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9/11, Terrorism and US Foreign Policy:

The Cases of the KSA and Iraq

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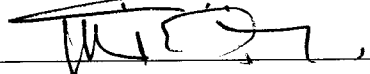
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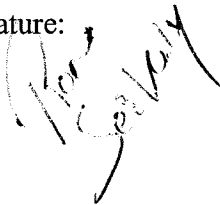
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Dedication

This thesis would remain incomplete without a word of solidarity to all the victims of terror; whether they be victims of terrorist attacks or victims of the foreign policies subsequent to them. I hope that my research, would at least give a voice for those who do not have one.

I would also like to dedicate this thesis to my father Jack, whom was a victim of terrorism, and without whom it would not have been possible to achieve this work. My lovely mother Irma, I thank you for your support and patience throughout this difficult period. Your love and support throughout my academic years kept me going, especially when I had the urge to stop; I thank you both.

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Abstract

National security has become a large focus for President Bush and Congress, as well as the international community. Following the tragic events on 9/11/2001, the importance of allies and partners became even more important to the United States. While the United States had not looked to act unilaterally in the past, multilateralism became crucial in order to determine how to thwart terrorism in the most effective way (Smith, 2005). In other words, the United States asked for the help of the whole world in order to fight terrorism. There is big difference between the pre- and post-foreign policy of the United States, particularly as it concerns the issue of terrorism. This current study analyzes the history of terrorism and how it has been addressed in the scholarly literature before turning to discuss how the US has addressed it. The thesis then looks at US foreign policy toward two countries in the Middle East: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iraq. The study concludes with an analysis of how and why US foreign policy regarding terrorism has shown both continuity and change.

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Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

National security has become an important focus for President Bush and Congress, as well as the international community. Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the importance of allies and partners grew to the United States. While the United States had not looked to act unilaterally in the past, multilateralism became crucial in order to determine how to thwart terrorism in the most effective way (Smith, 2005). There is a big difference between the pre- and post-9/11 foreign policy of The United States. The United States and its allies have successfully rid Afghanistan of the Taliban and denied Al-Qaida a safe harbor, as well as taken over Saddam Hussein's terrible reign in Iraq. Following American internationalism, the United States and its allies have encouraged democracy and democratic ideals in these countries, as it has been proven that democratic systems provide better security and human rights for their people (Smith, 2005). While the United States led "War against Terror" has been difficult, the support of the international community in terms of intelligence as well as resources has proven invaluable (Smith, 2005).

The use of pre-emptive force has also arisen as a major issue, as the United States and United Kingdom took pre-emptive force against the Iraqi regime in an attempt to dismantle the government as well as find weapons of mass destruction (Bleek, 2007). This was a major shift in foreign policy, as force, especially military force, is usually used as a direct result of being attacked by another group. It has

opened a new precedent in warfare, as it now appears that countries can act on assumption rather than hard evidence. America and its allies face a world that has become more and more dangerous with its weapons of mass destruction and a shadowy world of terrorists more than willing to use them. The wisdom of the past does not have the prescience or universal insight to deal with this new threat. America and its allies must change direction if they wish to respond to the challenge in an effective manner, even if it means employing policies that seemed dubious in the past. The state is called to protect its citizens in a Machiavellian world, filled with depravity and compromise.

Today the situation that confronts the American people is not so different. It is similar to that of their ancestors in many ways and more direct in regard to the number of lives at stake. One can debate whether the times have 'waxed worse and worse', but it is beyond question that the times have proved 'more and more critical' with their weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the ever-increasing number of potential users. Israel felt this threat in 1981 when it conducted a pre-emptive strike against an Iraqi nuclear reactor. The United States roundly condemned the action at the time, but with the threat now facing them from this and other rogue nations a new policy has emerged (Bleek, 2007). The nefarious intentions of the Iraqi regime were apparent to most observers. It appears as if this regime planned to continue the production of WMD and deliver these weapons themselves or distribute them through the shadowy world of terrorist networks to designated targets in this clandestine manner. By the time the US invaded Iraq, Iraq already had under Saddam violated over fifty UN resolutions to date (Bleek, 2007). The UN inspectors

revealed that Saddam was vigorously working on a stockpile of WMD—chemical, biological and nuclear—and by the mid- 1990’s he had begun to deny them access to his supply. He already had used these weapons against his own people and waves of foot soldiers in his war with Iran (Leavitt, 2004). He had pledged on a number of occasions to bring destruction upon the United States. He had subsidized and continues to support terrorist groups throughout the region, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad. The US government was able to argue that Saddam’s relationship to terrorism was a matter of grave concern (U.S. State Department report, 2002).

