statement by Secretary Rice was meant to bear any meaning. For the dictators to 'conduct themselves responsibly in the international system,' they were expected to facilitate and support the United States' anti-terrorism efforts by providing access to military facilities and cooperating on intelligence collection without any questions asked from the United States. Consequently, the democratic reform project ended up on the balance of security, mostly in favor of the dictators and their regimes. In the words of Alexander Cooley, "engaging authoritarian leaders by striking basing deals with them has done little for democratization in those states because these leaders know that at bottom, U.S. Military planners care more about the bases utility than about local political trends."[24] That is precisely what happened when the United States and its partners in 2002 proposed reform programs to their Arab and Muslim counterparts. The administration launched the Middle East Partnership Initiative [MEPI] that was meant to support nongovernmental organizations' activities in the social, economic and political spheres and empower individuals through education and entrepreneurship. The participation of citizens and civil society in economic and social life, it was thought - rightly so -, would lead to democratic change in the Middle East. That plan however, was compromised by the hostile reaction of the

23. Ibid.

24. Alexander Cooley, "Base Politics," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 6 (Nov.-Dec. 2005): 8-15.

region's leaders as they tightened the policies regulating civil society and restricting their funding options.[25] Administration officials dismissed these conclusions and insisted on the suitability of a gradual approach in any democratizing effort.

The second attempt made by the United States and its G-8 allies towards advancing the democratic project in what was called the Broader Middle East, including North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan, had targeted the governments themselves. The project was announced during the G-8 summit in August of 2004. It proposed to invite governments in the Middle East, North Africa and West Asia to introduce gradual reforms to their ruling systems with the financial help and the expertise of the G-8 members. The outcry that this proposal stirred up came from the governments of the region as well as the people. What could be better than a group of former colonial powers - to the exception of Russia and the United States - initiating reforms from within the governments of former colonies! Once again, the answers of the dictators were molded in the respect of their hard-earned sovereignty. Governments of the countries involved in that process were all too inclined to decry the nature of the project and call it an infringement on their independence and meddling in their internal affairs by the West.

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25. Michele Durocher Dunne, "Integrating Democracy Promotion into U.S. Middle East Policy," Carnegie Papers, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Democracy and Rule of Law Project, No. 50, (October 2004) and Marina Ottaway, "Democracy Promotion in the Middle East: Restoring Credibility," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Policy Brief No. 60 (May 2008).

As noted by Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers, the BMENA was left toothless as the United States and its G-8 partners passively accepted the objections of their 'dictatorial allies' who insisted on dictating which reforms were acceptable and which were not.[26] Thus, the programs that were meant to demonstrate the United States' good faith in carrying out its democratic project in the Middle East, were in some ways replicas of existing programs carried out for years through several U.S. agencies and institutions. They were ultimately faced with the same challenges that hindered the achievement of a tangible impact on the overall condition of democracy in the target societies.[27]

If these programs - and their subsequent inefficacy - have shown anything, it is that the United States, although willing to take small steps to show its support for democratic reform in the Middle East – out of conviction or hypocrisy -, was not ready to carry out the democratizing mission with the same fervor it announced it. In addition, the watering down of the content of those proposals by the U.S. government in response to the demands of its Arab and Muslim partners demonstrates that the Bush administration was not as ready to overturn the traditional U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and the other countries associated

26. Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers, "The Greater Middle East Initiative: Off to a False Start," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. Policy Brief, No. 29 (March 2004)

27. Katarina Delacoura, "US Democracy Promotion in the Arab Middle East since September 11, 2001": A Critique," *Foreign Affairs*, Issue 81. 2005.

with it. The announced grand strategy of transformation had only the merit of its aspirations and its eloquent formulations.

Proponents of engagement with undemocratic regimes justify this position, arguing that when tyrants are opposed and confronted by a great power, they perceive themselves as strong and project invincibility; they use their confrontational politics to reinforce their hold on power and thrash any domestic opposition by simply accusing it of being in service of the 'enemy'.[28] The examples of Saddam Hussein before the U.S. led invasion, Manuel Noriega before his arrest, Kaddafi before his awakening, Kim IL Sung and Mahmoud Ahmedinejad, are often presented as evidence in support of this trend, which is admittedly substantiated by empirical data. However, there is enough historical evidence to show that the opposite is valid as well.

Clearly, tyrants, by virtue of their nature, [29] are not easily inclined to bend to the wishes of other countries, even the United States of America. They tend to perceive their cooperation and association with great powers as a pledge of support for their repressive policies. Confident of the United States' support, during the Cold War, Augusto Pinochet and Reza Pahlavi did not skimp on efforts to smash domestic opposition and heighten repression while resisting the pressure of their patron at the

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28. Thomas Carothers, "Dictators Aren't Dominos," *Foreign Policy*, No. 13. Vol., 137 (July-August, 2003): 59-60.

29. Betty Glad, "Why Tyrants Go Too Far? Malignant Narcissism and Absolute Power," *Political Psychology*, Vol., 23, No. 1 (March 2002): 1-37.

time. Saddam Hussein's use of chemical weapons against the Kurdish communities in 1988, which seemed to have been temporarily missed by the United States satellites, was another example of dictators emboldened by their cooperation with great powers. Saddam's aggression against his neighbors to the South in 1991 could speculatively be interpreted as the ultimate expression of dictators' confusion of the power of their patrons with their own. It took the invasion of Kuwait and the ensuing reaction of the United States for Saddam to understand - probably at the sound of the cannons - that the Cold War was over and that he was of no greater importance to his patron than was Kuwait and the rest of the oil-rich Gulf countries. Central Asia dictators, Aliyev, Karimov and Yandarbeyev have also been able to prove this trend based on their own interpretation of their incidental cooperation with the United States.[30]

The examples above are anything but exceptions. They are repeatedly observed in many parts of the world where the United States had, or thought it had, interests at stake. Although it is not the object of this paper to analyze the psychological profiles of dictators, it is worth mentioning that given the nature of their personalities,[31] dictators do become inflated with the privilege of being a great power's ally and do tend to take that privilege as a blank check for pillage. These

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30. Thomas Carothers, "Promoting Democracy, Fighting Terror," in *Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion* (Washington D.C., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Democracy and Rule Of Law Books, 2004), 64-66.

31. Betty Glad, "Why Tyrants Go Too Far?" 1-37.

behavioral patterns are usually more salient when there is a security issue that could be used as pretext to justify them. The Global War on Terrorism and the security threat it entailed did not – and seems to still not - allow for intransigent demands for reforms. The dictators' participation in the fight against Al-Qaeda overweighed the urgency of reforming their ruling systems. Once again, the United States seemed to fall prey to the dictation of its surrogates.[32]

Aware of the United States need for their services against Al-Qaeda, Arab and Muslim leaders were prompt to seize the opportunity and turn it in their advantage, furthering their agendas without becoming overly concerned with the freedom agenda. Adapting their old strategies to the new challenges, those leaders, like their predecessors, understood the centrality of their cooperation with the United States in the conflict against Al-Qaeda. On the other hand, as the Global War on Terror raged on and the Jihadist ideology continued to expand, the U.S. administration was willing to make concessions that did not directly affect its security and its other economic interests, including oil and access to strategic locations. For the United States, fighting a brutal enemy, it is contended, requires brutal allies.

President Bush and his administration have consistently maintained that their engagement with dictators Pervez Musharraf and Hosni Mubarak is an overture for pressing more subtly for democratic reforms in those two countries. The plan was

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32. Georgie A. Geyer, "The United States Captive of its Surrogates," *Seattle Times*, August 21, 1983, A18.

apparently to praise the dictators for their anti-terrorism efforts in public and pressure them for reforms in private. The objective of this approach was seemingly aiming at solving an immediate problem while setting the stage for a long-term solution. The threat of Al-Qaeda acquiring weapons of mass destruction was more urgent than discontinuing the hemorrhage of the Muslim masses towards Jihadism. In its conflict with the Soviet Union, successive U.S. administrations had adopted the same approach. Curbing the ascension of Marxist groups to power was the only shared interest between the United States and its dictatorial allies in the Philippines, Chile, El Salvador, Iran and Vietnam.

