

"Can we 'teach them to elect good men'? The application of military force in Mexico and Iraq" Steven Bucklin

Abstract

The use of force has frequently accompanied U.S. efforts to export democracy and accomplish cultural change. Parallels drawn from a comparison of the American intervention in Mexico during the Woodrow Wilson administration to today's American intervention in Iraq reveal similarities between Wilson and President George W. Bush's world-views and their views of presidential power. In both cases, military forces were sent to accomplish tasks with inadequate equipment, insufficient and inadequately trained personnel, and incomplete analyses of the short and long-term consequences of the U.S. intervention.

The conclusion is directed to the question of whether democracies can afford wars of discretion and whether military force is sufficient to accomplish cultural change. The demilitarization of U.S. foreign policy is essential to preserve U.S. influence in the 21st century. Congress must abide by its Constitutional responsibility to declare wars, rather than unconstitutionally delegate its authority to the Executive Branch, or run the risks of no exit strategy or clearly defined criteria for victory in future efforts to export democracy through the application of limited military force.

Introduction

Woodrow Wilson's intervention in Mexico and George W. Bush's intervention in Iraq beg for comparison. Bush's association with Wilsonian internationalism in the media and in policy circles is an almost daily event. The similarities between the two presidential policies are tempting to draw. Although some are superficial, certain core themes are not. Despite the fact that time, space, and partisan affiliation separate both the events and the men who authored them, the ideology of missionary interventionism unites them.

Discussion

When Woodrow Wilson came to the presidency, a dictator ruled Mexico, and he was someone whom the former professor found less than desirable as the leader of a state so important to the United States. Mexico controlled huge deposits of natural resources the US economy found useful and was a focus of heavy American investment. The nation had an ancient history--it was a cradle of ancient civilizations--before falling victim to a long colonial history. During the period of European control, its people had fought hard to gain their independence, but once independent, they had failed to establish a form of government that met their interests. The dominant religion and its leaders had supported and even justified the series of dictators who had enriched themselves, their supporters, and their families at the expense of the common people. One of those dictators had even waged war against the United States, and the consequences were disastrous not only for him, but for his country.

Despite the apparent iron-fisted rule of the dictator, there were serious divisions within society. Various interest groups, at considerable risk, sought to eliminate him. The US was very interested in supporting anyone who might accomplish that goal and, when favorable circumstances arose, the US intervened with military force to accomplish just that.

The dictator was Victoriano Huerta, and the parallels between how Woodrow Wilson dealt with Mexico while Huerta ruled it and how George W. Bush dealt with Iraq, both during and after Saddam Hussein's rule, provide an opportunity for a broader analysis of the ideology of missionary interventionism and the

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goals of two presidents who on the surface seem as different as a neutron and a proton. What brings them together was their stubborn belief that the United States had something others not only wanted, but also were willing to accept from the U.S. in the same way an ailing person accepts recovery from a faith healer. That is, no questions asked.

As Henry Kissinger asserted so aptly in his book *Diplomacy*, "It is to the drumbeat of Wilsonian idealism that American foreign policy has marched since his watershed presidency, and continues to march to this day." (1) Although published in 1994, the assessment holds true today. Wilson sought to make the world safe for democracy; George Bush seeks to make the world democratic. Wilsonian idealism drives George W. Bush like no president since Wilson.

Woodrow Wilson came to the presidency with attributes few of his predecessors shared. He earned his undergraduate degree from Princeton University. Not unlike George Bush, young "Tommy" Wilson's grades were less than stellar. By the time of his graduation, he was "barely in the top third" of his class. (2) There the academic similarities end.

Wilson immersed himself in student life and in subjects like history that nurtured his curiosity. He even edited the student newspaper, the *Princetonian*. His admiration for things British were well-known while he was at Princeton and would continue, despite his misgivings about certain individuals in the British cabinet during World War One, for the rest of his life.

Wilson was the first president to earn a Ph. D., but not before studying law at the University of Virginia, then dropping out, but passing the Georgia bar exam. Dissatisfied with his practice, he returned to academia at one of the most prestigious universities in the nation, and its first university devoted specifically to graduate studies. That was the Johns Hopkins University. His doctorate, received in 1885, was in political science. Wilson was widely and popularly published. Beginning as a professor, he rose to be president of his former university, Princeton, and to become governor of New Jersey on his first effort at elective politics and then, on his second effort, president of the "United States.

