



War on Terror in Afghanistan; an Analysis of U.S Failed Policy

Abstract: *Bush's presidency begins with Al Qaeda attack on US territory, they adopted new strategies to counter radical Islamist groups and ensure American security, and the new setup established a new central agency, known as 'The Department of Homeland Security.' Secondly, they decided to keep the war out of American territory and invaded Afghanistan and quash the sanctuaries of Al-Qaeda and get rid of the government in Afghanistan. Another strategy was 'the doctrine of Preventive war' and the last action was against Saddam Hussain about whom they used to claim that Iraq possessed "Weapon of Mass Destruction." They pursued Afghan Taliban, too, as the enemies of the United States. The reason for such war was that the Bush administration or war policy makers had no understanding of Afghan society. To such an ignorant invader over the complex society, the ethnically diverse and religiously traditional fault lines caused tremendous trouble.*

Key Words: Al-Qaeda, Afghanistan, Taliban, Terrorism, NATO, Graveyard of Empire

Introduction

"There was no strategy for the campaign." "It just wasn't there," Army Gen. Dan McNeill, who served as US commander twice under the Bush administration, lamented. From 2006 to 2007, British Gen. David Richards, who oversaw US and NATO forces, declared, "There was no comprehensive long-term plan." "We were hoping for a single, long-term approach, a good plan, but instead we got a variety of techniques," says the author (Whitlock, *The Afghanistan Papers; A secret history of war*, 2021).

The Bush regime reacted to this once-in-a-lifetime occurrence by enacting radical and far-reaching new measures. First, it

established a brand-new federal agency, the Department of Homeland Security, and pushed the Patriot Act through Congress, giving domestic law enforcement more ability to combat would-be terrorists. Second, it invaded Afghanistan, a landlocked nation on the other side of the globe, and ousted the Taliban administration there, which had been harboring al-Qaida. There were three major areas of what we may call biased judgments that contributed to blunders by the Bush administration during its first term as custodian of US foreign policy. The first was the threat assessment and U.S. failed to assess accurately the nature of threat, to understand fully the sanctuaries of the

* Graduated in Political Science, Department of Political Science, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, KP, Pakistan. Email: Khanbk344@gmail.com (*Corresponding Author*)

† Undergraduate Student, Department of Political Science, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, KP, Pakistan.

‡ Undergraduate Student, Department of Political Science, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, KP, Pakistan

terrorists and geographical jargons of Afghanistan (Fukuyama, [2006](#)).

The difficulties that US authorities had in achieving long-term, sustainable improvements raise doubts about the government's competence to create, implement, and assess reconstruction initiatives. The allocation of responsibility across agencies did not always account for the strengths and shortcomings of each entity. The Department of State, for example, is intended to spearhead rebuilding efforts, but it lacked the skills and resources to do so in Afghanistan. DOD, on the other hand, has the means and skills to manage strategy, but not for large-scale reconstruction operations with substantial economic and governance elements. As a result, no single agency had the mindset, expertise, or resources to develop and manage an Afghanistan reconstruction strategy (Sopko., August, [2021](#)).

A narrative has emerged that the nation-building that followed the US invasion of Afghanistan constituted mission creep because the purpose for the operation was counterterrorism. In actuality, the Bush administration's choice in 2001 to pursue and punish the terrorists responsible for the September 11 attacks, as well as to depose the Taliban regime, which had housed al-Qaeda leaders, necessitated a nation-building operation. Wiping out the present administration in Afghanistan and making no attempt to facilitate the establishment of a moderately functional state in its place would have been the height of irresponsibility. Indeed, in the early years, the US was chastised for doing too little, rather than too much, to help construct an Afghan state, which included local security forces (Miller, [2021](#)).