Many politicians and scholars supported this approach then; they support it now. During the last years of the Cold War, Howard Wiarda advocated an amalgamation of 'long-term *moralism*' with a 'short-term pragmatism.' A combination that would serve, in his view, both the ideals and the interests of the United States and asserted that engagement with dictators is no more than a temporary entry that would permit direct pressure for reforms towards liberalization and help shape the post-authoritarian transition.[33] In other words, it allows the taming of the tyrants, a view that seems to flow in the same stream as President Bush's plan to 'convert' dictators into democrats. How that conversion would come about remains an unanswered question, especially with the pressing security issues

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33. Howard Wiarda, "Dealing with Dictators in Decline," *World Affairs*, Vol. 149, No. 4, (Spring 1987), Introduction.

that plague the region of the Middle East and all the countries vulnerable to the Jihadists.

The gains in civil liberties that once augured a possible movement towards some sort of democratization in the region have been spoiled by a dramatic setback after the September 11 attacks.[34] Dictatorial regimes all over the world found in the war on terror a perfect justification for their repressive policies and human rights abuses.[35] Countries such as Pakistan and Egypt were prompt to recognize the dividends they were about to reap through their 'cooperation' in the anti-terrorism efforts launched by the United States. As Rosemary Foot puts it, "Governments have noted that a promise of resolute persistence in tracking down terrorists carries with it increased economic and military assistance and — where desired — important political support from the most powerful state in the global system, the United States."[36]

The first to recognize the opportunity in the conflict that broke out at the global level were those states who could claim an interest in defeating Al-Qaeda - real or fictive - and who had previous experiences with regional conflicts and with the flexibility of patron states towards useful strategic allies.

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34. Sheila Carapico, "Foreign Aid for Promoting Democracy in the Arab World," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 3 (Summer, 2002): 379-95.

35. Richard Faulk, "Human Rights," *Foreign Policy*, No. 141 (Mar.-Apr. 2004): 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28.

36. Rosemary Foot, "Collateral Damage," *International Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 2 (2005): 411-425.

CHAPTER 3: TYRANTS AGAINST TERROR

CLIENTS IN SERVICE OF A PATRON

Dictators all over the world have learned the lessons of the Cold War; if a great power needed them for one consideration or another, they had the luxury to dictate the terms of the compact when it comes to issues of internal governance. A review of the cases of Egypt and Pakistan in the following sections shows that despite the different dynamics that characterize the relations between the United States and the two countries, they are clearly indicative of patron-client state relationships.

The Red Sea Connection

Egypt's connection to the greatest power in the world has held a steady course for about thirty years. Since the signing of the Camp David Peace Treaty in 1979 to end Arab-Israeli hostilities, Egypt has not had to worry about the United States meddling in its internal affairs or pressuring it for reforms. Owing it to its location on one hand and its sworn enemy-friend-neighbor, Israel, on the other, the Egyptian regime continues to enjoy a treatment of *laissez-faire* by the United States in the name of stability in the Middle East.

For over a quarter of a century Egypt consistently received economic and military assistance from the United States in exchange for rejecting belligerence towards Israel and, it is believed, for its role in enhancing the peace process between Palestinians and Israelis. However, the $1.7 billion yearly '*pension*' received by Egypt as a *"veteran"* of the Arab-Israeli war,[1] has not seemed to affect the people of Egypt, who still live in poverty and continue to view the United States as a contributing element to their malaise.

Moreover, that aid did not help the United States in its tentative quest to encourage democratic reforms in that country. From 1952, despite its revulsion of revolutionary movements, the United States sought to align Egypt through economic aid and technological assistance with the objective of helping it establish a functional democracy and prevent it from falling over to the communist camp. President Harry Truman's decision to include Egypt onto the list of recipients of the Point-4-Program had the objective to use aid as bait for democratization.[2] The vision of President Truman was to fight communism in the post-colonial world by eliminating the conditions under which communism thrived; that is poverty, ignorance and tyrannical government.[3] President Jamal Abdel Nasser's vision however, was geared

1. Michael Slackman, "On Human Rights, U.S. Seems to Give Egypt a Pass," *New York Times*, October 16, 2007, A4.

2. Jon B. Alterman, "American Aid to Egypt in the 1950s: From Hope to Hostility," *The Middle East Journal,* Research Library Core, Vol. 52, No. 1(Winter 1998): 51.

3. Ibid.

in a different direction, a direction that would prove rather troublesome for the region and the competing superpowers.

Although filling the vacuum left by the British and the French was considered by the Eisenhower administration, it was only after the accession of President John F. Kennedy to office that the stability of the Near East, i.e. cessation of Egyptian-Israeli hostilities, and the recuperation of Nasser from the Soviet Camp, became a central issue for the United States. Nasser's hostilities to Israel, his support of revolutionary movements throughout Africa and Asia, placed him in an unfavorable position with the successive U.S. administrations.[4] As the ideological leader of the Arab world and by extension the third world, both superpowers sought to align him as Israel, Iraq, Jordan and Saudi Arabia were already acquired to the western bloc.[5] Although President John. F. Kennedy had attempted to engage Nasser in a more positive manner and enhance U.S. relations with Egypt by assuming a more active role in advancing the peace process between Egypt and Israel, Nasser's ideological barriers and his determination to pursue a position of leadership in the Middle East brought those efforts to a stalemate.[6] Nasser's death in 1970 was in someway a blessing for Egypt's economy, Israel's peace - at least from one side of the border - and the United States' presence in the Middle East. His successor,

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4. Stephen Walt, *Origins of* Alliances, 89.

5. Ibid., 88.

6. John S. Badeau, "U.S.A And U.A.R: A Crisis in Confidence," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (January 1965): 281-196.

Anwar Sadat - although initially set out to follow the same path - seemed to be willing to relinquish leadership for peace and economic incentives.

The Camp David agreements between Egypt and Israel brought a relative stability to the region and addendums were attached to the peace treaties in the form the Special International Security Act (P. L. 96-35)[7] that guaranteed military assistance and grants for both parties. The United States succeeded in achieving peace between the belligerent neighbors but democracy and human rights were not included in the package. Mubarak for his part, inherited that package, honored the terms of the treaties, sustained not only the official foreign policy of his slain predecessor, but also his repressive domestic policies. For over a quarter of a century, President Hosni Mubarak ruled over Egypt with a tight grip on power and a royal disdain for human dignity.

Despite raising voices from the United States, Egypt and elsewhere against the dangers entailed by Mubarak's divisive and repressive policies, the United States has chosen to continue its support for the regime of President Mubarak and praise him for organizing the first multi-party presidential elections, although widely decried from inside and outside Egypt as a staged and unfair process.[8] President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice downplayed the wave of

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7. Congress, Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade Division, *Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations*, Congressional Research Service, Report prepared by Jeremy M. Sharp, for Congressional Members and Committees, August 12, 2008. Report No. RL33003.

8. International Crisis Group, "Reforming Egypt," *Middle East/ North Africa, Report* No. 46, (October 4, 2005).

arrests conducted before the election and the violence that characterized it.[9] They commended the dictator for bringing democratic reform to Egypt and leading the way for the rest of the Middle East and North Africa to follow.[10] In other words, as Egypt exported the extremist Jihadist ideology of Sayyid Al-Qutb to the rest of the Muslim World, now, it is expected to reverse the course and export democracy to the greater Middle East under the leadership of a dictator who has been in power since 1981.

The praise of the United States for the actions of Mubarak's regime comes against a background of systematic and massive human rights abuses, passing drastic laws controlling civic organizations and arresting activists and opposition leaders.[11] The United States' Commission for Freedom of Religion has consistently recorded human rights violations in the form of harassing religious minorities. The Commission has placed Egypt on its watch list "of countries…, which require close monitoring due to the nature and extent of violations of religious freedom engaged in or tolerated by the government."[12] Human Rights Watch vainly endeavored to

9. Challis McDonough, "Three Dead in Egypt Election Violence," *Global Security*, December 7, 2005 [on-line resource]; articles available from: http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/Egypt/Egypt-051207-voa01.htm; Internet; accessed February 2009.

10. U.S. Department of State, Office of the Press Secretary, *Remarks by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice*, Press Release, Washington, D.C., (September 9, 2005) and White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *Remarks by President George Walker Bush*, Press Release, Washington, D.C., (September 10, 2005).

