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**Anglo-American Defence Relations & The Government of  
Gordon Brown**



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2014

Durham University, School of Government and International Affairs

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
International Relations.

## **Acknowledgements and Dedications**

I would like to thank my supervisors, Professor John Dumbrell and Dr Christian Schweiger for all their help and support.

I would also like to thank my father, Tony Gannon for his time proof reading this thesis.

I dedicate this thesis to my wife Bori Gannon for all of the love and support she offered me during my research.

## **Statement of Copyright**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis intends to promote two key original contributions to the field of International Relations. One element of this thesis is to engage the body of work on Anglo-American relations with a set of International Relations theories in order to develop the understandings of the concept of the Special Relationship. By using the work of Alliance Theory and the English School's notion of International Society, this thesis presents a lucid model for analysing Britain and America's security partnerships. With this model in place, this thesis explores one of the most recent periods of the relationship by investigating the government of Gordon Brown.

This thesis uses this International Relations theoretical approach to explore Anglo-American relations in the Brown period by investigating the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. These conflicts were representative of the UK-US partnership and went through significant developments in the period between 2007 and 2010. In the case of Iraq, the Brown period saw the end of British combat operations and responsibility for parts of the country being handed back to the Iraqis. While these developments took place, attention returned to the war in Afghanistan and this period saw the emergence of serious problems in the conduct of the war. In this thesis, both of these conflicts are inspected by examining corresponding themes to demonstrate the working relationship between Britain and America. Equipment matters, troop power, military strategy and alliance relations are the four main grounds in which the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are investigated to determine the success of the Anglo-American partnership under Gordon Brown.

The findings of this thesis suggest that the Brown period saw the beginning of the deconstruction of the UK-US alliance as the goals of the alliance had failed to be achieved. Largely due to the British military's inability to conduct both wars simultaneously to the standard needed for success, her credibility as a reliable partner to the US was diminished. Brown himself was criticised for limiting the capabilities of the armed forces to operate effectively. However, Brown remained a strong supporter of the US in the War on Terror and did aim to provide important contributions to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Despite the failings of the alliance the theoretical approach to understanding the Special Relationship has proven to be an effective way to examine the nature of British and American interaction.

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## **Abbreviations**

ANA – Afghan National Army  
CentComm – US Central Command  
COIN – Counter Insurgency Strategy  
Con – Conservative Party  
D – Democrat Party  
DFID – Department for International Development  
ETT – Embedded Training Team  
EU – European Union  
FOB – Forward Operating Base  
GAO – US Government Accountability Office  
HCDC - House of Commons Defence Committee  
HCFAC - House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee  
HRCAS - House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services  
HRCFA - House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs  
IR – International Relations  
ICC – International Criminal Court  
IED – Improvised Explosive Device  
IR – International Relations  
ISAF – International Security Assistance Force  
Lab – Labour Party  
Lib-Dem – Liberal Democrat Party  
MoD – Ministry of Defence  
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation  
NGO - Non- Government Organisation  
NSID – National Security, International Relations and Development  
R – Republican Party  
RUSI – Royal United Services Institute  
SRA – Special Relationship Alliance  
SRA I - Special Relationship Alliance I  
SRA II - Special Relationship Alliance II  
SRA III - Special Relationship Alliance III  
UN – United Nations  
UOR – Urgent Operational Requirements  
WMD – Weapons of Mass Destruction

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Maps



Iraq Deployment 2005<sup>1</sup>



Afghanistan Deployment, 2008<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> BBC News, 'Poland postpones Iraq withdrawal', (27<sup>th</sup> December 2005).

<sup>2</sup> BBC News, 'Sarkozy renews Afghan commitment', (20<sup>th</sup> August 2008).

## 1. Introduction

In a recent collection of essays on the nature of Anglo-American relations Marsh and Dobson asked the question why; ‘produce another volume on this subject?’ For decades this topic has inspired multiple works analysing areas such as politics, security, economics, culture and diplomacy. Marsh and Dobson justified their own work by explaining that contemporary Anglo-American relations had been neglected.<sup>3</sup> In a similar fashion, this research project has aimed to shed light on recent dealings between British and American political leaders in the realm of defence relations. Specifically, this project places particular emphasis on the premiership of Gordon Brown between 2007 and 2010 and his government’s approach to managing Anglo-American relations. Throughout the course of this thesis the concepts surrounding what is referred to as the Special Relationship and its links to the Brown government shall be examined. To begin with, this introductory section will give an overview of the content and structure of this volume and offer a guide to readers on how the arguments will be developed.

