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U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGIES 1979 – 2019

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Research Problem:

The study problem lays in the nature and type of the factors and circumstances that define US National Security Strategies (NSS) for the period stretching from 1979 -2019. US NSS for each of the US administrations is different in accordance with its vision of the US national security role. Therefore, in this research, we try to define what are the factors and circumstances that define the American National Security Strategy.

Hypothesis:

Different international and regional factors around the world and some internal factors in the United States have played an important role in shaping the US National Security Strategy.

Research Methodology:

In this paper, I will be applying a comparative approach on some of US Presidents looking at their perspective on NSS in regards of US foreign policy.

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Introduction:

National Security as a term was rarely used before World War II however; it was correlated with American foreign policy and grand strategy. There is no specific interpretation or a particular variable defines National Security rather a comprehensive outline that associates variables to one another that give different interpretations in specific time and sitting. The national security concept takes in consideration the volatility of events internally and abroad, nurtures efforts to identify goals, priorities, and trade-offs, and focuses on means, resources, and ends.¹

The congress passed the National Security Act 1947 that created the National Security Council (NSC) that was responsible for coordinating both foreign policy and defense policy, and to reconcile diplomatic and military commitments and requirements. However, NSS was not required to be articulated and submitted by the President until 1986. While containment and deterrence were the main strategies that dominated the American National Security during Cold War, several alternative strategies have been proposed and debated following the end of the Cold War. These grand strategies included primacy, collective security, selective engagement, homeland defense, cooperative security, and offshore balancing.

In this research paper, we try to define what are the factors and circumstances that define the American National Security Strategy for the period 1979-2019.

¹ Leffler, M.P., 2017. *Safeguarding Democratic Capitalism: US Foreign Policy and National Security, 1920-2015*. Princeton University Press. PP 318

I- National Security Strategy: Theoretical Framework

A-Definitions:

US National Security Strategies get a lot of attention from nations, media, and different organizations due to the role of the United States as the leader of the world. National Security is not an easily defined domain. Here are some examples of national security definitions. Harold Brown, a former Secretary of Defense under President Jimmy Carter, defines national security very simply as:

National security, then, is the ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory; to maintain its economic relations with the rest of the world on reasonable terms; to protect its nature, institutions, and governance disruption from outside, and to control its borders².

While Melvyn P. Leffler explains, the national security strategy is not a specific interpretation of a defined variable rather it is a complete structure of interconnected variables that gives a diverse analysis in specific times and contexts:

National Security Policy encompasses the decisions and actions deemed imperative to protect domestic core values from external threats. This definition is important because it underscores the relation of the international environment to the internal situation in the United States and accentuates the importance of people's ideas and perceptions in constructing the nature of external dangers as well as the meaning of national identity and vital interests.

The national security paradigm takes cognizance of the fluidity and contingency of events at home and abroad, encourages efforts to identify goals, priorities, and trade-offs, and focuses on means, resources, and ends³.

Whereas Robert Worley referred to the national security strategy as a grand strategy that he defines it in his book *Orchestrating The Instruments of Power* as:

Grand Strategy unites military and diplomatic strategy...It integrates all elements of national power in policies calculated to advance or defend national interests and concerns in light of anticipated trends and events⁴.

² Brown, H., 1983. Thinking about national security: defense and foreign policy in a dangerous world. As quoted in Watson, Cynthia Ann (2008). US national security: a reference handbook. *Contemporary world*, (2), p.5.

³ Leffler, M.P., 2017. *Safeguarding Democratic Capitalism: US Foreign Policy and National Security, 1920-2015*. Princeton University Press. PP 318

⁴ Worley, D.R., 2012. *Orchestrating the Instruments of Power*. Lulu. com.PP89

President George W. Bush Summary of National Security Strategy 2002:

The United States Government will work to advance human dignity in word and deed, speaking out for freedom and against violations of human rights and allocating appropriate resources to advance these ideals.

However, as he was reelected in 2006, President Bush restated his National Security Strategy as the following:

The United States has long championed freedom because doing so reflects our values and advances our interests. It reflects our values because we believe the desire for freedom lives in every human heart and the imperative of human dignity transcends all nations and cultures.

