

The Foreign Policy Discourse
in the United Kingdom and the United States
in the “New World Order”

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Edited by

Lori Maguire

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

The Foreign Policy Discourse in the United Kingdom and the United States
in the “New World Order”, Edited by Lori Maguire

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

LORI MAGUIRE

This book aims to examine some of the major foreign policy debates in the United Kingdom and the United States in the period from 1992 to 2008.¹ The dates have been chosen because of their particular significance. 1992 makes a logical starting point for several reasons. First, in January 1991, the original Gulf War began with the air bombing of Iraq. Within a short time Kuwait would be liberated but the problem of Saddam Hussein and Iraq would not disappear and would continue to poison international relations throughout the following years. Two months later, in March, then President George H.W. Bush told Congress:

Until now, the world we've known has been a world divided—a world of barbed wire and concrete block, conflict and cold war.

Now, we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is the very real prospect of a new world order. In the words of Winston Churchill, a “world order” in which “the principles of justice and fair play ... protect the weak against the strong ...” A world where the United Nations, freed from cold war stalemate, is poised to fulfil the historic vision of its founders. A world in which freedom and respect for human rights find a home among all nations.²

He went on to state that: “the Gulf war put this new world to its first test, and, my fellow Americans, we passed that test.” He argued that Americans had been true to their principles by fighting for Kuwait and insisted that “the hard work of freedom still calls us forward”. He seemed to be announcing a far more interventionist policy in the future and even used the term “mission” so that the speech was broadly messianic. Certainly the term “new world order” did not go unnoticed and was frequently repeated. But what exactly, many commentators wondered, was this “new world order”?

When George Bush gave his speech, the Berlin wall had already fallen and the end of communism was obviously near. In December 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed and the Cold War came to its official end. The United States was now the world's only superpower, although a superpower afflicted with weaknesses, especially, at this time, economic ones. The "new world order" seemed to mean an American hegemony. But where did other nations fit in? In particular, what was the role for a middle-level power and long-time ally like the U.K.? 1992, then, is an extremely significant date as the first full post-cold war year as well as seeing the start of a new phase in the continuing conflict with Iraq. 1992, exceptionally, also saw elections in both the United States and the United Kingdom. Although the results differed—the Conservatives hung onto power in Britain while the Democrats, under Bill Clinton, returned in the United States, the date does provide a convenient launch point to consider certain major foreign policy developments of the 1990s and the 2000s.

2008 also provides a logical concluding point. Tony Blair had resigned the previous year leaving a weakened Labour Party behind him. The new Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, made a number of mistakes and became progressively more and more unpopular in his first year in office. Even more important, 2008 saw the election of Democrat Barack Obama to the White House which promised great change. By 2008 there was the feeling of the end of an era in both nations. Furthermore, by this point the "new world order" did not seem so new or so strongly American. The period saw the terrorist attacks against the U.S. of 11 September 2001, military problems for the superpower in Afghanistan and Iraq and, by the summer of 2008, near economic collapse. In all of these developments, Britain shared to a lesser or a greater extent.

During these years, the United States and the United Kingdom shared a great deal and diverged in a number of significant ways. Too often the policy of a nation—whether domestic or foreign—is considered in isolation from that of other countries. While there have been a number of studies of the foreign policy of each country, there has been no major attempts at comparative analysis. A number of books do exist on Anglo-American relations but our goal does not limit itself to the question of dealings between the two nations but considers a wide-range of issues in order to present an overall comparison of major foreign policy debates in each country. Clearly, they differ in terms of relative power on the world scene and in their geographic positions—both of which have had a profound impact on their foreign policy. At the same time, both obviously have had a lot in common: economic *rapprochement* with their closest neighbours, a global war on terrorism, and interventions in ex-Yugoslavia, Afghanistan

and Iraq, for example. It is hoped that this book will shed an important light both on each nation and on the so-called “special relationship” between the two. In particular, it will try to analyse the extent of American exceptionalism. Does being “the world’s only superpower” make American foreign policy completely unique? Or can we see similar developments in a middle-range power like the United Kingdom?

This book is also not specifically concerned with policy or how policy is made but with the debate around policy and the rhetoric used to present different points of view. We aim to show the discussion of these questions on different levels: among policymakers, legislatures, theorists, the press and the public. We will examine this theme from the point of view of rhetoric and content, considering, for example, the choice of language and its relationship to the subject of a speech and to the history of speech-making in the English-speaking world.

Discourse

The word “discourse” has become a highly contentious term. Merriam Webster gives its main meanings as “a verbal interchange of ideas, especially conversation... a formal and orderly and usually extended expression of thought as a subject; connected speech or writing, a linguistic unit (as a conversation or a story) larger than a sentence... a mode of organizing knowledge, ideas or experience that is rooted in language and its concrete contents (as history or institutions).³ Related to this last definition, the word has taken on a whole number of subsidiary meanings in recent years and discourse analysis has become a major field of study in a number of disciplines. The list of people who have made important contributions to its study is long but, unfortunately, we do not have the space here to give more than just a brief overview of the subject.