Politics had long been Wilson's passion, and he believed in democracy as its highest form of expression. His democracy, though, was one of limits. Born in the South, he was used to groups being excluded from the franchise on the basis of race and gender. He was himself a racist, paternalistic at best toward African Americans and adamantly opposed to Asian immigration. (3) It was that paternalism, coupled with a deep sense of Christian mission from his Presbyterian upbringing, that led him to believe that he and his people could teach the Mexicans--in fact, all peoples--to elect good men. Like another former governor who moved into the White House eighty years after Wilson left it, he had little clue how to teach them to elect good men.

It is probably not too far from the truth to declare that by 1914, many Mexicans felt a sense of nostalgia for the good old days of Porfirio Diaz. The man who had taken power from Diaz, Francisco Madero, was a sort of mystic fire-breather whose radicalism had alienated more than one Mexican conservative and even some Mexican moderates. In an eerie precursor to the dealings of another American ambassador with another general during another intervention, Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson negotiated Madero's overthrow with his opponent and subordinate, General Victoriano Huerta in 1913. Perhaps overzealous, like Henry Cabot Lodge and General Duong Van Minh in 1963 Saigon, Huerta not only removed Madero from power, but also had him executed.

Ambassador Wilson's complicity in this murder did not reflect Woodrow Wilson's policy for Mexico; Wilson was only president-elect and had not yet been inaugurated when the ambassador was engaged in his shady dealings. It was in response to the consequences of the Republican ambassador's work that Woodrow Wilson determined to do something for Mexico.

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That "something" was to continue President Taft's policy of withholding diplomatic recognition from the Huerta regime, "a government of butchers" according to President Wilson, and putting pressure on Huerta so as to isolate him and his supporters and force a free election in which Huerta would not be a candidate. Wilson was under no illusion that such a policy would necessarily work. He was willing, he informed America's European friends, to use force if necessary to accomplish his goal. (4)

The story of Huerta's long struggle with his Mexican opponents--especially Venustiano Carranza, Pancho Villa and Alvaro Obregon--is an interesting one, but it was his struggle with Woodrow Wilson that was most damaging to Huerta. Aching to remove the Mexican dictator from power, Wilson authorized American naval forces to call on several Mexican ports, knowing the potential for incidents that might serve to rally the Congress and the public behind the use of military force.

Such an incident occurred in April 1914 at Tampico, where a group of American sailors had been detained for bad behavior and paraded in the streets of the town. Admiral Henry T. Mayo, determined that American honor had been sullied, demanded that the local Mexican commander provide a twenty-one gun salute to the Stars and Stripes. The commander offered a written apology, but declined the opportunity to honor the flag of a foreign country on Mexican soil.

Wilson responded with a request to Congress on 20 April 1914 to authorize the use of military force to defend American honor and interests in Mexico. Before Congress granted him such authority two days later, Wilson had already ordered the bombardment of the port city of Vera Cruz in April 1914. He chose Vera Cruz rather than Tampico because of the imminent arrival there of a shipment of weapons for the Huertistas from Germany.

What Wilson had not anticipated was the depth of anti-Yankee sentiment in Mexico. Perhaps he had forgotten that only sixty-five years had passed since the US took one-third of Mexico's land as the result of a war foisted on the Mexicans; that one of the reasons for the success of Madero's campaign had been his attack on US interests in Mexico that had grown enormously wealthy while the Mexican people suffered. Those things resonated with the Mexican people.

The result was that the factions previously fighting one-another now joined together to defend the mother country against el Norte. Street-to-street, house-to-house combat ensued with twenty American deaths and hundreds of Mexican casualties. Although Vera Cruz fell to the Americans, Wilson was shocked. Unprepared for the most basic of the many consequences of military action--death--Wilson, stricken with regret, admitted "it was I who ordered those young men to their deaths." (5)

By July 1914, Huerta was on his way to a comfortable European exile, finally heeding the advice the British had given. Although the Foreign Office disagreed with Wilson's approach to Huerta--it characterized Wilson's policy as "most impractical and unreasonable"--the British navy depended on Mexican oil and British investments in Mexico were significant, so the British urged Huerta to leave in order to stabilize the situation. (6) Of particular interest here is that both France and Germany had recognized Huerta--perhaps out of spite for Wilson--and were willing to do business with him. (7)

Carranza was now in power, and American forces withdrew by the end of 1914, but the peace was an uneasy one. From 1914 to 1916, tensions grew between competing Mexican factions and between Mexico and the United States. After Wilson extended what can only be called semi-recognition to the Carranza government in 1915, a government that had not been elected, a new crisis emerged.