The purpose of presenting this research in the form of a thesis is to display the development of certain values as a researcher. Developing ontological skills, as defined by Frick, this thesis will demonstrate that I have established an identity as an academic researcher within the discipline of Politics and International Relations (IR). This thesis will also show its relationship to other forms of knowledge within the discipline by drawing links with other works. The methodology of this work will also be aimed at displaying the ability to create knowledge within the discipline as well as displaying the values, norms and practices of Politics and IR.<sup>4</sup> With the presentation of these skills, this thesis will act as evidence that my research has been able to display the quality of work appropriate at the PhD level. The research will demonstrate this in a number of ways including: connections being drawn between previously separate courses of knowledge, putting a special focus on material that has been largely overlooked to assist in generating new knowledge and challenging pre-existing ideas and views related to this topic. These approaches have been used to gather evidence in order to create original research presented here.

### 1.1. Research Aims

There are two stated aims for this research project which are designed to create an original contribution to the discipline. Although each area is intended to provide an original contribution, these efforts will not necessarily overturn contemporary thinking on these topics but will draw

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<sup>3</sup> Steve Marsh and Alan Dobson, ‘Conclusion’, in Alan Dobson and Steve Marsh (eds), *Anglo-American Relations Contemporary Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2013), 263-273, p263.

<sup>4</sup> Liezel Frick, ‘Facilitating Creativity in Doctoral Education: A Resources for Supervisors’, in V Kumar and A Lee (eds), *Doctoral Education in International Context: Connecting Local, Regional and Global Perspectives* (Malaysia: University Putra Malaysia Press, 2011), 123-137, p127.

links between previously unconnected pieces of knowledge. These original features will aim to play a part in contributing to the scholarly understanding of the Special Relationship and the government of Gordon Brown.

The first intended original contribution that this thesis intends to offer is related to the academic concept of Anglo-American relations, or as it is also known, the Special Relationship. Particular focus in academic literature on Anglo-American relations has been prominent since the 1950s. As this body of work has continued to grow, its main contributors have largely been in the UK, where the relationship carries a lot more weight. As will be displayed below, much of this literature is historical in its analysis of the relationship, with most studies focusing on particular concerns and discussing the implications for the wider historical relationship. Few academics have highlighted the role of IR theory within this body of literature, and even fewer have actually used any particular theory for analysing the relationship. It is the purpose of this thesis to address this gap by utilising appropriate examples of IR theory to understand the relationship. The English School's notion of International Society will be one position drawn on in this analysis. This approach is especially relevant given that many of the components associated with International Society are also present in Anglo-American relations. In addition to the English School, the concepts belonging to the loosely affiliated work on Alliance Theory will provide an important set of tools for developing a deeper understanding of the Special Relationship. Definitions of how alliances are formed, managed and deconstructed will be the relevant tools used in this study. Collectively these theories and tools will be used to create a framework to analyse the Brown period.

The second element that will be part of the original contribution of this thesis will be an examination of the defence agenda of the Brown government. From the mid-2000s, Brown was always expected to become the next Prime Minister after Tony Blair left office. As a result there has been a large amount of interest in Brown for several years. His time as Chancellor of the Exchequer and as Prime Minister has generated a considerable amount of academic analysis. However, many of these accounts focus on his management of the economy or his turbulent relationship with Blair. Similarly, since Brown left office in 2010, there have been few accounts or analysis of his premiership. One policy area that has been consistently overlooked and underdeveloped is Brown's approach to international conflicts and defence. Brown himself is an interesting figure to study given the power he retained as Chancellor, which effectively made him a co-Prime Minister. Similarly, his period of office is an important era as it oversaw the end of British military operations in Iraq and a refocus on the war in Afghanistan. By examining the Brown government's approach to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, with special emphasis placed

on how policies reflected the Special Relationship, an important contribution can be made to understanding the premiership of Gordon Brown.