11. Joshua A. Stacher, "Parties' Over: The Demise o Egypt's Political Parties," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (November 2004): 215-233.

12. United States Commission for International Freedom of Religions, "*Egypt Policy Focus*," June 2005[on-line resource]; available from: http://www.uscirf.gov/images/stories/pdf/Policy_Focus/EgyptPolicyBrief.pdf ; Internet; accessed February 2009.

pressure Washington to attach conditions to its military aid to Egypt in 2007, but Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice waived the requirement of oversight and Egypt received what it needed without questions asked[13] In a high-conflict region, the priority is to balancing the revisionism of Bin Laden and his satellites[14].

Admittedly, the Egyptian regime did not need external help or encouragement to heighten repression; it has reached a degree of expertise envied only by fellow tyrannies. The Global War on Terror, however, has served as an additional pretext to justify that policy. Anti-Terrorism laws, such as the presidential 4/1992 decree[15] aimed at controlling and monitoring external funding of Egyptian civil society organizations, which was initially meant to control the Islamist fundamentalists' funds, has been used against human rights defenders and intellectuals like Saad Eddine Ibrahim among others[16]. The United States has shown little or no interest in dissociating itself from such abuses and such negation of human dignity, despite the Presidents' strong words on freedom being the antidote for Jihadism.

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13. Scott J. Carpenter, "The Future of U.S. Assistance to Egypt," *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, Policy Watch Number 1399 (August 21, 2008).

14. Benjamin Miller, "The International System and Regional Balance in the Middle East," in *Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century*, T.V Paul, Writz, James J., Fortmann, Michael, ed., 243.

15. Stacher, "Parties' Over: The Demise of Egypt's Political Parties,"

16. Ibid.

In contrary, the administration of President George Bush allowed itself and the American public to believe in scarecrows. Thus, to counteract any pressure from the United States, although mild and scarce by any standard, Mubarak likes to use the threat of the Muslim Brotherhood as the only alternative to his power[17], prepares his son for succession to his presidency-throne and jails anyone standing in his way. An example of Mubarak's scorn for any democratic alternative that might arise between him and the Muslim Brotherhood is the arrest of his once democratic opponent, Ayman Nour among hundreds of others. An act condemned by many, even in the US Congress, as an attempt by Mubarak to enhance his political position by discrediting a secular democratic opponent[18].

Although Mubarak's resilience to internal and external pressure for reform constitutes solid evidence of the balancing dynamics between the United States and its 'strategic allies' on one hand and Al-Qaeda on the other hand, it is worth pointing out further evidence to support this claim. Hence, while patron-client relations are expected to involve concessions and compromise on both side of the equation, the challenges associated with the Jihadist threat leave little room for concessions on the part of the United States. Yet, those are the only visible features of the relations

17. Fareed Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom*, (New York: W.W. Norton , 2003), 120.

18. Congress, House, Committee on International Relations, Sub-committee on the Middle East and Central Asia, *Review of U.S. assistance to Egypt*, Part-I, 109th Cong., 2nd Sess., (May 17 and June 21, 2006), Serial No. 109-211, [On-line resource], available from: http://www.house.gov/international—relations ; Internet, accessed December 2008.

connecting the United States with those it has declared strategic allies in the Global War on Terrorism.

The support of the United States of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak despite his unsavory rule is often explained by some abstract logic that places American interests and anti-terrorism activities in the balance. Since the end of the Cold War, balance of power and balance of threat became proscribed notions. Nevertheless, the United States' endeavor to maintain its access to the Sinai Strait, base facilities and other economic and strategic advantages in the Middle East and Africa is typical of balance of power and balance of threat strategies.

The fight against Al-Qaeda, and the need for a partner in the Arab-Israeli conflict are only few of the justifications, inter alia, that place the regime in Egypt beyond criticism in the eyes of the United States. While the United States continues to make substantive financial contributions to the Mubarak regime in exchange for his full commitment to fight Al-Qaeda and hold back the expansion of the Jihadist ideology, it is clear that Mubarak's efforts are geared towards maintaining his hold on power and securing its potential transition to his son[19]. Meanwhile, he continues

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19. Arab and Egyptian Media often debate the accession of Jamaal Mubarak to power to replace his father at the head of the National Democratic Party and subsequently, as President of the country. Mohammed Abdel Azim, "Les Frères Musulmans en Egypte: Un Instrument pour Casser l'Opposition," [On-line resource], article available from: http://www.editions-harmattan.fr/auteurs/article_pop.asp?no=6090&no_artiste=12874; Internet, accessed, March 2009.

to appease the Muslim Brotherhood and the Sheikhs of Al-Azhar and to direct their ire towards the outside[20].

Brandishing the threat of the Muslim Brotherhood in response to pressures for reform, the regime of Hosni Mubarak has nonetheless done little to alleviate the influence of Jihadism in his country. Like his predecessors, Hosni Mubarak's approach to the Jihadism has been an ambiguous one. The Egyptian regime's tolerance of the incendiary *Fatwas* that emanate from the all-too-powerful Al-Azhar institution, vilifying religious minorities, political groups, modernists, women and inevitably the United States[21], shows willingness to compromise with extremists as long as they do not directly threaten to destabilize its power. Although many omit to point it out, Al-Azhar is a state institution which promotes fundamentalism and Jihad and which voices opinions on behalf of the Mubarak regime that would be otherwise undiplomatic. Thus, presenting the fundamentalists of the Muslim Brotherhood as threat to the stability of the region and the interests of the United States only indicates Mubarak's commitment to his power and to reaping dividends from his country's political situation. His government's refusal to legalize moderate *progressist* groups, such as the Wasat [Medium or Center] group where modernists from different ideological and social backgrounds, including dissidents from the

20. The Jamestown Foundation, "Al Azhar, Egyptian Islam and the War in Iraq," *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 2, Issue 12 (May 18, 2005), [On-line Journal], article available from: http://www.jamestown.org; Internet, accessed March 2009.

21. Ibid.

Muslim Brotherhood [22], offer moderate platforms for political change, is an additional manifestation of the regime's fear of losing its winning card, i.e., the threat of an Islamist fundamentalist party[23].

While the Egyptian government stresses its position on terrorism by reminding the world that the Muslim Brotherhood is officially banned as a political party, the latter has been given ample space and opportunity to radicalize the society[24]. Its members are permitted access to parliamentary seats as independents, usually on platforms in conformity with their party's ideological lines. Thus, extending the olive branch to the Muslim Brotherhood, Hosni Mubarak allows its members to participate in student associations, workers unions and other 'legal' social organizations, hoping they would give up political aspirations[25]; the result has been an increasingly radicalized society and a weakening of democratic alternatives. With the funds flowing from yet another U.S ally *par excellence*, Saudi Arabia, the Muslim Brotherhood has been able to supplant the government of Egypt by offering economic and social services to disenfranchised communities with the tacit approval

22. International Crisis Group, "Islamism in North Africa: Egypt's Opportunity," *Briefings*, Cairo/Brussels, (April 20, 2004).

23. Hala Mustapha, "A Policy for Promoting Liberal Democracy in Egypt," Foundation for Defense of Democracies, Voices from the Middle East on Democratization and Reform, White Paper Series [On-line resource], available from: www.defenddemocracy.org

24. John Walsh, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood: Understanding Centrist Islam: Perspectives on the United States," *Harvard International Review*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (winter 2003).

25. Ibid.

of the Mubarak regime[26] . Banned from the opposition and lacking the legal status of political party, the Muslim Brothers shifted their focus towards the society they aimed to shape in their image. In a country where 40% of the population lives below the poverty line, the Muslim Brotherhood offers free health care, education, carrier training and employment facilitation for communities that would be otherwise deprived of any prospects of a better future under the elitist regime of Hosni Mubarak[27]. The latter, freed of the burden of having to invest in socio-economic needs, instead of military equipment, has been complacent with this rather unusual situation of task sharing and consequently a de facto power sharing with the Muslim Brotherhood. The regime maintains political power while the movement gains social influence.