Carranza faced the same problem Huerta had faced from him: Pancho Villa now waged war against Carranza for failing to hold elections. Wilson continued to intervene in the hope that he could persuade

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someone--anyone, really--to eliminate the generals and hold elections.

When Villa, who at first enjoyed Wilson's support, in large part because he had not publicly criticized the Vera Cruz intervention, attacked a U.S. border town in 1916, Wilson authorized the Punitive Expedition to invade Mexico to punish the Villistas. The U.S. soldiers engaged not only Villa's forces, but also found themselves under attack from Carranza's army. In one of the continuing twists of what one wishes could be called a strange episode of American foreign policy, the Punitive Expedition never did capture Villa, who continued to attack and kill Americans and then escape into the mountains. He was assassinated in his car in 1923. Carranza was assassinated three years earlier. (8)

The U.S. Army was poorly prepared for the adventure. Pershing, who had counted on permission from Carranza to use the Mexican railroad system to supply his expedition, found the trucks he was forced to rely upon for transporting supplies after Carranza denied permission inadequate to the task. This problem was partially fixed when Secretary of War Newton Baker found \$450,000.00 in un-appropriated funds and bought new trucks. There was also a problem with a new weapon in the American arsenal. The airplanes that the Army sent were unable to climb to sufficient altitude to cross the mountains of the Mexican state of Chihuahua. To make matters worse, the Mexicans "made a sport of cutting the [telegraph] wires" the Army used for communication. (9)

Wilson was under pressure from two key developments: the consequences of the sinking of Lusitania in 1915, the U.S. response to it and to Germany's continued use of unrestricted submarine warfare; and his bid for re-election in 1916. In neither case could he afford to appear weak. It was not until after his re-election in November 1916 that he could disengage from Mexico. By February 1917, all U.S. troops were removed from Mexico, full diplomatic recognition had been extended to the Carranza government, and the U.S. was free to enter World War I without having to worry much about its neighbor to the South.

Nothing much to worry about, that is, as long as President Wilson had forgotten his promise to "teach them to elect good men." The fact of the matter was that Wilson did nothing to aid the Mexican people or their government in learning the practice of democracy. No mission was sent to any Mexican government staffed with the experts Wilson would rely on in the "Inquiry." None of Admiral Mayo's forces during the Vera Cruz operation and none of General John J. Pershing's men during the Punitive Expedition were trained to establish democratic institutions in Mexico, or anywhere else for that matter, nor were they prepared to cultivate democratic values in the local population. (10) Mexico would come under one party rule--that of the Institutional Revolutionary Party--for nearly the rest of the century.

In an ironic twist, the Mexicans may have taught Wilson an important lesson: that there are limits to what military force can accomplish. When he was given another opportunity to intervene militarily in another nation's affairs, he was no longer inclined to "teach them" anything about democracy. Wilson's intervention during the Russian Civil War was a practical affair designed to assuage our partners of World War I and to check the growth of Japanese influence in the Far East. His Latin American interventions other than in Mexico were similarly unencumbered by the desire to export democracy. (11)

By way of contrast to Woodrow Wilson, George Bush was a Yale graduate, allowed to enroll largely on his "legacy" status, coming as he did from a family of "Yalies." Bush went on to membership in a secret society, "Skull and Bones," and was a cheerleader. He earned his undergraduate degree in history in 1968 and an MBA from Harvard Business School in 1975.

Bush's first political campaign, which he lost, was for the U.S. House of Representatives in 1978. Sixteen years later, he won his campaign for governor of Texas and would win reelection three more times, and then became one of the few men to win the presidency without a majority of the vote. Somewhat famously, George Bush stated in his 2001 commencement address at his alma mater "To those of you

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who received honors, awards, and distinctions, I say, well done. And to the C students--I say, you, too, can be President of the United States." (12)

It is difficult to assess where George Bush learned his professed reverence for democracy. His birth into a life of privilege does not speak to it; his career as a businessman, which by definition does not allow democracy a great role in one's daily life, does not either. His born again religious experience as an Evangelical Christian, whose model is anything but democratic, fails, too, to explain this.

Whatever the explanation, it is clear that he now ties national security to the spread of democracy. At his second inauguration, he declared that the "survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world." He continued:

America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one. From the day of our Founding, we have proclaimed that every man and woman on this earth has rights, and dignity, and matchless value, because they bear the image of the Maker of Heaven and earth. Across the generations we have proclaimed the imperative of self-government, because no one is fit to be a master, and no one deserves to be a slave. Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our Nation. It is the honorable achievement of our fathers. Now it is the urgent requirement of our nation's security, and the calling of our time. So it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world. (13)

This is as clear an expression of Wilsonian principles as anything Wilson said in his eight years as president; in fact, the acolyte is, if anything, more orthodox than the priest.

