

THE U.S. VS. IRAQ: TESTING A NEW DOCTRINE

Introduction

Focus

The “Bush Doctrine” has evolved over the past two years as a response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Building on previous U.S. foreign policy and responding directly to the challenge of international terrorism, American foreign policy is entering a very aggressive stage. Following is an overview of the steps leading to the proclamation of the Bush Doctrine.

As you read this summary, consider whether or not the Bush Doctrine is a reasonable approach to curbing terrorism in the world? Why or why not?

The tragic events of September 11, 2001, had a significant effect on the people of the United States. This effect was also felt keenly by the newly elected president, George W. Bush. After this event, the American people looked for answers to questions arising from the tragedy. Why was this done to us? Who did this? Why couldn't we see it coming? How can we prevent this from ever happening again?

In response to these questions, investigations led to the discovery that Middle Eastern terrorists had caused the devastation and that they had willingly given their lives to complete their missions. The fact that the hijackings were closely co-ordinated implied that some outside organization had to have occurred. In time it was discovered that a network of terrorists, led by Osama bin Laden, had planned and set up these attacks. He was tracked down to Afghanistan, where he was protected by the extremist Taliban government.

The need to punish anyone who had been part of the 9/11 tragedies was strong in the U.S. Its first response was to engage in “Operation Enduring Freedom” in Afghanistan. The first U.S. attacks took place only a month after the twin towers of the World Trade Center collapsed. In time the U.S. government formed a coalition of countries, including Canada, to invade Afghanistan to root out the terrorists and rid the country of the oppressive Taliban government that was supporting them. Alliances were also made with rebel factions in northern Afghani-

stan. The war quickly resulted in the defeat of the Taliban and the expulsion and disorganization of Al Qaeda.

However, neither Osama bin Laden nor many of his top lieutenants were captured. They had disappeared and were feared to be able to once again lead terrorist attacks against the United States and its allies.

In the President's State of the Union Address at the end of January 2002 Bush began to formalize his approach to protecting the United States from terror. He stated, “. . . we must prevent the terrorists and regimes who seek chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons from threatening the United States and the world.” He continued: “But some governments will be timid in the face of terror. And make no mistake about it: if they do not act. America will.” He further identified North Korea, Iran and Iraq as an “axis of evil.” Bush began his campaign against Iraq with statements such as: “Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and support terror.” and “This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world.” It was clear that the Bush Doctrine was shaping into a new level of response to world concerns.

International law provides no justification for any attack on a foreign power without the proverbial “smoking gun” in clear view. The smoking gun scenario requires that the enemy first attack your country, giving a good reason for retaliation. This was the justification used to establish the forces to complete the Operation Enduring

Further Research

For the full text of George W. Bush's State of the Union Address, go to www.whitehouse.gov/stateoftheunion.

Freedom campaign in Afghanistan. Since the attack on the twin towers in New York could be traced to Al Qaeda and since the Taliban supported and protected them, the attack on Afghanistan was accepted by the UN Security Council. What, then, about establishing the reasons for attacking Iraq? Bush didn't have a smoking gun. He did have the clear knowledge that Saddam Hussein and his government were in violation of the post-1991 Gulf War UN resolutions. There were also allegations that Iraq was developing and storing weapons of mass destruction and possibly willing to provide these to terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda. How, then, was he going to protect his country from a potential but unproven threat?

One of the first indications of the extent of his solution to that question came in a June 2002 speech to the graduating class of West Point. Bush stated, "If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long. We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans and confront the worst threats before they emerge. The only path to safety is to act. And this nation will act."

To that end the United States has engaged in a concerted effort to gain public and world support for actions against the government of Iraq. In October 2002 Bush won support for HJ Resolution 114, through which Congress gave him the power to act against Iraq if necessary. In this resolution he agreed to consult with the UN Security Council and try to gain their approval as well. In November Bush convinced all members of the Security Council to support resolution 1441, which demanded Iraq's unconditional compliance to renewed weapons inspections. Failure to comply would result in "serious consequences."

