TONY BLAIR'S AND JACQUES CHIRAC'S FOREIGN POLICY IN IRAQ:

BALANCING PERSONALITY WITH AN INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of
Texas State University-San Marcos
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of ARTS

by

Clint A. Richards, B.A., B.A.I.S

San Marcos, Texas
May 2008

TONY BLAIR'S AND JACQUES CHIRAC'S FOREIGN POLICY IN IRAQ:

BALANCING PERSONALITY WITH AN INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

Committee Members Approved:

_____
Theodore Hindson, Chair

_____
Alfred Sullivan

_____
Gene Bourgeois

Approved:

_____
J. Michael Willoughby
Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGEMNTS

This thesis wouldn't have been possible without the guidance and direction of my committee chair Dr. Ted Hindson as well as my other committee members Dr. Alfred Sullivan and Dr. Eugene Bourgeois. I would like to especially thank my parents Kim and David Richards for all their support and patience with me. My mom gave me the patience to take my thesis one day at a time and not let it overwhelm me. My dad is probably the source of my interest in politics, which later gave way to a desire to understand politics from an international perspective. They are the ones that received the brunt of my stress during the long process of researching and writing my thesis, and without them the project would have probably died before I wrote the first page. I would also like to thank all my friends and family who supported me throughout my education and made the long process more than worthwhile. They helped shape not only my interests, but also my understanding of the world around me. Finally, I would like to thank my editor Jeff Miller, without whose help this thesis would be a morass of misplaced commas and hanging participles.

This manuscript was submitted on March 25, 2008.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

French President Jacques Chirac and British Prime Minister Tony Blair

have both secured a lasting place in the history of post-Cold War international

relations. Situated at the helm of two of Europe's most dominant countries after

the international relations paradigm shift of September 11, 2001, their respective

foreign policies concerning Iraq helped shape the debate leading up to the

invasion and subsequent occupation of 2003. In turn, these policies were shaped

by many contributing factors. For each man these factors are largely different;

however, there are some similarities that they have in common.

Both Chirac and Blair shared a fairly similar view of international

relations. They believed that the international community, and its institutions,

was integral in fostering modern, democratic values. However, they differed on

how this policy could be implemented. Chirac thought that the creation of a

multipolar world after the end of the Cold War was necessary and that

institutions like the United Nations and European Union were poles that were

meant to offset the power of dominant nations like the United States and rising

ones like China. Institutions like these were necessary because they gave states like France, and other second tier states such as Germany or Japan, a voice that could rival the superpowers with respect to foreign affairs in regions like the Middle East. In Iraq specifically he hoped that the U.N. and E.U. could provide a necessary counterbalance to traditional American predominance.

Blair also thought that the modern international values of democracy and tolerance were best instated and defended with the legitimacy of international law and its institutions. However, he differed from Chirac in that he didn't believe that there needed to be a counterbalance to U.S. hegemony; rather, he thought the U.S. could be influenced and guided to a certain extent by influential and loyal allies. His tactic with regard to Iraq was to attempt to guide the U.S. to use avenues of international legitimacy like the United Nations and its Security Council in order to not only strengthen these institutions, but keep the U.S. from working outside their consent and thus devaluing their legitimacy.

With regard to the U.N., and specifically its resolutions concerning Iraq, both men tended to differ in purpose and interpretation. Blair tended to view these resolutions as documents of action that authorized the U.N. and its member countries to force Iraq to either comply or capitulate. He did not see them as documents intended to restrain or contain the Saddam Hussein regime, but to outline a set of ultimatuma as to what would happen if Saddam didn't

comply with the resolutions. Blair saw regime change as a viable option in Iraq because Saddam had proven himself a danger not only to the region but also to his own people. For Blair, the U.N. and its resolutions were the requisite institution and tools to correct this volatile situation; however, they had to be interpreted with an implied use of force if they were to be effective.

Chirac viewed the U.N. and the resolutions concerning Iraq as a legitimate means of making the Iraq regime comply with international law and human rights. He viewed them as a way to bring the Iraqi government back into the realm of law-abiding states. As president he worked diligently from 1995 onward to make sure that Iraq was in compliance with these resolutions and that other states didn't interfere with the will of the global community as expressed in these documents by going beyond their bounds. For Chirac, the use of military force was never implied in these documents and, if military force were to be used, it would have to be explicitly worded in a new resolution if that force was to be considered legitimate.

The policies of the Bush Administration are an integral part of how the events surrounding the invasion of Iraq transpired, and, when relevant, will be examined in regard to how they influenced either Chirac's or Blair's foreign policy. To a large extent the invasion was at the behest of the U.S., and both Chirac and Blair found themselves compelled to act in ways they may not have

chosen on their own. Their response to America's compulsion to act is the main

focus of this study. The constraints of each man's personality and leadership

style, as well as his respective domestic policy and larger international factors

will be examined.

The two leaders worked in a hostile situation where the demand for

global security had heightened to such an extent that many viewed the invasion

of Iraq as inevitable. Both Chirac and Blair sought to constrain and direct that

sense of impending violence in different ways. As will be shown in subsequent

chapters, their means of doing so were quite different and led them to distinctly

different conclusions. What follows is a case study of each leader's foreign policy

with regard to Iraq. Both the rationale and the context for their decisions will be

examined and then assessed in light of how the events finally transpired.

Conclusions will be drawn after both case studies and each leader's policy will

be assessed in light of the others policy.

The purpose of this study is to decide to what extent each leader was

successful with his own particular style of foreign policy in Iraq, and what effect

it had not only in Iraq, but on institutions like the U.N., the Middle East as a

region, and the state of international affairs in general. Neither man acted in a

vacuum without the ability to perceive the others' actions, and conversely how

their actions would be seen by their counterpart. They operated not only within

the confines of their country, but also within their own paradigms and foreign

policy goals. However, the choices Blair and Chirac made within those confines

were uniquely their own and led to outcomes that they ultimately have to be

held accountable for. In the end, these actions and decisions must be considered

in light of the preponderant strength of the U.S., and to what extent they were

able to control events in the face of that brute force.

CHAPTER II

PRESIDENT JACQUES CHIRAC'S FOREIGN POLICY IN IRAQ: BALANCING
A MULTIPOLAR AGENDA WITH UNILATERAL ALLIES

As President of France, Jacques Chirac took a very deliberate and tactical

approach to the situation in Iraq regarding his foreign policy. While Chirac

seemingly put himself at odds with the United States and Great Britain by taking

a more multilateral and diplomatic approach, this view becomes increasingly

difficult to maintain if a more in-depth look is taken into his actions. While it is

true that Chirac, the state of France, and France's business interests, had a

different relationship with Iraq based on France's historical involvement in the

region, this did not translate into a predisposition toward non-cooperation with

the U.S. and Great Britain. French diplomatic and business ties with the region,

and Iraq in particular, have provided the basis for a different perspective on the

Iraqi situation. Chirac, specifically, had been involved with the region as a

French diplomat in three separate decades before becoming President in 1995.

This different historical perspective of the Middle East is coupled with

Chirac's ideas on how foreign relations and multilateral military action should be

handled. His assertion that action should be sanctioned by the U.N., and that a

multipolar world is the key to legitimate military action, are the foundational differences that separate him from the U.S. and Great Britain in regard to Iraq. This view is shared by many states within the European Union, as well as the world at large.

A third defining factor that is important to understanding President Chirac's views on Iraq is the social and political climate within France. Chirac had to guide foreign policy in a country whose people are predominately opposed to military action against Iraq. In terms of politics, that meant choosing an agenda that was acceptable to the people of his country, unlike Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair, whose policy was guided by his own political views and the British special relationship with the U.S. If Chirac failed to do that, he ran the risk of losing control of the legislature, and possibly the presidency.

A brief look at the background of Chirac's political history and experience may help put both him and his decisions in a proper context. He had quite a bit of experience working in the Middle East and with French foreign policy in general. He served first as a reserve officer in the Algerian War of the late 1950s and early 60s. He later served as the French secretary of state for economics and finance from 1968-1971. From 1974-1976 and again from 1986-1988, he was the French prime minister. It was especially during his first premiership that he was

given extensive responsibilities in the Middle East. (Political Framework 2005, 26)

Much of Chirac's foreign policy in Iraq, and the Middle East at large, can be explained by taking an in-depth look into his own, and France's, historical actions in the region. The actions of France since World War II placed a large emphasis on support from international organizations like the United Nations and, later, the European Union. However, Chirac sought to put France back in a stronger position of power in the region, and within Iraq specifically, while still using these organizations to promote stability and legitimacy. In a speech made in Cairo in 1996, Chirac stated that "France's Arab policy must be an essential element of its foreign policy." (Wood 1998, 563) Many political analysts believe this change in stance was brought about by what Chirac perceived as a diminution of France's political clout in the region following the first Gulf War of 1990-1991. France had traditionally been an active and even powerful player in the region throughout most of the post-war era, and Chirac sought to reassert that influence once again.

This French influence in Iraq can be tied to two very important factors: oil and trade. Once Algeria gained its independence, France shifted its oil interests to Iraq. This was after France had already gained a 22.5 percent share of oil production after World War I in what was then Mesopotamia. (Styan 2004, 373)

Chirac specifically was involved with this shift toward Iraq when he visited

Baghdad as the French prime minister in 1974 and 1976. He was given great

leeway in the region by President Valery Giscard d'Estaing, who otherwise kept

tight control over foreign policy. This involvement in the region, coupled with an

invitation to Saddam to visit France in 1975, resulted in a comprehensive trade

agreement between the two countries later that year. This agreement allowed

Iraq to industrialize quickly, with French companies getting large contracts to do

public projects in the country. Subsequent deals were struck for nuclear and

military contracts as well. (Styan 2004, 374)

This high degree of commercial integration between the two countries

over the next three decades led to several interesting outcomes. The first was that

many French corporations and executives had extensive knowledge and

experience with Iraq and its key issues, specifically oil. This large breadth of

experience with Iraqi oil, military, and infrastructure concerns allowed France to

offer an alternative to the policy being pursued by the United States and Great

Britain. Indeed, France was positioning itself as a clear alternative to these two

predominate states in what was referred to as the "new Arab policy." After 1974

Chirac cultivated the promotion of this policy in the region. At his speech in

Cairo in 1996, Chirac stressed this point again, emphasizing a policy of self-

determination and "pan-Arab unity... while emphasizing the fact that France has the largest Moslem population in Europe." (Styan 2004, 375)

In the aftermath of the first Gulf War, France and Chirac became increasingly skeptical of the usefulness of sanctions against Iraq and the Saddam regime. In fact, many French corporations and oil companies had begun to trade quietly with Iraq again just a few years after the war ended. These oil and corporate interests put increasing pressure on the French government, and later Chirac, stressing that sanctions were having a destructive humanitarian impact on the Iraqi people in the hopes that the sanctions would eventually be lifted.

These French businesses and oil companies, combined with French diplomats, sought to increase the ties between France and Iraq during this period. Just a few years after Chirac became President in 1995, the French oil companies Total, Elf, and Alcatel-Alsthom were already doing business again in Iraq's capital. The "oil-for-food resolution", also known as UN Resolution 986, paved the way for increased trade between the two countries. Indeed, trade between Iraq and France increased by 915 billion Euros between 1997 and 2001. The primary goal of these companies, and the direction of French foreign policy toward Iraq, was to increase the overall French share in the post-sanctions market. This was especially true for France's oil companies. Near the end of the 1990s, French oil companies like Elf and Total had already drawn up agreements

with Iraq for contracts that would go into effect as soon as the sanctions were

lifted. (Styan 2004, 378)

The depth and range of these economic ties go to show the very different

view Chirac and France held of Iraq. While Chirac certainly didn't see Iraq and

Saddam Hussein as benign entities, he definitely saw the potential for not only

increased commerce, but increased influence in the region through trade

agreements. This difference gave France, under Chirac's leadership, a different

perspective on how to handle the situation in Iraq. This is one of the main

underlying reasons why Chirac opposed the use of air strikes to force Iraq to

comply with UN resolutions in 1998, while at the same time arguing for an

increase in the "oil-for-food agreement." (Wood 1998, 564)

However, this doesn't mean that Chirac was attempting to foster a

complete break with the United States in terms of relations with Iraq. On the

contrary—the hostility of the Gaullist era between the two states has diminished

significantly. Chirac's foreign minister, Hubert Vedrine, stated that "France was

only one of seven or eight influential powers and must accept the superpower

status of the United States without acrimony, while still defending its own

interests." (Wood 1998, 564) Chirac has often stated that France should use its

power to complement U.S. policy rather that thwart it, even though that line is

seldom heard in the United States.

Despite Chirac's recognition that France must operate as a lesser power in relation to the United States, he saw the situation in Iraq as a means to assert French influence on the global stage. This is part of Chirac's larger vision of a multipolar world that will provide a balance to U.S. hegemony. Prior to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Chirac sought to accomplish this in several ways. He made two highly publicized trips to the Middle East in 1996 as well as sending Herve de Charette, French foreign minister from 1995 to 1997, to the region to foster diplomacy in response to the Israeli incursion in Lebanon in 1996. These were combined with the diplomatic efforts on the part of Vedrine to prevent the bombing of Iraq in 1998. (Wood 1998, 565)

Despite these specific instances of direct action on the part of the Chirac government, and because of the predominance of the U.S. in the region economically and politically, Chirac turned more frequently to the United Nations Security Council and the European Union to make sure the voice of France was heard on issues concerning Iraq. The success that Chirac enjoyed in preventing the air strikes in 1998 was in large part because of the French position on the Security Council. He used this arena to gain leverage that gathered support from Russia and a few other non-permanent states on the Council. He had also said on many occasions that French foreign policy and influence could be better served when combined with the weight of a unified European foreign

policy. According to Chirac, "a Franco-European foreign policy in the Middle East is indispensable." (Wood 1998, 565) Chirac believed that this combined foreign policy could provide the necessary counterweight to U.S. predominance in the region that France had been unable to do by itself.