In particular, discourse has been used to criticise empiricism. Empiricists believe that the human mind learns from experience and organizes its impressions into knowledge of the world. This knowledge, then, is expressed through language. The French philosopher, Michel Foucault, however, argued that if we are the sum of our experiences and if those experiences are the source of our knowledge, then those who control our early experiences have a great deal of power over how we think.⁴ Knowledge becomes something relative which can change over time. Furthermore, knowledge is based on discourses that existed before a person’s own experiences. The discourse we hear shapes our identity. According to Foucault:

Education may well be, as of right, the instrument whereby every individual, in a society like our own, can gain access to any kind of discourse. But we well know that in its distribution, in what it permits and in what it prevents, it follows the well-trodden battle-lines of social conflict. Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it.⁵

Those who control discourse, then, possess immense power. Foucault argued that every institution has a dominant discourse that identifies what is normal and excludes those who do not fit in. As he put it:

In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality.⁶

There are a series of unspoken rules in each area that defines what discourse is acceptable and those who break them are condemned to madness and silence. But these rules are not static. Foucault sees truth, morality and even meaning itself as changing. They are not universal ideas but created through discourse. Change, therefore, is linked to possessing the means of communication, and, therefore, being able to alter the dominant discourse.

Social and political power, thus, are gained through discourse. The French Marxist, Louis Althusser stressed the importance of ideology and its link with discourse.⁷ For Althusser, the political analysis of Rousseau and Marx lays out a structuralism whose key foundation is that of socially determined speech. Other scholars have studied the history of “resistances” to the dominant discourse. For, while one discourse is normally dominant, there are competing discourses. Different groups have their own discourse that expresses their thoughts, beliefs and history. Since politics is about power, political discourse has come under particular scrutiny. Much has been written about the relationship between language, ideology and power. The most obvious propagators of discourse in this arena are the political parties. They fight wars of words to express their own ideology and myths. They compete for control of the media and try to manipulate it as much as possible.

Indeed, some scholars have seen media as being far more important than content. Marshall McLuhan, notably, wrote that “the media is the message”.⁸ He saw media as extensions of our human senses, as well as massaging our senses. McLuhan also examined how people have seen the world at various times and how these views have been changed by media.

A number of other scholars have scrutinized the relationship between media and politics and how politicians use various media to gain votes.

Not surprisingly, the subject has attracted a great deal of attention in linguistics, and discourse analysis has become a major field there. The American, Noam Chomsky, is probably the most famous figure to have explored this area and he has produced thousands of articles speeches and books. He has argued that the mass media, far from presenting an unbiased vision of the news, tends to focus only on the point of view of the rich and powerful. In his book *Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies*, he presents the mass media as little more than vehicles for propaganda. For him, media and politics are inseparable. A number of other scholars have followed in his direction. Recently, the British academic Norman Fairclough has worked to link linguistic analysis with social research. In the introduction to his book, *Analysing Discourse*, he explains his goal:

This book aims to provide a useable framework for analysing spoken or written language for people in social sciences and humanities with little or no background in language study, presented in a way which suggests how language analysis may enhance research into a number of issues which concern social scientists.⁹

For this reason, he has devoted a great deal of effort to political discourse, notably in relation to New Labour.

This book, while taking into account these and other ideas, does not try to place itself within any specific theory. There are certainly many important reasons to look at discourse. For one thing, discourse and policy do not always agree and politicians frequently say things and not act upon them or do not act in the way expected. Politicians certainly adopt rhetoric to voters' expectations since one of their primary goals is to win elections. A classic case is that of the veteran cold warrior Richard Nixon who, to the surprise of many, initiated the policy of *détente*. So all discourse is subject to *realpolitik*. It is also well known that all discourse on foreign policy is also heavily subject to domestic policy, which clearly preoccupies voters. This can be seen most clearly in relation to trade and economic matters. During our period, NAFTA is a classic case as many workers feared that it would hurt their jobs and wages. Britain's failure to adopt the euro is another case. Lack of support for the euro in public opinion and in the press led both the Labour party and, eventually, the Liberal Democrats, to distance themselves from previously favourable statements. International economic issues, then, depend to a certain extent on political considerations within the country.

But discourse also takes place within a specific political context and political culture. Furthermore, international relations frequently raise questions relating to a nation's own identity. Studying discourse then can help us understand how a people view themselves and their history. And, of course, current foreign policy discourse does not stand in isolation but is part of a long rhetorical tradition. Placing recent speeches within the framework of past pronouncements shows changes (or not) in the nation and its image of itself.

Anglo-American Values

The United States was founded by English colonisers who brought their language and their culture with them. Although the two nations diverged afterwards, they still possessed, and possess, a great deal in common—and that includes discourse and rhetoric. This came to the fore in World War II when the “special relationship” was born, but it had many precursors. In the twentieth century, one of the most influential was Woodrow Wilson. Wilson came to see World War I in terms we associate more commonly with World War II. He told the Senate:

This is a people's war and the people's thinking constitutes its atmosphere and morale, not the predilections of the drawing room or the political considerations of the caucus. If we be indeed democrats and wish to lead the world to democracy, we can ask other peoples to accept in proof of our sincerity and our ability to lead them whither they wish to be led nothing less persuasive and convincing than our actions. Our professions will not suffice. Verification must be forthcoming when verification is asked for.¹⁰