After much posturing by Iraq, weapons inspectors were allowed to return, and the inspections started again. Throughout the following weeks there were several minor problems with the inspections, and the U.S. regularly emphasized these to their allies. In spite of these efforts, however, the willingness of many U.S. supporters to actually engage in armed conflict began to wane. Only Britain maintained a clear resolve; others vacillated, waiting for a clear message from the inspection team.

Since then, the Bush Doctrine has truly formalized. It is clear that the U.S. will act unilaterally if the UN does not give its approval to strike at Iraq. This was clearly stated in the President's 2003 State of the Union Address. "We must act before the dangers are upon us. . . . Whatever action is required, whenever action is necessary, I will defend the freedom and security of the American people. . . . Some have said we must not act until the threat is imminent. Since when have terrorists and tyrants announced their intentions, politely putting us on notice before they strike? If this threat is permitted to fully and suddenly emerge, all actions, all words, and all recriminations would come too late. Trusting in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein is not a strategy, and it is not an option."

Bush concluded this portion of his speech forcefully. "We will consult. But let there be no misunderstanding: If Saddam Hussein does not fully disarm, for the safety of our people and for the peace of the world, we will lead a coalition to disarm him."

Thus the Bush doctrine takes U.S. international intervention beyond the Cold War to the new world of terrorist action and promises to take the fight to the enemy before he has the chance to attack the American people.

To Consider

1. What events have spurred the development of a new hardline U.S. foreign policy?

2. Is it ever acceptable to attack a nation simply on the basis of fear of future actions? Explain.

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Video Review

This video examines the foreign policy the United States has developed over the last 50 years, to early 2003. It concludes with an analysis of the new Bush Doctrine.

Preview

The United States has long seen itself as the primary defence against those who would fight against freedom and democracy. The Truman Doctrine attempted to contain communism and establish a balance that would not allow any party to gain ascendancy in the world. Under President Reagan, this doctrine evolved to take the fight to the communists, with the United States backing those who rebelled against this ideology. The efforts in these years were against a clearly identifiable enemy—the Soviet Union—and ended in a victory when the Soviet Union collapsed.

The video then examines the United States as it is after the tragedy of September 11, 2001. It shows the sombre attitude of the U.S. and the need for a better answer to a nameless foe. It is in

this atmosphere that the Bush Doctrine develops, identifying the enemy and bringing the resources of the United States to bear on it. This new approach is not without its detractors. Some point out the dangers of a “strike first” mentality. What if there is no way to stop the aggression of the United States? Who should be the next target? How far will this doctrine go?

On the other hand, supporters of this new era state that the U.S. will treat this approach with responsibility and fairness. Countries have nothing to fear as long as they act for freedom and democracy. The United States has the most powerful military in the history of the world. There is no single power able to stop them. Yet, with all this power, the United States assures us that their intentions are honourable.

Questions for discussion before viewing

1. Why has the United States chosen to advocate a policy of pre-emptive strikes against terrorism?

2. Should the United States only act against Iraq if the United Nations gives its approval? Why or why not?

3. What are weapons of mass destruction?

4. Should Iraq open its doors to unconditional inspections for weapons and weapon systems? Explain.

5. In your opinion, what does the Bush Doctrine mean for Canada?

Definition

A doctrine is a principle or set of beliefs that govern political actions.

Questions to answer while watching the video

1. What was the result of the 1991 Gulf War?

2. What happened to the UN inspection teams in 1998?

3. What complaints were made by Hans Blix in January 2003?

4. President Bush reads about two past presidents in particular. Who were they?

5. What caused Bush to begin developing his Bush Doctrine?

6. What is the Bush Doctrine?

7. What was the Truman Doctrine?

8. What finally bankrupted the Soviet Union?

9. How does the Bush Doctrine go beyond the issue of Iraq?

10. What is Colin Powell's concern about the Bush Doctrine?

11. What is Donald Rumsfeld's opinion of the United Nations?

12. What is "soft power" and why is it important?

13. Do you believe that another Gulf War is inevitable? Explain.

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Axis of Evil

In his 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush referred to North Korea, Iran and Iraq as an "axis of evil." He claimed that each had weapons of mass destruction and might decide to use them against the U.S. or its friends. Following is a brief overview of these nations.