George Bush's initial foreign policy was not nearly so Wilsonian. His early foreign policy was predicated on the fact that US efforts at nation building had failed in the past and that his administration would not engage such a policy. Campaigning for the presidency in 2000, "George W. Bush argued against nation building and foreign military entanglements. In the second presidential debate, he said: 'I'm not so sure the role of the United States is to go around the world and say, "This is the way it's got to be.'" (14) The about-face in the wake of the 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon was stunning.

Like Woodrow Wilson, George Bush now wanted to teach others how to elect "good men." The emphasis is on "good," for as U.S. policy toward the election of Hamas in the Palestinian Authority indicates, if a people elects someone with whom the Bush administration disagrees, there is nothing, apparently, to compel him to honor the results of democratic elections. Like Wilson before him, Bush is apparently opting for a recognition standard that precludes certain types of governments, regardless of whether they are legitimately brought to power.

Also like Wilson, George W. Bush inherited a difficult situation with a country that was strategically important to the United States. In what was an unusual event in the annals of the American presidency, the problem was in large part the result of the policies of his father.

The diplomatic conclusion of the First Gulf War came with the Peace of Safwan that General Norman Schwarzkopf presented the defeated Iraqi military in 1991. That treaty forced Saddam Hussein to give up

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his efforts to conquer Kuwait, but left him in power in Iraq. The U.S. and Great Britain enforced conditions on Hussein that he found less than desirable, including supporting a semi-autonomous Kurdish zone and two "no-fly" zones in northern and southern Iraq.

This resulted in an uneasy state of affairs for the next decade. It also allowed Hussein to slaughter Shiite opponents in the Basra region who had been led to believe that Hussein would be removed after the war. Nonetheless, it was a *modus vivendi* that both the U.S. and Hussein were willing to accept, at least for the foreseeable future.

When the unforeseen occurred on 11 September 2001, Vice President Dick Cheney observed that "it changed everything," including the willingness of the Bush administration to let Hussein remain in power. Convinced, not from evidence, but from ideological predisposition, that Saddam was linked to the attacks on the United States, George Bush and his staff, consciously or not, sent a clear message to the intelligence community that they wanted a *casus belli* to justify a punitive expedition against Saddam. (15)

The cause came in the form of greatly exaggerated claims that Saddam possessed weapons of mass destruction and unsubstantiated reports of Iraqi intelligence agents meeting with Muhammad Atta in Prague prior to 9/11. President Bush received a Congressional resolution to wage war in October 2002 and he subsequently ordered the attack on Iraq that began in March 2003.

There are literally dozens of historical lessons that Bush and his advisers had available to them that Wilson did not when it came to waging war in Iraq, but two seem particularly appropriate: the use of a defeated army to achieve U.S. goals, as was done with the Japanese Army in China after Japan surrendered in 1945; and the recommendation of Marine Corps General Lewis Walt during the nation-building effort in Vietnam that the U.S. make extensive use of the Combined Action Platoon. Had the Bush administration followed either of these two lessons, the results in Iraq may have been more positive.

L. Paul Bremer, the career diplomat who replaced retired general Jay Garner as American Consul in Iraq in May 2003, was responsible for that country after the collapse of Saddam's government and during the origins of the insurgency. It was Bremer who chose to disband the Iraqi military as part of his greater goal of de-Baathification. (16) Instead of realizing that whatever ideology might have motivated them in the past, these soldiers were just that--soldiers--Bremer perceived in them an ideological threat. The fact was that they could have been used to hold at bay the rise of independent Shiite or Sunni militias. This is not hindsight. The use of Japanese troops to hold positions for the Nationalists in China and against the Communists as arranged under the U.S. terms of surrender is well documented. (17)

Destruction of the Iraqi military turned out to be one of the biggest of the "thousands of errors" Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recognized during a 2006 visit with British Foreign Minister Jack Straw. (18) Whether used to protect a new government or simply to maintain order, the maintenance and deployment of the Iraqi military would have blunted American casualties. What the U.S. got instead was thousands of avoidable casualties and tens-of-thousands of unemployed soldiers who were now vulnerable to the preaching (and promises of an income) of unscrupulous radicals.