It was a common perception among the Americans after Al-Qaeda attacked the twin towers and the pentagon that everything has now been changed for America. The main concern of the Bush administration was to convince the people of America for the two

wars, one in the Middle East and the other one which was against Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan after September 11 attacks on American soil. This attack from the side of the radical Islamists changed the whole American understanding of the threat. Before this the rivals of the United States of America were mainly on political or Economic. But a paradigm shift occurred in the American perception of threat occurred and the political and economic rivals were now replaced by the Radical Islamists and Weapon of Mass Destruction in the case of Iraq. Both these issues existed at the top of the list since a long. The issue of the Al-Qaeda gained momentum after the Iranian revolution in 1978 and the problem of Iraq intensified with the dawn of the nuclear age (Fukuyama, [2006](#)).

In May, British Lt. Gen. David Richards arrived in Kabul to take charge of NATO forces. A few months later, he also assumed command of U.S. troops in the east the first time the Americans and their NATO allies served under the same banner in Afghanistan. A veteran of far-flung conflicts in Sierra Leone, East Timor and Northern Ireland, he oversaw a combined force of 35,000 troops from thirty-seven countries, a formidable presence on paper. In public, Richards embraced his role as the commander of NATO's first combat mission outside Europe. But in private, he was appalled by the coalition's absence of strategic thinking and its inability to agree on the war's objectives. "There was no coherent long-term strategy," he said in a Lessons Learned interview. "We were trying to get a single coherent long-term approach a proper strategy but instead we got a lot of tactics (Whitlock, *The Afghanistan Papers; A secret history of war*, [2021](#))."

What were the reasons behind the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan?

Principles and Prudence

Al-Qaeda attacked the territory of the U.S. when Bush came into office of the president for the first time. The response of the Bush administration and policy makers was not in the same tone. Rather they adopted some new strategies and drafted some new policies in order to counter this radical Islamist group and to make sure the security of the U.S. in the future against any attack. Out of all the strategies and policies, the Bush administration established a new agency at the central level for the first time, known as the 'Department of Homeland Security (House T. w., [2003](#)).' Apart from this, the Bush administration succeeded to pass the famous 'Patriot Act' from congress in order to further strengthen the local security agencies against the expected terrorists ([CARLISLE, 2021](#)).

Secondly, the Bush administration decided to keep the war out of the American territory and for this aim they decided to invade Afghanistan and quash the sanctuaries of Al-Qaeda and get rid of the Al-Qaeda administered government in Afghanistan. Another strategy was based on the 'doctrine of Preventive war' which meant to attack first, use hard power against the enemy and take the war to the enemy's land. And the last action was against Saddam Hussain about whom they used to claim that Iraq possessed a "Weapon of Mass Destruction (Commissioners, [2006](#))." The first two strategies was a direct response to the September 11 attacks. While some of the Political figure criticized as they believed that it curtails the freedom of individuals.

The invasion of Iraq wasn't an explicit response to the September 11 attacks rather Fukuyama is of the view that the utmost aim of Iraq's invasion was make the environment of the Middle East friendly and non-hostile for Israel. The latter strategies,

the invasion of Iraq, became controversial when the Bush administration emphasized the regime change in Iraq and dismantling of Saddam's government. The Bush administration was solely responsible for this decision as Bush had declared at that time that whatever the response his allies and international institutions show nothing could stop him from doing so. Even Bush did not respect the Security Council's inspection team which was investigating the matter of WMD in Iraq ([Archive, 2002](#)). He took this decision before the assessment of Security Council's team and invaded Iraq. It was a pre-planned policy of the Bush regime because the Policy makers behind Bush were Neo-Conservatives and they used to propagate certain political dogmas and delusions during or before Bush's entry into the Presidential office included, American exceptionalism, and Regime Change, Unipolarity and Benevolent hegemony ([Corscadden, 2014](#)).