For the past half century, the Middle East has grabbed the greatest attention in matters of oil. It remains critical to future energy supplies. It produces a quarter of the worlds' energy supplies, yet it holds between two- thirds and three-quarters of all known reserves. Iraq alone possesses 11% of the worlds known reserves and is second only to Saudi Arabia. Iraqi oil also is of high quality and is inexpensive to process, making it very profitable. Moreover Iraq possesses promising untapped hydrocarbon potential (Bleek, 2007). The US Energy Information Administration estimates that these reserves may possibly reach 220 billion barrels, which is approximately 80% of Saudi Arabia's proven reserves. Although the Saudis have demonstrated repeatedly to the US in many events that they are willing to compensate for losses from other supplies, things have been shaky of late. Growing worries about Saudi Arabia, heightened by the events of September 11, with the Saudi extremist involvement in the terror attacks, and the growing instability in the Kingdom has prompted the US strategists to seek a back up plan. Therefore it is not

surprising that the US needs Iraqi oil. Iraq is the only nation that may be able to challenge the Saudi production in the future (Perkovitch, 2003).

If conditions in Iraq improve, new technology implemented and oil production increases, whoever gains access to these fields will be able to implement a massive influence over the global energy markets as well as the world. Rising world demand is depleting reserves in most world regions over the next decade. US oil reserves are running out. Whole US industries depend on oil for survival. The US is the largest consumer of oil in the world with its consumption levels rising (Perkovitch, 2003).

1.2 Methodology

The current study uses a deductive approach, which means that existing theories and ideas will be identified and studied to shed light on the topic of whether or not US foreign policy regarding terrorism has changed since 9/11. These are used to gain information and insight to prior incidents with similar signatures or modus operandi. Police reports, field interview cards, property pawn transactions, public records, and traffic citations are some common sources of information on known criminals. Ordinary street criminals often have lengthy arrest histories and numerous encounters with law enforcement officers documented on their criminal records (Lieberman, 2003). Criminals do not seek to have run-ins with the law, but they do not shy away from them. Terrorists, on the other hand, go to great extremes to avoid detection, as noted in the profiles of the September 11, 2001 hijackers, other than a traffic infraction they had little if any contact with the law enforcement community. Therefore, gathering information on these individuals requires analysts to think outside the box and to identify nontraditional

sources of information. Other sources used are the Internet, various published materials, court records, handouts, and self-published books such as *The Turner Diaries* and *Hunter* by Andrew MacDonald.

There are inherent difficulties in categorizing terrorism, which are compounded by the shaping of policy for a type of behavior that does not fall into known or familiar categories. Terrorist acts are considered both crimes and forms of warfare, unlike what we are used to. Understanding the larger possibilities, such as warfare, law enforcement will be able to make informed decisions on matters concerning data collection. When gathering information it is important to document and standardize every step of the process. This will alleviate any complications when categorizing behaviors or activities and will ensure that all participants in the process are on the same playing field.

Limited quantitative data was also used for this research. The data include the views of general public and executives of different security departments of United States. To meet the objectives and answer the question of this research, the thesis relies heavily on secondary data. The secondary data comes from various academic books and peer-reviewed articles relevant to the study. In the following section which includes the literature review we will thoroughly discuss what authors, historians and scholars think on this perspective. In the analysis section we will analyze the data through international relations (IR) theories and literature presented in this thesis. Finally in the light of methodology, literature review, and analysis we will draw a conclusion and a few personal thoughts on the issue.

In this respect, the important question that poses itself here is: How did the September 11, 2001 attacks affect US foreign policy towards terrorism, especially in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and Iraq”?

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Terrorism can be defined as the resort to violence against a specific group or a population. Terrorism is conducted for a variety of reasons that can be political, religious, cultural, and national. Treating the reasons of terrorism can be more efficient than treating the results of terrorism. Governments should of course attempt to be fair treating the phenomenon of terrorism (Mastny, 2003).