Definition

The term *axis of evil* was suggested by David Frum, a Canadian and one of Bush's speechwriters. It is a loaded term. The word *axis* is a reference to the Nazi-led alliance of the Second World War. *Evil* is a powerful word in U.S. politics, where religion plays a significant role.

Further Research

To learn what the "axis of evil" nations reveal themselves about their nations, visit www.korea-dpr.com (North Korea), www.president.ir (Iran), and www.uruklink.net/iraq (Iraq).

North Korea

The Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea is a small country (just over 120 000 sq. km) on the Pacific coast of Asia, south of China and north of South Korea. It is a poor country run by a socialist dictator, Kim Chong-il. It receives significant humanitarian aid from the Western world, including the U.S.

North Korea maintains an army, navy, and air force of approximately one million troops. It expends much of its resources on the development of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. This causes considerable concern for the United States and for countries close by, particularly South Korea. In recent years North Korea has actively re-established its drive to develop nuclear weapons. This has only recently been acknowledged by North Korea and has caused great concern for the United States and President Bush. Bush, now concentrating on the weapons inspections in Iraq, has chosen to downplay the North Korean challenge and seek a diplomatic solution to this crisis.

Iran

The Islamic Republic of Iran has an area of over 1.6 million sq. km. It is bordered by Afghanistan, Turkey, Pakistan, and Iraq as well as smaller countries from the former Soviet Union. Iran has had a strained relationship with the U.S. since the dramatic 1979 overthrow of the Shah of Iran, a key supporter of the United States. Its major industries depend on its primary natural

resources: oil and natural gas. President Ali Mohammad Khatami-Ardakani leads a theocratic republic that has had no formal relations with the United States for a number of years. Normal relations will likely not be renewed until Iran stops its development of weapons of mass destruction, both nuclear and other, and ceases its contacts with known terrorist groups.

Iraq

The Republic of Iraq is a country of nearly 440 000 sq. km. in size. It is bordered by Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, and Kuwait. Saddam Hussein is the president, elected by a unanimous vote, as there is only one political party, the Ba'ath party. The oil industry dominates the economy, producing over 95 per cent of its foreign exchange earnings. Since the Gulf War international sanctions have caused great suffering in the country. Despite this, the government under Saddam has refused to buckle. UN inspectors sent to oversee the destruction of weapons of mass destruction were forced out of Iraq in 1997. Only in the past few months have they been allowed back. Iraq has a sizeable army and air force supposedly ready to meet the challenge of a U.S.-led invasion.

The primary issues leading to a new war are the claims that Iraq has actively developed and stored weapons of mass destruction and is willing to provide these to international terrorists intent on attacking the United States.

Responding

What should Canada's position be with respect to the so-called "axis of evil"? Explain.

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The President's Men and Women

George W. Bush is supported in his foreign policy objectives by these powerful figures. They are responsible for making the Bush Doctrine a political reality.

Further Research

To better understand the views of the Arab world to the role of the United States, consider visiting www.arabic.news.com. This site offers current news from 23 Arabic countries.

"Iraq's behaviour demonstrates that Saddam Hussein and his regime have made no effort—no effort to disarm as required by the international community."
— Colin Powell, February 5, 2003

National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice

Dr. Condoleezza Rice, born in 1954, earned her Bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Denver in 1974. She graduated from Notre Dame with a Master's degree in political science and later, in 1981, with a Doctorate in political science from Denver. A political science professor at Stanford University since 1981, Rice has written several books on international affairs, focusing on the events in Europe during the collapse of the Soviet Union.