This degree of flexibility with the Islamist opposition movement betrays one of two possibilities. Either the Muslim Brotherhood is not as great a threat as the Egyptian ruling clan would like the world to believe, or Mubarak appeases the Muslim Brotherhood in order to maintain power while he continues to direct its ire towards the United States, especially as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict persists. The latest probability has often been presented as the rationale of Mubarak's double standard approach with the Muslim Brotherhood. While careful not to openly

26. The Jamestown Foundation, "Al-Azhar, Egyptian Islam and the War in Iraq," *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 2, Issue 12 (May 18, 2005), [On-line resource]; Article available from: http://www.jamestown.org; Internet, accessed February 2009.

27. Noha Antar, ''Le Succès des Frères Musulmans Lors des Elections Législatives en Egypte : Raisons et Implications,'' [On-line resource]; Article available from: http://www.euromesco.net/images//51_fr.pdf; Internet; accessed March 2009.

antagonize the United States, Hosni Mubarak delegates that mission to his clerics at Al-Azhar[28]. Although the latter rejects violence at home, it promotes Jihad in Palestine, Afghanistan and other parts of the world, including Iraq, all under the supervision of its sponsor, the Mubarak regime[29].

This is not to say that Mubarak's regime has been complacent with terrorists; it has not. The Egyptian government has taken some concrete, strict and by any standard, extreme measures to fight violence in general and Jihadist terrorism in particular. Egypt is signatory of a number of international and regional agreements to fight domestic and transnational terrorism[30]. Mubarak has successfully defeated the Jama'a Islamiyah and the Egyptian Islamic Jihad. However, it is important to put those measures in the context of state security. A police state that tracks down criminals with the same fervor it does intellectuals could not tolerate a form of violence that is likely to pose a threat to its power. Anti-terrorism strategies are not to be confused with the policies and actions – or the lack thereof - aiming at the eradication of the Jihadist ideology that fuels terrorism. Despite the massive arrests at the approach of elections, the Egyptian government has shown a very high degree of tolerance towards the Muslim Brotherhood as well as the Imams at Al-Azhar that

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28. Antar, ''Le Succès des Frères Musulmans Lors des Elections Législatives en Egypte : Raisons et Implications.''

29. Ibid.

30. Yonah Alexander, *Counterterrorism Strategies, Successes and Failures of Six Nations* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2006) 132-133.

have issued Fatwas to kill Muslims and non-Muslims alike if they did not agree with their ways.

American officials continuously acclaim Egypt for being "a close partner with the United States in the global war on terrorism and for having greatly assisted our efforts aimed at eradicating this scourge*." [31]* This statement by Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, David Welch, in front of Congress betrays a superficial view of the Egyptian regime's efforts to advance U.S interests in the region. The entire political sphere in the United States, seems to be hypnotized by Mubarak and his regime; the slightest positive action taken in domestic and regional politics provokes a wave of extol. If Egypt were Cleopatra, U.S. officials would be Anthony. Contrasting the Egyptian and international media reports with U.S. officials' assessment of the economic and socio-political situation in that country makes one wonder if there are not two nations named Egypt. Hence, ignoring Mubarak's complacency with the causes of terrorism and supporting his dictatorship through economic, diplomatic and military assistance shows the lack of interest of the United States in the internal dynamics of Egyptian politics. It is evident that as long as the dictator complies with specific requests that pertain to Global War on Terrorism, his ruling style is of secondary concern.

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31. (U.S. Congress, House 2006, 211).

The strategy that was initiated as a bait to keep Egypt out of the Soviet Camp[32] and from harassing its neighbor, has turned into a family tradition carried out without remembering when and why it originated.

> For years, many in the United States have complained that we get too little for our money in Egypt, and many in Egypt have complained that we get too much. It is partly because our agenda with Egypt is so broad and so deep that there are always areas of dissatisfaction. At the same time, this relationship clearly lost its spark many years ago[33].

The Soviet Union has joined the archives of history but Egypt still receives Congress' approval for Foreign Military Financing [34], designed to support democratically elected governments, which Mubarak's is certainly not. Hence, while the United States strives to prevent fundamentalist groups from accessing sophisticated weaponry, its arms trade with Egypt reveals its confidence in the longevity and the stability of the Mubarak regime. In the meantime, the discussion, politically and intellectually, focuses on the nature of the Muslim Brotherhood, its commitment to democracy and the prospect of accepting it as a successor - natural or fabricated - to the regime of Hosni Mubarak.

Like other authoritarians in many Muslim countries, the Islamist fundamentalists, for Mubarak and his predecessors, have been the most effective

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32. Christopher C. Shoemaker and John Spanier, *Patron-Client State Relationships: Multilateral Crises in the Nuclear Age* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 82-127.

33. (U.S. Congress, House 2006, 211), statement by Jon B. Alterman

34. Ibid.

weapons to curb the emergence of progressive, modern and democratic movements. The threat of the fundamentalists permitted him to preserve his throne for over a quarter of a century, maintain the flow of weapons from the United States and continue to enjoy the privileged position of regional leader. The appeasement of the Islamist fundamentalists at home and presenting them as a threat abroad, is another shared characteristic between Mubarak and his admirer in Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf.

Renewed Vows with Pakistan

The September 11, 2001 attacks were in some regard a blessing for General Pervez Musharraf. After the United States declared him a pariah in 1999 for his military coup against the elected government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, he suddenly resurfaced on the international arena as a 'strategic ally' of the United States, indulged with military assistance and pampered with economic aid. In a sort of déjà vu scenario reminiscent of the 1970s and 1980s, the United States re-embraces a military dictator in Pakistan in order to secure its passage to Afghanistan[35]. As if history had never occurred, the United States once again returned to its former client-trouble-child for a renewed contract under the same terms but with a different project. This vagueness in dealing with the Pakistani regime might seem confusing and incomprehensible for some, but it does not come

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35. S. Akbar Zaidi, "Pakistan: Legitimizing Military Rule," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 36, No. 40 (October 6-12, 2001): 3822.

as a surprise if one considers closely the history of the US-Pakistan relations. Similar precedents are easily found along the history of cooperation between the United States and Pakistan. The two countries have been dancing on ever-changing rhythms since the creation of the state of Pakistan in 1949.

Whereas Pakistan did not emerge immediately as a country of strategic interest to the Truman administration[36], the growing cooperation between the Soviet Union and India compelled the Eisenhower administration to pay more attention to the newly independent state of Pakistan, trapped, geographically, between the Soviet Union, China and India. Containment in Asia dictated Eisenhower's approach to Pakistan. Economic aid and military assistance were provided to keep Pakistan out of the Soviet spell.

Following the Pakistan-India war of 1965 over Kashmir, the United States withdrew its economic and military support to Pakistan[37] and the relations fell into a state of freeze that continued under the administrations of Presidents John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, both preoccupied with countries facing direct communist threats elsewhere in the world such as Vietnam and Congo. It was not long before Pakistan re-emerged as a key state in south Asia as a facilitator of U.S. China rapprochement. However, at the outbreak of the Pakistan-India war in 1971 over the

36. Gilani, Tarik. "US-Pakistan Relations: The Way Forward," Parameters, *US Army War College Quarterly* (Winter 2006-2007).

37. Daniel Benjamin, *America and the World in the Age of Terror*, (Washington, D.C.: The CSIS Press , 2004), 97.

secession of East Pakistan (currently Bangladesh), US Congress pressured the Nixon administration to impose an arms embargo on Pakistan due to its repressive military actions against the secessionists. The Nixon administration adopted the official policy of an even-handed approach towards the belligerent countries, but, unofficially, it insisted on 'tilting' towards favoring Pakistan in order to maintain President Yahiya Khan as the link to China[38]. Thus, in March 1973, the US administration resumed the sale of non-lethal arms to Pakistan, and, in 1975, the embargo was entirely lifted[39]. This situation lasted until April 1979 when US Congress passed the Symington-Glen Amendment to the Security Assistance Act, which prevented U.S. economic and military assistance to countries engaged in the acquisition or production of nuclear weapons[40], and Pakistan fell under that category of countries.

The Carter administration did not acknowledge the importance of an alliance with Pakistan until the fall of the Shah regime in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December of 1979. Due to President Reagan's determination to stop the expansion of the Soviet Union in Asia, Pakistan was once again admitted to the club of 'strategic allies.' Carter's idea to use Pakistan as a conduit for U.S. military assistance to the *Mujahideen* in Afghanistan, was carried out by the Reagan

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38. Ibid.