Championing freedom advances our interests because the survival of liberty at home increasingly depends on the success of liberty abroad. Governments that honor their citizens' dignity and desire for freedom tend to uphold responsible conduct toward other nations, while governments that brutalize their people also threaten the peace and stability of other nations. Because democracies are the most responsible members of the international system, promoting democracy is the most effective long-term measure for strengthening international stability; reducing regional conflicts; countering terrorism and terror-supporting extremism; and extending peace and prosperity.

To protect our Nation and honor our values, the United States seeks to extend freedom across the globe by leading an international effort to end tyranny and to promote effective democracy.

Finally, in December of 2017, the US published a new National Security Strategy where President Donald Trump defines NSS as:

My Administration's National Security Strategy lays out a strategic vision for protecting the American people and preserving our way of life, promoting our prosperity, preserving peace through strength, and advancing American influence in the world. We will pursue this beautiful vision—a world of strong, sovereign, and independent nations, each with its own cultures and dreams, thriving side-by-side in prosperity, freedom, and peace—throughout the upcoming year.

In pursuit of that future, we will look at the world with clear eyes and fresh thinking. We will promote a balance of power that favors the United States, our allies, and our partners. We will never lose sight of our values and their capacity to inspire, uplift, and renew.

Most of all, we will serve the American people and uphold their right to a government that prioritizes their security, their prosperity, and their interests. This National Security Strategy puts America First⁵.

B- Development of the field:

Until World War II, National Security was perceived as a military problem that needs a military solution. However, safeguarding national security, hence the international security nowadays demands the collaboration of all the resources and military and nonmilitary instruments available within the nation. The first time the term “National Security” was used in the U.S. was in 1943 during the World War II, then, on July 26, 1947, the congress passed the National Security Act that created the National Security Council (NSC) which is under the President leadership. NSC was responsible for coordinating both foreign policy and defense policy, and to reconcile diplomatic and military commitments and requirements. An “X” article in Foreign Affairs 1947 written by George Keenan that explained the justification for the containment strategy towards the Soviet Union was the basis of US foreign policy throughout the Cold War. Afterward, the Truman Doctrine was issued to translate President Truman’s believes that it was America’s duty as a democratic nation to help those who might fall under communism control, which would undermine US national security. Subsequently, Truman signed Document (NSC-68) which with the Truman Doctrine would shape United States foreign policy. During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, US national security policy was best contained in the Secretary of Defense’s “Annual Report to Congress. In 1986, The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act was issued and required the President to submit annually an articulation of national grand strategy. Since then, seventeen National Security Strategies were issued by the successive Presidents of the United States.

C- Post-Cold War Strategies:

After over forty years, the Cold War came to a halt, and the United States’ National Strategy of Containment and Nuclear Deterrence had at last conquered with no hot war engagement between the United States and the Soviet Union, which considered one of the utmost strategic triumphs in

⁵ Trump, D.J., 2017. *National security strategy of the United States of America*. Executive Office of The President Washington DC Washington United States.

the history⁶. During these years, almost every decision the National Security Council made had to be subject to the calculations of the reaction of the Soviets. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world had become unipolar and the United State was the superpower and was not dictated anymore by these calculations. While containment and deterrence of the Soviet Union were the main strategies that dominated the American National Security during these years, several alternative strategies have been proposed and debated following the end of the Cold War. These grand strategies included primacy, collective security, selective engagement, homeland defense, cooperative security, and offshore balancing.

Primacy: Supporters of a primacy strategy also known as a hegemonic primacy believe that the superiority of American power is the only guarantee of peace and an ascent of an equal competitor would impose the most threat to international order. Primacists are doubtful of the role of the international institutes and would prefer the military solution over other instruments that would prompt for a large U.S. overseas presence.

Homeland Defense: Advocates of this strategy believe that the very powerful economy, the nuclear arsenal, in addition to the special geography position with an ocean on each side, would give the United States security against most of the threats. Besides, they consider that the promotion of the U.S. values around the world and the American intervention in the foreign conflicts created the resentment and caused trouble to the United States. Thus, they promote the application of force is mainly to protect the homeland. The opponents of this strategy would call it isolationism.

Collective Security: This strategy rests on the assumption that peace is indivisible and a threat to one country is a threat to all. Thus, the best guarantee to the United States National Security is through international institutions. A multinational coalition is created in order to rout any state with sufficient power of posing aggression on other states. This strategy also prompts for a large U.S. overseas presence. In addition, on the international level, it compels other countries to retain force to support the international institution in addition to the force that is responsible for homeland defense. Primacy advocates do not accept that an international institute would dictate what United States interests are or where should American forces be.