In January 2001, she became Bush's National Security Advisor. Speaking to a reporter from the *National Review* Rice said, "I am a realist. Power matters. But there can be no absence of moral content in American foreign policy, and, furthermore, the American people would not accept such an absence."

In an interview with Margaret Warner on September 25, 2002, Rice discussed the situation with Iraq. "The key here is that the United States is leading the world toward a solution to the Iraq problem. . . . Well, I would say that the idea of preventive action is not a new concept. In fact the idea that you have to wait to be attacked to deal with a threat seems to us simply to fly in the face of common sense."

Secretary of State Colin Powell

Colin Powell, was born in New York City in 1937. He entered the United States Army through ROTC and spent 35 years serving his country. The recipient of several medals, Powell achieved the rank of four-star general

and finished his career as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a position he held during the 1991 Persian Gulf War. He was sworn in as the 65th Secretary of State in January 2000.

In a dinner speech on October 17, 2002, Powell made the following comments. "September 11 taught us that threats gathering in distant places like Afghanistan or North Korea or Iraq can pose real and present dangers. And in an age where terrorists and tyrants try in every way to acquire weapons of mass destruction, we must do all that we can to confront them decisively before catastrophe strikes. We must not, we will not, allow terrorists to acquire weapons of mass destruction. . . . The United States Congress last week passed a strong resolution authorizing the President to impose those consequences. The resolution supports and encourages action within the UN. It recognizes, however, that the world faces a real and present danger and if the United Nations does not act, the United States, joined by other nations, willing nations, must act, and we will act."

At a press conference January 23, 2003, Powell responded to a question asking whether the United States would act alone if necessary. He responded, "Oh, I don't think we'll have to worry about going it alone. I think the case is clear. I think that as we move forward, if it can't be solved peacefully, and if the UN should fail to act—and I hope this is not the case—then the United States reserves the right to do what it thinks is appropriate to defend its interests, the interests of its friends, and to protect the world. And I am quite

“There is only one truth, and therefore I tell you as I have said on many occasions before, that Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction.” — Saddam Hussein in a BBC interview February 4, 2003

confident if it comes to that we’ll be joined by many nations. . . . And we have had examples of this in the not too distant past where the international community wasn’t able to act through the Security Council, but nevertheless action was taken by a coalition of the willing.” On February 5, 2003, Powell presented evidence to the UN Security Council that Iraq was hiding weapons of mass destruction and had contacts with terrorists. This moved the U.S. closer to war with Iraq.

Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld

Born in 1932, Donald Rumsfeld served in the Navy as an aviator from 1954 to 1957. He entered politics in 1962 and was elected to four terms in Congress. In 1969 he joined President Nixon’s staff and served through the transition to President Ford in 1974. In 1975 he became the 13th Secretary of Defense and served in that capacity until 1977. After several years in the private sector, Rumsfeld was sworn in as the United States’ 21st Secretary of Defense, in January 2001.

In a statement made to the House Armed Services Committee on Iraq, September 18, 2002, Rumsfeld said,

“The question facing us is this: what is the responsible course of action for our country? Do you believe it is our responsibility to wait for a nuclear, chemical, or biological 9/11? Or is it the responsibility of free people to do something now—to take steps to deal with the threat *before* we are attacked?”

On January 22, 2003, during a press conference, a Canadian journalist asked his opinion of Canada’s reluctance to join the U.S. without a UN resolution. Rumsfeld responded, “You know, the United States and Canada are close friends and allies and neighbors, and we’ve participated together in so many activities across the globe, currently are with respect to the global war on terror, allies in NATO. It’s up to Canada to decide what it wishes to do. Each country has a somewhat different circumstance, a somewhat different history, a somewhat different perspective, and I think each country is inevitably going to do that which they feel is appropriate to them. . . . But it seems to me it’s asking a lot for other countries to step forward publicly and say where they are on this until and unless the case has been fully made, and the President has indicated that he’s concluded that force must be used.”