The immediate subject here is a constitutional amendment for women's suffrage, but, obviously, much more is implied. In calling this a “people's war” Wilson is rejecting traditional great power diplomacy: all parts of the population are concerned in the struggle and their desires must be taken into account. And Wilson is confident that he knows what the people of the world want—American democracy which will allow them to pursue happiness (another quintessentially American notion)—and that it is the duty of the United States to lead the world in that direction. To so this, they must become a model of democracy and for this, none of their citizens must be excluded from full rights. In a discourse of 1915, Wilson expressed his belief that the United States had a mission in the world, which he saw as one of “peace and good will among men”—the proclamation of the angels at Christ's birth.¹¹ America's mission is divinely inspired. Furthermore, America is uniquely able to do this

because it is a nation of immigrants. In the same allocution he said: "America has been made up of the nations of the world and is the friend of the nations of the world." A nation whose citizens come from all over the world, Wilson believes, is able to speak to the world with a power and understanding that more homogenous nations cannot equal. Wilson has had a profound effect on American rhetoric. He is one of the leading exponents of ideas of American exceptionalism, that the United States is fundamentally different from other nations.

World War II formally united American and British traditions of rhetoric and, from the Atlantic Charter onwards, the two nations presented their war aims in consciously similar terms. Both Roosevelt and Churchill emphasised the superiority of their values and stressed that the combat had a missionary dimension. In his famous speech of the 18th of June 1940, after France's demand for an armistice, Churchill said:

What General Weygand called the Battle of France is over. I expect that the battle of Britain is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilisation. Upon it depends our own British life, and the long continuity of our institutions and our Empire. The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands. But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Ages made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science. Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, "This was their finest hour."¹²

According to Churchill, the survival of Western values and civilisation (whose pinnacle he seems to have found in Great Britain) depends on that nation's continued resistance to Germany—whatever its citizens may suffer. The Battle of Britain is a cosmic battle in which Good and Evil fight for control of the world and only Britain's self-sacrifice—her remaining true to the nation's values—can secure victory for the side of Right. Not only will Britain herself be saved by this action but she will ultimately bring a higher level of civilisation to the world and allow it to progress.

Churchill has frequently been called a "Whig" historian. This term comes from Herbert Butterfield, who in his 1931 book, *The Whig Interpretation of History*, used it to describe a view of British history as one of progress towards constitutional monarchy and the rule of law.

Political leaders of the past were generally portrayed either as heroes who had advanced these causes or villains who had tried to stop their inevitable victory. In particular, “Whig” historians presented the British system of government as the zenith of human political achievement.

In his eighth State of the Union address on the “four freedoms” given nearly a year before the United States entered the war—Roosevelt committed the American people to aiding the opponents of Nazi Germany in all ways short of war. Although he began by speaking of the needs of his fellow citizens, by the end of the speech he had, like Churchill, adopted a messianic tone, extending his project to the entire world:

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a worldwide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbour—anywhere in the world.¹³

Obviously this speech is not nationalistic in the sense that Churchill’s is. Roosevelt wants to establish the “four freedoms” in the world but he does not portray them as particularly American and Roosevelt rarely uses the language of American exceptionalism. Still, they are American war aims (although the U.S. is not yet at war) and putting them into effect depends on Allied success.

Since the first and probably the quintessential speech of the Cold War was given by Churchill—that of the “iron curtain”, it is not surprising to see a continuation of the themes of World War II in the new conflict. The Cold War was generally portrayed, in official circles at least, as a battle between Good and Evil. In his speech of 1947, outlining what became known as the Truman Doctrine, Harry Truman contrasted the Western democracies and communism:

At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one. One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from

political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms.¹⁴

John Kennedy, in his inaugural address in 1961, insisted that “here on earth God’s work must truly be our own” which he defined as “defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger”.¹⁵ Reagan used some of the most morally charged language, famously saying:

I urge you to beware the temptation of pride - the temptation of blithely declaring yourselves above it all and label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.¹⁶

Reagan here describes the Cold War in stark Manichean terms—some of the starkest of the entire conflict, especially since the 1950s.

While the subject figured less prominently in British discourse, one can still see important similarities. In a speech to the House of Commons on the formation of NATO, Ernest Bevin, Labour Foreign Minister, insisted that “no nation innocent of aggressive intentions need have the slightest fear or apprehension about it”—thus not too subtly implying that the USSR had exactly these intentions. He also spoke of Western civilisation as “founded on principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law between nations.”¹⁷ Later Harold Macmillan spoke of the Cold War as “a struggle for the minds of men” with Western civilisation representing “freedom and order and justice”.¹⁸ Margaret Thatcher used harsh terms to talk of the conflict. She mocked the Soviets for having to buy wheat from the United States and refused criticisms of Western life:

Is it not time we spoke up for our way of life? After all, no western nation has to build a wall round itself to keep its people in.¹⁹

The end of the Cold War gave rise to a certain triumphalism, especially in the United States, where many argued that Western values had finally defeated all opposition. The end of history in the Hegelian sense was actually announced in 1989 in an article by Francis Fukuyama and then in a book he wrote in 1992. He argued that:

What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind’s ideological evolution and the

universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.²⁰

Of course, the events of 11 September 2001 shattered this complacency. Some people now saw a new ideological conflict and as America and the United Kingdom had fought fascism and communism earlier—each time seeing their values triumph and spread to new parts of the world—now they had to defeat the threat of radical Islam.