⁶ Bacevich, A.J. ed., 2007. *The long war: A new history of US national security policy since World War II*. Columbia University Press.pp78

Selective Engagement: There are two goals of this strategy, to prevent wars among the major power and to prevent the propagation of Weapons of mass destruction. The first goal would include Russia, China, Japan, and European countries, whereas the second goal would include Iran, Iraq and North Korea. The advocates of this strategy believe that any major power conflict in Eurasia presents a risk to the United States interests. Middle East oil is the main source of the industrialized regions of Europe and Northeast Asia. Any interruption in access to the ME oil would cause a great-power competition. Thus, the United State is required to have the power to deter major power conflicts in the region of competition and to restore peace. Critics to selective engagement argue that engaging selectively means that when the U.S. vital interest are threatened America should interfere. This would negatively affect the United State's ability to lead the international community⁷.

Off Shore Balancing: according to John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt offshore balancing is the case when “Washington would forgo ambitious efforts to remake other societies and concentrate on what really matters: preserving U.S. dominance in the Western Hemisphere and countering potential hegemony in Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf. Instead of policing the world, the United States would encourage other countries to take the lead in checking rising powers, intervening itself only when necessary. This does not mean abandoning the United States' position as the world's sole superpower or retreating to “Fortress America.” Rather, by husbanding U.S. strength, offshore balancing would preserve U.S. primacy far into the future and safeguard liberty at home.⁸”

D- Debates around National Security Strategy:

Despite the importance of the concept of National Security, there has been no agreement between scholars about what is considered an element of National Security. Robert McNamara, the former Secretary of Defense at Kennedy administration, suggested, “Security implied the freedom of a state to develop and improve its position in the future. He remarked that Security is development and without development, there can be no security. Development means economic, social and

⁷ Bacevich, A.J. ed., 2007. *The long war: A new history of US national security policy since World War II*. Columbia University Press.pp179-189

⁸ Mearsheimer, J.J. and Walt, S.M., 2016. The case for offshore balancing. *Foreign Affairs*, 95(4), p.22.

political progress. It means a reasonable standard of living, and reasonable in this context requires continual redefinition.”⁹

Liberalism school of thought believes that people like to co-operate and progress and since states are made of groups of people, thus, states are able to achieve peace and security through co-operation. Furthermore, liberals stress that states are capable of reaching peace and democracy and are able to establish good states and international organizations with domestic and international legitimacy and that would lead the world into a more peaceful situation¹⁰.

On the other hand, realist school of thought rests on a pessimistic view of humankind that perceives human beings as driven by acquisition and competition hence, conflict cannot be avoided. States, in the same sense, are led by self- interest, and since the international system is anarchic, states must obtain enough power to prevent the attack and to assure their own survival. War is inevitable and peace can be achieved only when states acquire independent power or form alliances that balance against other State. Realism is based on the principles of territorial sovereignty and the corollary principle of noninterference. Realists believe that the balance of power is the tool on how to approach the security dilemma, this balance is obtained when no state has absolute mastery and dominate over other states. However, this balance can be wrecked by different reasons such as asymmetrical economic development or shifting alliances¹¹.

Constructivists meet with liberals in considering the actors on the world stage are not exclusive of states; rather include international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and Multinational Corporation. On the other hand, constructivists are in severe contrast with realists and liberals that are in the view of the actors on the world stage, constructivists view them as dynamic entities, and their interests and identities change in accordance with the situation and over time. In addition, actors are affected by their social rules, meanings, and ideas. The ideas and meanings that define the actors change over time as actors change over time because it is the very behavior and interactions of actors that create the ideational context of world politics¹².

⁹ McNamara, R., *The Essence of Security* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1968). pp149-150.

¹⁰ Soltani, F. and Yusoff, A.M., 2012. Concept of Security in the Theoretical Approaches. *Research Journal of International Studies*, 7.