39. Aftab Alam, *U.S. Policy towards South Asia* (Delhi, Rhaj Publications, 1998), 89.

40. Ibid., 89, 90.

69

administration and the latter did not hesitate to offer Pakistan as much as $ 4.2 billion in military assistance which propelled the country, in 1987, to the second largest recipient in US military aid after Israel.

During the period from 1980 to 1989, opposition in Congress to continuing Pakistan's armament due to the latter's acquisition of nuclear technology often faced an administration that was willing to turn a 'blind eye' on the issue as long as Pakistan assisted the Afghan *Mujahideen* and facilitated their contacts with the United States. However, the end of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and the fall of the Soviet Union made it difficult for such certification to be continued[41]. President George H. W. Bush did not provide a valid reason to certify that Pakistan did not own nuclear weapons, especially after the dissipation of the Soviet threat and the augmenting lamentation in Congress about Pakistan's nuclear capabilities. Consequently, all military and economic aid was again suspended[42] and the US Pakistan relations were put on ice.

The end of the cold war and the subsequent precariousness that characterized Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Republics turned America's attention to that specific region of the world. The new world order offered no incentive for the U.S.-Pakistan relations to warm up as the issue of nuclear proliferation re-surfaced due to

41. Ibid.

42. Paul. H Kreisberg, "The US and Asia in 1990," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 31, No. 1, A survey of Asia in 1990, Part 1 (January 1990): 1-13.

raising concerns over central Asian countries such as Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan controlling a nuclear arsenal. The Clinton administration imposed further sanctions on Pakistan as a result of this country's nuclear tests in 1998 and in condemnation of the military coup against Prime Minister *Nawaz Sharif* which brought General *Musharraf* to the helm in 1999[43]. During this period, Pakistan continued its nuclear activities and launched a line of nuclear trade through its national nuclear laboratory named after its senior nuclear scientist *Abdel Qader Khan* who was to be blamed later for the illegal trafficking in nuclear technology[44].

It seemed, however, that the interdependence of Pakistan and the United States never ceased to exist as backchannel cooperation continued in the field of intelligence regarding the activities of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan[45]. Despite the sanctions it imposed on Pakistan, the Clinton administration did not seem willing to further compromise its relations with a corrupt regime that might reveal helpful in fighting the newly emerged threat posed by what will become a global threat. The events of September 11, 2001 would soon solidify this position, and General Musharraf was soon to be tagged U.S. strongest ally in the fight against terrorism. Indeed, those events proved another catastrophe in favor of Pakistan. As the Islamic threat mounted, the United States foreign policy has been modified to suit the needs

43. Benjamin, *America and the World in the Age of Terror*, 105.

44. David Armstrong and Joseph Trento, *America and the Islamic Bomb: The Deadly Compromise* (Hanover: Steerforth Press, 2007), 202. 207, 215.

45. Ibid., 202. 207, 215.

of the Global War on Terror. The unruliness and lawlessness of Pakistan's northwestern border cities and the allegiance of the latter to their fellow radical Islamists offered additional grounds for the two countries to charm each other again. Despite *Musharraf's* refusal to allow U.S. Forces to use Pakistan as a staging ground for attacks against the Taliban, the Bush administration defines Pakistan as a key ally in the war on terror[46].

The concerns over nuclear weapons were no longer the focus of U.S. Foreign policy toward Pakistan, except in that the United States needs to keep those weapons out of the hands of anti-American extremist groups. To do so, the United States unconditionally backed up the leader that it perceives as being capable of fighting the Islamists, ignoring his army's history in supporting radical and violent Islamists for political purposes[47]. Even after the activities of A. Q. Khan, were revealed in 2004, the Bush administration failed to hold the Pakistani regime accountable for such activities and preferred to adopt Pakistan's official version on the subject as being an operation coordinated secretly by a small group of scientists[48] and that the Pakistani government did not have any knowledge of those activities. Furthermore, reports of Pakistan accords with Saudi Arabia to exchange nuclear technology for low-priced

46. Benjamin, *America and the World in the Age of Terror*, 103.

47. Stephen Philip Cohen, "The Jihadist Threat to Pakistan," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Summer 2003): 7-25.

48. Ibid.

oil guarantees did not alter the current administration's attitude toward Pakistan[49]. As President Musharraf understands the United States' need for his support in the Global War on Terror, he does not hesitate to carry on not only his violations of human rights and political repression but also his rather 'suspicious' nuclear activities[50] and even more suspicious relations with the Taliban.

As Musharraf agreed to support US efforts to defeat the Taliban and joined the Global War on Terrorism, the United States agreed to feign amnesia regarding the issue of nuclear trials. A. Q. Khan was no longer a celebrated hero in Pakistan but Musharraf became one in the United States. Both countries agreed to keep nuclear weapons out of the Jihadists' reach by maintaining Musharraf's hold on power. The United States placed great expectations on Musharraf, offering him more incentives that he could have expected. Pakistan was granted major non-NATO ally status, which assured him increasing military assistance[51]; he received $1 billion in aid from the United States to redress his country's crumbling economy while international financial institutions, - with American encouragements - agreed to reschedule and restructure Pakistan's debt[52]. It became clear shortly after the revival of partnership between Pakistan and the United States that Musharraf's interpretation

49. Ibid.

50. Armstrong , *America and the Islamic Bomb*, 202.

51. Veena Kukreja, and M. P. Singh, *Pakistan: Democracy, Development and Security Issues*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005), 162.

52. Ibid., 162, 163.

of America's message was tantamount to 'forgiveness' of past and future sins. As evidenced by his 2002 showdown with India[53] and by the turn taken in his domestic policies in the field of human rights and civil liberties, Musharraf had his own way of interpreting anti-terrorism and of his alliance with the United States.

Specifics of the deteriorating conditions of civil liberties in Pakistan were systematically recorded and published by human rights organizations inside and outside the country. However, despite the detailed records of the brutality of Musharraf's security apparatus manifested by the regular arbitrary arrests of dissenting intellectuals, journalists and civil society activists[54], the United States policy towards Pakistan remained unchanged. Musharraf was the 'man of the hour' and no other alternative was to be considered. Even in the last days of Musharraf's rule, and despite the worldwide condemnation of his actions and some sporadic outcries from members of Congress[55], the United States hesitated to openly criticize its ally in West Asia and failed to exert effective pressure, favoring a return to constitutional rule in Pakistan. While the strategy of the United States was to reduce Al-Qaeda's threat worldwide and transpose the battles away from its shores,

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53. Ian Talbot, "Pakistan in 2002: Democracy, Terrorism and Brinkmanship," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 143, No. 1. A Survey of Asia in 2002 (January-February, 2003), 198-207.

54. Hassan Ali Dayan , "Pakistan's General Problem," *South Asia Research for Human Rights Watch*, [On-line resource]; article available from: www.hrw.org/en/news/2007/06/26/pakistan-general-problem; Internet; accessed January 2009

55. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, "Democracy, Authoritarianism and Terrorism in Contemporary Pakistan, "Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 110th Cong., 1st Sess., .November 7, 2007, Serial No. 110-130, [On-Line resource], available from: http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/ ; Internet, accessed December 2008.

Pakistan's Musharraf sought to augment his dividends from his alliance with the United States. Meanwhile, his obsession with maintaining himself in power was manifested by a reluctance to antagonize even the threat he was hired to alleviate.

Although it was generally assumed that, the Pakistani dictator was a key ally in the Global War on Terrorism and that "it would have been much more difficult to dislodge the Taliban and Al Qaeda from Afghanistan without the cooperation of Pakistan's military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf,"[56] evidence of him playing on both sides of the field is hardly scarce. Musharraf might have helped dislodge the Taliban and drive them out of Kabul, but only to allow them access to Pakistan, the birthplace of their movement. Without his help, indeed, the Taliban and Al-Qaeda sympathizers would not have been able to rearm and reorganize under the supervision of the Inter Service Intelligence [ISI][57]. Musharraf, like his role model to the west of the Red Sea, but in a different style, sought to maintain both the Taliban and the United States on his side as long as his power remained intact. For him, the alliance with the United States was a guarantee to maintain the internal balance of power in his favor.