A small aside that may shed further light on Chirac's determination to provide this counterweight was the US-Israeli relationship which has shaped much of the Middle East to the exclusion of France as well as much of the rest of Europe. Chirac had repeatedly tried to exert French influence to promote peace in the conflicts arising between Israel and Lebanon, yet U.S. influence has been so great that France has not been able to establish a larger role in the area. However, because of his work, and that of Cherette in Lebanon, the Lebanese government asked the French to intervene diplomatically. Chirac responded quickly, partly to give real credence to his "new Arab policy" that was meant to show that France was committed to cultivating peace in the region. (Wood 1998, 567) In Iraq, Chirac felt that he had an even firmer footing upon which to exert political influence and he worked tirelessly to maintain that influence.

Even though Chirac was committed to a leading French role in pursuing the peace process in Iraq, he consistently maintained that the European Union should be a main source of financing that peace. Toward that end, most French as well as other European aid was given through the E.U. Even so, despite how

substantial this aid was, it had not given France or the E.U. commensurate

political power. This was still a problem primarily because the E.U. was divided

over how it should exert that influence, and because some of its members feel

that economic aid was all that was necessary and that political power in the

region is irrelevant.

Although Chirac took a different stance than the U.S. in the late 1990s of

how Iraq should be handled, he agreed that Iraq had to dismantle and disclose

all of its weapons of mass destruction and cooperate with the U.N. Special

Commission as laid out in UN Security Resolution 687. His main contention was

the process of dismantling and disclosure. He felt that the imposition of

sanctions, which were espoused by the U.S., until Saddam was ousted, was

counterproductive and that the Iraqi people would be the ones to pay the price,

not Saddam. According to Chirac, "The road [for Iraq] to follow is drawn. It

follows the implementation of all the Security Council resolutions—and only

those." (Wood 1998, 572) This situation gives relevant insight into how Chirac

would later handle a different situation in Iraq.

The French determination to comply with the Security Council's decisions

and contend with the U.S.'s ability to "manipulate" them is a very important

reason for the fundamental fissure between the American President Bill Clinton

and Chirac. The fact that most Arab countries were against U.S. or any Western

military action in the region has certainly made France and Chirac's diplomatic

solution seem more of a palatable answer to the Iraqi problem. The "new Arab

policy" of Chirac consistently tried to bring about an independent

European/French stance on Iraq.

This turned out to be difficult, however. The problem of unity within the

European Union has made a constant and consistent stance on any topic, much

less Iraq, difficult. The French position has seen only limited support, due in

large part to the stance taken by Great Britain. Britain, led by Tony Blair, has

taken a position of backing the U.S. almost unequivocally. Despite all this, Chirac

argued that the only way to achieve a lasting peace with Iraq was to bring Iraq

back into the international community by reestablishing trade and diplomatic

ties, hence his support of U.N. resolution 986, among others.

However benevolent Chirac's motivations may seem at first, they must be

examined in light of other economic factors, one of the most significant of which

is Iraq's outstanding debt to France at the sum of roughly $7.5 billion. This debt

couldn't start to be repaid until Iraq was allowed to sell its oil. (Wood 1998, 573)

Along with an already high level of investment in Iraq by French corporations,

the debt prompted Chirac to hold a much different perspective from that of

either Britain or the United States.

Chirac, as well as most other high ranking officials at the time, thought that the post-Cold War era, and subsequent emergence of American unilateralism, had turned the U.S. into the world's only "hyperpower". This meant the only way France could move forward its own agenda was with the assistance of other countries. In effect, "multilateralism was to be both the ultimate objective of a French-led effort to restore a balance and the means by which to achieve it… the weak seek refuge in multilateral diplomacy—and that the defining characteristic of the current international order is weakness." (Oudenaren 2004, 66)

Chirac, along with the leaders of China and Russia, felt that by 1997, after more than half a decade of sanctions, a different strategy that provided incentives to Iraq was a better way of resolving the situation. However, Saddam spoiled this chance for help when he attempted to split the Security Council by expelling the American delegation to the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) team in Iraq, which was charged with making sure Iraq was complying with U.N. resolution 986. This made the situation even more difficult for Chirac. He now had to contend with an even more upset and determined United States, while at the same time making sure that his position on Iraq did not upset the balance.

In order to accomplish this, Chirac had Vedrine publicly state that the actions of Iraq were unacceptable and that the resolutions passed by the U.N. be followed to the letter. At the same time, he condemned what he considered to be "the hysterical rhetoric emanating from the United States... and warned the United States and Great Britain that any action against Iraq would require the approval of the U.N. Security Council." (Wood 1998, 573) By the beginning of 1998, this position had solidified and was largely responsible for the diffusion of any confrontation that might have come about between the United States and Iraq because of Chirac's swift maneuvering within the Security Council.

Diplomacy was a key method which Chirac would consistently stick with. The diplomatic effort of 1998 was launched on many different levels besides just the Security Council. Chirac held consultations not only with members of the Security Council, but also the Secretary General Kofi Annan as well as other regional powers. He even penned a personal letter to Saddam Hussein emphasizing the necessity of Iraq to comply with resolution 986. This multi-pronged approach led to solid gains for France. In the face of such strong diplomatic pressure, combined with Chirac's dogged stance in the Security Council, the United States was left with no legitimate grounds for an air attack. By February Iraq had signed a memorandum reaffirming its compliance with all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. (Wood 1998, 575)

Beyond agreeing to the old resolutions, Iraq was also constrained by a new resolution: U.N. Resolution 1154. This resolution demanded immediate access for the UN inspectors as well as providing much stronger language in the event that it was violated. (U.N. Resolution 1154) Regarding this new resolution, Chirac had to struggle to ensure that while it contained language strong enough to ensure that Iraq was in compliance, he did not want the U.S. or Great Britain to be able to resort to military action without first consulting the Security Council. In this, Chirac was also successful. (Wood 1998, 576)

The potential air strike crisis of 1998 and Chirac's subsequent response positively proved many aspects of his policy. First and foremost, the crisis proved that France could play an important and influential role in Middle East affairs if France successfully used its role in the Security Council and had international support. Chirac's ability to persuade China, Russia, and other non-permanent members of the Security Council gave him the leverage necessary to counter the U.S. and British position. France's position as a permanent member of the Security Council is one of the few real tools Chirac had to provide an alternative to the position of the U.S. in an effective manner. Chirac had also demonstrated that he was willing to work with the United States when they share a common interest, like resolving the 1998 air strike crisis over Iraq. As his foreign secretary at the time Verdrine said, "France and the United States, the

only two actors in the world with the means and the will to pursue a global policy, will try to work together." (Wood 1998, 579) Whether or not France actually shares this dual status of power with the United States is dubious at best, but the statement shows that France and Chirac are amenable to cooperating with the United States if their point of view is shown adequate respect.

While Chirac's hopes that the E.U. could be an effective counterbalance to the U.S. with a strong French influence did not pan out in 1998's situation in Iraq, there were other positives for France that came out of this situation. The 1998 conflict did much to boost the image of France with the rest of the Middle East as a major power that firmly espoused diplomacy over military action. The situation also enhanced the perceived strength of the Security Council, of which Chirac was a shrewd arbiter. From Chirac's view of the need for a multipolar world, this Security Council strength was a necessary means to offset the vast power and dominance of the United States. (Wood 1998, 580)

The interim period between the 1998 incidents and the push toward war with Iraq in late 2002 and early 2003 was generally more subdued. The attacks of September 11, 2001, proved to be the catalyst for the March 2003 invasion of Iraq, and as of November 2001, both Chirac and Blair were in accord that further "incontrovertible evidence" was necessary before an anti-terrorist invasion of

Iraq could be justified. A week before Chirac's statements at the War in

Afghanistan Summit on November 30, 2001 Bush intimated that an attack on Iraq

might be necessary. Chirac responded that he hoped these types of threats

"would never become typical, because it would have very serious implications

for the international struggle against terrorism… As for Iraq, nobody is giving up

on their position, for our part we stick by it completely, but the question now is

to see how peace can succeed." (*The Guardian* [London], 30 November 2001)

However, Chirac tried to remain conciliatory by promising to send Special Forces

to Afghanistan in order to help route terrorist organizations out of that state.

When the United States began again to assert its influence in Iraq after the

attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan,

Chirac used much the same tactics that he used in 1998 to diffuse the situation

and provide a more multilateral response to the escalating dialog of conflict.

However, these tactics were combined with an escalation in French objection to

sanctions in Iraq, which resulted in a much different outcome.

The renewed tension in Iraq came after the French elections in the spring

of 2002. Chirac won reelection by a larger margin than any other French

president since the 1950s when Charles de Gaulle won by a similar landslide. In

addition, his party, the Union for a Popular Movement, garnered almost 60

percent of the seats in Parliament. (France Country Forecast 2005, 26) This

newfound "mandate" of French public opinion gave Chirac the confidence to

stay his own course when faced with the hard decisions Iraq would pose in the

coming months.

The transition from France wholeheartedly supporting the passage of

U.N. Resolution 1441 on November 8, 2002, to staunchly opposing the final

invasion a few short months later is interesting in light of the fact that Chirac was

determined to keep a steady course. The resolution cataloged a list of complaints

against Iraq concerning its noncompliance with previous resolutions. These

included the continued production of weapons of mass destruction (WMD's),

using oil for food money not to feed its people but instead to buy more weapons,

and blatantly flaunting the requirements set out to allow U.N. weapons

inspectors to verify Iraq's inventory of WMD's. (U.N. Resolution 1441) The fact

that these violations occurred while France sought to continually reopen

commercial ties with Iraq was yet another hurdle Chirac found himself forced to

grapple with. The fact that he was largely able to continue his stated course,

despite the fact that most of the British and American press were vilifying him

for doing exactly that, is remarkable and deserves further attention.

Chirac began this process early on with his visit to the U.N. and the

subsequent interview on September 9, of 2002, with the *New York Times*. During

this visit and interview, as well as later speeches and interviews on the matter,

Chirac consistently expounded on several key points. One of his biggest points

was that a military use of force should never be employed preemptively, or at

least only as a last resort and with the full support of a multilateral U.N.

resolution. This was important because Chirac felt that only through using

international law could this type of action be given the weight of legitimacy.

Instead of a preemptive strike, Chirac favored intensified weapons inspections in

Iraq to put pressure on the Saddam regime, or at the very least to expose the

weapons that would be needed as proof of the necessity for an invasion. Another

key element to his argument was that military action could not be directly linked

with a failure to allow the continued operations of the weapons inspectors on the

part of Saddam. Chirac felt that that type of action could only be legitimized

through the implementation of a second resolution. (Styan 2004, 380)

    This continued insistence on the policy of a staggered approach to the

eventual use of military force was clearly spelled out by Chirac. He also drew a

clear distinction in what he saw as "the difference between regime change and

weapons control. France's stance rested on [the] assumption that the objective of

international pressure was the disarming of the Baathist government, not its

overthrow, which in the eyes of the French would undermine collective security

and international law." (Styan 2004, 380) Chirac then spelled out the

requirements that would have to be met in order for France to endorse military action.

This was done in September of 2002 with the help of his Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin. They emphasized that France could not afford to be content with the status quo and that increased inspections were an immediate and dire necessity. This implied an antagonist stance regarding the Iraqi regime and was necessary toward showing that France indeed took the situation seriously with regard to Iraqi violations of weapon inspections. A key part of Chirac's stance was that France absolutely refused to take the option of military action off the table and leave Iraq in the driver's seat in terms of how the inspections would ultimately play out. However, he made certain to point out that "if the inspectors cannot return, there will have to be a second Security Council resolution to declare if there is the basis for [armed] intervention or not." (Styan 2004, 380)

In fact, this firm stance paid off for Chirac when President George W. Bush used his subsequent address before the U.N. to ensure that the U.S. would pursue a diplomatic approach before deeming military action a necessity. Chirac also attempted to accommodate the Americans as well when on January 7, 2003, he spoke to his military forces and asserted that they might have to be activated if the situation called for it. He even declared that he would increase military

spending in France which had shrunk to a mere 1.8 percent of overall French gross domestic product. (Euro-Focus 2002, 2) More than anything, the passing of U.N. resolution 1441 reaffirmed Chirac's stance in Iraq as well as helped solidify the role of the U.N. in the peace process with Iraq. This channeling of action through the U.N. was key to Chirac's strategy in Iraq because it not only gave international legitimacy to any action taken in Iraq, but it also reinforced his idea of a multipolar world in which decisions were made, and power asserted, by many powers in a concerted manner. This was ultimately what Chirac wanted, a legitimate alternative to the unipolar world in which France found itself at the end of the Cold War. (Styan 2004, 381)

Both Chirac and de Villepin were very pleased with the outcome of resolution 1441 and stressed their pleasure that France and the United States had been able to cooperate on such a potentially explosive issue. De Villepin even went so far as to say that while, "the negotiations were tough… rarely had French and American diplomats worked so closely together." (Styan 2004, 381) Indeed, the period between September and November was a high water mark in terms of relations between France and the United States diplomatically on this issue. Up until February of 2003, both Chirac and his foreign minister repeatedly emphasized that France would use military force in the event that Iraq continued to thwart inspections and that any subsequent action would be legitimate if

backed by another U.N. resolution. Chirac supplemented this rhetoric by again

actively pursuing support throughout the Middle East diplomatically. His hope

was that these countries would in turn apply pressure on Iraq.

At that point Chirac almost certainly believed events would play out

much as they had in 1998. He felt certain that the right combination of

international diplomatic leverage as well as pressure from other Arab states

would be enough to force Saddam to comply with the new U.N. resolution. In

addition, he continued to reinforce the idea to Arab states that France would be

an indispensable partner in diplomatic negotiations within the Middle East.