So, it can be concluded that September 11 attacks were a blessing in disguise for the Bush administration as they exploited this event and clubbed Saddam Hussain with radical Islamists and declared Afghanistan and Iraq as the 'Axis of Evil.' Neo-Conservatives seem dominant drivers of the Bush administration as ample policies of the Bush administration were compatible with what Neo-Conservatives used to believe. There are certain common factors between Bush administration policies and what Neo-Conservatives used to propagate or mention in their writings which included concerns for Democracy at the global level, Human rights, reluctance towards International institutions, the tie between U.S. use of force and moralities, and lack of any Programme of social engineering in the post-war period ([Monten, 2005](#)). The last part, the lack of Social Engineering's programme, had so many repercussions for the World's peace and stability because the U.S. did not try to restore the normal situation and to drag the common people out of the war crisis in the

post-war period. This flaw in the American strategy led to Anti-American sentiments throughout the world and ultimately Radical Islamists fought vigorously against the American forces in Afghanistan and even the war in Iraq about which the Americans believed would a short war, but hopes didn't meet the reality (Hearings, [2009](#)).

Social Engineering and the Problem of Development

Ample critiques of American foreign policy like Chomsky, Mearsheimer, and Fukuyama have concluded that there were certain biases and flaws in the American strategy during the 'War on Terror.' First, these critiques believe that the Bush Administration had made a wrong assessment of the threat. Parallel to this loophole in the American approach, there was another bias approach of the Bush administration which was their pre-planned antagonistic and hostile attitude towards international institutions such as the United Nation and the International Court of Justice (Leffler, [2009](#)). This megalomaniac attitude of the Bush administration again gave birth to Anti-Americanism once again but this time it was among the developed states or State actors. And the final conclusion upon which these critiques have reached was that the Bush Administration failed to address the serious issue of the reconstruction of the war-hit society of Iraq which not only fanned the instability Middle east but throughout the world (CRS, [2003](#)).

The Neoconservative Legacy

After the American invasion of Iraq ample have attempted to unveil the nexus between the Neo-Conservatives and the Bush administration as many of the Political writers, and critiques believed that Neo-Conservatives had captured the Bush administration and were largely responsible for Pushing America into the war against

Iraq (Stott, [2015](#)). Even Howard Dean, the Presidential candidate in 2004, alleged the Bush administration for having a romantic nexus with the Neo-Conservatives. Many believed that the ones who drafted the policy of the Iraq war such as Douglas Feith, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz were by religion Jewish and by School of thought they were Neo-Cons and their utmost interest in the Iraq War was to make the Middle East safe for Israel. And to attain this objective they used the concept of 'Noble Lie' as they, at public level, were doing propaganda that the aim of invasion is for the propagation of Democracy while the implicit aim was to favor Israel by making the region of the Middle east disturb. The critics of the Bush administration often used the word 'Neo-Conservatives' as a synonym for the Jewish (Boot, [2004](#)).

The Roots of Neo-conservatism

Neo-Conservatives came into existence after ample political and Foreign Policy intellectuals assembled in the city college of New York in between 1930 and 1940, a group that included Irving Kristol, Daniel Bell, Irving Howe, Seymour Martin Lipset, Philip Selznick, Nathan Glazer, and a bit later, Daniel Patrick Moynihan (Lipset). All these were either emigrant of from a very penniless background and they didn't afford the other elite oriented and expensive institutions such as Howard etc.

The time at which this school of thought was emerging was almost a state of anarchy at the international level and CCNY had provided a very suitable environment for political discussions and another worth mentioning factor was that CCNY was curbed by the Leftists at that time. So, this much frank and politically autonomous institution favored the Neo-Conservatives to club together and to have a discussion upon the political issues of international caliber. The link between Leo Strauss, a Neo-Conservative and the Bush administration

looks a bit implicit. Multiple writers have attempted to write about this entente such as Mark Lilla etc (Lilla, [2004](#)).

What made the relationship between Neo-Conservatives and the Bush administration was that there were not any Neo-Conservatives served in the Bush administration. Even if one asked President Bush about Leo Strauss he would have nodded his head and would have responded in no. The only bone of contention was Paul Wolfowitz, the deputy secretary of defense, who studied with Leo Strauss briefly. But he did not consider himself as the Neo-Conservative or a supporter of Strauss's approach. Leo Strauss, a political theorist and Jewish by religion studied under the aegis of Ernst Cassirer, who ran away from the atrocities of the Nazi regime and went to America in the 1930s where he started teaching in the university of Chicago and died in 1970. His writings were merely a response to the philosophy of Nietzsche and Heidegger and criticized the English Enlightenment for its too much nakedness and secularism. He was of the view that Divine revelations about a good life could not be excluded out of the whole political scenario (Levine, [2009](#)). Strauss, too, used to own certain political beliefs and stood against communism and fascism in favor of Liberal democracy. He praised Churchill for his struggle for the propagation of Liberal democracy as Churchill had declared America the beacon of democracy for the world and have left America with the task to propagate and spread democracy throughout the world by whatever means she used.