2.1 General overview of terrorism

Terrorism constitutes a major phenomenon in today's politics. The world is busy combating this phenomenon. Terrorism constitutes a major concern for various nations around the globe (Depke, 2000). In the following sections, I will define the general ideas and definitions to define the term terrorism.

2.1.1 Definition of terrorism

Terrorism is "the use of violence or the threat of violence, to create a climate of fear in a given population" (Mastny, 2003, p. 1). Terrorist violence targets ethnic or religious groups, governments, and political parties, corporations, and media enterprises. Organizations that engage in acts of terror are almost always small in size and poor compared to the populations and institutions they attack. Through publicity and fear generated by their violence, they seek to magnify their influence and power to create political change on either a local or an international extent (Mastny, 2003).

2.2 Reasons behind terrorism

According to current research, terrorism is caused by several reasons. These reasons can be religious, political, and cultural and can be based on natural resources as well. In this respect, terrorism is conducted for several reasons around the world and these reasons shall be treated as well as the results of terrorism (Depke, 2000).

2.2.1 Religious reasons

A key United States foreign policy goal today is to manage and minimize the threat of religious intolerance, and sectarian violence. To date the US has failed to effectively address the complexity of religious extremism with at times deadly outcomes. Since the US invasion of Iraq some regions are still overwhelmed by sectarian violence. Peace and stability within the country and region have not been met. Afghanistan and Pakistan are both American allies in the war on terror. Yet in Afghanistan, the Taliban presence has led to an increase in instability and human rights abuses. Pakistan on the other hand, has religious extremists that have continued to erode that country's stability as well as that of the region.

In the Middle East and central Asia, religion's relevance is not limited to current conflicts. For example, Christian churches played a important part in the 1980's revolutionary movements. In Lebanon, churches were involved in the Lebanese civil war. In the 1990's and beyond religion, ethnicity and nationalism played a destabilizing role across the political economic and social areas of many countries. Therefore, there is a growing recognition in all circles, for example policymakers, diplomats, and scholars,

that informed attention must be paid to the role of religion in world affairs. The U.S. Department of State took action by enacting the International Religious Freedom Act. This act prompted religious freedom in foreign policy. Since the issue of religion was brought to light it has helped address harmful religious issues. As a result, an annual report on the status of religious freedom worldwide was issued (Stern, 2006).

U.S. actions have resulted in some important achievements. In Vietnam for example, forced renunciations of faith was eliminated and the Saudi government rewrote their textbooks to no longer include explicit racism (Leavitt, 2004). Even with these big changes, the act has not been embraced and integrated among the various US departments that are involved with foreign policy. Outsiders misunderstand and mistrust this law as just another form of US unilateralism. The law focuses more on identifying problems rather than solutions that could foster religious tolerance.

“The current focus on extremism has skewed official U.S. policy toward viewing Islam through a threat lens, rather than as a community of actors who may also be able to play a positive role in international relations.” Military and foreign service officers have not been sufficiently trained to utilize and encourage the involvement and support of various religious and tribal leaders to promote peace and stability in the region (Leavitt, 2004).

Since the late 1970's, Islamic terrorism has become so widespread that it has become a major problem for the entire world (Francis, 2006). Of course, non-Muslim related terrorism also seems to have escalated since the 1970s, such as the Red Brigades in Italy, (Rogers, 2004) the IRA in Ireland (Dunn, 2006) and the Shining Path in Peru. (St. John, 2008) Islamic terrorist attacks have not had any enemy in particular