Toward this end he and some of his ministers went on several more diplomatic

missions during this period. Michelle Alliot-Marie, the Defense Minister, was

sent to Saudi Arabia to ensure that the Saudi government would apply pressure

to Baghdad. Chirac personally went to Syria on December 18 to meet with

President Bachar al Assad. De Villepin also encouraged Syria to take advantage

of its position as a temporary member of the Security Council and use its vote

effectively. Chirac's main rationale for the necessity of diplomacy as an answer to

any conflict within the region was that the national sovereignty of each Arab

country was paramount. (Styan 2004, 382)

Despite this massive push by Chirac to ensure that a diplomatic solution

would carry the day in Iraq, the events from January to March did not work in

his favor. By January 10 the U.S. and France were at odds within the Security

Council. President Bush's speech before the U.N. in which he stated that "the

U.N. is perched on the brink of irrelevance unless it agrees to sanction a war to

disarm Iraq and depose its leader" certainly didn't improve Chirac's chances of

reaching a diplomatic solution. (*The Globe and Mail* 15 March 2003, 1) It was in the

context of this heightened rhetoric from the U.S. that Chirac was made to take a

stand, and he sent De Villepin back to the Security Council negotiations to do

just that.

De Villepin made it clear that France would veto any action in which the

U.S. attempted to circumvent the diplomatic process with direct military action.

At the same time, in a Council meeting on February 5, he attempted to

significantly increase the inspection efforts in Iraq by increasing inspectors,

verification offices, intelligence, and surveillance. Chirac did his best to make

sure that any vote in the Council for war without a second resolution would fail.

He had de Villepin lobby the non-permanent members from Africa by personally

visiting their capitals, as well as applying pressure on them during February in

Paris at the Franco-African Summit. (Styan 2004, 382)

Chirac was determined to defeat a vote for a resolution that would

include military action because he felt that the inspections and diplomatic

process had not been given enough time and were beginning to bear fruit. Russia

as well was opposed to such a premature vote and declared it would veto it. On March 10 Igor Ivanov, the Foreign Minister for Russia stated that the "new resolution contained… an unrealistic ultimatum, Russia would vote against it." (Styan 2004, 382) By March 18 the United States and Great Britain gave up their attempts to pass a second resolution. Both France and Russia responded with anger. Russian President Vladimir Putin declared the decision a 'mistake' and Ivanov called it 'illegal'. The French U.N. ambassador, Jean-Marc de la Sabliere, argued that a second resolution at that time was opposed by most Security Council members, and that, "members of the council repeatedly stated… that it would not be legitimate to authorize the use of force now when the inspections were producing results." (Styan 2004, 382) Chirac himself made his distinction between disarmament and regime change clear in an interview on March 10th of 2003 when he stated, "It is necessary to say what one does want… [If] we want first and foremost to change the Iraqi regime that [is] another discussion… we have said that we want to disarm Iraq." (Lorda 2006, 454)

In an interview with *Time Europe* right before the invasion Chirac identified what he thought the consequences of war would be. He stated that the human and political cost would be much greater than what the British and Americans were projecting and that the region as a whole could end up being destabilized. He said that there "would inevitably be a strong reaction from Arab

and Islamic public opinion… [that it would] give a big lift to terrorism [and]

create a large number of little bin Ladens." (Graff 2003, 30) He stated further that

there was no evidence that the inspections weren't working and that while Iraq

may indeed possess WMD's, as constrained as it was by inspections and western

attention, it posed no imminent threat to the region.

Chirac, and most of France, believed that the U.S. and Great Britain were

using France as a scapegoat for their failure to produce a timely diplomatic

solution that included the use of military force. Chirac's seemingly stubborn

resistance to any immediate use of military action is largely tied to the lack of

evidence that the U.S. and Great Britain were able to show that Iraq indeed had

large stock piles of WMD's before the Security Council. The lack of evidence was

also a catalyst for increasing negative public opinion of the invasion of Iraq in

Germany and Great Britain as well as France. At an earlier Franco-German

summit on January 21 in Elysee, Chirac made it clear that both countries had 'the

same judgment' on the situation and that "France is not a pacifist, and France is

not anti-American." (Styan 2004, 383)

Chirac was clearly aligning himself with the "new Arab policy" of

strengthening ties with Arab states through reinforcing the ideas of sovereignty

and self-determination. He has also forged many links with individual Arab

leaders toward that end. This policy has also amplified voices on the Left and

Right of politics in France who have focused for a long time on diplomatically

interacting with the Arab world. This type of policy would serve two ends. First

of all it would increase the role French foreign policy plays in the region, and

secondly it would gain favor with the large and still increasing Muslim

population inside France from Algeria. Chirac feared what the long term

ramifications of a prolonged military engagement could mean for future

diplomatic interactions for France in the region.

Chirac's view and actions were largely echoed at home and throughout

Europe and the Middle East. In March of 2003 a poll taken in France showed that

96 percent of the French population viewed Chirac's veto with favor. As early as

February of 2003 Francois Heisbourg, a notable French analyst, commented that,

"the Chirac government, followed by an overwhelming majority of the political

establishment, is determined to avoid a war against Iraq in the absence of a clear

and present danger. This determination has overridden other considerations."

(Styan 2004, 384)

Chirac also had to consider the Iraqi situation in terms of how it would

affect the European Union and France's position within that body. Chirac had

long considered the E.U. to be a tool that could be equally as effective as the

U.N., if not more so, in providing a more multilateral solution to international

problems such as the one in Iraq. However, the situation in Iraq in 2002 and 2003

was not something that the European Union felt the need to become involved with. The E.U. has most often taken the stance that premature military action prevents peace from expanding throughout the developing world. This is a view that in large part was shaped by France and more specifically by Chirac during the late 1990s.

In the direct buildup to the events of March 2003, Chirac was forced to contend with an E.U. that was becoming increasingly divided over the issue. In February of 2003 several member countries (Denmark, Poland, Italy, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Great Britain, and Spain) and several other then prospective member countries (Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria) signed a letter sanctioning U.N. military action in Iraq. Chirac immediately went on the offensive, specifically against the new and prospective members. He referred to them as "not very well behaved and rather reckless… [that they had] missed a good opportunity to keep quiet" and that "if they wanted to reduce their chances of joining Europe, they could not have found a better way." (Graff 2003, 28)

At the time most critics agreed that France and Britain had decided to battle out the Iraq issue within the arena of the E.U. Prior to the letter sent to the U.N., at an E.U. meeting in Brussels to settle on a common policy in Iraq, Chirac had already instructed his diplomats within the E.U. to convince Greece, who

was presiding over the E.U. Council at the time, to not invite those candidate

counties who were not in line with France's views on foreign policy in Iraq.

Chirac's one stable and substantial ally within the E.U. was Germany, and it

remained so throughout the period before to war in Iraq. British Prime Minister

Tony Blair responded almost immediately with a direct jab at Chirac. "People

who want to pull Europe and America apart are playing the most dangerous

game of international politics I know." And with regard to the prospective

member countries that had been singled out by Chirac, "I had argued that you

should be present and able to contribute fully to the debate." (Graff and Crumley

2003, 30)

The real problem at that time was that many Central European members

and prospective members felt that Chirac was trying to "claim founders' rights"

and force them to acquiesce to French predominance within the E.U. This further

hindered his attempts to have a unified E.U. position on Iraq that was

consistently anti-invasion. He found himself frustrated by the "new Europe"

which was falling in line with British and the Americans. The fact that Chirac

was never able to unify European opinion in any meaningful way was a major

setback in his foreign policy which could have added great strength to his

position on Iraq. (*The Economist* [London] 2 April 2005, 48)

It's interesting that while Chirac was in fact consistent in regard to his foreign policy in Iraq, he chose to take the forefront in terms countering the American position.

> "This attitude, which consists of countering America wherever possible, has had the effect of helping Washington to divide Europe. There is a competition [between France and the US] over values and principles that is delicate to manage. With other countries it is easier; the French representative can make the claim, 'I have my interests but I speak in the name of humanity.' What is needed is to conceive a new compromise between the empire [US] and the rest of the world." (Cogan 2004, 121)

The Iraq War of 2003 did something that hadn't happened since before World War I, it broke up the alliance of the United States, France, and Great Britain. Despite the differences in ideology, Chirac would have gained much in staying in line with his allies on the Iraq issue. The obvious positive would be continued alignment with Great Britain in terms of experience as well as continued cooperation within the European Union. Another gain that was no less important was that the impact of America moving unilaterally would severely damage the credibility of international organizations like the U.N. and E.U. that Chirac put so much stock in. America moving forward on its own meant that the multipolar world that Chirac believed so strongly in wasn't a reality but merely an ideal that was only credible if the U.S. saw fit to comply with it.

Some scholars suggest that Chirac did in fact fall prey to the French political ideology of knee-jerk, anti-American reactionism. That argument certainly may have some credence given how the situation may have played out had Chirac made just a few subtle changes in his approach. For instance, instead of leading the opposition of the second resolution put forward by the U.S. and Great Britain after resolution 1441, why didn't France simply abstain from voting instead of lobbying for a veto from undecided members? Had that been the case, not only would the resolution probably have passed, but U.N. support would have given the operation the international credibility that Chirac saw as a prerequisite for any military action in Iraq. Not only that, but had France actually participated in the subsequent military action, the political and psychological ramifications would have been substantial. Then not only the U.S., but also the two premier European superpowers would have had troops on the ground participating in military action. Such participation would have made the operations in Iraq truly a global and multilateral undertaking.

According to British Ambassador to the U.N. Jeremy Greenstock, "Chirac did not wish to set a precedent whereby the U.N. Security Council would be put in a position of rubber-stamping a United States decision." (Cogan 2004, 124) Another factor that some critics see as contributing to Chirac's stance on Iraq might be that he was trying to counter Blair's attempts to increase his (and

Britain's) power within the E.U. This seems at least remotely possible

considering how fractured the E.U. became over the Iraq issue with most states

deciding to fall in either camp instead of remaining neutral. But on the whole it

doesn't seem like this was a major issue with Chirac; he seemed more

preoccupied with America than Great Britain.

Chirac's views on Iraq were tempered by a very different reality than that

of the United States. Not only is France much closer to the Arab world

geographically, but it also has a substantially larger portion of its population

comprised of Muslims from that region. So in this respect Chirac was forced to

take a different and somewhat longer term approach that at times made him

critical of American foreign policy in the region. He questioned, "Whether

certain American initiatives are really appreciated beyond their immediate

quick-fix impact." (Cogan 2004, 124) This attitude is certainly something Chirac

felt was detrimental not only to all the diplomatic effort he had put into the

region, but also the attitude that Arab nations would have toward the West in

general.

So when the U.S. began putting pressure on Iraq through new U.N.

resolutions and threats of military action and regime change, Chirac began

pushing for concrete diplomatic action first. Apart from the reality of France

taking a separate stance on the eventual military action taken by the U.S. and

Great Britain was the unclear nature of the wording of Resolution 1441 itself.

This problem was sometimes what is known as 'creative ambiguity' in that it

made military intervention an open-ended question. Chirac interpreted this to

mean that military force could not automatically be applied and that further

action would have to require a second resolution. At least initially, President

Bush interpreted resolution 1441 to contain sufficient authorization for the use

of military force providing that the Security Council deemed there to be a

substantial material breach. According to Greenstock, "We entrenched ourselves

in different interpretations of what the wording of Resolution 1441 meant."

(Cogan 2004, 125)

After the resolution was passed Chirac probably expected Saddam

Hussein to either be found with WMD's or to simply do as he had done before

and not comply with the resolution. Either way would have been a positive for

Chirac because it would have necessitated and justified a second resolution and

thus military action. Unfortunately Saddam did neither and instead began

doing what is known as passive cooperation wherein he agreed to inspections

yet attempted to string them out as long as possible. However, since no new

weapons were found once these new inspections were underway and the

inspectors' presence was keeping Saddam in check for the most part, Chirac

concluded that the resolution was serving its purpose and military action was unnecessary.

That isn't to say that Chirac was prepared to take the military option off the table. As late as December 21, 2002, Chirac stated that France could send as much as 100 aircraft and 100,000 troops if need be. This was on par with what France had contributed in the First Gulf War. His caveat was that the report of the chief inspectors should be assessed first before these troops and supplies would be made available. Later, on January 7, 2003, he even made a statement to the French military to be prepared for an eventual deployment to Iraq. The problem that occurred shortly after was that Chirac felt that he had gone too far in stating that France was prepared to intervene militarily and so began overcorrecting for this in his public speeches. Villepin was perhaps even more vehement in his determination to make sure that France wasn't perceived as intent on going to war. He stated that "nothing" would justify military action against Iraq and began mentioning for the first time that France's veto power within the Security Council might be used if a second resolution sought to make war inevitable.