¹¹ Bacevich, A.J. ed., 2007. *The long war: A new history of US national security policy since World War II*. Columbia University Press. pp 16-19

¹² Ackerman, J.T. and Han, M.Y.I., *Constructivism and Security*.p2

II- US NSS from Jimmy Carter to Donald Trump:

A- Presidents Carter and Regan between Superpower Détente and Star War

The year 1979 was the year that separated the two distinct foreign policy strategies that characterized the President Jimmy Carter administration. He entered the office with the faith that the Cold War was coming to an end and U.S. foreign policy is no more governed by the East-West power struggle and left the office with a second round of the Cold War¹³. Carter at the beginning called for the abandonment of containment, and he continued in the footsteps of President Richard Nixon in stressing on superpowers détente, promising to withdraw combat forces from Korea and emphasizing on arms control and defense cuts. In addition, he expressed an “absolute” commitment to human rights and moral values on global scale and in his NSC 30 in 1978, the president established three goals of human rights: decrease of government abuse of human being integrity, safeguarding civil and political freedom, and ensuring that essential economic and social rights are provided for all¹⁴. The year 1979 came with two major events, it started with the victory of the Iranian Revolution and concluded with the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.

The Iranian Revolution was induced by the prolonged past interventions of the U.S. in its internal affairs. According to Arnold Offner, “Iran had been a client state since a CIA coup in 1953 restored the Shah to power. Revolt against his repressive rule, however, by a rising middle class and the powerful Muslim fundamentalist forces of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who banded the U.S. the “Great Satan”, forced the Shah to flee in early 1979, with Khomeini’s followers taking control”.¹⁵[Offner 2007] Carter controversial decision to allow the shah to enter U.S. increased doubts of another U.S. backed a coup to reinstall the shah and provoked young Iranian students to seize U.S. embassy in Tehran and take over sixty-six American hostages for 444 days¹⁶. The military rescue mission of the hostages advised by the National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski was a total failure when the helicopter collided in the desert. The crisis was finalized

¹³ Worley, D.R., 2012. *Orchestrating the Instruments of Power*. Lulu. com.PP89

¹⁴ Worley, D.R., 2012. *Orchestrating the Instruments of Power*. Lulu. com.pp151-159

¹⁵ Bacevich, A.J. ed., 2007. *The long war: A new history of US national security policy since World War II*. Columbia University Press. P 25

¹⁶ Worley, D.R., 2012. *Orchestrating the Instruments of Power*. Lulu. com.pp151-159

after the Shah died in Egypt; Iran agreed to release the hostages in return of U.S. pledge to release \$8 billion of frozen Iranian assets and not to intervene in Iran¹⁷.

The second major event of 1979 was the invasion of the Soviet Union troops of Afghanistan in December in order to support the new inexperienced Marxist government from its opposition composed of Muslim mujahedeen and dissident Marxists. The opposition got support through Carter who signed a directive on July 3, 1979, that allowed aid to the opponents of the Afghani government. This aid aimed to drag USSR into an extended pricy war in Afghanistan and that was what happened¹⁸. In response to the Soviet invasion, Carter declared Moscow's action as a threat to U.S. position in the Middle East and it would institute for a rise of the potential of Soviet hegemony in the Persian Gulf that would endanger the free movement of oil in the area. Carter's Doctrine (a new containment policy) announced on January 1980, that the U.S. would oppose even with force any attempt by any nation "to gain control of the Persian Gulf region," followed with imposing an economic sanction on USSR, and starting up a military and intelligence operation build up. When Nixon and Carter adopted détente, they had the intention to defuse tension with the Soviets. However, Regan returned to the earlier confrontational position and his National Security Strategy was to "contain and reserve" Soviet advances¹⁹.

Thus, Regan at his first term of presidency built his National Security ideology on five postulations; first, the Soviet Union was an illegitimate society that respects no law. Second, the Soviets had an expansionist power and Regan referred to them as an "evil empire" in 1983; Third, that conciliation always ends up with war. Fourth, that "superiority" would protect the U.S. and not "Mutually Assured Destruction." Last, Regan believed that arms control had damaged national security. He even went further to call the Cold War as a "struggle between right and wrong, good and evil." Hence, he banned détente and proposed a defense budget totaled up to several trillion that would allow the U.S. to fight two and a half wars simultaneously. Further, he introduced the Strategic Defense Initiative SDI, which was known as "Star Wars."