(Perkovich, 2003). They have attacked all kinds of military targets diplomatic institutions, entertainment and trade centers, religious establishments and innocent civilians and children (Smith, 2005). It is difficult to accuse one Islamic group with terrorism because in various parts of the world, including the US, the Middle East and many others, Islamic terrorism has attacked different targets that did not always have much in common. In many cases, Islamic terrorism was carried out in order to assert a political point of view, but in many other cases, it has also been an expression of anger and violence. During the 1980's and even today, many people have lost their lives in Islamic terrorist attacks, only because they happened to be in the place and time of the explosion or shooting (Depke, 2000). However, the majority of Islamic terrorist attacks today aim at western targets, particularly those related to the United States. Most Islamic terrorist groups consider the US as their first enemy. Islamic terrorism developed in the 1970s following the Islamic Revolution in Iran, and it has taken an anti-western identity, and attacks western targets all over the world. Islamic terrorism has developed out of hostility and hatred toward the west. Western governments, especially the US, have been involved in policies that resulted in feelings of defeat and frustration among many Muslims. Islamic terrorism has also prospered because of the support from many Muslims and from a number of Muslim states, especially Iran. Islamic terrorism is a violent trend through which frustrated political hatred of Muslims towards the west is represented (Depke, 2000).

Islamic terrorism is mostly identifiable with Islamic fundamentalism. For many years, Islamic fundamentalism has called for 'the return' to the origins of Islam. However, Islam and terrorism only became strongly related after the outbreak of the

Iranian Revolution in 1979. From the very beginning, this revolution was involved in a violent clash with the western world, especially with the US. At the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution, Iranian fanatic students, backed by the new regime, attacked the American embassy in Tehran. The incident which started on November 4, 1979 lasted for 444 days, reflecting the beginning of Islamic terrorism backed by the state (Mohaddessin, 2002).

During the 1980's, Islamic terrorism prospered as Iran fostered many terrorist activities against the west. The Iranian government legitimized Islamic terror by calling it a divine duty of every Muslim. The religious leaders of the regime encouraged Muslims to involve in terrorism against the West and to the extent of losing their lives during these missions, in return of "a place in heaven" (Mohaddessin, 2002). Thus, religious support and legitimization made it much easier for Islamic groups to adopt terrorism as a means of dealing with their enemies (Mohaddessin, 2002).

2.2.2 “Clash of Civilizations” Theory

This theory is tied closely to American political scientist, Samuel Huntington, and his article of the same name (Huntington, 2005). Through this theory, Huntington and others try to explain terrorism by noting that there are innate conflicts between ‘civilizations’. Civilizations are defined as a group of cultural, social, political norms and values (Dunn, 2006).

Paz and among other describes that after the collapse of the USSR, the world is now divided into two major parts: the west under the leadership of the US and the Arab World countries which is mostly made up of Muslims (St John, 2008). There is conflict

between the two parts, especially as the Muslims feel the need to be united against the rich and powerful west (Paz, 1999). However, while this line of thinking still has many supporters, others have called it reductionist.

2.2.3 Fight over resources

The United States lacks sufficient energy resources to meet its current and future needs and its foreign policy has always focused on securing access to energy. In addition to the oil resources, the United States aims to dominate over other natural resources all over the world. As international theory describes that the power of state lies when you have enough resources within and outside the state (St John, 2008). In other words, the United States has a major goal to dominate important oil resources in the Gulf and other regions of the world.

2.2.4 Fight against foreign policies of specific countries

Overall, lots of theories about terrorism and its measurement in American foreign policy came up to justify the recent attacks on the United States (Gelb 2003; Rosenthal, 2003). On the one hand, some theories claim that United States' foreign policy has constituted a major trigger of the attacks. On the other hand, willingness to use terrorism and fanaticism are attributed to Muslims. However, is United States' policy behind the attacks? Based on some evidences, a positive answer might be quite suitable. Thus some diplomatic alterations might have a better solution than the war that might exacerbate the hatred among Arabs and the United States (De Mesquita, 2007).

The United States interferes militarily in many cases around the globe and refuses to interfere in others. In other words, the United States launched a war against Iraq because it did not abide by the United Nations rules and resolutions (Jamal, 2003). However, it refused to interfere in Lebanon when the United Nations adopted the 425 and 426 resolutions that call upon Israel to withdraw from all occupied regions (Jamal, 2003). This behavior raises question marks, why here and not there? In addition, many other places in the Arab world suffer from the same type of discrimination (Giuliani, 2007).

The most powerful issue that triggers the Arabs is the United States seemingly blind support of Israel. In addition, the United States is perceived as having supported numerous criminal and repressive regimes in the Middle East which have caused untold death and suffering upon the Muslim people (The Attack, 2003). The United States is always for the Israeli policy and against Arabs who do not 'tow the US line' whether it is right or wrong. This issue has made some Arabs hate the United States. For example, according to Bin Laden, "the United States should not relax unless the Palestinian children relax" (*The Attack*, 2003). So, the blind American support to killing hundreds of innocents is a major and considerable cause behind the hatred against the United States. This issue is one important part in the United States foreign policy that might be so biased (Depke, 2000).