In this sense it seems that the French and American sides were simply unable (though not unwilling, as some critics may believe) to interpret the moves of each other. For the Americans, it was assumed that if a second

resolution were brought forward and passed the French would simply step aside and abstain from voting rather than veto. This would have given the military action the international force that Chirac always claimed was necessary without forcing them to condone the action outright. For Chirac the misinterpretation was in two parts. He first assumed that the U.S. would not attack Iraq without direct evidence that Saddam had WMD's. Once he realized that wasn't the case, his second misconception was his overcorrection by using his veto power in hopes that the influence of the Security Council, and a large part of international opinion, would stop the U.S. from moving unilaterally. (Cogan 2004, 128)

The situation in Iraq thus exposed some significant weaknesses of Chirac's foreign policy. While Chirac espoused a multilateral and international solution to the problem, he could offer no concrete alternative other than going to war and so lost some of his moral high ground. In addition, his use of the veto within the Security Council risked the chance of significantly isolating France from the U.S. and Great Britain in a way that hadn't been seen in well over a century. Perhaps his most fatal mistake however was his underestimation of Bush's determination to go to war. According to Dominique Moisi, a notable French critic of the L'Institut Francais des Relations Internationales,

> "In opposing the US… [France] did not integrate the
> emotional reality of the 11th of September… And in

> the final analysis, the question is twofold: Firstly, has
> our foreign policy increased our stature…? Secondly
> has France's action favored the emergence of a future
> diplomacy for Europe? To both of these questions, I'm
> afraid that the response is not positive." (Cogan 2004,
> 130)

While Chirac could show that most of the international community felt the same way he did, he couldn't pool enough support within the E.U. to give his argument the weight it needed. And while Chirac may still not regret the course that he chose to take, it exemplifies an irony in the French perspective that was best summed up by a senior French diplomat, "[the French] do not see in their position the defense of their interests but [rather] the expression of a transcendent reason of which they [consider] they have the monopoly." (Cogan 2004, 132)

However, Chirac's stance did improve his popularity at home tremendously. Popular French opposition to an invasion was no secret, and Chirac's maneuverings inside the Security Council brought him a wave of positive feedback at home. On April 14, 2003, over 100,000 protesters were outside the US Embassy in Paris opposing the war and supporting President Chirac. One activist that was interviewed during the protest stated, "We really thought Chirac would eventually follow Bush to war, we never liked [Chirac], but now he deserves credit." (Cramer 2003, 16)

Once the U.S. and its allies invaded, Chirac continued to emphasize the importance of a multilateral approach to restoring democracy in Iraq. In a speech given before the U.N. on September 23rd 2003, he outlined how this restoration should occur. He stated that multilateralism was necessary for instituting a legitimate democracy in Iraq because then the government would have the support of the world through the U.N. and not be dependant on one country to legitimize its existence. He also stressed the importance of turning over the running of the country to the Iraqis as soon as possible. He stated on August 27, 2004, that, "In Iraq, the devolution of sovereignty to the Transitional Government under UN Security Council Resolution 1546 commits us all to the same objective, namely the forming of a democratically elected government." (Chirac 2004d, 5) Throughout the invasion and subsequent emergence of a U.S. supported and led government, Chirac managed to keep the same outlook on events and their course as he had back in 1998. He still firmly believed that the U.N. should lead in the rebuilding process in order to give it legitimacy, and that "once sovereignty has devolved to the Iraqi provisional government… then obviously it's not for foreign elements, the international community, or one of its components to set the timetable [for democracy]." (Chirac 2003b, 240)

In an interview two days later Chirac seemed rather more conciliatory toward the American perspective when he stated that he agreed with Bush on

the need to stop proliferation and fight terrorism but that they simply differed on

Iraq. He even went so far as to say that in light of the attacks of September 11,

2001, he could understand the American reaction, but that he disagreed with

how America conducted their reaction. In terms of moving forward after

Saddam had been removed, Chirac said that the West had to send a strong

message that they considered the Iraqis capable of handling their own situation.

All they required was a little time and a concerted effort on the part of the U.N.,

E.U., and America. (Chirac 2003a, 2) In an interview in June 2004 he stated, "I

was never angry with the President and never had the feeling that he was angry

with me. We have had a difference of view, that's fine, it's normal." (Chirac

2004a, 2)

When Bush was reelected in 2004 some critics believed that Chirac used it

as an excuse to keep French troops out of the continuing peacekeeping effort in

Iraq. While the validity of that statement is questionable, Chirac did state shortly

afterward that, "France would consider participating in a NATO mission to train

the Iraqi military only on a direct invitation from the Iraqi government and only

if the training [took] place outside of Iraq." He then reiterated his belief that a

multipolar world wasn't simply French doctrine but rather an inevitability that

every country must make ready for and that the E.U. must continue to unite in

the face of "forceful U.S. policy". (Giry 2004, 13)

However, Chirac was never willing to completely sever friendly relations with the U.S., and in two subsequent speeches on June 28 and 29, 2004, he stated the final course he believed should be taken in Iraq. He started out by reiterating that in order for Iraq to truly become stable and democratic, it had to do so as a completely sovereign nation. In order to truly be sovereign, Chirac argued that, "one of the necessary conditions for the rapid restoration of Iraqi sovereignty is obviously for the Iraqi authorities to have military and police forces without which there's no sovereignty in a modern state." (Chirac 2004b, 2)

In addition to Iraq guiding its own course, he felt it had to be clear that France and the United States weren't antagonistic toward each other, especially in terms of Iraq. When speaking on June 29, 2004, the day after he made the above comment, he spoke of the open dialogue between the two countries and that there had always been mutual gratitude and respect between them with a shared history and values. He stated that the two countries, "are friends, allies, we aren't servants… when we don't agree… we don't do it aggressively, we do it firmly." When asked if the course President Bush had taken affected their relationship, Chirac stated that it was not and could not be affected. He believed that the relationship of the two men represented the relationship of their respective countries, and that those bonds were stronger than any one incident could ruin. (Chirac 2004c, 3)

To conclude, Jacques Chirac guided France's foreign policy in the way he thought would best serve France's national interest and prestige within the region while preserving the legitimacy of international law and the authority of the United Nations. The policy that began in 1998 largely remained intact throughout the second Iraq crisis of 2002 and 2003. The constancy of his policy regarding Iraq was not what posed a problem in regards to the U.S. and Great Britain. It was the fundamental difference in background and approach of Chirac that caused the difference.

Chirac, and France in general, had a historically different experience with the Middle East and Iraq in particular following WWII than either the U.S. or Great Britain. Chirac's experiences with the "new Arab policy" gave him a different perspective when engaging diplomatically with the countries of the Middle East. This respect for national sovereignty, combined with the large investments of some of France's biggest oil companies in Iraq, led to a fundamental difference in understanding Iraq before the problems of 1998 and 2002 developed. It became imperative for Chirac to seek a different solution other than a military one in order to protect French business interests in Iraq.

However, that doesn't mean to suggest that his motives in Iraq were based strictly on French capital and business interests. Underlying this motive was a foreign policy that Chirac maintained not just in Iraq but elsewhere in the

world. His foreign policy was based on multilateral initiatives that made sure

international use of force had the sanctioning of international law combined with

the legitimacy of U.N. resolutions. Chirac felt that no action could be undertaken

without these because then the action was not in the interest of the global

community but rather a single state. In that sense Chirac can be viewed as a

strong internationalist because his view of the use of force requires the authority

of a supernational entity.

It is the motive behind this strong internationalism that should be

considered in the final analysis. It is clear from the situation in Iraq that Chirac

was trying to offer an alternative to the usual foreign policy espoused by

America and its allies. He engaged diplomatically not only with Iraq but several

other Middle Eastern states to make sure that the French policy was favored over

what he felt to be American dominance. The only real way that Chirac saw

France countering the predominance of the U.S. was through international

organizations that provided a multipolar, or at least multilateral, perspective.

With the power of U.S. foreign policy offset by other poles of power like the U.N.

and E.U., France would be able to expand its own foreign policy. To a large

extent Chirac did this through his shrewd us of French veto power in the

Security Council, at least during the 1998 situation. It was only after he failed to

unify the E.U. against the invasion of 2003, and when the U.S. decided it didn't

need U.N. support, that the weaknesses in his policy became evident. His underestimation of U.S. resolve to invade caused him to overplay his hand in the Security Council and ultimately lost him the diplomatic solution he so strongly favored in Iraq. The fine line between acquiescing to American predominance in certain instances, while trying to counter it through international or multilateral means in others, was one that Chirac attempted to walk as President of France, with varying degrees of success.

CHAPTER III

PRIME MINISTER TONY BLAIR'S FOREIGN POLICY IN IRAQ: COMBINING

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH MODERN, INTERNATIONAL VALUES

As Prime Minister of Great Britain, Tony Blair has had a uniform, and at

times controversial, foreign policy concerning Iraq. Many critics and scholars

have portrayed him as little more than a lackey of the Bush administration whose

tenacious commitment to the "special relationship" between the United States

and Great Britain cost him far too much domestically, and in certain realms

internationally. While there certainly is evidence that this might be the case, a

more in depth look into Blair's policy concerning Iraq definitely puts the facts in

a different light.

A closer look at the evidence will show that many different factors played

into the decisions that Blair made concerning Iraq. While his personal connection

to President Bush and the importance of the "special relationship" certainly

played a part, there were other things that played a role in his decision-making

process. A key element was Blair's own personal conviction that the values of the

modern Western world were at stake. Iraq was simply a microcosm of the battle

over these values being played out between modern democratic states and extremist regimes and religious sects. Things like democracy, religious tolerance, and equality were the core values that Blair held dear and tried to secure with his foreign policy.

Another aspect that is important in understanding the decisions that Blair made is his personality. He firmly believed that he had the ability to convince those who were necessary, be they voters, party and cabinet members, or other world leaders, that the course of action taken in Iraq was not only the right one, but the only one possible. On many different occasions Blair took it upon himself to push his agenda through at home and in the international community. As will be shown, he managed to accomplish his goal with varying degrees of success and with mixed ramifications for himself as prime minister and the relationship between Great Britain, the U.S., and the rest of the world's powers.

It is important first to consider how Blair viewed the threat from Iraq. This is an interesting starting point because even in this initial stage there were differences between him and President Bush. While the Bush administration considered Saddam Hussein's regime to be an imminent threat, and Blair certainly made some statements supporting that fact, Blair viewed the continuing situation in Iraq as intolerable and, short of war, lacking a positive outcome. He saw Iraq as a threat to the region as well as to its own population, and that it

could become a threat strategically if it were allowed to acquire long range

missile systems. All of these reasons were coupled with his belief that Saddam

would eventually, if he had not already, make these weapons and other

resources available to international terrorists. (Bluth 2004, 871)

Many senior level officials in Blair's own government questioned his close

involvement in Iraq. One of his senior cabinet ministers was quoted as saying,

"had anyone else been leader, we would not have fought alongside Bush."

(Stephens 2004, 234) Indeed, many critics question the importance of the "special

relationship". This relationship has ostensibly been in place since World War II

and implies that both the United States and Great Britain are far more integrated

on a strategic military level than with any of their other allies, and will render

military support almost unequivocally. However, historically this has not always

been the case. Most notably was the Vietnam War when, faced with stiff

resistance at home, Britain declined to send troops.

Additionally, Prime Minister Blair was not put under significant pressure

by the American government to contribute ground forces to the Iraqi campaign.

In fact, President Bush even offered Blair a way out of participation when it

seemed likely that doing so would significantly damage his premiership.

However, Blair was not, as some critics suggest, merely a "lackey of President

Bush" and inextricably tied down to the special relationship. His own personal

views on Iraq were at least as strong as President Bush's and dated back to 1998.

During the escalating inspection crisis of that year, Blair made it clear that,

"The Saddam Hussein we face today is the same Saddam Hussein we faced

yesterday. He has not changed. He remains an evil, brutal dictator… It is now

clearer than ever that his games have to stop once and for all. If they do not, the

consequences should be clear to all." (Caldwell 2003, 12) It was also during this

time that Blair was becoming increasingly disturbed by the amount of dangerous

weapons material Saddam was accumulating. Blair couldn't understand why

other countries, and France in particular, couldn't see the serious and strategic

threat that Saddam was becoming. When asked later, in February of 2003, as to

whether or not he was simply acting on the orders of President Bush, Blair

stated, "People say you are doing this because the Americans are telling you to

do it. I keep telling them that it's worse than that. I believe in it." (Dyson 2006,

290)

Blair further expounded on his view of interventionist foreign policy in

general in April of 1999 during a speech in Chicago. He stated that, "the

principle of noninterference… should not be regarded as insurmountable… [it]

must be qualified in important respects… the most pressing foreign policy

problem we face is to identify the circumstances in which we should get actively

involved in other people's conflicts." (Dyson 2006, 298) He believed that rogue

regimes lose the right of noninterference when they harm their own people or

the people of other nations.

In the events of 1998, when the United States and Great Britain were

contemplating air strikes on Iraq because of non-compliance with United Nations

Resolutions concerning Iraq, Blair's views on Iraq became solidified. When the

situation was diffused through tough diplomatic negotiations within the United

Nations Security Council's permanent members, Blair sought to make sure that

further production of weapons of mass destruction (WMD's) were stopped along

with the humanitarian atrocities being committed by Saddam. The short-term

goals for Blair in May of 1999 concerning Iraq were simple yet exacting. His

primary goal was to limit the threat to the region posed by Saddam. He believed

this could only be done by aggressively seeking out and eliminating Saddam's

stores of WMD's. At the time, Blair still held the belief that this could be

accomplished through the authority of the United Nations Special Commission

and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

It was only after the events of September 11, 2001, that Blair began to see

Iraq, and what he considered to be rogue states in general, in a different light.

> What changed for me with September 11th was that I
> thought then you have to change your mindset… you
> have to go out and get after the different aspects of
> this threat… you have to deal with this because

> otherwise the threat will grow… you have to take a
> stand, you have to say 'Right we are not going to
> allow the development of WMD in breach of the will
> of the international community to continue. (Bluth
> 2004, 874)

When Blair later met in Crawford, Texas with President Bush on April 6, 2002, he was informed that Bush had concluded that the only solution in Iraq was the removal of Saddam Hussein. Blair was then confronted with the extremely tough strategic decision of letting the United States act on its own, or joining in whatever military action was liable to take place.

Blair considered this decision from a much different perspective than that of other European leaders. While he still supported action sanctioned by international organizations such as the U.N. or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, he felt the cost of letting the United States act on its own was too great. He envisioned a world that was organized according to international law with the United Nations as the ultimate origin of authority for using military force to solve international problems. However, he also believed, like Bush and the United States, that "rogue states" seeking or using WMD's had to be dealt with in a firm and definitive manner. "We must be prepared to act where terrorism or Weapons of Mass Destruction threaten us… If necessary the action should be military and again, if necessary and justified, it should involve regime change." (Bluth 2004, 875)

According to those close to Blair within his government, Blair was

confident that he could do several different things almost simultaneously in

effecting what he believed was the necessary outcome in Iraq. He first believed

that he had the persuasive capabilities to convince President Bush that U.N.

authorization was necessary before military action could be taken. In that respect

he at least succeeded in having Bush attempt to go through the motions of

working with the U.N. Security Council. Blair also believed he would be able to

sway popular British opinion in support of a possible military engagement with

Iraq. In this respect he never reached a meaningful level of success. Finally, he

thought he would be able to persuade enough members of the British

Parliament, and his own cabinet, that war with Iraq was necessary. An aide close

to Blair once stated that,

> Tony is the great persuader. He thinks he can convert
> people even when it might seem as if he doesn't have
> a con in hell's chance of succeeding. Call him naïve,
> call it what you will, but he never gives up. He would
> say things like, "I can get Jacques (Chirac) to do this"
> or "leave Putin to me". (Dyson 2006, 299)

Other significant statements made by Blair before the invasion of Iraq in

2003 make it clear that his personality, and the way that he viewed the world,

influenced his decisions and the approach that he took in handling Iraq. Many

critics and scholars believe that Blair exhibited a very low level of conceptual

complexity and that he tended to view events like those in Iraq in terms of black

and white instead of appreciating some of the finer nuances of the situation.