While the United States continued to prop up the military arsenal of Pervez Musharraf and alleviate the economic strain on his country, the General negotiated

56. Mona Al-Naggar, Dancing With Dictators, *New York Times*, September 1, 2002, A8.

57. International Crisis Group, "Pakistan's Tribal Areas: Appeasing the Militants," *Asia Report*, No. 125 (December 11, 2006).

peace with the Taliban and their supporters in Pakistan[58]. As Marvin Weinbaum

expresses in the following:

> Musharraf has shown a keen sense of limits on how far he can go in
> cooperating with American law enforcement in searching for terrorists
> and in knowing what Jihadist groups he will tolerate while he tries to
> appease Washington on controlling militants[59].

The United States presented and celebrated Musharraf as the only option capable of

fighting the Taliban and Al-Qaeda militants, ignoring the history of that country's

army, which is marked by its long ties with radical and violent Islamists for political

purposes.[60] It took the United States six years of fighting, billions of dollars and the

clear resurgence of the Taliban to realize Musharraf's cunning. Even some members

of Congress - several billions of dollars later - reached the conclusion that America's

man on the frontlines was not responding to orders. The opacity surrounding

Pakistan's performance in the Global War on Terrorism was expressed in the words

of Congressman Gary Ackerman stating, "For the last 5 years … despite our

assistance, Pakistan was not making a complete effort to combat terrorism…

President General Musharraf had made a strategic decision to have it both ways."[61]

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58. Ibid.

59. Marvin Weinbaum, "Pakistan and the United States: A Partnership of Necessity," in Benjamin, *America and the World in the Age of Terror*, 111.

60. Cohen, "The Jihadist Threat to Pakistan," 7-25.

61. (Congress, House, 2007. 110-130).

Thus, as the funds flowed from Washington and the world was invited - or incited -

to take Musharraf's good faith in fighting terrorism at face value, the latter was only

preoccupied with maintaining his helm and weakening the political communities in

his country.

> Since 9/11 though, terrorism and the fight against it has come to dominate the
> relationship and frames any conversation we may have about all of the other
> issues. It is obvious that we need Pakistan's help in finding al-Qaeda and the
> Taliban, and they have provided some of that help, but their inability or
> unwillingness to control their own territory along the Afghan border continues
> to raise the perennial question about Pakistan: Is their uneven effort against
> terrorists a question of political will or simply one of capabilities?[62]

The hopes of President Bush to 'convert' Musharraf into a democrat were lost on the

Northwest frontier. The relationships between the United States and the regimes of

Egypt and Pakistan were not built upon mutual interest but mutual distrust. Each

country sought to use the other for its own gains, and on the side of the dictators for

their personal ambitions.

The alacrity of the dictators to declare their support for the United States'

effort to fight terrorism immediately after the September 11 attacks is indicative of

bandwagoning on their part. Instead of running the risk of being the targets of the

United States' 'democratization campaign', the dictators in Egypt and Pakistan - like

their counterparts in most of the Muslim world, including Libya - opted for joining

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62. Ibid.

the coalition of the willing, which in turn gave them all the advantages enjoyed by client states.

Unconventional Allies against an Unconventional Enemy

By definition, balancing alliances are formed with the objective of adding the military power of several states to that of the leading state, i.e. the hegemon. The military power of the dictators in Egypt and Pakistan could by no means be a complement to that of the United States whose defense spending is greater than that of the next twenty powers combined [63]. However, the security apparatuses in dictatorial countries such as Egypt and Pakistan possess and practice tactics that the United States might not favor, at least not openly. It is now clear that great armies, especially in a democracy such as the United States, are not equipped to fight guerrilla warfare, let alone fight an enemy that uses terrorist tactics and whose members are prepared to die as long as they wreck havoc at the heart of their target.

In recognizing the nature of Al-Qaeda, the reach of its criminal ideology as well as its capacity to mobilize millions worldwide, the United States seems to have adopted some of its enemy's strategy through dictators interposed. Al-Qaeda and its satellite Jihadist groups employ the democratic nature of the United States, the free speech and the freedom of information to spread their lethal propaganda. In return,

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63. Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment Revisited," in *The New Era of Terrorism: Selected Readings*, Gus Martin, ed., (California State University, Dominguez Hills, Sage Publications, 2004), 14.

the United States found in the un-democratic and unruly dictators a useful tool to curb the expansion of the Jihadists and their propaganda. Al-Qaeda, uses globalized communication networks to recruit militants, order and organize terrorist attacks, the United States condones the dictators' restrictive laws on internet use[64].

The secretive nature of the network, its ubiquity, the difficulty to identify its members or their locations and to predict their next actions requires alliances that would be otherwise unconventional. In front of such a shadowy organization, the laws of the land might prove to be more of an obstacle than a facilitating means to bring criminals, i.e. terrorists into justice. Closing gathering premises, preventing public manifestation, randomly arresting suspects and forcefully interrogating them is the cachet of dictators. In the United States, or any other liberal democracy, those practices could not be attempted without stirring up a wave of indignation from the citizenry, civil society organizations and international institutions, say nothing about law-suits.

Although the United States faced numerous scandals domestically and internationally with the controversies stirred up by wiretapping of communications, rendition of U.S. citizens, the status of the enemy combatants and the alleged use of torture in Guantanamo as well as the treatment of prisoners in Abu Ghraib, its

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64. Reporters Sans Frontières (Reporters Without Borders) places Egypt in the category of countries considered as 'internet enemies' due to the repressive policies regulating internet access, [On-line resource], Reports available from: http://www.rsf.article.php; Internet; accessed March 2009.

democratic nature prevents it from crossing legal and constitutional lines. The Bush administration had to face many unpleasant situations and answer to indignant lawmakers and citizens when the pictures of mistreated Iraqi prisoners appeared on the internet. The debate that ensued, domestically and internationally, compelled the administration to immediately order an investigation and bring those responsible of those despicable acts to justice. The administration was equally swift to publicly dissociate such actions from the American character and from the nature of its mission in Iraq and in the region.

Conversely, dictators are characterized as such because of their scorn of laws, their disregard of constitutional rules and their ability to conceal the horrors committed by their security forces against civilians. In dictatorial countries such as Egypt and Pakistan, the lack of democratic institutions and the rule of law that reinforces checks and balances, facilitates the gangrene treatment approach towards terrorism, which consists of cutting off the infected parts instead of treating them. Dictators have the luxury of impunity. They have the power to abduct individuals and imprison them, torture them and in some cases assassinate them, without having to answer to civil rights movements, be they national or international. The unlawful nature of the dictators makes their alliances necessary to fight an enemy scornful of laws and of rules of engagement. Where the United States has to use authorized investigative techniques, refrain from unwarranted information gathering, for dictatorial regimes, laws are meant to regulate society not the governments;

80

dictators make many laws only to break them and use them against their citizens.

Hence, while the formation of alliances supposes the objective of adding states' military power to that of the leading hegemon, the usefulness of the dictators in Egypt and Pakistan stems not from their added military power to that of the United States, but from their capacity to use unconventional means to fight an unconventional enemy. Hence, to fight a criminal organization, whose intention is to kill and die, one needs the services of rulers whose disdain of laws is only matched by that of their scorn for freedom and who do not hesitate to sacrifice the lives of innocents among their own with the only purpose of clinging to power.

Democratic governments in Egypt or Pakistan might lessen the resentment of their citizens as well as their aspiration to die for Ben Laden rather than live for their countries. However, they might also not be able to prevent those citizens from following the path of the suicide bombers if they do not eavesdrop on them, restrict their access to information and prevent them from freely expressing their opinion. The experiences of the United States with semi-democratic Turkey refusing to lend its territories for the launching of U.S. strikes against Iraq and democratic Spain withdrawing its troops from the Multi-National Forces under popular pressure enhance the posture of useful "friendly tyrants".

CONCLUSION: BALANCING ALLIANCES AND DEMOCRACY PROMOTION

The 2002 and 2006 National Security Strategies of the United States contained elements of a good diagnosis as they identified some of the fundamental factors that have contributed to the expansion of Jihadism, including repression and corruption. However, politicians and practitioners of International Relations remain divided over the prognosis. The United States' decision to enlist the dictators' unruly expertise to fight the unruly hordes of Ben Laden is a pragmatic approach and a matter of survival. Nevertheless, hiring dictators as hit men to carry out a 'dirty mission' should not constitute an obstacle to upholding America's ideals. The United States' association with dictators diminishes its credibility and further complicates its efforts to promote democracy.