US foreign policy also can be seen in other arenas. The United Nations is an international organization of countries created to promote world peace and cooperation. In spite of being so, the United Nations' decisions are sometimes shaped by the United States but gradually it is becoming a fade episode now due to strong conspiracy on US foreign policy (Jamal, 2003). In other words, the United States influences very

considerably the decisions of the United Nations Security Council, which has considerable power, while the decisions of the General Assembly, which are rarely enforced, are also often ignored by the US. For example, Lebanon was supposed to receive financial aid after the liberation of the South. Unfortunately, the aid was deleted upon a request from the United States which preferred that benefits be given to Israel (Jamal, 2003).

In this respect, the doctrine of containment is the premise that all out war should be avoided but the US should be vigilant in stopping potential threats from rising against the country anywhere in the world. For many years, the doctrine of containment was focused on stopping the creation of new communist governments and the growth of existing communist regimes. For years it was thought that all communist governments were tools of the USSR and their desire for world domination. The nuclear capabilities of the USSR, the large military in place and their dislike of the US made them a perceived enemy of the US (De Mesquita, 2007).

The theory of containment was and remains flawed, however. The assumption that all nations must be allied with either the United States or the USSR in the past and with either the US or an 'enemy' state such as Iran today is not completely defensible. The major example is China which is a communist nation with a long history of struggle over its borders and a different culture than the USSR. The problem with the theory of containment is that it made it difficult to see nations as distinct, different problems, and different histories.

2.2.5 Defense of nation

Americans are increasingly perceived as a colonial force in the Arab world. Countries like Egypt and Kuwait always sent a kind of informal invitation to the US troops to help them and the United States has forces distributed throughout the Arab world. This might reflect pessimistic pictures in Arab minds. Americans exploit Arab resources while Arabs' hearts rattle (*Historical Causes*, 2002). Yet, it is in many cases unelected Arab governments themselves that invite in the US; in other words we can say that Arabs want to be exploited due to security reasons. This does not endear United States foreign policy to the Arab public (Scraton, 2002).

To begin with, one of the most important things that the American dream is to achieve is having extensive financial power. To do this, Americans established numerous military bases in some rich regions of the Islamic world. For example, the Gulf which is a region that is full of oil is full also of American military bases (*Historical Causes*, 2002). Seeing foreign forces in their holy lands, Muslims get enraged and infuriated. In addition, Muslims start having pessimistic forecasting of the future. They fear being colonized by other forces that will live as parasites on their lands. This is one clear part of the United States' foreign policy that might exacerbate the emotions of Arabs, Muslims specifically (Depke, 2000).

2.2.6 Liberation of occupied territories

In addition, Arabs do not want Israel to be a state that jeopardizes their existence. The United States supports Israel. This means for them that Israel will sooner or later invade and occupy their territories (Francis, 2006). Thus, having such strategic

goals, Arabs intend to weaken the supporters of Israel especially the United States. So, another super power like the European Union, for example, will come up and be somehow the leader of the world. Therefore, Arabs have terrorist intentions that have to be restricted and captured (*Historical Causes*, 2002).

2.2.7 Cultural reasons

On the public level, many Muslims, especially among the lower classes accept and acknowledge terrorism because they have suffered from disappointment with ideologies imported from the west, such as democracy, socialism, communism and other ideologies. In Lebanon, Muslim Shiites resorted to the use of terrorism because for many years they remained an ignored minority in the Lebanese society. More importantly, Islamic terrorism has gained a lot of ground and support among Muslims because most attacks were against the west and the US in particular (Esposito, 1999). American policies toward Muslim countries were usually seen to be biased by the majority of Muslims. For example, the US supported the Shah of Iran when he was repressing and terrorizing his own people. When the Islamic Revolution started in Iran, the US was seen as the number one enemy. The west in general and the US in particular, are seen to be enemies by the majority of the Muslims, especially as support to Israel continues, on the other side in various surveys by many online organizations such as BBC world and others have shown a dramatic drop down in thinking of Muslims regarding extremism and terrorism (Rotter, 2007)

The majority of Muslims today do not believe that there is one Muslim state that represents them or their aspirations. Even Iran is not acceptable to most of them because

it is based on Shiite not Sunni Islam. The majority of Muslims believe that their frustration and feelings of inferiority and defeat are the result of a conspiracy by the west and Israel. Since they are deprived from uniting and organizing themselves in a powerful state, many of them see Islamic terrorist organizations as the best means through which Islamic power is reflected (Esposito, 1999).