Since President Eisenhower, the United States' foreign policy towards the Soviet Union was based on a containment strategy through which the U.S. tried to overturn the political influence of the USSR in a defensive manner. On the contrary, Regan Doctrine adopted an offensive means that

¹⁷ Bacevich, A.J. ed., 2007. *The long war: A new history of US national security policy since World War II*. Columbia University Press. P 26

¹⁸ Worley, D.R., 2012. *Orchestrating the Instruments of Power*. Lulu. com.pp158-159

¹⁹ Ibid

relies on the overt and covert military support of those rebellious against communist control. He backed the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries, the right wing Salvadoran, Angola's civil war, and he continued supporting the Mujahedeen against Soviets in Afghanistan; in addition, Regan administration backed Saddam Hussein, the brutal ruler of Iraq since 1979, in his war against Iran during 1980-1988. This support included as Robert Bacevich mentioned:

“restoration in 1984 of full diplomatic relations (broken during the 1967 Arab–Israeli war), \$4 billion in agricultural credits, U.S. military advisers and intelligence, and U.S. support for sale by its allies to Iraq of arms, dual-use technology, and material for the manufacture of biological and chemical weapons²⁰”. Furthermore, he deployed the U.S. Sixth Fleet to deliver fire support to the Israeli occupation of Lebanon, the newly born Hezbollah considered the U.S support as part of the occupation. U.S. embassy and the marine barracks were bombed in Beirut triggering President Regan to instruct for the withdrawal from Lebanon²¹. According to Robert Worley:

“Critics said the Reagan Doctrine supported terrorist regimes that abused human rights, distributed weapons, and landmines, fueled violence, and contributed to blowback and Islamic opposition to U.S. policies. Moralists remind us that the ends do not justify the means. Realists remind that national security is amoral”²².

B- Presidents Georg W. H. Bush and Bill Clinton, The Area of Globalization:

The sudden end of the Cold War and the other major events around the world shaped Georg W. H. Bush national security strategy. These events impelled the President to articulate a new role for the United States in which he called it the “New World Order” where America would lead other nations to be democratic, economically free, tolerant at home, and committed to peaceful resolutions abroad²³.

During the year 1989, the wall of Berlin fell, Germany was unified, and the former Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan. Then, in 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed. The Bush administration offered to use the liberal trade relations to bring back the Soviet Union into the world order. In

²⁰ Bacevich, A.J. ed., 2007. *The long war: A new history of US national security policy since World War II*. Columbia University Press, p 30

²¹ Worley, D.R., 2012. *Orchestrating the Instruments of Power*. Lulu. com. pp.160-163.

²² Ibid. pp 173.

²³ Bacevich, A.J. ed., 2007. *The long war: A new history of US national security policy since World War II*. Columbia University Press, p 32

return, the Russians pledged to bring their economy into line with the world trading system and to stay out of third world disputes.

The Bush administration national strategy can be characterized as a selective engagement strategy²⁴. As examples, after the Iraq-Iran war was concluded, Saddam used a boundary dispute with Kuwait to invade it and the Iraqi troops occupied Kuwait. Up until this point, American politicians barely pretended that their policies towards the Middle East were meant to support freedom and democracy. Indeed, the main factors that motivated the United States policy in the Middle East were oil, stability, Israel, and to restrain Soviet influence in the area. Thus, Bush formed a coalition of thirty-four nations to eject the Iraqi army from Kuwait and got a UN resolution to impose severe economic sanctions on Iraq. In addition, Bush used forces to overthrow Panama's president, General Manuel Noriega, who the U.S. had hired in the eighties to covert actions in Central America. However, although the U.S. supported UN sanctions against President Milosevic's regime in Belgrade, Bush refused to provide troops or air cover to stop the Serb's brutal ethnic cleansing against the Bosnian considering it a civil war²⁵.

When William Clinton was inaugurated in 1993, he was the first true post-Cold war president who came after two very important and contradicting books have been issued and debated. First, was Francis Fukuyama "The end of History" in which he interpreted the end of the cold war as a victory and universality of the Western liberalism over both fascism and communism, and since the globalism was inevitable, all nations will follow the American western liberal democracy as the ultimate model for human government. Second, was Samuel P. Huntington, a former National Security Official during Carter Presidency, "The Clash of Civilizations" in which he interpreted the end of the cold war as a turning point from competition between the world's ideologies to a new collision between civilizations, the west versus the world of Islam. Thus, Huntington pressed that in order to maintain "Western civilization", an "Atlanticist" system should expand through Europe, regions of the former Soviet Union, Latin America, and to avoid any intervention in other civilizations, which would lead to the most dangerous global conflict. Clinton attempted for a while to merge both of these views, however at the end, he restored to what he advocated for in his campaign that led to his election, which is the superiority of economic security over reforming