The idea of democracy promotion as a means to enhance U.S. interests in the world seems to be struggling to earn merit, despite the lessons learned from the dictatorial alliances of the Cold War. The issue of reconciling America's ideals and principles with national interests seems to have never been settled even with America's unchallenged and unequaled position of power in the system. Although democracy and freedom are presented as the end goal of the United States in its engagement in the international arena, the pursuit of that goal remains relegated to a secondary priority, depending upon the protection of perceived interests.

82

By placing the conflict with Al-Qaeda and its satellites in an ideological context, the United States leveled the grounds for its future defense against any criticism of a course of action that would not be recognized in connection with its war against '*evil*.' The administration's change of justification of the Iraq war provides evidence that does not require further elaboration. In addition, and more importantly, placing the Global War on Terrorism in the hands of the American public and its beliefs would facilitate a defensive argument against any criticism directed at its cooperation with dictators in countries vulnerable to the Jihadist ideology. In the fight against Al-Qaeda, the United States as a nation would have to be content with the lesser of two evils: Jihadists or Dictators. Hence, *moralism* in promoting democracy would have to be supplanted by pragmatism.

The analysis of the relations maintained by the United States with its two most important strategic allies in the Muslim world corroborates the assumption that balancing strategies remain central to its foreign policy practice. On the other hand, democracy promotion as an anti-Jihadist strategy has been largely discredited both by parallel offensive strategies and by the need for tactics that cannot be enunciated in any official strategy. Whether it was to sustain the regime in Egypt to balance the emergence of a revisionist state in the Middle East, or enlist the services of a hit man on the North-West Frontier of Pakistan, for the United States the choice between democracy promotion and dictatorial allies was clear: democracy is desirable but not necessary.

One has to concur that great powers do not achieve their preponderance by just preaching the good word. Preserving self-interests is clearly the core mission of statehood; expanding those interests is the prerogative of great powers. As Robert Osgood puts it, "the pursuit of ideals is in the long run contingent upon their compatibility with the most compelling ends of national self-interests."[1] Therefore, it is understood that the crucial importance of national security provides a rational and a moral justification for nations to pursue their self-interest, at the expense of others, if needed[2]. In other words, the United States - as any other power - seeks its security and its interests first, even if that entails the subjugation of entire nations and a flagrant contempt for the very ideals it associates with its identity. Clearly, the case studies of Egypt and Pakistan show that the United States efforts to promote democracy as a means to fight terrorism have been surpassed by the dictators' efforts to promote terrorism in order to prevent the success of democracy. In what seemed to be a power contest between the United States and its 'incidental allies,' democracy remains the eternal scapegoat.

As acknowledged by President George W. Bush, "the United States is idealistic about [its] national goals, but realistic about the means to achieve them."[3]

1. Robert E. Osgood, *Ideals and Self Interest in America's Foreign Relations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 16.

2. Ibid.

3. Amy Zegart, "The Legend of a Democracy Promoter," *National Interest*, September 16, 2008, [Journal On-line]; Article available from: http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=19688; Internet; accessed February 2009.

Those means, however, have been revealed to be escaping from the control of the United States. Where the United States cannot afford repressive practices without causing a seismic reaction from the international community, the media, and an opposition on the lookout for missteps, the dictators have the luxury to do so. Fighting Al-Qaeda's shadowy network requires the mobilization of all the means and power available. Hence, faced with an unreasonable enemy, the United States felt the need to cooperate with unreasonable rulers. After all, reason does not always appeal to unreasonable men[4]. Ben Laden's determination to take the fight to the end of his resources or the end of the United States presence in the Muslim world, and his ambition to reestablish a Caliphate from Afghanistan to Spain, does not coincide with the United States' hegemonic objectives. To let an entire region of the world fall under the barbaric rule of Ben Laden is simply not an option.

Balancing Al-Qaeda's threat has dominated the foreign policy of the United States during the two mandates of President George Walker Bush. Although Al-Qaeda had attacked interests of the United States in Kenya, Tanzania and the Gulf of Aden during the inter-wars interlude[5], it was regarded and dealt with as a mere nuisance on the periphery of the world. After the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the devastating effects they had on the world generally and the United States

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4. John F. Kennedy, Speech at the Washington University Centennial Celebration, November 16, 1961, John F. Kennedy Library Organization [On-line resource]; recording and transcript available from: http://www.jfklibrary.org/Historical+Resources/Archives/Reference+Desk/Speeches/Speeches+of+John+F.+Kennedy.htm , Internet; accessed April 2009.

5. Thérèse Delpech, "Imbalance of Power," in Martin, *The New Era of Terrorism*, 47.

particularly, it has risen to be a global threat, which requires global strategies and the mobilization of efforts and assets similar to those needed to deal with a threat emanating from a challenging or revisionist state. However, as it differs from a state in that it has no regard for compromise, the strategies, and more importantly the tactics, used to fight it differ from those used in fighting a state with a conventional army and a defined territory. In addition, where a state might be vulnerable to deterrence and retaliation or amenable to negotiation, diplomacy and sanctions bear no meaning for Ben Laden and his followers.

The new threat facing the world has redefined the concept of strategic balancing. As a non-state actor with the ambitions and reach of a great power capable of altering the dynamics of world order, Al-Qaeda has proven to be capable of provoking the formation of traditional and non-traditional alliances as well as sealing the fate of millions of people. Ben Laden's global network lacks status but it does not lack resources and determination, topped off with a fixed objective.[6] Whereas during the cold war balancing was closely associated with power, the insidious nature of Al-Qaeda, and its capacity to undermine the security of the United States and threaten its interests domestically and internationally, has made the threat balancing approach a sine qua non of the Global War on Terrorism. The novelty that emerged from this conflict is more defined within geographic lines than

6. Bruce Hoffman, "Rethinking Terrorism and Counterterrorism Since 9/11." Martin, *The New Era of Terrorism*, 2-11.

within ideological and strategic ones. The iron curtain turned into fault lines; Eastern Europe and Latin America were supplanted by Central and West Asia while South East Asia remains on the checkerboard and the Middle East emerges as the centerpiece of the new balancing dynamics.

As shown through the cases of Egypt and Pakistan, the United States was more concerned with the dictators' contribution to fighting Al-Qaeda than with their inclination to introduce democratic reform into their respective societies. However, history has shown that entrusting dictators with a mission as vital as the eradication of terrorism could only incur surprises; and the results might not necessarily be to the liking of the United States or to the rest of the world. The rulers of Egypt and Pakistan – among others - have mastered the scare tactics within their societies and in the face of the international community. The threat of an Islamist regime internally and the threat of neo-colonialism in countries newly independent from European influence makes the dictators' task of maintaining power an easy one. Dictators scare their patrons with the threat of an extremist regime to replace them, and play on the sensitivities of their population regarding the dangers of neocolonialism. Hence, at the end, they remain masters of the game. While receiving military assistance from the United States aimed at enhancing their capabilities to fight Ben Laden's network, the dictators were more focused on keeping their hold on power by restricting domestic opposition than on drying up the source that feeds Jihadism. They were prompt to recognize that their

participation – real or fictitious - in the fight against Al-Qaeda had earned them a pass with regard to their ruling systems.

As shown earlier, the objectives sought by dictatorial regimes might not always coincide with those of the United States. The use of dictators as tactical assets to fight terrorism might have incurred some short-term success, but the failure to stress their responsibility in the emergence of Jihadism has not the served the end purpose of eradicating this twenty-first century ill. For Jihadism to be fought effectively, those who contributed to its expansion with their appeasement policies, as is the case of Egypt and Pakistan, or through the promotion of fundamentalist Islam, as is the case of Saudi Arabia, need to feel the pressure of the international community to alter their policies. In that regard, the Bush administration's failure to dissociate its military strategies from its political objectives has greatly affected the democratic project and to some extent, it has complicated the fight against Al-Qaeda.