Islamic fundamentalism is like a genie that was set free out of a small bottle. It has grown too big that it is impossible to return it to where it came from (Dobriansky, 2003). In the late 1970s and during the 1980s, Islamic terrorism was directly related to the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Today, many Islamic terrorist groups are independent of Iran. The Iranian government for example, has finally announced that it was no longer responsible for the *fatwa* (verdict) made by the late Khomeini, rewarding \$2.5 million for the murder of Salman Rushdi for publishing his anti-Islamic book, *Satanic Verses*. However, following this announcement, many Islamic fundamentalists argued that the *fatwa* was final and valid, even if it is denounced by the Iranian government (Depke, 2000). While Salman Rushdi might be safe in Britain where he lives under very tight security, Islamic fundamentalists will be after him whenever he appears in public. British Airlines, for example, would still not allow him to travel on its flights because this might endanger other passengers (Depke, 2000).

Islamic terrorism might be facing a lot of changes in the future. In Iran, there is a power struggle at the top of the state between the moderates and the hardliners. If the moderates win the struggle, Islamic terrorism will certainly lose a lot of diplomatic and financial support from Iran (Depke, 2000). Currently, the conservatives rule the state of Iran and this supports the issue of terrorism.

Indeed, whether or not Iran will continue to support Islamic terrorism is no longer as important as it was before. Islamic terrorism is now supported and financed by a number of Islamic fundamentalists who have access to arms and funds, and who are also protected in their hiding areas. For example, the CIA believes that Osama Bin Laden, the Muslim leader of a terrorist group was responsible for giving orders to bomb the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in August 1998 (Waller, 2000). Osama Bin Laden's operations have so far proven to be successful because his organization depends on terrorist cells that are not related in their communication. Hence, one cell does not know of the existence of other cells that may be operating in the same area (Waller, 2000).

Although Iran is now taking a moderate political line and even though many Arab and Muslim countries enjoy better relations with the west than they used to in the past, Islamic terrorism continues to threaten American and western targets and goals, many of which are purely civilian (Dunn, 2006). Islamic terrorism is a major problem because it is a violent behavior (Lieberman, 2003). This violent behavior could be the result of frustration, disappointment, and failure to express political needs. It is also facilitated by support from states such as Iran, Sudan, Afghanistan, Libya and others. Furthermore, popular support from the frustrated Muslim public is another important factor giving Islamists more prestige and motivation. The US is now putting a lot of effort in fighting Islamic terrorism. So far, its attempts have not succeeded, and in the future, little success may be witnessed. The US is right in not accepting terrorism (Murden, 2002). However, the US must understand that Islamic terrorism is considered to be a crime by many Muslims. It is rather considered to be the only way through which these Muslims can

make their message clear to the world and the United States shall assess the reasons behind terrorism. The US might succeed in eliminating terrorism if it tries to listen and take into consideration the points of views of Islamic fundamentalists. Whether this is acceptable or not, it remains the most effective solution. Examples from Northern Ireland show that terrorism continues as long as there is frustration and disappointment among many people.

Therefore, eliminating Islamic terrorism can not be achieved by attacking Islamic terrorists. Instead, what is needed is an open policy of understanding between the west and the Muslim world. Until then, Islamic violence will continue, especially that Islam itself – as some other religions – is a political religion that has a lot of place for violence and military activity in its teaching (Murden, 2002). Other issues such as the economy, poverty, education and other factors also contribute when it comes to change an individual mind. America also plays a large role in the global economy. As technology and communications have improved, the United States has become even more industrialized and economically advanced. With a GDP of over 10.4 trillion dollars, the United States is a powerhouse in the international market. The government looks to encourage international trade by opening markets and freeing capital, goods, and services for all nations (Leavitt, 2004). The United States benefits when other countries prosper, so it must pursue positive economic policies in order to encourage others to prosper. The decision of who to interact with economically has become even larger as a result of September 11, 2001. While the government has had restrictions and embargoes on certain governments in the past, the problem has become even more severe in terms of terrorist financing. This is a large focus in American foreign policy, as the ever present problem

of national security has come to the forefront of American consciousness. The issue of developing countries is also relevant, as the government has to decide how much money to allocate to help these struggling countries each year (Sorrentino, 2002).

