

# Analysis of the united states' national security strategy



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“ Analyse the documents key tenets in light of contemporary events; does the disposition outlined therein still inform US policy today? Do the arguments still frame the debate on sovereignty? Has the rise of ‘ emerging powers’ rendered the document obsolete?”

A vital historical document required to understand U. S. history is The National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States. Whereby the colours of the American flag conveyed the extent of global supremacy the U. S. embodied in 2002. An analysis of the key points within the NSS itself, will begin this essay, and it will argue that a wider neoconservative political strategy along with pre-emptive counter-terrorism, as the fundamental tenets implemented within Bush’s political administration agenda. This essay will seek to analyse how this particular agenda challenges the Westphalian principal of national sovereignty and how universal hegemony of the U. S. allowed justification of this. The last theme explored in this essay will be the anticipated evolution to a multipolar stability of power.

The NSS prologue conveys imperative importance when understanding the body of the document, as it already includes a core postulation which is of the belief that the USSR was defeated allowing one mutually agreed neoliberal ideology. The first page of the Bush speech uses a neoliberal, post-Cold war scenario and emphasises that “ People everywhere want to be able to speak freely; choose who will govern them; worship as they please; educate their children- male and female; own property; and enjoy the benefits of their labour.” (The White House, 2002). Consequently, the elusive evolution from being completely neoliberal to embodying neoconservative values created structure within the U. S. as the custodian as well as the

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magnifier of these ideologies: “ 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 preserve the peace by building good open relations among the great powers. We will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent” (The White House, 2002).

International cooperation is clearly identified as the NSS highlights continual strategic support. What is more, the entire NSS as a whole identifies international cooperation in every chapter and the role of global institutions such as the World Bank, United Nations, OAS, NATO and the WTO.

Cooperation from allies operating under a neoliberal flag contribute to economic conformity leading a capitalist system, which in turn deters the growth of other growing powers, identifying those with nuclear weaponry with greater importance. The NSS shows this importance as clarifies the position of the U. S. in terms of the leader of military and economic alliance.

The rise of the BRICS has posed a threat to U. S. unipolar dominance as said by many academics. In the last decade we have witnessed the rise in two super-powers both Russia and China. This shared dominance has already threatened the U. S. regional power in the Middle East as shown during the invasion of Syria. Western authors unsuccessfully predicted the invasion of Syria would be a challenge to U. S. hegemony, with Allison (2013) being among them. Majority of them also failed to recognise the supremacy struggle between U. S. and China.

“ The Bush NSS report could be, therefore, the most important reformulation of U. S. grand strategy in over half a century”. Argued by Gaddis (2009)

suggests that the restriction on the Westphalian order that historically  
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apprehended as the pure origin of sovereignty and the territorial inviolability that comes with it. In addition to this, it can be explained that the strategy in fact contests dual sovereignty as a concept of international recognition of nation sovereignty, which translates to be a standard issue external sovereignty faces. In fact, the U. S. national strategy outlines the U. S. to be the nonconstructive, leading authority to determine which countries are eligible for protection under international law for territorial inviolability and which aren't.

In complete contrast, the NSS initialised this international, compliant tactical strategy that in fact directed the transition into neo-conservative ideological framework. This is yet to be explained within this paper. Questionably, the previous definition of the U. S. " grand strategy" impelled the other western states to follow the conforms of counter-terrorism after the aftermaths of 9/11. Nevertheless, to define the historical growth of such terrorism and " guerrilla warfare" which in turn vindicated the diversionary offense strategy of this US-led international community, one would implicitly have to scrutinize the Soviet Union and the global power vacuum left by its failure. The Soviet Union is cited with the sole purpose of highlighting the deficiency of U. S. key competitors and as primitive reasoning for the rise of terrorist organisations that fled the legality of war to achieve their purpose of individual supremacy against superpowers such as the United States. A multinational new world order that would go above and beyond the sovereignty of individual states is still a far (Cohen, 2004) and succeeding agreed global legal framework. Consequently, the U. S. has remained the dominant power that exerted the " state of exception" (Agamben, 2005) as a

corroboration to the conquest of sovereign territory as well as a pledge of Western State's obedience.

Using a contemporary example of president Obama in two terms of office, where he produced contrasting NSS (White house, 2010 and 2015), both showed a change in direction towards the new languages of internal security strategies as well as the reinforcement of national economy. However, the U. S. inherited by Obama differed from the implicit self-proclaimed American supremacy of the Bush era: " a position of unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence" (Bush, 2002). Unrivalled Obama then faced the 2008 sub-prime financial crisis, which entailed social disorder versus the costs of a long invasion of the Middle East, which in turn cast shadows over the efficiency of neoconservative, defensive warfare. Obama's administration wasn't in fact disrupted from reinstating some of the vastly criticised Bush strategies using Guantanamo tribunals (Alexander, 2009) as an example in addition to creating modernised forms of warfare. Wetham (2013, p74) consequently argued that " No state has disclosed the full legal basis for targeted killings [...] Nor has any State disclosed the procedural and other safeguards in place to ensure killings are lawful and justified, and the accountability mechanisms that ensure wrongful killings are investigated, prosecuted and punished." With regards to foreign policy targeted killing became Obama's facet and featured a breadth in U. S. presidencies that exceed one term in office. The lack of culpability in regard to a legal international institution, allowed the use of targeted killing to silently continue and with it carry the neoconservative burden of the War on Terror,

but at the same time this excused the social unrest towards the death of American soldiers.

The academic work of Fukuyama (2006) and his *End of History* present the socio-political effects of the post-Cold war. In order to understand Fukuyama and his work it is imperative to not only underline the neoconservative framework that his work unknowingly generated, from which he went to distance himself from, but to scrutinise the lack of historical validity used in his arguments. Democracy and neoliberalism seemed the dominant factor of political discourse in the *End of History* where perhaps it presented the effect of a temporary unipolar world. Having said this, the return to a multipolar distribution of power is detectable by the change of language from the 2002 NSS (White House) and the *End of History* (Fukuyama, 2006), moving in the direction of the latter part of the new millennium. Bilateral language presented in the *End of History* and predominantly in the 2002 NSS, allows conclusion of this dualistic approach “ West vs the Rest” global agenda, allowing empowerment of the neoconservatives against rebellious states, nuclear propagation and terrorism. The use of “ good” and “ evil” by Gaddis (2009) referencing allies and enemies, is seen to argue that “ what appears at first glance to be a lack of clarity about who’s deterrable and who’s not turns out, upon closer examination, to be a plan for transforming the entire Muslim Middle East: for bringing it, once and for all, into a modern world.” Contrast to the Bush administration, National Security Strategies which were released by these administrations demonstrated additional caution regarding strategies for the U. S.

Recognition towards the continuity of American presidencies in sustaining neoconservative approaches has been identified. Thus, this essay argues that another NSS like the 2002 one cannot be written again by the U. S. for application to present day, on the basis that the political, economic and social shift of international hegemony of superpowers China and Russia have steadily and progressively challenged U. S. supremacy. Moreover, it poses doubt on the legality of principles (challenge to Westphalian order) and practice (Guantanamo, targeted killing) of the War on Terror and U. S. military intervention, accentuating the military connotation of American equipment, that has remained consistent throughout 16 years of precedencies since 2002. Plausibly, military standing warrants American power - just as in the Cold War - to never comply or surrender when facing emerging superpowers.

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