These ideas were much stronger in the United States than in Britain and are particularly associated with a group known as neo-conservatives. The term neoconservative originally referred to a group of politicians and political thinkers who tended towards the Left on domestic issues but were strongly anti-communist. Over time it has come to refer to those who hold an aggressively moralist foreign policy and who favour unilateral action by the United States. They sympathize with Woodrow Wilson's idealistic desire to spread American values in the world—especially those related to democracy—but do not accept Wilson's espousal of international organizations. Many of them have long argued that the United States should imitate Israel and use pre-emptive strikes against potential enemies. A number of commentators, most notably a former director of the CIA, have even talked of World War IV (World War III having been the Cold War) being fought since the 9/11 attacks.²¹ There is no equivalent movement in Britain but there are rhetorical similarities between the neo-conservatives and many of Tony Blair's statements, as we shall see in chapter 11.

Having said all this, a sense of national destiny is by no means peculiar to the English-speaking world, or even the West, and, indeed, has taken far more ominous paths as the case of Nazi Germany shows. Nor does it have to be associated with one particular country for communism is a messianic philosophy. It may be that all peoples like to think they are special in some way and have an exceptional role to play in the world.

The “Special Relationship”

At the centre of this book is Anglo-American relations and the changes they underwent during the period. A number of books have been written on this subject and so we will only give a brief overview here.²² It was, apparently, Churchill who coined the term, most famously in his “iron curtain” speech of 1946, which was given in Missouri with President Truman in attendance. Essentially, Churchill states here that a “special relationship” existed during World War II but he is afraid that it might not

continue afterwards. Much of the speech is an attempt to alert the Americans to the seriousness of the international situation. He actually sees it as a special relationship between all English-speaking countries:

Neither the sure prevention of war; nor the continuous rise of world organisation will be gained without what I have called the fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples. This means a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States... Fraternal association requires not only the growing friendship and mutual understanding between our two vast but kindred systems of society, but the continuance of the intimate relationship between our military advisers.²³

As the speech goes on, he specifies how he wants the military link to continue. He wants the two nations to use similar weapons and instruction books, to arrange exchanges of officers and cadets and to continue joint use of air force and naval bases. He even suggests the establishment of common citizenship. Perhaps most importantly, he calls for the “common study of potential dangers”, obviously hoping to increase British influence over American policy. Clearly, Churchill fears Soviet aggression in Europe and wants America to continue its presence there as a counterbalance.²⁴

Of course, Churchill did not limit British foreign policy to Anglo-American relations. He saw British influence as being exercised in three circles: the Atlantic partnership, the Commonwealth and Empire, and Europe.²⁵ In the period since 1945, the importance of the Commonwealth declined considerably while that of Europe grew substantially. The relationship with the United States, however, in spite of ups and downs, tended to remain steady. Meanwhile, throughout this period, the United States normally was the leading economic and military power of the world. The disproportion in power has led many to see Britain as having exaggerated the importance of their influence and of the “special relationship” and, indeed, as having been often subservient to the larger power. John Dumbrell insists that the “special relationship” has to be considered from the point of view of policy, culture and sentiment.²⁶ With regard to policy, it has been almost exclusively a British preoccupation. Dumbrell also writes of the debate between those who take a purely *realpolitik* view of Anglo-American relations²⁷ and those who emphasize shared culture, values and traditions. Part of the purpose of this book is to analyse the similarities and differences between British and American discourse since the end of the Cold War and this obviously deals with the question of shared culture and values.

Anglo-American Relations since the End of the Cold War

The first Gulf War demonstrated that, although the Cold War was ending, Anglo-American relations remained close. Certainly Margaret Thatcher portrayed them as such. After lamenting, in her memoirs, the close relationship between Germany and George Bush's America, Thatcher insisted that the Gulf War had made the Bush administration understand who their true friends were:

Anglo-American relations suddenly lost their chill; indeed by the end [of 1990] they had hardly been warmer. The protectionism of that "integrated" Europe, dominated by Germany, which the Americans had cheerfully accepted, even encouraged, suddenly started to arouse American fears and threaten to cost American jobs. But this change of heart was confirmed by the aggression of Saddam Hussein against Kuwait which shattered any illusion that tyranny had been everywhere defeated. The UN might pass its resolutions; but there would soon be a full-scale war to fight. Suddenly a Britain with armed forces which had the skills, and a government which had the resolve, to fight alongside America, seemed to be the real European "partner in leadership".²⁸

From the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 to her resignation in November of that year, Thatcher repeatedly pressed on the Americans her enthusiasm for a military solution to the conflict. However, an examination of American sources tends to show that Thatcher exaggerated her own role in stiffening Washington's resolve and the importance of the British contribution in U.S. eyes. Bush's Secretary of State, James Baker, for example, roughly equated the British and French contribution in his memoirs.²⁹ The diplomatic correspondent, John Dickie argued that the Gulf War was the last blossom of the special relationship.³⁰ Indeed, it became rather fashionable in the 1990s to talk of its end.