Chapter Three: US Foreign Policy on Terrorism

US Foreign Policy on Terrorism

On September 11, 2001, the U.S and the world as a whole experienced a new generation of terrorist attacks. In synchronized attacks, hijackers took control over four commercial jet planes, using three of them as missiles to assault U.S targets. Two of the hijacked planes hit into the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center, which led to their destruction. The third plane hit the Pentagon in Virginia. Luckily, the fourth plane went down in an open area in Pennsylvania. Around four thousand people lost their lives in this devastating event (Terrorism in 2002, p.15). However, while this tragedy was undoubtedly the most devastating terrorist act on American soil, it is not a unique terrorist act but rather one of numerous terrorist acts which have occurred since the beginning of the 20th century and even before.

The threats of weapons of mass destruction were enough to cause the United States to attack pre-emptively in Iraq. In the Middle East, as well as elsewhere, the threat of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons (CBRNs) has increased exponentially. The government does not know which groups have them, what their capabilities are, or when the United States and its allies could be attacked by them. As technologies have increased and become more available, the need to know this information has become even more crucial in order to strategize and prepare. The United States must remain close to both its allies and enemies in order to avoid the possibility of being attacked at home or abroad. (Rogers, 2004). This chapter demonstrates the overall

idea of American foreign policy regarding terrorism after the 9/11 attacks on the United States while also focusing in on US foreign policy toward Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

While the United States has hundreds of foreign policy goals and objectives, its most important goals currently are national security and limiting weapons of mass destruction. A divided government within the United States sometimes makes it difficult to create clear strategies both domestically and internationally, but both groups are usually willing to compromise in order to deal effectively with any problems. Media and public opinion often present challenges as well, as leaders must represent the concerns of the people. Yet, the freedom of Americans to give their opinions and have them represented is central to the government of the United States. This is something that the United States hopes to provide in other nations in order to encourage development and future governmental progress. As President George W. Bush said, “We will defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants. We will preserve the peace by building good relations among the great powers. We will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent” (as quoted in Kelley, 2006). The United States will continue to lead along with its allies where necessary in the international system in order to promote democratic ideals and a better world for all countries in the future (Bleek, 2007).

The United States maintains relations with nearly every nation state in the international system. The US also conducts frequent relations with many international organizations for a great deal of different reasons. All actors in the international system are important to the US, but current situations elevate temporary importance of certain actors and countries. Traditionally, issues concerning international trade and security

dominated US international relations. Today issues of terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and Middle East peace are frontrunners in American foreign policy. These current issues facing the US, compiled with traditional objectives in international relations, dictate the current most important countries and actors to the United States in the following sections the pre and post 9/11 American foreign policy.

3.1 US policy towards terrorism before 9\11

On September 17, 2002 George W. Bush submitted to Congress a document entitled “The National Security Strategy for the United States” in which he stated that the national security strategy “is based on a distinctly American internationalism that reflects the union of our values and our national interests. The aim of this strategy is to help make the world not just safer but better”. China, Russia, India, and North Korea are very important to US security because they rank among the top in size of armed forces. The United Kingdom, France, Japan, Germany, and Italy are also important because they have the highest levels of military spending. Additionally, all countries that currently have the technology and capabilities, or are developing the capabilities, to use nuclear warfare, are important to the US and international security objectives. The United States consults regularly with the United Nations and other countries regarding arms control, regional security, and defense relations.

Trade issues have also traditionally dominated US objectives in pursuing foreign policy. As stated by the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, the aim of US policy making regarding trade is to advance “economic prosperity by increasing trade through the opening of overseas markets and freeing the flow of goods, services, and capital.”