The second historical lesson that demonstrates the ideological tie between Bush and Wilson is the fact that Bush and his advisers were so convinced that Americans would be welcomed as liberators that they took no overt steps to prepare for a different reception. Whether it was the ill-advised Rumsfeld Doctrine of the quick strike, "shock-and-awe" campaign that failed to respect the long-held doctrine that to win wars, one must have boots on the ground, or the simple belief that if Americans instructed the Iraqis in the mechanics of democracy--conducting elections--they would elect a good government, the Bush administration made few preparations to address the post-Saddam needs of the people. This left the Iraqis

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vulnerable to a determined insurgency, another post-war development the Bush administration failed to anticipate.

This disposition also hindered administration diplomacy. Secretary of State Colin Powell could not convince the French and Germans of the need for war. Both German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and French President Jacques Chirac used anti-American sentiment and opposition to an Iraqi war in their homelands to political advantage, with Schroeder riding it to re-election. Of the major European powers, only Great Britain, under Prime Minister Tony Blair's leadership, would join the coalition. Blair has so far survived the unpopular war, but he has paid a political price.

Regardless of the political gains or losses of individual politicians, there was at least one good reason for the Germans and French to have been involved: it might have allowed them to influence the course of the war and of the peace. Perhaps they could have convinced the U.S. to retain the Iraqi Army. Perhaps their participation would have allowed a timely withdrawal. Perhaps their participation would have resulted in less bloodshed. The world will never know, because the Germans and French shirked their responsibility to temper what Chirac himself has labeled the "hyper power" of the 21st century.

Woodrow Wilson faced similar diplomatic problems with the Europeans during the Mexican intervention, but he also faced the fact that he could look to only a few interventions in the Caribbean and Central America as models for his actions in Mexico. It was during those and subsequent interventions, though, that the United States Marine Corps would develop its Doctrine of Small Wars. Dealing with a highly motivated foe in Nicaragua from 1925-1933, the Marines learned that in "order to defeat the Augusto Sandino movement ... they had to assume the role of local government institutions." (19) That meant providing effective protection to the people.

The Marine Corps published its lessons in the Small Wars Manual in 1940. That manual recommended actions designed to win the loyalty of the local population, to include building improved transportation, sanitation, and education infrastructures, but the principal factor remained providing protection. (20) In addition, "tolerance, sympathy, and kindness should be the keynote" of the relationship U.S. forces, but Marines in particular, should establish with local populations. (21)

The Small Wars Doctrine, although supplanted in 1962 by the Marine Manual 8-2, continued to influence Marine thought during the Vietnam War. (22) Andrew Krepinevich, Jr., provides a revealing examination of how General Lewis Walt ordered the Marines under his command to follow these principles in his book *The Army and Vietnam*. Walt required his marines to conduct their operations "from sundown to sunup" because that was when the enemy operated. As opposed to the Army doctrine that advised a brigade commander to spend "firepower as if he is a millionaire and to husband lives as if he is a pauper," Walt wanted firepower kept to the "absolute minimum" as well as casualties. (23)

The Combined Action Platoons produced results far exceeding those of the Army's policies, producing an intense inter-service rivalry that resulted in General William Westmoreland's strong-arming Walt to abandon the program despite its proven results. Krepinevich notes that in part, this was due to "the Army's impatience for results in a conflict environment that would not produce them." (24) That impatience to produce results for political purposes was and is a dynamic the U.S. military recognizes today.

John A. Bonin, scholar-in-residence at the Army Heritage Center Foundation at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, has addressed this issue, although indirectly, in a booklet published just days before the bombing of Baghdad that has had limited release to the general public or to scholars. (25) In it, Bonin writes that in late April 2002 U.S. Army Forces Central Command (ARCENT) began "a new phase of tactical operations reminiscent of counter guerrilla operations in Vietnam" in Afghanistan. These included

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sweeping missions that could not fail to bring to mind the "search-and-destroy" operations of Westmoreland. (26)

In addition to these combat missions aimed at Al-Qaeda and Taliban forces, whose leaders, like a certain wily Mexican, had a habit of finding refuge in mountains, Army Civil Affairs teams "were conducting operations aimed at changing local perceptions about America" and to "garner support for the interim government...." Tellingly, sufficient funds had not been earmarked for such operations and there were "bureaucratic delays" in their implementation. (27)

In part, this may have been due to President Bush's original antipathy to nation building; perhaps the change with the events of 9/11 was incomplete. Nonetheless, on 15 May 2002, General Tommy Franks declared that the mission in Afghanistan "goes on as long as it takes." (28) As part of that mission, the U.S. sought to rebuild the Afghan military. Instructors wanted six months to a year to train a battalion; they were given ten weeks, and even this pace was too slow for Defense Secretary Rumsfeld. (29) This is a prime example of a political demand forcing the military to act contrary to a lesson learned from previous experience.