The period of the Clinton presidency, at least at first, seemed to support this. Although Clinton had been a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, as had other members of his administration, his personal relationship with John Major, the then British premier, got off to a rocky start. This was primarily Major's fault as he had cooperated with the Bush re-election campaign in 1992. But Major also found irritating Clinton's interventions in Northern Ireland.³¹ Furthermore, Clinton had very early on stated his desire to concentrate on domestic and trade policy, with the famous slogan "it's the economy, stupid."³² He also made Russia the centrepiece of his foreign policy.³³

The arrival of Blair at 10 Downing Street saw a renewed warmth in Anglo-American relations. Blair and New Labour openly admired Clinton

and the new Democrats; indeed, they had modelled many of their programmes and strategies on the Americans. Added to this Blair, unlike Major, welcomed Clinton's involvement in the Northern Ireland peace process. And finally, Blair and Clinton genuinely liked each other and enjoyed being in each other's company—a fact which is shown by their continued friendship even after both have left office.

They did, however, have some differences, in particular over Kosovo. In 1999 Blair addressed the Chicago Economic Club. At this time the air campaign in Kosovo was going on and was less successful than NATO leaders had hoped. Blair worried about what would happen if Milosevic could not be stopped solely by air power and wished to have American agreement to prepare for a land war. Clinton, however, refused to give Blair any such assurances. The Prime Minister arrived in Washington just before a major NATO summit on 21 April and met with Clinton the same day. The next day he gave this speech which had obviously been designed well in advance to put pressure on the American President.

Among the many subjects he discussed was the international situation and, in particular, the war then taking place in Kosovo. In this discussion, Blair asserted that:

This is a just war, based not on any territorial ambitions but on values. We cannot let the evil of ethnic cleansing stand. We must not rest until it is reversed. We have learned twice before in this century that appeasement does not work. If we let an evil dictator range unchallenged, we will have to spill infinitely more blood and treasure to stop him later.³⁴

Blair emphasizes here the moral dimension of the question and his text is full of emotionally charged words. In particular, “evil” appears twice in this short extract alone. Opposed to the “evil” of Milosevic stands the morality of the nations who fight against him: their cause is righteous. They seek nothing for themselves and their actions reflect their “values” Having established this Manichean division, Blair goes on to allude to the failure of earlier attempts at “appeasement”—another highly charged word that automatically brings to mind the 1930s and Neville Chamberlain's attempts to placate Hitler in order to avoid war. This analogy is increased by the use of the term “evil dictator”. Although never specifically stated, Blair has summoned up the earlier conflict between Chamberlain and Churchill over how to deal with Hitler—and thus, the tragedy of the Second World War—to support his own position.

The crux of the speech came towards the end where Blair argued that:

No longer is our existence as states under threat. Now our actions are guided by a more subtle blend of mutual self-interest and moral purpose in defending the values we cherish. In the end values and interest merge. If we can establish and spread the values of liberty, the rule of law, human rights and an open society then that is in our national interests too. The spread of our values makes us safer. As John Kennedy put it: "Freedom is indivisible and when one man is enslaved who is free?"

The word "values" appears four times in this short extract. Blair believes—and this clearly reflects Blair's conviction and not just that of his speechwriter—that foreign policy must be based on morality. More than this, the use of the word "spread", which appears two times, shows that Blair feels that these values, British and American political ideals, must be disseminated throughout the world. There is thus a messianic element to Blair's philosophy. Note also his argument that "self-interest" and "moral purpose" coincide in this case, for this reasoning will recur in the Iraq conflict. It is interesting to observe that along with Milosevic, Blair singles out Saddam Hussein in this speech, describing both dictators as "dangerous and ruthless men". Given the similarities between what Blair said over Kosovo and much neo-conservative rhetoric, it is not very surprising that the Labour Prime Minister got along almost as well with the Republican George W. Bush. But this will be discussed in more detail in the last two chapters.

Political Parties and the Left/Right Axis

The Cold War saw an important division between Left and Right but one which should not be exaggerated. In the United States, both Democrats and Republicans were hostile to the Soviet Union and a general consensus existed on stopping the spread of communism. Although some of the strongest anti-communist rhetoric was associated with the Republican party, ideology rarely won out over *realpolitik*. Nixon, that ardent cold warrior, went to China and Reagan, who talked of an "evil empire", met with Gorbachev. In Britain, the post-war Labour government pushed for the establishment of NATO and the Marshall Plan. There did, however, exist a group of extreme leftwing sympathisers within the Labour party and, in particular in the 1980s, a polarised discourse did exist.

In the post-Cold War world we can notice a frequently polarised discourse in the American political scene. From 1994, foreign policy issues were repeatedly used by a Republican dominated Congress to attack a Democratic president. The origins of this lay within the United States

and are outside the scope of this book for they can only be examined in detail in relation to domestic policy discourse. Interestingly enough, this renewed polarisation often reflected debates of the Cold War. The fight against globalisation and NAFTA, with all its anti-capitalist overtones, became a preoccupation of many leftwing groups and influenced Democratic party policy. Criticisms of Russia and China were used by the Right to attack the Clinton government.

In general, British politics do not show the same degree of polarisation. Little difference existed on issues like the euro, relations with former Cold War enemies or even military interventionism. Of course, participation in the War in Iraq was highly controversial but the fact that a Labour government spearheaded it, seemed to divide opponents—at least at first. On the whole, Labour appears to have succeeded in taking the centre ground and building a consensus while the Conservatives still seem to be seeking to rebuild their party.