Historically, the United States' alliances with uncompromising tyrants faced with serious internal threats have ended in chaotic situations. The cases of Vietnam, Iran, Guatemala and El Salvador, are the most telling examples of such unwelcome outcomes. While the United States cannot be held accountable for the actions of dictators, it is nonetheless, perceived as the force protecting the authoritarian regimes by strengthening their power through arms transfers and economic aid and contributing to the strangulation of the democratic movements in those countries. This perception of the United States not only affects its credibility but it also

antagonizes the democratic forces in the target countries. Those very forces that have been quasi-ignored by the democratic project and discarded as ineffective and disorganized are the ones that need to be encouraged and supported financially and politically in order to balance the influence of the fundamentalists. The United States and many of its partners have adopted a euthanasia approach towards the third option and that has been – and still is – a mistake. For the democracy promotion process to succeed, it needs to involve the fringes of the society that believe in it.

Obviously, it is not in the interest of the United States if the Jihadists gain power either through legitimate elections, such as the case of Hamas, or through an Iran-like revolution. However, supporting dictators, in a world of uncertainty, could only diminish the credibility of the United States and undermine the success of its democratic project, which in turn, curbs its efforts to protect its interests. With no challenger in sight, the United States needs to assume its role of leadership in the system in a manner consistent with both its power and the values it advocates. To reassert itself as the moral authority in the post-modern world, the United States needs to determine its goals and the ways to achieve them in accordance with the ethical codes to the elaboration of which it has contributed.

President George Walker Bush's plan of promoting democracy to fight terrorism was not only commendable for its moral dimension but also strategically sound, as it identified the core elements that contributed to the expansion – if not the emergence – of the Jihadist threat. However, its failure to follow up with

concrete, sustainable actions to oversee the implementation of that plan has only empowered critics of America's objectives, as well as it having given the Jihadists more material to expose America's alleged scheme. As shown at the beginning of this paper, the idealization of democracy has curtailed its spread more than it has advanced its cause.

Evidently, the United States cannot assume the role of other nations in seeking democratic rule; it can only assist those nations that take it upon themselves to achieve that objective. At the same time, if the United States is willing to enhance the cause of democracy, it needs to maintain a homogenous set of policies that resist contradiction. Dictators' cooperation in the fight against Al-Qaeda should not exempt them from the responsibility to enhance their ruling systems, especially as evidence correlating the emergence of extremism with their repressive policies is compiled.

The need to promote democracy is not merely laudable for its moral value; it is a necessity to maintain a world order that favors peace and stability. Democracy promotion, and democracy as a preferable ruling system, would acquire its moral character only when accepted and implemented effectively through a set of ethical guidelines. Ideas become truth only when they are gradually integrated into everyday life[7]. Hence, for the United States to champion democracy promotion, it needs to

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7. Alexis De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Translated by Gerald E. Bevan (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 504.

maintain a course of action consistent with its discourse. If democracy is to be promoted, dictatorship needs to be demoted. By demotion, one means discrediting dictators and their ruling systems, not necessarily through regime change, but through a *juris corpus* that would enjoy the legitimacy granted to it by the international community.

The United States, in concert with the international community and institutions, needs to cast democratic rule in a set of ethical guidelines. It is imperative to understand that, politics, to paraphrase E. H. Carr, is necessary but not moral[8]. Conversely, one could state the opposite to be true as well: morals are necessary but do not always serve political objectives. The era of Christendom and Caliphates is over. States could opt to pursue politics in accordance with a given set of ethics, including internal and international laws and regulations, but not necessarily in accordance with morals, as the latter are open to interpretation within cultural and religious beliefs. For democratic governance to follow the path of the scientific method and to become universally accepted, it needs to be liberated from its association with the moral values of one culture or civilization. To succeed, democracy needs to be promoted based upon its ethical value, its moral value being intrinsic to its implementation. In addition, the scientific method has only earned the

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8. E. H. Carr, *The twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave, 2001), 97.

merit of truth through experimental consistency. Similarly, the normative value of democracy would only be recognized through consistency in its promotion.

Returning to historical examples, it is worth mentioning that the normalization of values has yielded more effective results than their moralizations in the politics of nations. The examples of the Apartheid and the self-determination movements should offer guidance for the strategies to be pursued by the United States in its effort to promote democracy. Nations long condemned Apartheid in South Africa as immoral and made many attempts to convince that country's leadership to part with its racial discriminatory policies. However, it was only after resolutions were adopted by the U.N. Security Council, and concerted efforts by the international community to cast Apartheid policies in a framework of ethical guidelines, that the South African government came to terms with the need to alter its policies. Similarly, Woodrow Wilson's idea of self-determination as a moral value had no immediate impact on the former European colonies. It only held sway when the international community agreed that it was unethical to maintain countries under foreign rule against their will and passed the Security Council resolution number 1514 in 1960, which recognized the colonies right to claim their independence.

In this regard, the case of Iraq notwithstanding, the 'freedom agenda' initiated by President Bush could in the long-term affect the peoples of the Muslim world the way Woodrow Wilson's self- determination idea had affected former

European colonies. However, for that outcome to crystallize, the United States needs to move forward, in concert with the international community, to cast the rule of law and the respect of human rights and democracy into a set of ethical guidelines that need to be upheld by all nations.

It is through their capacity to remain within the delimitations of the ethical lines that states can come close to reaching a certain level of moral authority. The United States, by enforcing or attempting to enforce international laws and regulations regarding the respect of human rights in different countries, could maintain the moral authority it has gradually acquired since the end of WWII. Democracy promotion is a noble enterprise only if it is followed with concrete and palpable actions that make it an attainable objective.

In sum, America's unchallenged position of power does not only entail a capacity to wage preemptive or preventive wars unilaterally. It also supposes a capacity to bring the international community to a point of accord under which dictators would be held accountable for their failure to meet the requirements of sound governance. It is urgent for the United Sates to establish that democracy promotion in the new paradigms of the post-9/11 world is not merely an idealistic objective that constitutes an end in itself, but it is also a vital means to ensure the protection of U.S. interests. The democratic project needs to shift locations. Instead of cooperating with dictators and disregarding their human rights abuses, the United States needs to hold them responsible for   the scourge that resulted from their failed

rule.

It appears that the issue facing the United States is not how to reconcile its interests with its values, but how to reconcile its tremendous power with its role in the global system. It is universally recognized that the United States has the capacity to translate its military, economic and political power into a moving force that serves not only its interests but also those of the global system. Al-Qaeda's challenge to the United States is not only a threat; it also offers an opportunity to carry out America's mission under the ethical paradigms suggested in this paper.

In conclusion, it is worth pointing out that democracy promotion and the protection of interests, including security issues, need not to be exclusive of one another. Cooperating with dictators to balance the threat of Al-Qaeda is a pragmatic decision imposed by the nature of the conflict as well as the seriousness of the threat it poses to the United States. Dictators might not be the best of allies, but it is necessary to understand that the United States needs all the assistance it can mobilize in the Global War against Terrorism.

However, military cooperation targeting the balancing of Al-Qaeda's threat should not impede political steps aiming at enhancing the stature of democracy in the world. Dictatorship needs to be called out and discredited in public and in private. The United States needs to seize the 'opportunity' of the threat posed by Al-Qaeda and its followers to pressure dictators for reforms, publicly and in private if necessary. After recognizing the responsibility of the dictators in the

94

emergence of Jihadism, the United States cannot afford to sit back and let them continue to engender more Jihadists through their repressive policies. The most compelling necessity consists of placing the dictators in the spotlight, where their responsibility is exposed and where they are required to mend the policies that created individuals of the like of Ben Laden, Al-Zawahiri and Khalid Sheikh Muhammad.

Finally yet importantly, it is often advanced that pressuring dictators for reforms would facilitate the emergence of radicals in those countries. One has to concur that such a scenario is possible, but it is evitable. For the United States to ensure the success of democracy in countries of strategic importance, it needs to collaborate with the democratic forces within those societies. The assumption that only radicals could replace dictators is false. It has been discredited in many of the countries that were once under dictatorial rule. Democracy in Chile, the Philippines and most recently in Pakistan did not bring to power the Marxists or the Jihadists. It is only by encouraging the 'third option' that the United States could guarantee the emergence of democratic states, i.e. future partners, in countries of strategic importance.

The United States has the capacity, the resources and the political influence necessary to promote democratic reform with a firm conviction in its success and serious engagement in its implementation while maintaining the necessary alliances to balance Al-Qaeda's threat. Without a   combination of all the above-mentioned

actions and their implementation in the most urgent way, the democracy promotion

project will continue to fail.

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