When speaking about the Iraqi regime he referred to it as "evil" and that they,

"are not people like us… They are not people who obey the normal norms of

human behavior." Blair viewed Saddam and his regime as both irrational and

dangerous, something not to be dealt with lightly or timidly. Other officials both

in the British and the French government observed this dualistic behavior with

Blair. One British expert on Iraq was frustrated with Blair's "inability to engage

with the complexities" of the situation, and it seemed as if Blair took the

obstinance of Saddam personally. "He didn't seem to have a perception of Iraq

as a complex country." A French government official observed that, "There is not

a single problem that Blair thinks he cannot solve with his own personal

engagement… The trouble is, the world is a little more complicated than that."

(Dyson 2006, 299)

Some experts have put forward the idea that the influence of religion on

both Blair and Bush led to their similar views on Iraq. While interpreting the

influence of religion upon President Bush is beyond the scope of this paper, it is

fairly simple to ascertain its influence upon Blair. Blair's penchant for seeing

events and people in terms of black and white is not only consistent with a low

level of conceptual complexity, but also with his views on faith and its role in his

decision-making process. In his own words on faith he says,

> Christianity is a very tough religion, it is judgmental.
> There is right and wrong. There is good and bad. We
> all know this, of course, but it has become fashionable
> to be uncomfortable about such language. But when
> we look at our world today and how much needs to
> be done, we should not hesitate to make such
> judgments. (Kampfner 2004, 74)

This isn't to suggest that Blair's faith was ultimately what determined his foreign

policy, but he did see a definite moral dimension to it. Moreover, his

interpretation of morality and faith are essentially the same.

Another instance that could correspond with a low level of conceptual

complexity was Blair's tenacious attachment to the special relationship with the

United States. Some critics saw it as a fixed pole of Blair's perception of

international politics. For Blair, it wasn't merely important that the relationship

exist, but that Britain remain the United States premier ally, especially with

respect to foreign affairs. At times it seemed as if Blair feared that any deviation

from this policy might risk the entire alliance. In discussions with his cabinet he

said, "I will tell you that we must stand close to America. If we don't, we will

lose our influence to shape what they do." (Dyson 2004, 300) When Blair's

foreign secretary Jack Straw suggested that Blair offer all political support short

of sending troops, due to the lack of support both at home and abroad, Blair

responded that the only course of action was complete commitment to America.

Another aspect of Blair's personality which influenced his foreign policy with respect to Iraq was his preferred style of command structure. He preferred to keep as much influence as possible for himself, while sharing the day to day aspects of his policy with a small, core group of advisors. Foreign Secretary Straw complained several times that he was unable to exert his own authority due to Blair's high level of involvement. Blair was reported to prefer bilateral meetings with his cabinet members and advisors or to make policy in informal groups as opposed to formal cabinet meetings which would provide more structure and thus less control for Blair. His Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, described these meetings and the groups that attended as, "that close entourage… That was the team, they were the ones who moved together all the time. They attended the daily 'war cabinet.' That was the in group. That was the group that was in charge of [foreign] policy." (Dyson 2004, 301) Short resigned from the cabinet on March 12, 2003, shortly before the invasion of Iraq.

The usual body used to deliberate over decisions like Iraq was the Cabinet Committee on Overseas Policy and Defense (OPD). However, Blair disliked using the OPD because he felt it was too "formal" and "insufficiently focused". As a consequence, the OPD was never used by Blair who instead preferred his inner circle of advisors. At a meeting with these advisors in July of 2002, the

minutes show that the use of military force was seen as inevitable and it was

assumed that Britain would be a part of any military action in Iraq. However,

when questioned by his cabinet members as late as August, Blair made it sound

as if nothing was settled and that "Anglo-U.S. decisions are still a long way off."

(Dyson 2004, 301) As the Butler report after the conclusion of formal military

action stated,

> Without papers circulated in advance, it remains
> possible but is obviously much more difficult for
> members of the cabinet outside the small circle
> directly involved to bring their political judgment to
> bear on the major decisions for which the cabinet as a
> whole must carry responsibility. We are concerned
> that the informality… of the government's procedures
> which we saw in the context of policymaking towards
> Iraq risks reducing the scope for informed political
> judgment. (Butler 2004, 147)

In case that Blair was unable to secure U.N. authorization for an invasion,

Admiral Michael Boyle, the head of British armed forces, asked for a definitive

opinion as to the legality of such an invasion. Blair had Lord Goldsmith, the

British Attorney General, draft the response to Boyle's question. This was

submitted to Blair on March 7, 2003, and stated that the U.K. could make a

reasonable case for war, but that there was no guarantee that those in opposition

to invasion would not bring a case, at which point he could not be certain

whether or not they would succeed. Goldsmith's final article was a long

document full of caveats and explanations. However, when the cabinet met to

consider the legality of a possible invasion on March 17, 2003, Blair did not make the document available but rather provided a one page summary of it. When asked by his cabinet members why the document had not been presented, Blair told them that they could read it later, but that the legality of military action was clear. Some critics have used this instance to show yet another instance of how Blair's personality played a key role in decision making, in which he sought to control events through the strength of his convictions rather than built on consensus.

Polling data taken in September 2002 among the British public concerning Iraq showed that nearly three-quarters of the population were opposed to an invasion. This was mainly believed to be because no large amounts of WMD's had been found and the invasion lacked the approval of the U.N. Blair was cognizant of the weight U.N. approval would give to an eventual invasion and so sought to get it with the help of U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell. However, when the U.N. option failed to work as Blair had hoped it would, he was faced with an overall domestic approval rating of around 33% just prior to the invasion in March of 2003. (Dyson 2007, 653)

Blair was also faced with stiff opposition within his cabinet as well as in Parliament in general. Reports from within the cabinet show that at various times seven different members were opposed to his policy in Iraq. Prior to the

invasion, in February 2003, a sampling of 101 Labor members of Parliament were

asked if they believed there was enough evidence to justify an invasion of Iraq.

Of those polled, 86 responded that there was not enough evidence, with eight

concurring and seven undecided. Blair was only narrowly able to close the gap in

votes needed to support the war on March 18, 2003, after intense lobbying and

personal meetings with many members of Parliament. Blair was displaying what

some scholars describe as action based on the characteristic of a "constraint

challenger". According to Dyson, these types of leaders "make foreign policy

based upon state goals and interests—not through a dialogue with others or a

survey of the political landscape." (Dyson 2007, 655)

If Blair indeed displays the characteristics of a constraint challenger, he

could be expected, according to Dyson, to contest domestic political opposition

in order to direct foreign policy in a way that he felt to be strategically important.

He could also be expected to have a very proactive foreign policy and a stark,

black and white approach to international affairs. Both of these assumptions are

borne out by Blair's behavior in regard to Iraq. The relevance of these

assumptions is that, if this indeed was Blair's perception of events, what was the

reason behind it? Dyson also contends that this dualistic perception of

international affairs, and Blair's belief in interventionism, made the alliance with

the United States all the more appealing. Blair would be able to use the alliance to further facilitate his interventionist goals. (Dyson 2007, 660)

In a cabinet meeting in July of 2002, many cabinet members expressed their misgivings to Blair about the large domestic opposition to military action. Blair however was not deterred and stated that, "the British public will support regime change if the political context is right." His Home Secretary David Blunkett expressed his concern that Blair was, "overwhelmingly certain and confident in his own judgment [and] believed that he could carry the people with him." In fact, Blair refused to change his stance even as many high level officials left his government. Among them were the former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, the current Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, and Secretary of State for International Development Clare Short. In several interviews with cabinet members, it became evident that Blair was attempting to limit the discussion of Iraq by consulting with just a handful of advisors rather than building a consensus within the cabinet. Before she resigned, Clare Short described these meetings as, "Blair updating people on things everyone had read in the press… the squeeze was on: you've got to stick with Tony… in the Blair government, cabinet has not functioned properly." (Dyson 2007 661) Robin Butler, a former cabinet secretary and Chairman of the Privy Counselors' Inquiry on intelligence pertaining to WMD's before the invasion, made a similar observation.

> What happened was you didn't necessarily have an
> agenda… A lot of decisions were taken informally in
> Number 10 without set meetings or good records
> being taken. In fairness, the use of Cabinet was
> already in decline, but Blair and Brown had been
> used to keeping their cards pretty close to their chests
> and didn't necessarily share them with all their
> colleagues. (Hennessy 2007, 345)

In spite of the opposition both within his own government and the general

population, Blair continued to pursue the foreign policy that he believed to be

the right course for Britain. At times it left him sounding isolated, "People have

just got to make up their minds whether they believe me or not, I'm afraid… I've

never claimed to have a monopoly of wisdom, but one thing I've learned in this

job is you should always try and do the right thing, not the easy thing."

(Kampfner 2004, 278) Blair felt that while he might be making decisions that

people felt were unpopular, it was simply the cost of leadership. Even David

Blunkett commiserated with Blair's position.

> The easiest thing for Blair would have been to oppose
> the U.S. in terms of intervention in Iraq, to have
> demonstrated that publicly, to have avoided sending
> troops with the U.S., and to have been as belligerent
> and vocal as Chirac and Schroeder. He would have
> made himself pretty heroic [domestically]. (Dyson
> 2007, 661)

This shows that Blair was making foreign policy decisions based on the strategic

importance of Iraq and the necessity of maintaining an optimal relationship with

the United States. He was clearly willing to bear the obviously heavy domestic costs of sending in troops if the situation required it.

In spite of all the negative effects his policy was having domestically, Blair enjoyed a level of popularity in America not seen since 1945. Polls taken in the U.S. in 2003 showed that Americans believed in Blair's characterization of Great Britain as the 'pivotal power'. Many critics in America and abroad believed that Blair presented the case against Iraq with more conviction and skill than Bush. In fact, some critics point out that much of the White House rationale for the U.S. Iraq policy came from Blair's 2002 Joint Intelligence Committee dossier which the British government used to assess Iraq's weapons capability. Bush's 2003 State of the Union address clearly showed that Blair had been made privy to intelligence before the rest of the international community. Blair's statements the Monday before the address preceded Bush's rationale shift to non-compliance from weapons searches. Blair's specific phrase was, "These [WMD's] are not things you lose like a pair of house keys around the house." (Caldwell 2003, 11)

Blair had long held the same opinion of Iraq and the necessity to disarm Saddam. He had worked with President Bill Clinton prior to Bush in trying to disarm Iraq and enforce the U.N. resolutions pertaining to its WMD's. In 1999 at a speech in Chicago, Blair had outlined his views on international affairs based on the "notion of community." He stated,

Many of our problems have been caused by two
dangerous and ruthless men: Saddam Hussein and
Slobodan Milosevic. Both have been prepared to
wage vicious campaigns against their own
community. As a result of these destructive policies
both have brought calamity on their own peoples…
One of the reasons why it is so important to win the
conflict is to ensure that others do not make the same
mistake in the future. (Kramer 2003, 94)

Blair's rhetoric for much of 2002 emphasized two key points: the brutality

of the Iraqi regime and the threat it posed to the region. In a British policy

document from March 2002 on Iraq, several key aspects of British foreign policy

were laid out. It stated that the current British objective in Iraq was the

immediate reintegration of Iraq as a law-abiding state within the region and that

this could not come about while Saddam was still in power. The report went on

further to state that Iraq still maintained tactical missiles that were capable of

reaching Israel as well as other Gulf states, and that Saddam had the capability to

start reproducing these missiles at any time. According to these facts the

document then considered the possibility of reaching the previously stated goals.

The report then concluded that the only viable options, "were either to

strengthen containment, simultaneously making it more selective in targeting

specific items related to weapons production: or to bring about regime change

through military force." Given these options, the report stated that disarmament

through renewed inspections was unlikely and that, "Saddam is only likely to

permit the return of inspectors if he believes the threat of large-scale U.S. military

action is imminent... Playing for time, he would then embark on a renewed

policy of non co-operation." (Bluth 2004, 876)

In effect, the report stated that however desirable disarmament through

inspections might be, the only way Britain could be confident of the necessary

change taking place in Iraq was through a military ground campaign. The policy

goals of Britain in Iraq could only be achieved through regime change, and

regime change unequivocally required the use of military force. This in effect

was the rationale that Blair used throughout the rest of 2002 to make the case to

Great Britain, and the rest of the world, that the only real option for removing the

WMD's from Iraq was regime change: something most of the rest of the world

was still unready to accept.

In a later intelligence dossier from September 24, 2002, Blair stated that

Iraq had the capability to produce several different chemical weapons such as

sarin, cyclosarin, and mustard gas. While the dossier did not disclose where the

information came from, Blair maintained, "I and other ministers have been

briefed in detail on the intelligence and are satisfied as to its authority." (Ramsay

2002, 1004) It also claimed that Saddam was still attempting to acquire nuclear

weapons material and increase the range of the army's ballistic weapons. Some

critics stated that the dossier merely restated information that was already

widely known, however, it did provide additional weight to both Blair and

Bush's belief that military action was necessary and that there was little time left

for negotiation. Before the dossier was released, eight non-governmental

organizations (NGO's) from Great Britain released a statement voicing their

trepidation over a possible conflict with Iraq. Their main concern was that war

would have an immediate negative impact upon the Iraqi civilian population in

terms of food supply and medicine. Iraq's already poor water supply in terms of

quality would also be affected: something that was already contributing to child

death in the country.