The Organisation of the Book

This book is divided into three sections and the first concerns relations with international groupings. We begin with Martine Azuelos' chapter on NAFTA where she shows us the importance of trade issues since the end of the Cold War. These questions have gained both in prominence and controversy and, have consequently, become more and more partisan. Professor Azuelos shows how NAFTA had been negotiated by the first President Bush's administration, as part of the "new world order". Bush hoped it would help the U.S. develop a closer relationship with its southern neighbours and believed its impact, on the U.S. at least, would be more political than economic. The treaty had been signed but not ratified by the end of Bush's term and so its future was left to the new Democratic government. Given the importance of trade issues to the Clinton administration, it is not surprising to see that they worked for its approval. However, the debate about NAFTA only grew after its ratification and became embroiled in the escalating partisanship of the American political scene. Clinton had underestimated the hostility to it among certain important groups within the Democratic party. Workers and unions feared that freer trade with underdeveloped countries would hurt their jobs and wages. Clinton's alliance with Republicans to pass NAFTA undermined its support in the Democratic camp. As a result, in the 2008 primaries, very few Democratic candidates had anything good to say about it. This article shows clearly how foreign policy questions, especially those involving trade (and thus jobs) can be strongly affected by domestic

considerations. Furthermore, it involves debates, not only about economics but also about immigration and, ultimately, national identity.

The next two chapters consider Britain's relationship with the European Union. The first, by Pauline Schnapper, examines the discourse among the leaders at a time that saw the vote on the Maastricht Treaty, the "mad cow" crisis, a massive expansion in EU membership and the debate on the European constitution, among other things. Europe obviously raises questions about national identity since it is by nature supranational. Added to this, the British have, historically, seen themselves as fundamentally different from their European neighbours. Prof. Schnapper shows that no political leaders have been able to articulate a positive vision of Europe in relation to British identity and that the question has, therefore, attracted little popular support or interest. While, in the period since 1992, Labour has been consistently less hostile to Europe than the Conservatives, neither has shown much enthusiasm for it and both have resorted to the use of military and defensive vocabulary. Even the Liberal Democrats have dampened their own interest for it, primarily because of a lack of popular support.

The third chapter, by Carine Berberi, analyses specifically the debate over British membership in the European single currency. Neither major party came out in favour of joining the economic union, although they have flirted with it, but they base their opposition on different grounds. Labour's main objections have been economic; the Conservatives' political and constitutional. Labour has certainly had a more positive attitude but lack of support in public opinion and in the press has hampered it. Indeed, Labour has become less pro-European more because of public opinion and divisions within its own party than over somewhat debateable economic reservations. In the end, while the discourse in the parties has been somewhat dissimilar, their policy has not been very different.

Finally, Fatma Ramdani looks at American discourse at the United Nations. She examines the exportation of the political divide in the United States over questions related to gender—notably abortion and family policy, feminism and women's rights. Of course, this has occurred because controversy over these questions exists in other nations. In the 1970s, development was a major issue at the U.N. and the American Republican administrations insisted that women were key players. In international conferences of the time, the U.S. linked control of population growth to development—a position fiercely attacked by many developing nations. In the 1990s, the U.S. was still exercising a leadership role and working for women's rights but this time under a Democratic administration. Their

active work at the U.N., however, stimulated those within the U.S. who had more traditional views on gender related issues to organize themselves on an international level and seek allies among developing nations. Some of them decided to use the U.N. as a forum to counterattack a secular feminist agenda—and this in spite of much hostility to the U.N. and international institutions among many in their ranks.

The second section of the book concerns relations with former Cold War players. We begin by looking at the discourse within the U.K. relating to Hong Kong. This undoubtedly belongs to the long history of British imperial discourse and, as such, is linked to concepts of national identity. Certainly, two often repeated words in the debate were “mission” and “legacy”—both harking back to nineteenth century imperial rhetoric. In the second half of the twentieth century, before becoming independent, colonies were supposed to receive training in British values, notably with regard to democracy and human rights. Hong Kong, the U.K.’s last major colony, did not become independent but was returned to China—a significant difference, especially since China’s record on human rights was notoriously poor. The population of Hong Kong was afraid of their future, especially after Tiananmen. Much of British discourse, then focussed on how to ensure, as much as possible, the survival of British values there and on trying to reassure the population. To leave with honour, in other words. Little difference existed between the parties either on this need or on the way to do this, although the last governor’s attempts to put this policy into effect hurt relations with Beijing. But most politicians seem to have felt this was an acceptable price to pay, although, once Hong Kong was returned, Blair’s government immediately moved to improve relations.

In the next article Juliette Bourdin examines U.S./China relations which show, as with the British, a conflict between *realpolitik* and moral values. In Washington, the subject became increasingly linked to the growing partisanship of American politics. Under Clinton, China became an issue in the tug-of-war between a Republican Congress and a Democratic president as the Republicans attacked Clinton’s policy. Here we see clearly how trade can be linked to the spread of American values and, indeed, how capitalism can be considered to be one of the most important of these values. *Realpolitik* and support for the spread of capitalism dictated closer economic relations with China and many argued that the best way to westernise China was to engage it in Western institutions. Others wanted to limit relations with China because of its poor human rights record. Finally, we can see the continued existence of Cold War rhetoric in this debate.