A promising development during the Afghan operations--although it is one that "differs from existing doctrine"--was the idea of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT). These teams of 70 personnel work to provide infrastructure repair and development, but they do not mirror the security aspects of the CAP program. In addition, just as in Vietnam, the lack of U.S. military personnel trained to speak Pashtun and Arabic poses a major liability, as does the fact that only eight centers in Afghanistan were to receive PRTs. (30)

As the mission in Afghanistan took on a more lasting nature, one that many analysts called "nation building," plans were being made to invade Iraq and topple Saddam Hussein. Bonin makes it clear that there was tension between the military and civilian planners leading up to the invasion of Iraq. Generals like Tommy Franks wanted a large force of at least five divisions, five aircraft carrier groups, and large contributions from the other branches and coalition partners. Rumsfeld and his advisers wanted no more than 50,000-to-80,000 personnel. (31)

Equally clear to Bonin, writing on 11 March 2003, nine days before the war started, was the fact that planning for "post conflict Iraq received somewhat belated attention. Arguably, post conflict operations have been not only the most difficult to undertake, but offer tremendous possibilities for change." (32) The challenges ahead included those identified in an Army War College study about the nature of an occupation of Iraq: "immature political institutions, tensions among longtime rival groups, traditions of sectarian violence, and potential terrorism." (33) Bonin, a retired colonel, concluded that a force of at least two hundred thousand would be necessary to the post hostilities missions, and he indicated sympathy for General Erik Shinseki's estimate that post-war occupation might require a force of several hundred thousand. (34)

The Mexican Intervention did not develop the way Woodrow Wilson had anticipated. Mexicans did not elect the men he wanted them to elect. Mexicans did not welcome American military personnel with open arms. American pride, prestige, and honor were on the line, and the intervention did not embellish them. It was an embarrassment to the United States then and remains a blemish on American foreign policy. It was, though, a relatively bloodless intervention and did not result in a post-hostilities environment of wholesale slaughter.

The initial phase of the attack on Iraq was extraordinarily successful for the Bush administration. Baghdad fell. Saddam was eventually captured in December 2003. The President was pictured on the flight deck of the USS Lincoln in a flight suit and a backdrop banner declaring "Mission Accomplished."

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The premature nature of that declaration became all too apparent when the insurgency developed. The arrogance of the president and his advisers, like that of their predecessors, led them to send an inadequately prepared ground force, one that had insufficient body armor, insufficient vehicle armor, and insufficient language skills. In addition, the reserve component of the U.S. military was called on to shoulder much of the burden of the occupation, with many National Guard units rotating out of Iraq after one tour of duty, only to be recalled for another tour with different responsibilities that required additional training. (35)

It has become increasingly evident that the post-hostilities environment in Iraq, if there is such a thing, represents not only the failure of administration vision, but the hubris of the men responsible for the destruction of so many lives, the shattering of so many more, and the loss of hard-earned prestige. Perhaps had President Bush aspired to something more than Cs as a history major at Yale, he would have learned something about the nature of war, the seriousness with which it must be approached, and the fact that bravado ("Bring it on" comes to mind) does not replace adequate planning and commitment of resources. (36)

Conclusion

As far as the promise to export democracy, there was a reason President Wilson did not promise to do for the Mexicans what the U.S. had done for the Filipinos or the Cubans. The same reason explains why President Bush did not promise to do for the Iraqis what the U.S. had done for the Vietnamese or the Haitians. The reason is that the U.S. has never successfully exported democracy via limited military interventions.

Neither Wilson nor Bush made an effort to promote anything resembling a cultural shift in Mexico or Iraq in order to cultivate democratic principles in the hearts of the people. Although the media and the administration made much of the many blue ink-dipped fingers following the first Iraqi election, little was made about the types of people and parties that were receiving those votes. What difference does a constitution make for a people willing to vote fascists or radical theocrats into government who are not committed to democratic values and who then subvert the constitution or eliminate it?

Devotion to democratic principles, such as it is, was cultivated in the English and American cultures over a period of centuries, not in the immediate aftermath of a foreign intervention. In addition, as it is in the case of the Americans, protections were written into the Constitution to make it very difficult for democratic processes to be used to eliminate democracy. (37)

In the case of George Bush's foreign policy, the most dangerous premise may be that the U.S. must assure the success of liberty abroad to sustain it at home. This was the underlying assumption of the Truman Doctrine, a doctrine that successive administrations endorsed and followed, and a doctrine that cost the United States dearly in terms of domestic liberties and in terms of resources wasted on interventions, wars, and tyrants. Although democracy in other countries may be desirable, historical events have demonstrated that it is not essential to the national interest of the United States.