The Alternative Case for War with Iraq

The American war against Iraq was based on certain calculations against Iraq included

1. That Iraq possessed weapon of mass destruction and wanted to increase.
2. Iraq had links with Al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations.

3. And finally the Americans believed that the government in Iraq was tyrannical and Saddam ruled the country the in the style of a dictator and the people of Iraq deserved to be liberated from this mess (Dunn, [2005](#)).

All this set of arguments against Iraq came to the global scenario or more specifically in the American attitude right after the September 11 attacks. Americans had the fear that the weapon of mass destruction which Iraq possessed are extremely vulnerable and there is a great possibility that might some non-state militant organizations took control over these WMDs and hurt American society. When the assumption did not prove right, they Americans blamed Iraq by clubbing her with Al-Qaeda, violation of Human rights and lack of democratic spirit. The United States did not choose the option that she is invading Iraq for the global public good rather Bush administration succeeded by restricting Iraq and its WMD to the security of the United States of America. Thus, without considering the response of the international community, her allies, and international institutions such as the United Nation, its Security Council and the International Court of Justice and invaded Iraq on the basis of the above-mentioned blames. Many critics believed that none of these blames and arguments can be taken true and the only aim of America's invasion of Iraq was either OIL CONTROL or to serve the interest of ISRAEL by disturbing this region or to force the countries in the Middle East to give up their hostile and undiplomatic attitude towards Israel and to recognize Israel as an independent states despite the internal conflicts and political turmoil between the Palestinians and Israel (Outlook, [2008](#)).

Historical Background in the Context of Stimulus Response Theory

The stimulus response model introduces a new model or approach to the paradigm of decision-making. The stimulus-response model is the combination of ample faculties and factors. It is these factors that define the collective nature of the event, the Psychology of actors, how intensified an event would be, and the entailments of the conflict for both the actors. i.e., The perception (S) and Response (R), as they constitute the model, this thing define the pattern of behavior and this pattern in a long run defines the outcomes of the interaction between the two actors. The pattern of behavior of both, America's political and military decision-makers and the De facto sovereign of Afghanistan, The Taliban correlated closely. But the case is different from that of the Cuban Missile Crisis where, too, the actions were correlated closely but the end result was a de-escalation of the crisis.

The reason for de-escalation in the case of the Cuban Missile crisis is obvious because no actor either USA or USSR adopted any deception-oriented strategy neither party tried to escalate the situation by adopting an aggressive policy toward the other. But the case is different when it comes to the Afghan War. Here, too, the concerned actors follow the same footings and pattern, but the outcome was not de-escalation rather the situation escalated because of the crossing of the threshold from an actor by attacking the territory of the USA and turning the twin towers into ashes by killing hundreds of innocents of people (S) (Amount of violence/Action from Al-Qaeda). Now the expressed Response (r) from the USA was in the contour of policies or we can say the policymakers, or the Bush administration brought some structural changes. First, they established a new federal agency, the Department of Homeland security. The second step (R) was

more tangible and aggressive as they invaded Afghanistan by following the same pattern of behavior as followed by Al-Qaeda earlier, the use of hard power.