We can see a similar situation in the following chapter which deals with British and American discourse on Russia. In his first term, Clinton made assistance for Russia a major element of his administration's foreign policy. He argued that it would help bring Russia into the Western camp and remove it as a security threat. There was much bipartisan support for this policy, even in Congress. But like China, after the 1994 election, Russian policy became yet another part of the partisan debate between the Republican-dominated Congress and the Democratic President. In Britain there was more consensus between the parties but this did not prevent relations from worsening. Transforming Russia into a democracy proved more difficult than hoped and Yeltsin did not live up to expectations. Putin, although showing promise after the 11 September 2001 attacks, became more hostile and threatening to both the U.S. and Britain (especially the latter)—especially after the invasion of Iraq. In both Western nations we can see a return to the rhetoric of the Cold War (some might argue it had never really disappeared). Certainly, much of the rhetoric relating to Russia, whether in Britain or the U.S., presents it as a nation that must be taught how to behave properly and can seem patronising—especially to the Russians.

The last chapter in this section, by Ann Lane, concerns British discourse on ex-Yugoslavia, notably with regard to Western interventions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. Since each situation was multifaceted and morally unclear, British political debate about a response was equally complex. The intense coverage events there generated in the international media and its closeness to the Cold War further complicated the matter. Deliberations over British involvement in ex-Yugoslavia showed that the Left/Right axis of foreign policy debate during the Cold War had shattered and split in an indefinable way that did not always follow party lines. Paradoxically, British confidence in its military ability was weaker under the Conservative government of John Major than under the Labour government of Tony Blair. Blair's conviction politics could build a consensus for intervention (not only in ex-Yugoslavia). In fact, Dr. Lane suggests at the end that Blair may have helped forge a new consensus over intervention that would develop more strongly after the 11 September attacks.

The third section considers the Middle East, terrorism and the Iraq War which became the most urgent question of foreign policy for both nations. We begin with Lars Berger's chapter considering different approaches to America's Middle East policy. As he points out, the U.S. has generally managed to reconcile two seemingly irreconcilable aims—to have its cake and eat it too—by maintaining close relations with both Israel and the oil-

producing Arab countries. Certainly, many countries in the Middle East found the neo-conservative discourse patronising: the U.S., Israel and Europe will teach the Arab world how to behave. This undoubtedly increased the difficulties the Bush administration had in those areas. The repeated problems encountered in Iraq and Afghanistan discredited to some extent the neo-conservative discourse and, towards the end of his second term, Bush's policy moved closer to *realpolitik*.

In the next chapter, Jon Roper examines the rhetoric of Blair and Bush in more detail and looks at their relationship to rhetorical traditions in both Britain and the United States. He shows how Blair, although from the Labour Party, resembles, in many ways, the great nineteenth century Liberal statesman, William Gladstone. Much has already been written about the Wilsonian (as in Woodrow Wilson) origins of neo-conservative thought in America. Prof. Roper shows the links between the two men's ideas. Blair is by no means Bush's poodle but believes sincerely in his moral vision and shares a similar outlook to the American President. Both believe in the superiority of their nations' values and the need to spread them throughout the world. However, Blair places more emphasis on ideas of international community while Bush stresses American internationalism.

Finally, our last chapter, by James Bergeron, focuses on the importance of choosing an all-encompassing name for the post-9/11 conflicts. The Bush administration certainly would not agree with Shakespeare's assessment that "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet". Several terms were tried before the War on Terror became the generally accepted appellation. Dr. Bergeron also compares Blair's and Bush's rhetoric after the 11 September attacks. In spite of remarkable similarities there were important differences. Bush emphasized that they were an attack on the United States and used vocabulary related to war. Blair, on the other hand, talked of an attack on democracy and placed greater emphasis on policy more than war.

It would be impossible in a book of this size to give a comprehensive view of British and American foreign policy discourse and we have not tried to do so. Major areas are missing: Africa hardly appears; Asia, outside China, is neglected as is much of Latin America. Our goal was not to give a comprehensive view but to examine those areas that figured most strongly in foreign policy debate within the two nations during the period.

Notes

¹ I would like to thank Susan Ball, Lilli Parrott, Allan Potofsky and Henri Zuber for their help.

² George H.W. Bush, "Address before a Joint Session of Congress on the Cessation of the Persian Gulf Conflict", March 6, 1991, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: George Bush, 1991, vol. 1* (Washington, D.C.: 1993) 220-221.

³ Merriam Webster Dictionary Online, www.Merriam-webster.com/dictionary/discourse (accessed October 16, 2008).

⁴ See *The Essential Works of Michel Foucault, 1954-1984, vol. 3, Power*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 2002)

⁵ Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language" in *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972) 227

⁶ *Ibid.*, 216

⁷ See, for example, Louis Althusser, *Essays on Ideology* (London: Verso, 1984)

⁸ See, for example, Marshall McLuhan, *The Media is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967)

⁹ Norman Fairclough, *Discourse Analysis : Textual Analysis for Social Research* (London : Routledge, 2003) 1.