What can be done to prevent the American presidency from disastrous exercises of missionary interventionism and failed military interventions in pursuit of democracy abroad in the future? The Constitution vests Congress, and Congress only, with the power to declare war. The U.S. Congress must stop the unconstitutional practice of delegating its authority to declare war to the Executive Branch through joint resolution. If there is cause for war, the President must present Congress with a war message and the members of Congress must then exercise their Constitutional responsibility and declare war or reject it.

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Without a declaration of war, there is no total commitment to the war. War aims and post-war goals may become tied to a specific administration. Domestic and foreign critics alike can wait for the next election cycle in the hope that the war will fail. There is some evidence that this is already taking place in Egypt and Syria, with President Hosni Mubarak and President Bashir al-sAssad no longer feeling pressure to reform because they believe they can simply wait for the departure of President Bush from office. (38) Proponents may be encouraged to lie or engage in illegal or extralegal activities like those at the Abu Ghraib prison and Guantanamo Bay, or to reveal the names of American intelligence agents in an effort to undermine people whose findings stand in the way of the cause, as was the case with the administration's attacks on Joe Wilson and I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby's outing of Wilson's spouse, Valerie Plame, as a CIA operative.

The Mexican Intervention, the Vietnam War, and now the Iraqi War stand as sobering lessons that democracies cannot afford wars of discretion. Such wars not only destroy lives and have the potential to destroy standing in the international community, but like all wars, they have the acid effect of undermining the liberties every American citizen should enjoy. (39)

The time has come, not for an American isolationism, but for the fulfillment of Abraham Lincoln's words "with malice toward none, with charity for all" on an international level. The security interests of the U.S. would be better served if its leaders abandoned missionary interventionism and sought instead to implement policies that the U.S. would not object to if other nations emulate them.

Rather than imposing a stamp mold for democracy on those who may not want it, the U.S. should build the best possible democracy at home. Francis Fukuyama, a former supporter of the neoconservative agenda whose supporters were the driving force leading to war in Iraq, now advocates a "realistic Wilsonianism" that would require "a dramatic demilitarization of American foreign policy and re-emphasis on other types of policy instruments." (40) Through a foreign policy of humanitarian aid and of commerce with all, a foreign policy that emphasizes "soft power" rather than military might and moral supremacy, the U.S. may become "a uniter, not a divider" of people who hunger for meaningful democracy across the globe.

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(1) Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (NY, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1995 [1994]), 30.

(2) John Milton Cooper, *The Warrior and the Priest* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1983), 22.

(3) Letter from Woodrow Wilson to Oswald Garrison Villard, 23 July 1913; letter from Wilson to James D. Phelan, 10 October 1912; as found in David Cronin *The Political Thought of Woodrow Wilson* (New York, NY: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), 230-232.

(4) See Thomas Paterson, *American Foreign Relations: Volume 2, Since 1895* (NY: Houghton-Mifflin, 2005) for an overview of the diplomacy leading to the military intervention.

(5) Cary T. Grayson, *Woodrow Wilson*, (NY: Holt, 1960), 30; as found in Paterson, 50.

(6) *Ibid.*

(7) *Ibid.*

(8) Mitchell Yockelson "The United States Armed Forces and the Mexican Punitive Expedition: Part 2,

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Prologue Magazine, Winter 1997, Vol. 29, No. 4 as found at <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1997/winter/mexican-punitive-expedition2.html> on 4 May 2006.

(9) Ibid.

(10) The military histories I consulted do not even mention the goal of "teaching them to elect good men." See, for example, Alan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For The Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: Free Press, 1984, 1994), 336-37 or Jack Sweetman's *The Landing at Veracruz: 1914; The First Complete Chronicle of a Strange Encounter in April, 1914, When the United States Navy Captured and Occupied the City of Veracruz, Mexico* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1968).

(11) See, for example, Wilson's interventions in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti.

(12) Commencement Address of George W. Bush, delivered at Yale University on 21 May 2001, as found at <http://www.yale.edu/It/archives/v8n1/v8n1georgewbush.htm> on 20 February 2006.

(13) George W. Bush, Second Inaugural Address, 20 January 2005, as found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050120-1.html> on 16 April 2006.