Blair continued his campaign for regime change by expounding on the

problems of ongoing containment. The first and most obvious problem that he

pointed out was that containment would be impossible to sustain indefinitely.

Saddam had already proven himself to be more than capable of circumventing

sanctions and avoiding inspections. He had already pilfered about $3 billion

annually from the oil-for-food program, and it was becoming increasingly

apparent that the negative effects of the sanctions were being borne by the Iraqi

people and not the regime. The result was a decline in the economy and

deterioration of infrastructure which were having extremely adverse effects on

Iraqi health and life expectancy. (Bluth 2004, 878)

Based on these criteria, Blair came to see containment as not only a failure, but morally wrong with respect to the effects upon the Iraqi people. Both he and his foreign secretary Jack Straw began lobbying against it as an effective strategy in Iraq. They contended that, "proponents of containment never engaged with the argument that containment itself entailed human costs on a scale arguably greater than those that would be incurred in a war to depose the regime." (Bluth 2004, 879) However, neither Blair nor Straw felt that regime change could be undertaken without U.N. involvement. They held this view partly because they knew the British people and government would want such an action to be sanctioned by the U.N. But Blair was also a very large proponent of military action being taken in accordance with international law and approval, if at all possible. What he didn't want was the U.S. moving unilaterally and thus distancing itself from the international community. That would not only weaken the effectiveness of international bodies like the U.N., but also allow the U.S. to become more isolationist and thus less likely to listen to the opinions and advice of its allies. Indeed, some critics have asserted, "the primary challenge of [British] foreign policy is to find ways of restraining a United States that is forever seeking to solve complex international problems through the use of military force." (Freedman 2006, 62)

With help from U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, Blair was able to convince President Bush that the issue would have to be put before the Security Council before action could be taken. What resulted was U.N. Security Council Resolution 1441 which stringently demanded that Iraq comply with all previous resolutions and fully disarm: if not, there would be serious military repercussions. However succinct and forceful the language of Resolution 1441 may have sounded, it faced serious problems in light of the reality of the situation. The United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) was sent to implement Resolution 1441, however, it was faced with formidable opposition in Iraq. Both Blair and Bush believed the purpose of the resolution was to initiate military action in light of any discovery of WMD's within Iraq. According to officials like U.S. Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice though, Saddam had become so proficient in hiding his WMD's that UNMOVIC might not ever find anything. Additionally, as the weapons inspectors began to find minor infractions within Iraq, some members of the Security Council began to view this not as non-compliance, but rather as evidence that the inspections were working and that Iraq would eventually disarm.

Both the British and American leadership viewed the duty of the inspectors as simply to verify the weapons that Iraq was being forced to declare,

not hunt the weapons down and struggle with the Iraqi regime to gain

compliance. They claimed that the intention of the resolution was to facilitate an

immediate end to the conflict over Iraq's WMD's, not to begin yet another

prolonged period of possibly indefinite containment. Blair viewed the situation

of immediate disarmament as possible in only one of two ways. Either Saddam

willingly acknowledged all his stores of WMD's and turned them over to the

inspectors, or military force was used to remove him and then find the weapons.

For Blair, the possibility Saddam willingly disarming himself seemed remote in

the extreme. (Bluth 2004, 880)

The major problem posed to Blair's course of action was that Iraq didn't

pose an imminent threat in light of the known facts. Blair couched the threat

from Iraq as "serious and current", but couldn't argue the point that Great

Britain was in any real danger itself. The case had to be made that the real

imminent threat Saddam posed was to his own people. On February 21, 2003,

Straw stated in a speech at the Royal Institute of International Affairs

> Recent intelligence shows that Saddam's military
> plans envisage using chemical and biological
> weapons against a range of targets, including his own
> Shia population…During the Cold War, people in
> Britain had to become inured to the everyday
> possibility of annihilation. Imagine the effect on the
> public psyche if this threat came not from an external
> adversary, but from one's own government. (Bluth
> 2004, 882)

Both Blair and Straw were consistent in their reasons for regime change throughout 2002 and 2003. Their first reason was the threat of Saddam Hussein himself. In Blair's own words, "He has twice before started wars of aggression. Over one million people died in them." (Bluth 2004, 882) The second was that Saddam possessed and used WMD's against his own people and that he seemed bound by no restraints except those posed by external military force. The final reason was that an actual or potential terrorist threat might exist. While Blair never stated that Saddam had links with Al-Qaeda, he firmly believed that rogue states with WMD have had a high potential for collaborating with terrorist organizations.

The intelligence that Blair was acting on clearly stated that at current capabilities, Iraq was only a threat to its immediate neighbors. However, that did not take into account hazardous material that could eventually be weaponized. U.N. inspectors reported that Iraq had up to 10,000 liters of anthrax with associated production capacities. Therefore, the perceived threat of Saddam by the British government could be categorized in a few ways. First of all, after September 11, 2001 any state with WMD's had to be viewed as a threat and confronted. Although Saddam was contained, he had proven himself to be aggressive in the past and was a definite threat to the region. Iraq was also perceived as becoming a greater strategic threat because it was attempting to

develop longer range missile systems. While that was not yet the case, Iraqi experts had sufficient knowledge to develop that capability in the near future.

The substantial obstacle the Blair administration faced was how to justify military action in light of no immediate threat to Great Britain. His answer was that, while there indeed was no immediate threat, the situation was urgent because Britain couldn't predict when Iraq would be capable of a more strategic attack and could not wait for that eventuality. Furthermore, containment was not a viable option because this course of action couldn't realistically hope to disarm Saddam in the near future. And finally, Blair believed it was completely at odds with Western values for the Iraqi people to have to continue to suffer while the rest of the world decided what to do about the situation.

The cost of war was, for Blair, the same as not going to war in terms of human loss. Without an acceptable alternative to containment short of military action, Blair was confident that regime change was the only realistic option. While his eventual rationale for war was disarmament, which was done to keep Britain at least ostensibly in compliance with international law, this put his political strategy at odds with his reasons for invasion. The threat of Saddam was not so great as to necessitate military action on its own, but the lack of a realistic alternative made it the only course of action for Blair.

> We must face the consequences of the actions we
> advocate. For me, that means all the dangers of war.

> But for others, opposed to this course, it means—let
> us be clear—that the Iraqi people, whose only true
> hope of liberation lies in the removal of Saddam, for
> them, the darkness will close back over them again:
> and he will be free to take his revenge upon those he
> must know wish him gone. (Bluth 2004, 886)

In the aftermath of the invasion it became evident that both Blair and Bush had put too much emphasis on what turned out to be weak intelligence regarding Saddam's WMD capability. However, for Blair that was never the main concern behind the invasion. The Butler inquiry and the U.S. Senate inquiry both looked into the intelligence gathering and assessment process of British and Americans respectively. Both reports found that the British and U.S. leaders believed in the accuracy of information they had at hand and then made their decisions accordingly. It was the way that the information was interpreted, combined with their already stated belief in the value of regime change, which further heightened the threat posed by Saddam in their minds and thus necessitated military action.

As U.S. Vice-President Dick Cheney saw it, if there indeed were no WMD's in Iraq, then why didn't Saddam openly comply with the inspectors and have the sanctions lifted? Why lose billions of dollars in potential oil profit from the West over weapons that supposedly did not exist? Additionally, Iraq was never really in compliance with Resolution 1441 in that the resolution required a "currently accurate, full and complete declaration" of Iraq's WMD's. (Resolution

1441 2002) The declaration of weapons released by Saddam in December 2002 did not meet the requirements of the resolution. It was merely a rewording of the declarations made up to 1998. "By failing to provide adequate and extensive explanations for its programmes… and refusing to give unfettered access to its weapons scientists, it gave an effective pretence at compliance, while refusing to cooperate in a meaningful manner." (Bluth 2004, 887) It was according to these criteria that Prime Minister Blair concluded that the Iraqi regime had decided not to disarm.

Blair came to believe that the removal of Saddam was the least adverse contingency that Britain, as well as Iraq and the surrounding region, had available. While disarmament was one of the main reasons for both Blair and Bush to invade Iraq because it gave their actions at least partial legitimacy according to international law, it was never the main reason. Blair never denied that one of his core objectives was the reintegration of Iraq with the international community through regime change. He assumed that war was the necessary precursor to disarmament, which would mean that all of their goals for Iraq (regional stability, freedom for the Iraqi people, elimination of WMD's and their possible proliferation to terrorists, and defending modern, democratic values) could be obtained.

In the immediate aftermath of the invasion, Blair attempted to consolidate the political gains he had accrued with Bush and the U.S. because of his support and use it to push the Bush administration to move peace talks in the Middle East forward. In part Blair was doing this to improve his position domestically because the invasion had damaged his standing at home considerably. However, he also pushed this agenda because it was part of his larger view on international affairs. He believed stability in the Middle East was an essential part of maintaining stability in Iraq. He was also aware that this change in policy would be beneficial not just for his image with the people of Britain at large but also with his party. "[The] Labor [Party] will see his attempts to move forward on the peace process as the real test of his special relationship with the U.S. President." (Henderson 2003)

In an article written in January of 2007, a few years after the completion of formal military action against Iraq, Blair reiterated many of his earlier points while expounding on new ones. He continued to believe that the essential battle in Iraq, and against terrorism in general, was not about security but about values. He asserted that the battle against terrorism that was currently being fought in Iraq could not be won unless equal emphasis was placed on the use of force and the integration of modern values. Aside from striking that correct balance, he believed, "We will never get real support for the tough actions that may be

essential to safeguarding our way of life unless we also attack global poverty, environmental degradation, and injustice with equal vigor." (Blair 2007, 79)

Blair characterized the situation in Iraq as a battle about civilization itself. He plainly believed that the conflict wasn't simply about disarmament or regime change, but "between those who embrace the modern world and those who reject its existence—between optimism and hope, on the one hand, and pessimism and fear, on the other." (Blair 2007, 81) Blair believed that militant ideology combined with poverty and cultural minimalization had led to international terrorism and extremist regimes like Saddam's in Iraq. He saw the continuing terrorist influence in Iraq after the invasion as proof that the conflict was about which way of life was valid. For Blair, the values of democracy were what these terrorists feared most because those values stood to upset the well-established order that gave the terrorists their influence.

In the aftermath of the invasion of Iraq, Blair sought to justify the continuing maintenance of British and American troops. He recognized that the continuing violence and troop deaths were difficult and that many wanted to leave. However, he staunchly opposed this course of action. "Many believe that what was done in Iraq in 2003 was so wrong that they are reluctant to accept what is plainly right now." Blair believed the only available strategy was to continue to support the new Iraqi government so that democracy could be given

a chance to take hold and withstand the attacks from terrorist forces. He pointed

to the January 2005 elections as an example of the reason why British and

American involvement was still critical. He stated that given the chance, the Iraqi

people had turned out in record numbers to vote compared to most Western

counties, and that this was done despite the intimidation and violence inflicted

upon them by insurgents.

Blair felt that this proved that all any people needed was the chance at

freedom and they would take it. All they needed was the support and protection

of the U.S., Great Britain, and their allies. He felt it was their duty to stand by the

Iraqi people now that they had started this process, and see them through until a

stable democracy had been firmly established. Blair declared that the three main

goals left to accomplish by the U.S. and Great Britain were "to help indigenous

security forces grow, support the democratic process, and provide a bulwark

against the terrorism that threatens the process." (Blair 2007, 82) While

acknowledging how difficult the situation in Iraq was, he stressed the need to

persevere and move forward in other areas.

> "I know that Iraq has been a divisive issue, but I also know
> that people want to move on. They want to focus on the
> future in Iraq and here. And I know too that there are many
> other issues that concern people in the international agenda,
> and we will focus on those: on poverty in Africa, on climate
> change, on making progress in Israel and Palestine.
> (Henderson 2005)

Jack Straw too weighed in on perceptions about Iraq and the

responsibilities still left to accomplish there in November of 2003. He pointed out

that the three new U.N. Resolutions, 1472, 1483, and 1500, all expressed the clear

responsibility and shared interest of the international community in preserving

the new rights and freedoms in Iraq. He also urged people not to lose sight of

what had already been gained: namely the removal of a terrible dictator and the

restoration of authority to the people of Iraq. He then stressed some important

factors that had to be recognized with Iraq's transition to democracy. First of all

he proposed that the transfer of power be done in light of the reality of the

situation on the ground in Iraq and that above all security must be maintained.

Second, the new democratic institutions must be made strong and effective

before power is transferred to them. And third, "the exercise of executive powers

and responsibilities must be based on good governance, involving representative

Iraqi authorities and coherent constitutional arrangements." (Straw 2003, 251)

Critics have accused Blair of spinning the facts on Iraq to justify his own

agenda. Many people in Britain believe that he went so far as to lie to them about

whether or not Iraq had WMD's in the first place. However, many inquiries after

the war, and the Butler report specifically, point out that this simply wasn't the

case; Blair believed that there were weapons in Iraq prior to the invasion. The

insistence that Blair relied perhaps far too heavily on this information when

convincing the British public is warranted, however. Of the various inquiries,

several noted that Blair's head of Public Relations played a significant role. "He

appears to have been the prime minister's chief interlocutor with John Scarlett,

the official responsible for coordinating intelligence findings on Iraq." (Crook

2007, 36)

Blair then addressed the critics of the invasion who stated that Iraq never

posed a serious strategic threat in the first place. He countered that if Iraq were

not a threat, why had it been involved in two regional conflicts and the subject of

over 14 U.N. resolutions in the past quarter century? He then pointed out that

the Iraq Survey Group, sent into Iraq after the invasion to secure WMD's, had

concluded that Iraq did indeed pose an imminent threat if left to its own devices

because of its production capabilities. Blair also claimed that securing Iraq had

led to a great increase in non-proliferation. Finally, he commented that, in

response to these critics, since June of 2003 the forces in Iraq had been there with

full authority from both a U.N. resolution and at the invitation of Iraq's first

elected government. Blair stated, "The crucial point about these interventions is

that they were not just about changing regimes but about changing the value

systems governing the nations concerned. The banner was not actually 'regime

change,' it was 'values change'." (Blair 2007, 83)

Ultimately, Blair believed that the conflict in Iraq, and with terrorism at large, was about modernity. He contended that Islam was not the problem since it was a religion that had been around for centuries and had only recently been incorporated by terrorists. It was a struggle for progress and values, and as such, must be won. If it was lost then we risked losing these values not only abroad, but eventually at home too. Blair believed it was up to countries like Great Britain and the U.S. to prove to the people of Iraq that these values were in their best interest and worth protecting.