²⁴ Worley, D.R., 2012. *Orchestra ting the Instruments of Power*. Lulu. com. P194

²⁵ Bacevich, A.J. ed., 2007. *The long war: A new history of US national security policy since World War II*. Columbia University Press, p 32

the military and disseminating democratic values. “Engagement and Enlargement” was the new doctrine to replace containment as Clinton administration recommended in order to increase the world’s “free community of market democracies.” Globalization which refers to the merging of the world’s markets, resources, and financial and investment centers would be utilized by the United States to revive America slow economy, compensate its trade balances, and promote a peaceful, and secure world order. Economic enlargement and technological advance would prevail over ideological conflict and advance worldwide democracy. Thus, Clinton finalized the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), increased economic relations with Russia, and applied full trade relation with China. In 1999, Clinton administration published, “A National Security Strategy for A New Century” that offered to keep the best trained, equipped and most efficient forces, in addition, U.S. should maintain the competence to determine where an attack could come from and to respond effectively and prevent any potential enemies of acquiring Weapon of Mass Destruction WMD. Although the NSS emphasized working with allies and through an international organization, it did not rule out the need to “act alone” when necessary. Clinton used standoff methods much more than deploying ground forces. He applied punitive strikes in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Sudan in response to terrorist attacks, Clinton response to terrorism was viewed as too little, too late. The foundation of the Clinton strategy was drawn from cooperative security, selective engagement, and primacy²⁶.

C- Presidents Georg W. Bush and Barak Obama, The War on Terrorism:

Initially in his 2000 presidential campaign, President George W. Bush stated that the US should stay strong nonetheless modest in its foreign affairs. His administration gave small consideration to terrorism but revived intense nationalism and unilateralism by declining multilateral treaties, intending to refute the 1972 ABM treaty and built a ballistic missile defense system. In September 2002, after the 9/11 attack, “The National Security Strategy of the United States” was published by Bush administration. It contained a new “American internationalism” that explained the government’s intention to achieve American goals through the unification of the United States principles and power and was viewed as revolutionary change in U.S. policy. The Bush 2002 NSS stand on four concepts:

²⁶ Ibis. pp33-36

Firstly, the faith of freedom and constitutional government is what maintains the US as a superpower and inflicts special responsibility on the U.S. to lead the world toward similar political-economic models. Secondly, the containment and deterrence of strong enemies, which were Cold War security strategies, are no more applicable due to the facts that the new adversaries are rouge or failed states. These states support dictatorships and terrorists who choose weapons of mass destruction as their first option. Thus, prior to the full formation of the threats, the U.S. should be prepared to strike unilaterally and preemptively and no matter how distant or vague threats might be. Thirdly, “lessons of history” exhibit the fact that the twentieth century ended with only one “sustainable model of national success that the best methods for the nations to prosperity is through market economies and the U.S. will encourage other nations to adopt “pro-growth” policies. Lastly, the United States will not allow any opponent to pursue a military accumulation that equals or exceeds that of this nation. However, the Bush NSS does not say much about major extended threats, such as global warming, poverty, disease, civil, ethnic, or tribal conflicts that often lead to genocide.

After the 9/11 attack, the president declared a “crusade” in Afghanistan to arrest ‘dead or alive’ Osama bin Laden and he condemned Iran, Iraq, and North Korea and labeled them as “axis of evil” even though they are not involved in the September attacks and began to plan military operations against Iraq shortly after that. Vice President Cheney with other senior officials had time after time distorted intelligence information in order to prove that Saddam either had WMD or that they were being manufactured. Thus, the Bush administration promptly went to war without sanction from the UN or close allies like France and Germany. The United States found itself facing a major riot in Iraq and the earlier anticipation of Bush’s administration that the American troops would be welcomed as liberators were wrong, they were seen as occupiers²⁷. The war on Iraq resulted in over 4400 American deaths and U.S. spending neared \$500 billion with no Weapons of Mass Destruction being found. Bush adopted the primacy strategy but with the invasion of Iraq it went beyond primacy, it even lost the appearance of a benign hegemon²⁸.