(14) CBS News, as found at <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/09/28/politics/main646142.shtml> on 21 February 2006.

(15) The administration continues to deny that it massaged evidence, but accounts like Richard Clarke's *Against All Enemies* (NY, NY: Free Press, 2004), Seymour Hersh's *Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib* (NY, NY: Harper Collins, 2004), James Bamford's *A Pretext for War* (NY, NY: Doubleday, 2004), several memos leaked from the British government, and just plain common sense have led most thinking people to accept that the administration had no smoking gun rationale for waging war against Iraq. See also Michiko Kakutani, "Waging a Battle, Losing the War," *New York Times*, 4 November 2005 as found at <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/04/books/04xbook.html?ex=1288760400&en=c804872492b973c9&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss> on 17 April 2006 for discussion of additional sources of the administration's drive to war.

(16) Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (NY, NY: Pantheon, 2006), 476-77.

(17) Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett *A War to be Won: Fighting the Second World War* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2000), 568-71.

(18) Joel Brinkley, "Rice, in England, Concedes U.S. 'Tactical Errors' in Iraq," *New York Times*, 1 April 2006, as found at: http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/01/world/middleeast/01rice.html?_r=1&oref=slogin on 1 April 2006.

(19) Michael E. Peterson, *The Combined Action Platoons: The U.S. Marines' Other War in Vietnam* (New York: Praeger, 1989), 15-19, cited in Major Brooks R. Brewington, United States Marine Corps, "Combined Action Platoons: A Strategy for Peace Enforcement," CSC 1996, as found at: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/brewington.pdf> on 6 April 2006. Brewington was researching the efficacy of reviving Combined Action Platoon tactics for UN Peacekeeping actions in the 1990s.

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- (20) Small Wars Manual (Washington, DC: Headquarters Marine Corps, 1940).
- (21) General Lewis W. Walt, *Strange War, Strange Strategy* (New York: Funk and Wagnall's, 1969), 29, as found in Andrew Krepinevich, Jr., *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1986), 172.
- (22) Brewington, 6.
- (23) James William Gibson, *The Perfect War: The War We Couldn't Lose and How We Did* (NY, NY: Vintage Books, 1988), 103; Krepinevich, 172.
- (24) *Ibid.*, 175-76.
- (25) John A. Bonin, Monograph 1-03: U.S. ARMY FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND IN AFGHANISTAN AND THE ARABIAN GULF DURING OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM: 11 September 2001-11 March 2003 (Carlisle, PA: Army Heritage Center Foundation, March 2003).
- (26) *Ibid.*, 21. For an additional account of a fire-fight with air support that Bonin says resembled similar operations the U.S. Army conducted in Vietnam, see Bonin, 23-24.
- (27) *Ibid.*
- (28) "Franks: as long as it takes," *Army Times* (27 May 2002), 5, as quoted in Bonin, 21.
- (29) Mitch Frank, "Army on a Shoestring," *Time* (26 August 2002), 43, as found in Bonin, 22.
- (30) Bonin, 28.
- (31) *Ibid.*, 29.
- (32) *Ibid.*, 33.
- (33) Conrad C. Crane and W. Andrew Terrill, *Reconstructing Iraq: Challenges and Missions for Military Forces in a Post- Conflict Scenario* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, January 2003) as found in Bonin, 33.
- (34) Bonin, 33-34. Shinseki, of course, was forced to take early retirement for making this estimate during Congressional hearings.
- (35) The experience of the 147th Field Artillery, Battery B, of Yankton, South Dakota, is illustrative. Now serving their second tour in Iraq, they have been assigned military police duty.
- (36) The revolt of the retired generals against Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's alleged arrogance and mismanagement of the war as described in the article "Rumsfeld Rebuked By Retired Generals: Ex-Iraq Commander Calls for Resignation" echoes these comments. See *The Washington Post* 12 April 2006 at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/12/AR2006041201114.html> as found on 16 April 2006.
- (37) Among others, such protections include the system of checks and balances and the protection of minority rights in Congress and used to include the indirect election of senators.

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(38) Hassan Fattah, "Democracy in the Arab World, a U.S. Goal, Falters," New York Times 10 April 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/10/world/middleeast/10democracy.html?ex=1145332800&en=6091022e43e33101&ei=5070&emc=eta1> as found on 16 April 2006.

(39) For a brief analysis of the historical assault on those liberties during times of war, see Steven J. Bucklin, "To Preserve These Rights: The Constitution and National Emergencies," 47 South Dakota Law Review 85-98 (2002).

(40) Francis Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 184.

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