Activity

After reading these brief descriptions about Bush’s closest advisors, draw conclusions about the likelihood of military action against Saddam.

1. Do these advisors believe that the war will inevitably be brought to Iraq? Explain.

2. If the United Nations does not support armed action against Iraq, will the United States act unilaterally?

3. Which of the three advisors to Bush would most likely counsel caution before an attack on Iraq was made? Explain your choice.

4. Which of the three advisors would most likely recommend unilateral action? Explain.

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Foreign Policy Timeline

Did you know . . .

The U.S. is the most powerful military power on the face of the earth? The United States has approximately 1.4 million active soldiers, sailors, marines, and air force personnel. In addition, the National Guard and ready reserve have 1.3 million more personnel that can be called up in an emergency. In total this translates into 13 active Army and Marine divisions plus nine reserve divisions, 1600 active aircraft and 650 reserve aircraft and 340 warships. The U.S. also has over 1000 nuclear missiles. The United States has technological superiority to any other force in the world.

American foreign policy has moved from being very isolationist before the Second World War to being more aggressive and proactive today. After being latecomers to two terrible world wars, Americans have slowly decided it is in their best interest to play an active role on the world stage. Since the U.S. is also the only remaining superpower, it has greater freedom to enforce its views and actions on the world. Review this very selective list of foreign policy highlights and respond to the activity that follows the timeline.

1947 Truman Doctrine established to contain the spread of communism by giving aid to non-communist nations.

1948 President Truman creates the Marshall Plan to assist Europe in recovering from Second World War and to limit expansion of communist influence.

1948 Berlin airlift established to counter Soviet blockade. Blockade lifted in May 1949.

1949 NATO formed to protect Europe from Communist aggression.

1950-53 U.S. forces sent to fight in South Korea against the invasion by North Korea.

1960 President Kennedy sends first U.S. troops to Vietnam.

1961 U.S. sponsors Bay of Pigs invasion.

1962 Cuban Missile Crisis

1963 Nuclear Test Ban Treaty signed.

1965 U.S. begins bombing of North Vietnam.

1970 U.S. forces invade Cambodia.

1973 Vietnam Peace Accords signed.

1980 Embargo on trade of grain and technology to USSR because of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

1983 President Reagan announces Space Defense Initiative. U.S. invades Grenada.

1986 Benghazi and Libya bombed by U.S. warplanes.

1989 U.S. troops invade Panama and install a new government.

1991 Operation Desert Storm sends U.S. and allied troops to attack Iraq with the support of the UN.

1992 U.S. and Russia sign treaty ending Cold War. America is the clear victor.

2001 U.S. and allies invade Afghanistan in first campaign of the War on Terrorism.

2001 U.S. leads push on Iraq to disarm and mobilizes a powerful invasion force.

2002 Possible war with Iraq.

Research Activity

Select one of the timeline items and investigate the details. Divide these items so that each is examined by at least one student. As a class collect all the detailed accounts and create a large timeline showing foreign policy actions of the U.S. over the past 50 years.

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The Canadian Position

For the full text of UN Resolution 1441, go to www.un.int/usa/sres-iraq.htm. To find the current position of the Government of Canada with respect to Iraq, visit the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Web site at www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca.

Canada has been involved in the crisis with Iraq for the last 11 years. Canada joined the U.S.-led coalition that pushed Saddam Hussein's forces out of Kuwait in 1991. Canada has also contributed to the naval blockade and inspection forces in the Persian Gulf since the end of Desert Storm. In October 2001 Canada joined the U.S. forces in Afghanistan. All these actions had the approval of the United Nations. However, the recent campaign of the Bush government to force Iraq to either surrender its alleged weapons of mass destruction or suffer invasion has met with resistance by the Canadian government. Its primary concern lies with the U.S. intention to act unilaterally if the UN does not sanction military action against Iraq if it does not comply with UN Resolution 1441.