The decision makers also introduced a new doctrine, "Pre-emptive action policy" by pushing the conflict toward the enemy's territory. So, by this strategy, they declared the Middle East and more specifically Iraq and Afghanistan as an "AXIS OF EVIL" as mentioned by "Francis Fukuyama" in his book "America at the Cross Road (Fukuyama, 2006, pp. 23-25)." Individual level decisions or Personality is a part of s: r relation. Individual involvement sometimes makes the whole decision a Subjective phenomenon by ignoring the Truth and facts. As stated by Churchill, "In wartime truth is so precious that she should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies (Times, 1984)." As a result of Individual errors, the USA's assessment of threat was not ideal and statistically correct; both in the case of Iraq and Afghanistan because she remained unaware of her genuine enemy which proves right after Defense secretary, Donald Rumsfeld's Confession during war time in Afghanistan is that "there is no visibility into who the bad guys are." This miscalculated response from the Americans created so many problems for the Americans. The Americans were uncertain about their target.

The troops were unaware of their bullets' targets, the unprofessionalism shown by the Afghan Military (As they were using to back American troops in the war Against Al-Qaeda), corruption's factor, ill-informed policymakers, and also the military in the field from the collective psyche and consciousness of the local people further fanned the problem against the interests of USA. Out of all the internal crises in Afghanistan, corruption was and still is the most dominant factor. About Hamid Karzai and Vice president Qasim Fahim Khan, Richard Holbrook was of the

view that "they were as corrupt as hell (Whitlock, CONSUMED BY CORRUPTION, 2019)." But this practice was not just practiced by the native Afghani politicians or military personnel. Even the Americans, too, were involved in this black trade. Starting from the ghost appointments of the troops in the military and corruption in grants that were granted by the American congress for social engineering in Afghanistan (This is a separate debate that Neo-Conservatives who at that time backed the Bush's Administration for Attacks against Al-Qaeda, Social engineering in Afghanistan was not included in their plan) ends with the triumph of the Taliban. All these tales of corruption have now been illustrated by Craig White in his very recent book "The Afghanistan Papers."

Democracy: An Impossible Goal of the U.S.

A stable, American-style government in Afghanistan with democratic elections, a functional Supreme Court, an anti-corruption body, a women's ministry, and hundreds of freshly built public schools with a revised curriculum was the "impossible" aim the US set, according to Boucher. You are attempting to establish an organized government similar to that of Washington, D.C. in a nation that does not function that way, he said (Whitlock, The Afghanistan Papers; A secret history of war, 2021).

The Pentagon's early directives in the fall of 2001, according to Philip Kapusta, a Navy commander who worked as a planner for Special Operations forces, lacked sufficient detail. For instance, it wasn't obvious if Washington planned to punish the Taliban or depose it. Many officials at U.S. Central Command, the military command responsible for conducting the war, he claimed, did not believe the plan would succeed and saw it as a stopgap measure to gain time while developing a

more effective strategy. In an Army oral history interview, Kapusta stated, "We received some basic direction like, 'Hey, we want to go fight the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan'." In actuality, regime change was not necessarily a goal in the initial plan (Timeline, 2019).

Infantry officer Maj. Glen Helberg spent the night in a sleeping bag on the sand when he landed at Kandahar Airfield in January 2002. "That night it rained, and water was streaming beneath the tent flaps. It was moon dust. In an oral history interview with the Army, he said, "I woke up and part of my equipment was floating. Six months later, when Helberg's battalion left, troops were sleeping on cots as opposed to the ground. Nobody could have predicted that the dingy camp at Kandahar would eventually grow into a massive fighting center comparable to Bagram. With 5,000 takeoffs and landings every week, it would occasionally surpass all other airfields between Delhi and Dubai in terms of activity.

Maj. Lance Baker, an intelligence officer with the Army, claimed in an oral history interview that his division, the 10th Mountain Division, had nothing left to do because there was "no more combat, Afghanistan's done." We are returning home. Army Maj. Andrew Steadman and his paratrooper unit arrived in Kandahar in June 2002 full of enthusiasm for the search for al-Qaeda but ended up sitting on their hands. In an Army oral history interview, he said, "The boys played video games (Whitlock, The Afghanistan Papers; A secret history of war, 2021)." "They exercised in the morning and trained in the late afternoon."