¹⁰ Woodrow Wilson, "Address to the Senate" September 30, 1918, in *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Vol. 51*, ed. Arthur Link (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) 158.

¹¹ Woodrow Wilson, November 4, 1915, in *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Vol. 35*, ed. Arthur Link (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981) 353.

¹² Winston Churchill, *Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat: Winston Churchill's Famous Speeches*, ed. David Cannadine (London: Cassell, 1989) 177-8

¹³ *Ibid.*, 200-1

¹⁴ Harry Truman, "Speech to Congress", March 12, 1947, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Harry Truman: 1947* (Washington: USGPO, 1966) 178-9.

¹⁵ John Kennedy, "Inaugural Address", January 21, 1961, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: John Kennedy, 1961* (Washington: D.C., USGPO) 3

¹⁶ Ronald Reagan, "Remarks at the Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals, Orlando, Florida", March 8, 1983, in *Speaking My Mind: Selected Speeches* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989) 179.

¹⁷ Ernest Bevin, *House of Commons Debates*, 18/3/1949, 5th Series, vol. 462, cols. 2533-6

¹⁸ Harold Macmillan, speech in Cape Town, 3 February 1960 in *Pointing the Way* (London: Macmillan, 1972) 476

¹⁹ Margaret Thatcher, Speech at the Conservative Party Conference at Brighton, October 10, 1975 in *Let Our Children Grow Tall: Selected Speeches, 1975-77* (London: Centre for Policy Studies, 1977) 31.

²⁰ Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?", *The National Interest* (1989)

²¹ See James Woolsey, “World War IV”, lecture at the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, 16 Nov. 2002; Eliot Cohen, “World War IV: Let’s Call This Conflict What It Is”, *The Wall Street Journal*, November 20, 2001

²² See, for example, John Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2nd edition, 2006); D.M. Andrews, ed. *The Atlantic Alliance under Stress: U.S.-European Relations after Iraq* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); John Baylis, *Anglo-American Relations since 1939: The Enduring Alliance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997); Alex Danchev, *On Specialness: Essays in Anglo-American Relations* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998); John Dickie, “Special No More”: *Anglo-American Relations: Rhetoric and Reality* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1994); Alan Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 1995); J. Hollowell, ed., *Twentieth Century Anglo-American Relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001); Beatrice Heuser, *Transatlantic Relations: Sharing Ideals and Costs* (London: Pinter/RIIA, 1996) and any others which there is not the space to list.

²³ Churchill, op.cit.

²⁴ While Churchill may have had a romantic idea of England, its dependence on and need for the U.S. was one of the major themes of his war speeches. Even his speech after Dunkirk terminates with, after the famous “We shall fight...” sequence, the recognition that, the only way Britain can be saved is through the assistance of the United States.

²⁵ Winston Churchill, Speech to the Conservative Party Conference, October 9, 1948, in *Never Give In! The Best of Winston Churchill’s Speeches*, edited by Winston Churchill (London: Pimlico, 2004) 448.

²⁶ Dumbrell, 6.

²⁷ Alex Danchev calls them the “functionalists” in “On Specialness”, *International Affairs*, 72:4 (1996): 737-51

²⁸ Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, (London: Harper Collins, 1993) 769

²⁹ James Baker, *The Politics of Diplomacy* (New York: Putnam, 1995) 381.

³⁰ See Dickie, *op. cit.*

³¹ For more on this see Dumbrell.

³² For more on this see I.M. Destler “Foreign Economic Policy Making under Bill Clinton” in James Scott, ed. *After the End: Making US Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World* (London: Duke University, 1998) and John Dumbrell, *American Foreign Policy: Carter to Clinton* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997)

³³ See chapter 8.

³⁴ Tony Blair, Speech to the Chicago Economic Club, April 22, 1999, at www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/jan-june99/blair_doctrine4-23.html

PART I:

**RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL
GROUPINGS**

CHAPTER TWO

NAFTA AND BEYOND: FREE TRADE IN U.S. POLICY DEBATES FROM 1992 TO 2007

MARTINE AZUELOS

While foreign trade had not been a major bone of contention in the United States between the 1930s and the late 1980s, the negotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico and Canada in the early 1990s marked the beginning of a new era. Indeed, NAFTA sparked off an acrimonious debate which has durably affected the perception of and discourse on foreign trade in the U.S. As public opinion became increasingly concerned with the impact of trade liberalisation on the everyday lives of U.S. citizens, the free trade issue gained greater visibility and moved to the foreground of the political agenda. Trade politics became more partisan, and the bipartisan consensus which had prevailed since the Roosevelt Administration evaporated, thus often leading to political deadlock.

In an attempt to account for these developments, this paper first draws attention to methodological issues: in particular, it posits that discourse matters in trade policy making. The second part studies the making of NAFTA: after analysing the institutional framework which determines the way trade policy is made in the U.S., it focuses on debates and discourse in the 1990-1993 period, i.e. during the negotiation and prior to ratification of the agreement. Finally it examines the legacy of NAFTA, i.e. the way in which the discourse on trade liberalisation, which grew out of the debate on NAFTA, has informed political debate and political action since that period.

1. Why discourse matters in trade policy making

The literature on trade policy making in the U.S. has traditionally emphasized the role of actors and institutions. Elected officials are seen as