Blair conceded that the U.S. could be a difficult ally at times and that he did not always agree with their foreign policy. However, he thought it was ridiculous that some European nations let their anti-American sentiment reach such levels that it threatened their common long term goals. He considered the problem not to be that the U.S. was highly involved with the foreign affairs of other counties, but that it might decide to do this on its own without the council and guidance of its European allies. None of the major problems confronting the world, and more specifically the West, could be addressed without the help of the United States, and therefore it was imperative that Britain and its European allies have an influence on America. (Blair 2007, 86)

Security could only be achieved through increased interdependence and through a shared set of global values. Blair contended that foreign policy must be

driven by these common values and not self interest. The best way to do that, he

believed, would be through globalization because it increased interdependence

between countries and necessitated the creation and proliferation of these

common values. Blair recognized that this would never completely eliminate the

inconsistencies and setbacks inherent in the real world, but that it would help

reduce the root cause that created terrorists and rogue regimes. When asked by

members of Parliament how these ideals could improve the situation in Iraq and

with terrorism in general, Blair replied,

> I believe that progress in the Middle East, the
> democracy that now exists in Afghanistan, and the
> democracy that is to come, I hope, in Iraq—those
> three things together—would be the single most
> significant contribution we could make to the
> reduction of terrorism and of the power of terrorists
> to recruit to their cause in the world… I will do
> everything I can to work with the president of the
> United States to secure that progress in the Middle
> East. (Henderson 2004)

Many scholars contend that the special relationship between the U.S. and

Great Britain has been damaged because of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. While it is

certain that both Blair and Bush lost a great deal of domestic political support

because of their decisions, that does not mean that the relationship between the

two countries suffered. In fact, the British government is probably more popular

than ever in America right now. The difficulty stems from neither leader seeing

any viable option other than invasion. However, it is highly doubtful that any

subsequent government will change the nature of this relationship in any significant way. It has been too beneficial, especially for Britain, to let one specific incident ruin the whole thing. Furthermore, the root of the Iraq problem was not the special relationship. The two countries probably worked more closely and cooperatively on this engagement than on any other since World War II. They shared common objectives and were able to influence each other to varying degrees. The problem stemmed from an inability to convince the rest of the international community as to the immediate necessity of invasion, and then the subsequent fallout over a lack of evidence and flawed analysis. (Freedman 2006, 68)

While Blair and Bush were in agreement with the international community that the Iraqi regime must disarm, they believed that the only way that would ever really happen would be through a change of regime and not just protracted inspections and sanctions. They felt that Saddam would never willingly divulge his entire array of WMD's and so the only way to make Iraq comply with international law and the multiple U.N. resolutions concerning Iraq was through regime change. Blair continued with a policy he believed in, at great cost to himself domestically, because he thought it was the only course of action that had a realistic chance of success.

Forty years before, Dean Acheson stated that "Britain has lost an empire and has not yet found a role." (Black 2003, 16) However, that may not actually be the case. The British since World War II have striven to be an influential partner of the United States. Each prime minister has, to varying degrees, sought to garner special favor with the U.S. Blair perhaps more than most though has sought not only to increase the role of Great Britain internationally through this relationship, but to proceed with his own international agenda through it. Blair's views on a new and modern international order could only be facilitated with the help of the world's only remaining superpower. He felt that it was up to him to make sure that Britain had a voice in how this new order would take shape, and so he acted independently in order to ensure that voice.

Indeed, Blair's policy in Iraq did pay some unexpected dividends. Britain emerged in a better commercial position with regard to Iraq than any other European country. Great Britain also received tactical benefits in the form of weapons like cruise missiles from the U.S. and some of America's latest military technology. Thanks to these increases in technology and overall arsenal, Britain now stands well in the lead within the E.U. in terms of military capabilities. In fact, some analysts have stressed that the "capabilities gap" between Great Britain and the rest of Europe has widened to such an extent that it could only be bridged with help from Russia. (Caldwell 2003, 13)

In 2006 Blair made a speech in London which concerned what he called the "clash of civilizations." In it he outlined the justification of military action in places like Kosovo and Afghanistan as well as Iraq as part of a larger overall global agenda. He made it clear that in his foreign policy he "sought to link, in values, military action… with diplomatic action on climate change, world trade, Africa and Palestine." (Blair 2006, 1) He acknowledged that Iraq wasn't the biggest issue in terms of settling the volatile situation in the Middle East, but rather it was the conflict over Israel and Palestine. However, he firmly believed that creating stable democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan was vital in defeating global terrorism. While the U.S. and Great Britain may have decided to invade without initial U.N. support, global alliances like the U.N. and E.U. were decidedly important if the common goals of modern states such as liberty and democracy were to be reached and sustained. However, these international institutions would need "radical reform" if they were going to be able to meet these new challenges. "I want to stress this concept of an international community, based on core, shared values, prepared actively to intervene and resolve problems, is an essential pre-condition of our future prosperity." (Blair 2006, 2)

While the reasons that led to Blair's rationale for his foreign policy in Iraq may be complex, they are easily discernable. He clearly viewed containment as a

failed strategy that for too long had allowed Saddam to shift the burden of

sanctions onto the Iraqi people. Not only that, but the sanctions had not

effectively stopped him from pursuing his WMD programs: at best they had only

delayed them. As a result the Iraqi people were forced to suffer while Saddam

abused the weapons for food program for his own personal gain. The strategy of

sanctions and containment would never remove the basic threat that Saddam

posed to the region and his own people, and so Blair saw regime change as the

only plausible solution.

Additionally, Blair's persona and his values were a key factor in

developing his foreign policy. Blair saw the Iraqi regime as an example of the

type of state that threatened the core values of modern, democratic nations. He

felt that these values had to be strengthened in order for the global community to

become further integrated and interdependent. Regimes like the one in Iraq

posed a threat to this international cohesion because they not only threatened

their region, but could potentially reach beyond those bounds and become a

global concern. These values were reinforced by his perception of people and

events in stark dualistic terms of black and white. For Blair, Saddam was "evil"

and must be dealt with accordingly. In his statements and policy little emphasis

was given to the subtleties of Saddam's character or the implications of invasion

of Iraq in Great Britain and internationally. Blair felt that these were obstacles

that, if not easily overcome, were a distant second in relation to securing a stable regime in Iraq.

Finally, Blair's actions have to be considered in light of how he viewed Britain's role in the special relationship. While his stance on Iraq was largely determined by his own convictions, he made the relationship with the U.S. a priority. This was because, initially, both he and Bush shared the same opinion on regime change and were willing to work closely together to make that happen. Blair also saw the negative implications of the U.S. acting alone in Iraq. The U.S. already had an historic proclivity toward isolationism, and as the world's only remaining superpower, Blair felt it was imperative that Britain have a margin of influence on the power that the U.S. wielded internationally. Without that influence, not only Britain, but also the rest of Europe and many other nations would be forced to try to implement their international agenda without the help of the U.S. colossus. Additionally, Blair managed to secure concrete strategic gains in the form of military technology and weapons from the U.S. This served to heighten not only the prestige, but also the capability of the British military. The legacy of Blair's foreign policy may have some negative connotations in the short term, but if Iraq indeed becomes a stabilizing influence within the Middle East, then his actions will be largely vindicated and Britain will get to share in, and take credit for, much of that success.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

At first glance it may seem difficult to compare the strategies taken by
Jacques Chirac and Tony Blair. Certainly they took two decidedly different paths
with respect to Iraq that were a product of two fundamentally different attitudes
toward international relations. However, neither man worked inside a vacuum,
and both were cognizant of each other's decisions as well as the current climate
of international relations. The similarity that links them is how they let their own
particular brand of foreign policy drive the actions of their nations, despite what
it might cost them domestically or internationally. Chirac was certainly aware of
how his position would affect France's relationship with the United States, and
Blair was equally aware of how his position would affect his standing at home
and with some of Britain's major allies in Europe.

Both men took measure of their own actions and decided that their course
was right not only for their country, but as a direction in which international
relations should head in general. Why would two European leaders with

essentially the same historical interests choose to go in opposite directions? Since World War I both countries staunchly supported each other and tended to take the same position regarding military action on foreign soil. The answer usually given is that Britain, and particularly Tony Blair, had become too attached to the special relationship with the U.S. and allowed it to cloud his otherwise sound judgment. As has been borne out, Blair's situation was much more complex, and while the relationship was important to him, his personality and personal convictions were just as influential, if not more so. Additionally, Chirac was continuing a pattern that previous French presidents had set by attempting to increase France's influence and create a more multipolar world.

Having laid out their differences with respect to Iraq, and foreign policy in general, what conclusions can be drawn from this study? Certainly there has been a negative impact on the relationship between France and Britain in terms of coordinating their foreign policy. While neither man's actions were calculated to be at odds with the other, nevertheless the end result has been a foreign policy on each side that is at loggerheads with the other. Why would two leaders from historically allied countries choose this course of action? The situation begs the question as to why they couldn't put their more substantive differences behind them in favor of continued friendly relations.

The answer to this question lies in several different places. Initially the difference is one of perception. Both Chirac and Blair had a fundamentally different perception of Iraq and the way to solve the problems it posed. Not only had Chirac been in office longer than Blair, but he also had more experience with the region. While that doesn't necessarily mean that he had a better perception of the situation, it does mean that he had more knowledge and experience from which to draw upon. Blair on the other hand, while perhaps not as experienced as Chirac, was certain in the knowledge that Britain was in a position to benefit from remaining loyal to the U.S., and thus part of his tactic was to see that his broader international agenda was given additional weight by that alliance.

So for Chirac, who had dealt with the Middle East in several different capacities over the course of three decades, Iraq was a situation to be handled delicately and cautiously. He had seen the effect that premature Western intervention could have upon the population of these countries and the backlash of hatred it had spawned. Specifically with Iraq, his perception was influenced by French investments in the country that had to be protected from what he felt to be premature military involvement. This involvement could also put in jeopardy all the other work that Chirac had done in other countries in the region as well. He had been systematically trying to cultivate a French influence in the region that could be a counterweight to American policy. An invasion

undertaken in the way it was, with American forces leading the way, would

undermine that work.

Blair, on the other hand, perceived Iraq in a much different way. Iraq was

a rogue country that had been flaunting U.N. authority for years. Almost

immediately after becoming Prime Minister he sought to remove Saddam

Hussein in 1998 over U.N. Resolution violations. Blair saw Iraq under Saddam as

an example of a state that was hostile to modern, Western values. Furthermore,

negotiation had long since ceased to be an option. Not only did he believe that

sanctions and containment weren't working, he felt that the Iraqi people were

the ones bearing the burden of these sanctions, not the Saddam government the

U.N. resolutions were intended to target.

Perception thus played an integral role in how far apart these two leaders

came to be regarding their foreign policy in Iraq. This initial point put the men

on two opposite courses from which neither would reconsider. Once each had

decided what was important, not only in regard to Iraq but also with their

foreign policy and international relations in general, reconciliation became a

much harder goal to reach.

What is interesting is that both Chirac and Blair had similar overall goals

with regard to foreign policy; they just chose different means of attaining it. Both

men felt that there had to be a counterweight to U.S. predominance and that

America simply could not be allowed to decide the outcome of any international incident that might transpire. Unfortunately, their differences of approach were significant enough to make a more concerted effort much more difficult.

Blair felt that the only way to avoid having the U.S. act as the sole hegemon left after the Cold War was to ally Britain with the U.S. to such a degree that he could eventually exercise some control over how America conducted its foreign policy. As to whether or not that strategy actually worked, in the case of Iraq the results are mixed. While Blair was able to at least get the U.S. to go before the U.N. and try to get international approval for an invasion, the invasion itself was never sanctioned: although the subsequent occupation was. As far as promoting the rest of his international agenda by means of influencing America, the results here too are mixed. Blair was successful in getting Bush to make Iraq part of a larger Middle East agenda and was integral in getting America to spur on new Israeli-Palestinian talks. However, much of the rest of his agenda, such as Africa, global poverty, and hunger, were largely overlooked by the U.S. government. On balance, it seems that Blair was only able to get the American government to go along with his policy in as much as it agreed with their own policy, and was left on his own to take care of the rest.

As for Chirac, he sought to counter U.S. predominance by increasing both the influence of France and international institutions like the U.N. and European

Union. He hoped that a multipolar world could be brought about in which several different superpowers conferred to decide international policy. However, here we see varying degrees of success. Chirac was initially successful in 1998 when he managed to use the leverage of the U.N. Security Council to counterbalance the influence of U.S. policy concerning Iraq. By working with other states such as China and Russia, he used the power of the Security Council veto to ensure that the voice of the U.N., and by proxy that of France, was not only still heard, but relevant. However, in 2002 he overestimated the power of the U.N., and underestimated the resolve of the U.S., and was thus relegated to the sideline while America once again decided the course of international affairs in Iraq.

Another interesting point is that, while domestic emotions ran high in both countries over the Iraq issue, each leader stayed his course for the most part. For Chirac this was easier because the French people wanted nothing to do with an invasion and occupation of Iraq; especially not one that was being spearheaded by the United States. However, had Chirac simply been pandering to his constituency, he would likely have acted much differently. For instance, as was noted in the previous chapter concerning Chirac, he instructed French diplomats to work with the U.S. and Great Britain to draft U.N. Resolution 1441.

He only refrained from joining the invasion because he felt the requirements for doing so had not been met according to the resolution.