Conclusion

After the disastrous incident of September 11, the Bush administration decided to keep the war out of American territory, and for this aim, they decided to invade Afghanistan and quash the sanctuaries of

Al-Qaeda and get rid of the Al-Qaeda-administered government in Afghanistan. Another strategy was based on the 'doctrine of Preventive war' which meant to attack first, use hard power against the enemy, and take the war to the enemy's land. And the last action was against Saddam Hussain whom they used to claim that Iraq possessed a "Weapon of Mass Destruction." The first two strategies were a direct response to the September 11 attacks.

While some of the Political figures criticized it as they believed that it curtails the freedom of individuals. The invasion of Iraq was not an explicit response to the September 11 attacks rather Fukuyama is of the view that the utmost aim of Iraq's invasion was to make the environment of the Middle East friendly and non-hostile for Israel. The latter strategy, the invasion to Iraq, became controversial when the Bush administration emphasized on regime change in Iraq and the dismantling of Saddam's government. The Bush administration was solely responsible for this decision as Bush had declared at that time that whatever the response his allies and international institutions show nothing could stop him from doing so.

Even Bush did not respect the Security Council's inspection team which was investigating the matter of WMD in Iraq. He took this decision before the assessment of the Security Council's team and invaded Iraq. It was a pre-planned policy of the Bush regime because the Policymakers behind Bush were Neo-Conservatives and they used to propagate certain political dogmas and delusions during or before Bush's entry into the Presidential office included,

including American exceptionalism, and Regime Change, Uni-polarity, and Benevolent hegemony.

So, it can be concluded that September 11 attacks were a blessing in disguise for the Bush administration as they exploited this event and clubbed Saddam Hussain with radical Islamists and declared Afghanistan and Iraq as the 'Axis of Evil.' Neo-Conservatives seem, dominant drivers of the Bush administration, as ample policies of the Bush administration were compatible with what Neo-Conservatives used to believe. There are certain common factors between Bush administration policies and what Neo-Conservatives used to propagate or mention in their writings which included concerns for Democracy at the global level, Human rights, reluctance towards international institutions, tie between U.S. use of force and moralities and lack of any Programme of social engineering in the post-war period.

The last part, the lack of a Social Engineering program, had so many repercussions for the World's peace and stability because the U.S. didn't try to restore the normal situation and drag the common people out of the war crisis in the post-war period. This flaw in the American strategy led to Anti-American sentiments throughout the world and ultimately Radical Islamists fought vigorously against the American forces in Afghanistan and even the war in Iraq about which the Americans believed would a short war but hoped didn't meet the reality.

The lack of clear aim, war strategies, and the fragmented response of the member states made a short war a lengthy one.