The issue of whether Canada should support U.S. action against Iraq has divided Canadians. How far should Canadians go to support their close ally? Should Canadians support and participate in a U.S. attack, even if the UN does not offer its approval? The Bush Doctrine presents some difficult choices for Canadians. Consider the following comments as you try to determine your own position on this difficult issue.

The Government

"We believe very strongly in building legally based, multilateral reactions to problems in the world and we would urge the United States to accept that."
— Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham June 2002

"We always moved with the approval of the UN, when we went to Kosovo, when we went to any other situation of peacekeeping. But Kosovo was a war. The planes were used against the Serbs and we did 10 per cent of the sorties of the military. It was under NATO but approved by the UN. That is the system. We believe in multilateral organizations. It is very important for countries like Canada to be great promoters of multilateral organizations. We have only one superpower, it happens to be a friend of ours, but to maintain the equilibrium in the world it is very important that we have these multilateral organizations like the UN or others." — Prime Minister Chrétien in a CBC National interview December 18, 2002

The Experts

"The Canadian government is gradually coming around to support the U.S. stance. I think even if the United Nations does not say Iraq is cheating, there will be a phone conversation between Chrétien and Bush, and after that Chrétien will announce he's satisfied Iraq is cheating."
— Rob Heubert, a military expert from the University of Calgary in the *Edmonton Sun*, January 2003

The Opposition

"The government and the Prime Minister should not be spectators. The government should have its own opinion on what is happening in this situation. We never used to be spectators. . . . Is the government prepared to stand with the allied coalition to seek enforcement of the United Nation's will?" — Stephen Harper, leader of the Official Opposition January 29, 2003

“We should be clear now that we will act only within the context of initiatives sanctioned by the Security Council.”
— Joe Clark leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, House of Commons, January 30, 2003

“What should we do now? First, we must act and act only under the authority of the United Nations.” — Gilles Duceppe, leader of the Bloc Québécois, House of Commons, January 30, 2003

Speaking to an NDP convention, newly elected NDP leader Jack Layton stated his party’s stand very directly. “New Democrats believe Canada’s global obligations go far beyond George Bush, and that war in Iraq is wrong.”
— January 27, 2003

The Media

Excerpts from Rex Murphy’s commentary on the CBC National on Canada’s position in the Iraq debate, January 29, 2003: “The U.S.’s claim to a right of pre-emptive attack is not a creation of the minds of George Bush. We should remember this. It is the creation of the attacks by Osama bin Laden. Without September 11 we would not have had the state of the union speech we had last night. . . . If we really oppose this war, let us say so. And if we do not, let us hear very clearly why we are on side. So far all we are getting is calculated muddle, which has neither the dignity of courage nor the usefulness of clarity in a difficult time.”

Questions

1. After reading the various quotes, what do you predict will be the final decision of the Canadian government?
 - a) If the United Nations approves of a military action against Iraq.

 - b) If the United Nations does not sanction military action, but the U.S. chooses to act unilaterally.

2. If Canada does not join in a unilateral U.S. coalition to attack Iraq, what do you predict would be the U.S. reaction to Canada?

3. What do you think Canada’s position on war with Iraq should be? Why?

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Evaluating the Doctrine

Working with at least one other student, carefully consider the Bush Doctrine. What does it mean for the United States, the world, and you, as a young citizen of the country that shares such a long border with the world's most powerful nation? After a brief discussion, outline your thoughts with the aid of this organizer.

The Meaning of the Bush Doctrine for the U.S.

The Meaning of the Bush Doctrine for Canada

The Meaning of the Bush Doctrine for the UN

The Meaning of the Bush Doctrine for Me

Once you have completed this organizer, write a brief statement identifying and explaining your opinion of the Bush Doctrine and what you feel should be Canada's response and why.