For Blair, the domestic outcry against the war was almost as loud as the one in France. He stepped into a huge firestorm when he opted to join the U.S. and other countries in the Coalition of the Willing. This was a much more prominent issue for Blair, and one that was not easily dealt with. While he did persuade his government to go along with his decision to invade, Britain's populace was in an uproar. Blair thought that the eventual benefits of freeing the Iraqi people and creating a democratic state sympathetic to the West in the Middle East would be evident to his people, if not immediately then at least eventually. He simply overestimated his ability to persuade the people of Britain as to the merits of his foreign policy. Even if he was aware that he would never have been able to convince them, it is reasonable to assume that he would have chosen the same course anyway. His convictions on the issue were such that he was willing to sacrifice domestic popularity to accomplish his foreign policy goals.

A comparison of Chirac's and Blair's personalities is also beneficial when drawing conclusions about their decisions. Not only their personalities, but also how they viewed the actions and personality of the other as well. As has already been shown in the aforementioned studies by Dyson, Blair's personality played

an integral role in his decision-making process. It is not unusual for a leader to be driven by their convictions, but Blair did so in a way that suggests he put his own beliefs first when assessing different courses of action brought forth by many highly qualified members of his government. While there is little direct evidence as to how Blair viewed Chirac (aside from the perfunctory statements that he and Chirac were close and on friendly terms), he set about his policy in full awareness of what Chirac was doing and how he felt about the situation. Blair had the underlying belief that he would somehow be able to convince Chirac and other European leaders as to the veracity of his argument. When he saw Chirac make overtones of conciliation with Resolution 1441, Blair thought he was well on the path of persuading Chirac that an invasion and regime change were the only viable options. This fundamental misunderstanding was another core issue that led to their eventual falling out over Iraq.

As for Chirac, less scholarly work has been done about how his personality affected his decisions in Iraq. Certainly his previous experience in the Middle East shaped how he viewed the later situation, and he was much older than Blair when Iraq became an issue. Chirac's firm belief in creating a multipolar world with organizations like the U.N. and E.U. providing effective counterbalance (always with a strong French influence) to U.S. hegemony was something that had been in place long before he became president. Chirac's view

of Blair certainly had to be one of consternation. From Chirac's perspective Blair

was simply amplifying the views of the U.S. within the E.U. and U.N. He was

certainly aware of Blair's internationalist perspective, and so was at a loss as to

how to explain why Blair would choose to further his foreign policy goals by

strengthening his ties with the U.S. Here too is another early misinterpretation:

Chirac failed to see that more than anything Blair was acting on his convictions

and not just at the behest of the U.S. Chirac either chose to ignore, or failed to see,

that Blair was seeking to gain a measure of control over U.S. foreign policy by

strengthening the bonds of the special relationship.

Another point worth examining is how Blair and Chirac viewed the

United Nations and its resolutions. Were they merely tools to be used to further

each man's own agenda, or did they actually believe that the U.N. and its

resolutions were valid instruments that were necessary if a truly internationalist

perspective was to be championed? For each leader the answer is, again, mixed.

Blair could be seen as simply attempting to use the U.N. to accomplish his

ultimate goal in Iraq which was regime change. He wanted at least the illusion of

international legitimacy, which is why he pushed the Bush administration to take

its case in front of the U.N. before initiating military action. But when that course

of action ultimately failed, Blair had no qualms about invading without U.N.

approval. However, if he was simply using the U.N. to further his own agenda,

that wouldn't explain why he immediately sought U.N. approval for each step after the invasion. Clearly this institution and its resolutions were important to him; it was the embodiment of the modern, democratic views he espoused. However, the risk of letting the U.S. act unilaterally was too great in his opinion, and so by allying with the U.S. he gave that action a semblance of international legitimacy.

Chirac too can be accused of trying to manipulate the U.N. and the Security Council to France's advantage. His use of the veto, and his lobbying of other Security Council member states to do the same, was calculated to either change the opinion of the U.S. and Great Britain, or rob any subsequent invasion of Iraq of its legitimacy. His and De Villepin's maneuvering to squash a second resolution authorizing an invasion were done without any real effort to interact diplomatically with Blair or Bush on the issue. However, his involvement with constructing and enforcing the U.N.'s resolutions concerning Iraq for his entire presidency speaks to the fact that he viewed them as legitimate tools in bringing about a stable, or at least manageable, Iraq. Had Chirac not believed in the validity of the U.N., he would have never agreed to work on Resolution 1441, and instead would have obstructed its creation and implementation.

All of these issues beg the obvious question of who made the correct decision in Iraq. Was it smarter to ally oneself with the United States as Blair did

in hopes of influencing U.S. policy, as well as furthering his international goals and garnering positive military concessions? Or was Chirac wiser for having stayed out of Iraq and promoting the legitimacy of the international institutions as well as their laws and resolutions? The answer to both is a qualified yes. Both leaders gained a measure of what they sought by the course of action they chose. In reality neither was able to gain the entirety of their goals because of the actions taken by the United States.

Blair pinned much of his hopes on the fact that he could accomplish more, if not most, of his international agenda by strengthening the bonds of the special relationship at the cost of domestic popularity. However, not only did the Bush administration fail to take up most of Blair's other causes, the heavy-handedness of its policy in Iraq alienated much of the world to Blair, and thus his objectives. Even though he was seen as the voice of reason within the Coalition, his reputation was tarnished as a result of his association with the U.S. For Chirac, his hopes of strengthening the U.N. and E.U. positions (and thus the French), were dashed when the U.S. decided to act outside the agreed upon boundaries of international law as established by the U.N. The legitimacy of his favored institution was questioned when it was unable to influence the decision of the worlds lone superpower.

Both leaders acted in a way that they felt would positively affect not only their own country, but also international affairs in the future. While they both chose different courses of action, neither course effectively changed the outcome of events in Iraq. What can be speculated with a degree of certainty is how the situation would have transpired if Chirac and Blair would have decided to act concertedly. If Blair had sided with Chirac the E.U. would have been galvanized in its rejection of an invasion and possibly offered a real incentive for the U.S. to continue to negotiate. It is still entirely possible that the U.S. would have invaded Iraq on its own anyway, but the degree of isolation from all of America's traditional allies would have been significant and might have given the Bush administration pause. At the very least the U.S. would probably have continued its efforts within the U.N. as well as made greater concessions to its allies in terms of a timeframe and prerequisites for invasion.

Conversely, had Chirac chosen to side with Blair and Bush, or at least not pose a significant obstacle to their course of action but rather stand aside and allow their intended use of Resolution 1441 to stand, the situation would be vastly different. Without Chirac's threat of the veto within the Security Council and his lobbying of other permanent members, the invasion of Iraq would in all likelihood have been sanctioned by the U.N. In reality that would have strengthened the appearance of the U.N.'s authority and made the invasion, and

subsequent occupation, a much less polarizing issue. Instead, Chirac became one

of the most prominent faces in the opposition to the invasion as an act outside

the sanctioning of international law and its institutions.

Speculation aside, what is clear is that both leaders chose a foreign policy

that they believed to be in their nations' best interest, and that neither

significantly strengthened their nation's standing, or those of the international

institutions they espoused, in the international arena. The clear victor in terms of

whose policy was chosen and followed throughout the duration of the invasion

and subsequent occupation was the United States. As the prevailing superpower,

its policy held sway with little or no recourse for other states or institutions. Both

Chirac and Blair sought to mitigate this force in different ways, but ultimately

were only successful in as much as their foreign policy served the interest of the

United States.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Black, Conrad. "Britain is Right to Stick by America." *Spectator*, 15 February 2003, 12.

Bartle, John, and Anthony King, eds. *Britain at the Polls 2005.* Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2006.

Blair, Tony. "A Battle for Global Values." *Foreign Affairs*, Jan-Feb 2007, 79.

Blair, Tony. "Clash of Civilizations." Speech: London, 21 March 2006.

Bluth, Christopher. "The British Road to War: Blair, Bush, and the Decision to Invade Iraq." *International Affairs* 80 no.5 (2004): 871-892.

Brenner, Michael, and Guillaume Parmentier. *Reconcilable Differences: U.S.-French Relations in the New Era.* Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2002.

Butler, Lord. "Report of a Committee of Privy Councillors, Chairman: The Rt. Hon The Lord Butler of Brockwell. Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction." London: House of Commons, 2004.

Caldwell, Christopher. "The Fruits of Victory: Tony Blair's Visit to Camp David Comes at a Time When we are Riding High in America." *Spectator*, 1 February 2003, 10.

Calleo, David P., and Eric R. Staal, eds. *Europe's Franco-German Engine.* Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 1998.

Chirac, Jacques a. "Transcript of Interview of President Jacques Chirac." Interview by Barbara Slavin (USA Today, 25 September 2003) 1-7.

Chirac, Jacques b. "Should the United Nations Play a Central Role in Reconstruction and Peacekeeping in Iraq?" *International Debates* 1 no. 8 (Nov. 2003): 238-255.

Chirac, Jacques a. "Statements Made by M. Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic, During his Joint Press Briefing with M. Bertie Ahern, Prime Minister of Ireland."*Archives of Jacques Chirac's Presidency 1995-2007*. 2 June 2004.

Chirac, Jacques b. "NATO Summit – Press Conference given by Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic." *Archives of Jacques Chirac's Presidency 1995-2007.* 28 June 2004.

Chirac, Jacques c. "NATO Summit – Press Briefing Given by M. Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic, Following the Summit." *Archives of Jacques Chirac's Presidency 1995-2007.* 29 June 2004.

Chirac, Jacques d. "Closing Speech by Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic,to the French Ambassador's Conference." *Archives of Jacques Chirac's Presidency 1995-2007.* 27 August 2004.

Cogan, Charles. "The Iraq Crisis and France: Heaven-Sent Opportunity or Problem from Hell." *French Politics, Culture & Society* 22 (Fall 2004): 120-134.

Cramer, Mark. "France." *The Nation,* 14 April 2003, 14-16.

Dyson, Stephen Benedict. "Personality and Foreign Policy: Tony Blair's Iraq Decision." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 2 (2006): 289-306.

Dyson, Stephen Benedict. "Alliances, Domestic Politics, and Leader Psychology: Why Did Britain Stay Out of Vietnam and Go Into Iraq?" *Political Psychology* 28 no.6 (2007): 647-666.

"Europe's Battling Twosome." *The Economist,* 2 April 2005, 48.

Euro-Focus. "Chirac's Blind Date with History" *Center for Strategic and International Studies* 8 (June 2002): 2-4.

Freedman, Lawrence D. "The Special Relationship, Then and Now." *Foreign Affairs*, May-June 2006, 61.

Giry, Stephanie. "Bush Wins, Chirac Wins." *The New Republic,* 13 December 2004, 13-14.

The Globe and Mail. [London], 15 March 2003, F1.

Graff, James. "Europe's Family Feud." *Time Europe,* 3 March 2003, 28.

Graff, James, and Bruce Crumley. "France Is Not a Pacifist Country." *Time Europe* 24 October 2003, 30.

The Guardian. [London], 30 November 2001, 6.

Henderson, Simon. *Blair and Bush: Tensions in the Relationship.* The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Watch #738. 2 April 2003.

Henderson, Simon. *Blair's Visit to Washington: British Politics and the Peace Process.* The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Watch #914. 10 November2004.

Henderson, Simon. *Nearing the End of the Bush-Blair Relationship: Middle East Policy After the British Elections.* The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, PolicyWatch #993. 10 May 2005

Hennessy, Peter. "From Blair to Brown: The Condition of British Government." *The Political Quarterly* 78 no. 3 (2007): 344-352.

Kampfner, John. *Blair's Wars.* London: Simon & Schuster, 2004.

Kramer, Steven Phillip. "Blair's Britain After Iraq." *Foreign Affairs*, July-Aug 2003, 82.

Lorda, Clara Ubaldina, and Elisabeth Miche. "Two Institutional Interviews: Jose Maria Anzar and Jacques Chirac on the Iraq Conflict." *Discourse and Society* 17 (2006): 447-471.

Maclean, Mairi. *Economic Management and French Business.* New York: Macmillan, 2002.

Naughtie, James. *The Accidental American: Tony Blair and the Presidency.* New York: Public Affairs, 2004.

Oudenaren, John Van. "Unipolar versus Unilateral." *Policy Review* 124 (April-May 2004): 63-75.

Political Framework. "France Country Forecast." *Political Framework* 1 December 2005, 25-34.

Ramsey, Sarah. "Blair says U.K. Dossier Points to Iraq Missile Capability." *Lancet*, 28 September 2002, 1004.

Reitan, Earl A. *The Thatcher Revolution: Margaret Thatcher, John Major, Tony Blair, and the Transformation of Modern Britain, 1979-2001.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2003.

Stephens, Phillip. *Tony Blair: The Making of a World Leader.* New York: Viking Books, 2004.

Straw, Jack. "Should the United Nations Play a Central Role in Reconstruction and Peacekeeping in Iraq?" *International Debates* 1 no. 8 (Nov. 2003): 238-255.

Styan, David. "Jacques Chirac's 'non': France, Iraq, and the United Nations, 1991-2003." *Modern and Contemporary France* 12 no. 3 (2004): 371-385.

United Nations Security Council. "Resolution 986." *United Nations Security Council* 14 April 1995.

United Nations Security Council. "Resolution 1154." *United Nations Security Council* 2 March 1998.

United Nations Security Council. "Resolution 1441." *United Nations Security Council* 8 November 2002.

Wood, Pia Christina. "Chirac's 'New Arab Policy' and Middle East Challenges: The Arab-Israeli Conflict, Iraq and Iran." *Middle East Journal* 52 no. 7 (Autumn 1998): 563-580.

VITA

Clint A. Richards was born in Austin, Texas, on October 24, 1981, the son of Kimberlee K. Richards and David C. Richards. After completing his work at Gatesville High School, Gatesville, Texas, in 2000, he entered Mclennan Community College in Waco, Texas. In 2002 he enrolled in Texas State University-San Marcos and received a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies in December 2005. In June of 2006 he entered the Graduate College of Texas State University-San Marcos.

Permanent Address: 9107 Trailridge Drive

Temple, Texas 76502

This thesis was typed by Clint A. Richards