References

- Alvi, F. H. (2022, January 9). *The U.S. failed in Afghanistan by trying to moralize with bullets and bombs*. The Conversation: <https://theconversation.com/the-u-s-failed-in-afghanistan-by-trying-to-moralize-with-bullets-and-bombs-174033>.
- Archive, T. N. (2002). *Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction*. The National Security Archive.
- Archives, T. U. (2009). *The Global War on Terrorism: The First 100 Days*. The U.S. state Department Archives.
- Boot, M. (2004). *Neocons*. *Foreign Policy*, 140, 20. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4147516>.
- Carlisle, M. (2021, September 11). *How 9/11 Radically Expanded the Power of the U.S. Government*. Time: <https://time.com/6096903/september-11-legal-history/>.
- Collins, J. J. (2015, September 1). *Initial Planning and Execution in Afghanistan and Iraq*. National Defense University Press: <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Publications/Books/Lessons-Encountered/Article/915829/chapter-1-initial-planning-and-execution-in-afghanistan-and-iraq/>.
- Commissioners, W. (2006). *WEAPONS of terror Freeing the World of Nuclear, Biological, and chemical Arms*. Stockholm, Sweden. : WMDC.
- Corscadden, P. (2014, June 14). *The Neoconservative Influence on US Foreign Policy and the 2003 Iraq War*. E-International Relations. <https://www.e-ir.info/2014/06/14/the-neoconservative-influence-on-us-foreign-policy-and-the-2003-iraq-war/>.
- CRS. (2003). *Iraq War: Background and Issues Overview*. Every CRS Report.
- Dunn, D. H. (2005). *Bush, 11 September and the Conflicting Strategies of the "War on Terrorism"*. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 16, 11–33. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30001932>.
- Dunne, T., & Mulaj, K. (2010). *America after Iraq*. *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, 86(6), 1287–1298. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40929762>.
- Entous, S. C. (2021, December 10). *The Secret History of the U.S. Diplomatic Failure in Afghanistan*. The New Yorker: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/12/20/the-secret-history-of-the-us-diplomatic-failure-in-afghanistan>.
- Fukuyama, F. (2006). *America at the Cross road*. In F. Fukuyama, *America at the Cross road* (pp. 19–20). London: Yale University press.
- Group, I. C. (2016). *Exploiting Disorder: al-Qaeda and the Islamic State*. International Crisis Group.
- Hearings, C. (2009). *Exploring Three Strategies*. Washington: Committee on Foreign Relations.
- House, T. w. (2003). *Protecting the Homeland*. The White House Archives.
- House, T. W. (2006). *President Bush Nominates Dr. Robert M. Gates to be Secretary of Defense*. Washington: President Bush Nominates Dr. Robert M. Gates to be Secretary of Defense.
- Kaplan, F. (2010, August 6). *The Transformer*. FP: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2010/08/06/the-transformer/>
- Khan, A. R. (2017, May 29). *It's time for a hard look at Operation Medusa*. MACLEAN'S: <https://www.macleans.ca/news/world/its-time-for-a-hard-look-at-operation-medusa/>
- Kissinger, H. (2021, August 25). *The Economist*. The Economist:

- <https://www.economist.com/by-invitation/2021/08/25/henry-kissinger-on-why-america-failed-in-afghanistan>
- Leffler, M. P. (2009, October 23). *Think Again: Bush's Foreign Policy*. FP: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/23/think-again-bushs-foreign-policy/>.
- Levine, P. (2009, May 21). *Leo Strauss, Friedrich Nietzsche*. <https://peterlevine.ws/?p=5697>.
- Lilla, M. (2004, November 4). *The Closing of the Straussian Mind*. TNYR: <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2004/11/04/the-closing-of-the-straussian-mind/>.
- Lipset, S. M. (1996). Steady Work: An Academic Memoir. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 22, 1-27. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2083422>.
- Miller, L. (2021, November 17). *Afghanistan 2001-2021: U.S. Policy Lessons Learned*. International crisis group: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/afghanistan-2001-2021-us-policy-lessons-learned>.
- Mogelson, L. (2011, October 11). *Bad Guys vs. Worse Guys in Afghanistan*. The New York Time Magezine: <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/23/magazine/bad-guys-vs-worse-guys-in-afghanistan.html>.
- Monten, J. (2005). The Roots of the Bush Doctrine: Power, Nationalism, and Democracy Promotion in U.S. Strategy. *International Security*, 29(4), 112-156. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4137492>.
- Outlook. (2008). 'The War Is A Fraud'. Outlook.
- Sopko, J. F. (August, 2021). *What we need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*. Virginia: Arlington.
- Stott, L. (2015, September 17). *The Iraq Invasion: the Neoconservative Perspective*. E-IR: <https://www.e-ir.info/2015/09/17/the-iraq-invasion-the-neoconservative-perspective/>.
- Timeline. (2019). *the U.S. War in Afghanistan 1999-2001*. Timeline.
- Times, T. N. (1984). *Truth's Bodyguard*. The New York Times.
- Whitlock, C. (2019, Dec 9). Consumed by Corruption. Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/investigations/afghanist-an-papers/afghanistan-war-corruption-government/>.
- Whitlock, C. (2019, December 09). *At War With the Truth*. The Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/investigations/afghanist-an-papers/afghanistan-war-confidential-documents/>.
- Whitlock, C. (2021). *The Afghanistan Papers; A secret history of war*. In C. Whitlock, *The Afghanistan Papers; A secret history of war* (pp. 10-11). New York: Simon and Schuster.