President Barak Obama’s national security strategy, issued in 2010, displayed the advantages of an open Global trading system and the indispensability of U.S. global leadership for upholding

²⁷ Ibis. pp37-39

²⁸ Worley, D.R., 2012. *Orchestra ting the Instruments of Power*. Lulu. com. P207

international order²⁹. Obama reasserted that the United States' essential national interests are in: "the security of the United States, its citizens, and U.S. allies and partners; a strong, innovative, and growing U.S. economy in an open international economic system that promotes opportunity and prosperity; respect for universal values at home and around the world; and an international order advanced by U.S. leadership that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges."³⁰ Obama presented a strategy that reforms the means in which the U.S would improve its interests in this rapidly changing world. This required strategic rebalancing on several fronts; first, he urged the U.S. government to spend more time, attention, and resources in building at home and less on costly foreign military interventions. Second, he indicated an increased focus on prosperity, especially as the U.S. and the world faced the worst economic and financial crisis since the Great Depression. Third, he offered to move towards even greater multilateral and collective action to confront global threats and challenges. Where these threats the United States could not or should not face alone. This would involve turning to the G20 as the best forum for international economic cooperation. Forth, he proposed restoring more balance in the use of U.S. instruments of power by sustaining United States military force, however, supplementing it with strengthened diplomacy, development, law enforcement, and intelligence operations. For example, Obama opposed the war on Iraq since the beginning, he announced the end of combat operation in August 2010, and the troops were shifted to Afghanistan. In addition, Iran agreed on a long-term deal on its nuclear program known as the P5+1. The strategic shifts that Obama followed to improve the position of the U.S were not fully executed and they triggered contradictory criticisms that Obama had rebalanced too much or not enough. Furthermore, some attributed the ISIS's rise, global crises eruption, and even the amplified Russian advancement, to Obama's hesitancy to assert U.S. power, particularly military power, in the Middle East.³¹ Obama strategy was in between selective engagement and offshore balancing.

²⁹ Ahmed, S. and Bick, A., 2017. *Trump's National Security Strategy: A New Brand of Mercantilism?* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

³⁰ "National Security Strategy," White House: Barack Obama, May 2010, 7

³¹ Ahmed, S. and Bick, A., 2017. *Trump's National Security Strategy: A New Brand of Mercantilism?* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

D- Presidents Donald Trump “America First”:

At the end of 2017, President Donald Trump published his National Security Strategy (NSS). It concentrates on different areas of NS, firstly is how to protect the ‘American way of life’. The NSS emphasizes that enemies have taken advantage of a America’s free and democratic system to hurt the US, Therefore, borders should be controlled and the immigration system reformed. Second, is to foster national prosperity, Trump Administration believes that it has inherited a weak country, with stagnating salaries, and an excessively regulated economy, and that requires a strategy that would ‘rejuvenating’ the economy and making it more competitive. Thus, he insists on imposing many restriction on trade with China and renegotiating many of the US’s bilateral trade agreements to advance US competitiveness. Critics argue, this will raise the risk of the US slide into protectionism and isolationism. Third, is to preserve peace through fortifies and reconstructs the military in order to stay preminent, continues to deter enemies and, if necessary, fighting and winning a war.

Two years since Trump in the White House, he and his administration made a series of controversial moves in withdrawing of international agreements and organizations. Here is a list of these withdrawals, he pulls out of Paris climate agreement because he believes it was bad for the US economy; he is pulling the U.S. out of the agreement to curb Iran’s nuclear weapons program. Experts said the move would isolate the United States from its allies who remained in the deal, and they worried that Iran could resume its push to get a nuclear weapon. So far, according to the US intelligence community, Iran has not. Earlier, Trump withdraws the U.S. out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade agreement that included 12 Pacific Rim countries. According to Trump that was for the benefit of American workers. Trump has threatened to withdraw from the NAFTA. Last, Trump administration announced that it will withdraw from a nuclear arms control treaty with Russia, he claimed Russians had violated the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty. Trump claim that he is doing all of that for the best interest of the United States.

Two years since Trump in the White House, four different National Security Advisors....

Conclusion:

Protecting national security is one of the most crucial responsibilities of nation-states. The common practice of most states to determine important national security priorities is to develop documents that define national security, refer to their perception of threats, and numerate suggested ways to preserve national security.

Since the end of the WWII, Presidents of United States always had varied national security strategies; however, Cold War administrations retained a core strategy of containment and deterrence to prevent any potential major war between the American and the Soviets. Post– Cold War strategies range from Primacy, collective security, selective engagement, homeland defense, cooperative security, and offshore balancing. However, none of these strategies by itself has consensus of the administrations.

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