Both of these research aims are designed to provide guidance for this thesis which has the objective of providing new information, analysis and insight into what is already a crowded topic. On the one hand, attempting to provide one of the first accounts of defence in the Brown government provides the opportunity for an original empirical contribution. On the other hand, the aim of providing new theoretical approaches to a heavily discussed topic is more ambitious. In relation to the aim of creating a new theoretical construct of Anglo-American relations, it is important to clearly identify the scope and limitations such a theory is bound by. The Special Relationship can be seen as a uniquely diverse affair due to the variety of policy areas it has an impact on as well as the depth of many of these policy matters. In relation to the empirical contributions of this study, military defence shall be the central line of inquiry. Although certain other political elements and policy areas will be touched upon, usually for the sake of comparisons or illustrative purposes, it is the military concerns of the Brown government that will form the central contribution of Part II of this thesis. In regards to the theoretical contributions, the objectives of this thesis is to provide a new way of thinking about the relationship and an attempt to move discussions to a theoretical ground, often lacking. Therefore the scope of this theoretical discussion shall be adaptable to accurately reflect the ever evolving relationship between Britain and America.

With these goals in mind, it is also worthwhile considering what this thesis does not set out to achieve. To begin with, the theoretical positions being used are, to a significant extent, still developing. The English School's notion of International Society is still strongly debated within the English School with disputes about methodology and conceptual meanings prevalent. Similarly, the notions of Alliance Theory are thoroughly under-theorised and need further development and clarification. Each of these areas could be a thesis in its own right. However, this research project does not attempt to resolve these issues. It will address some of these concerns in the appropriate discussions below, but it will not place substantial emphasis on solving them. In relation to the empirical elements of this study, there were several avenues that could have been pursued to analyse Anglo-American relations. Extraordinary rendition or post-conflict reconstruction, are both important elements of the relationship and either could also be a research project in their own rights. Intelligence is also an important area of the relationship and as more evidence comes to light, it will be an important way to measure the success of the relationship. Yet, in relation to this thesis, intelligence relations did not represent a pivotal element of the Brown period in comparison to other areas. For the reasons stated below, the emphasis of this project will be placed on military collaboration. Although there will be a

considerable amount of discussion on military themes, it is not the purpose of this thesis to analyse the independent military decisions of each country. This study will instead use military decisions to understand the nature of Anglo-American collaborations during the Brown years.

### 1.2. Research Questions

1. How can International Relations theories help in understanding the Special Relationship?
2. How did Gordon Brown's government approach the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan?
3. To what extent were British and American policies in Iraq and Afghanistan harmonious during the Brown period?
4. How did Brown's relations with the US reflect the theoretical understanding of the Special Relationship?

Each of these questions is premeditated to direct the development of the thesis' argument based on the use of appropriate primary and secondary evidence. Question 1 is designed to concentrate on the opportunity to develop a meaningful discourse on British and American affairs as seen through the lens of IR theory. In contrast, questions 2 and 3 cover the empirical research carried out on the management of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan between 2007 and 2010. Whereas question 2 will seek to establish the context and approaches to the wars, question 3 will emphasise the measurement of successful conjunction between Britain and America. Question 4 will seek to bring these areas together to realise the nature of Anglo-American security relations between 2007 and 2010 and the usefulness of using theoretical perspectives to understand the relationship. These questions are designed to help organise this thesis and will be answered accordingly through the thesis' structure.

### 1.3. Thesis Structure

This thesis is separated into two parts to categorise the various elements of this research project. Part I of the thesis will begin with a review of the methodology used before analysing the academic literature relevant to this study. The first of these literature reviews will explore the academic literature on Anglo-American relations. This review will be focused on the concept of 'specialness' with a particular emphasis placed on security relations. It will trace academic explanations of the historical origins of the relationship before looking at various concepts used to describe the relationship such as 'Greeks and Romans' and 'The Atlantic Bridge' metaphors. From here, the review will examine the construction of the relationship by comparing the notions

of interest or sentiment as the primary motive in the relationship. It will also examine the historiographical cycles of the relationship before finally looking at the suggested future discourse of the partnership as presented in the academic literature. This review will form a major part of the thesis that will help to place my research in the appropriate academic context.

Once the academic literature on Anglo-American relations has been presented, a similar set of literature reviews will be offered, analysing British foreign policy and American foreign policy respectively. These reviews are aimed at setting the relationship in a contemporary context and determining relevant themes in both countries' foreign policies. Membership of international organisations, and approaches to foreign and security policies will be explored to provide a broader context in which the following empirical studies will be placed.

The third set of literature reviews in Part I will involve engaging with the IR theories mentioned above. An overview of the English School will be undertaken to highlight the evolution and meaning of the concept of International Society. This overview will also provide the opportunity to highlight the appropriate links between the English School and the literature on Anglo-American relations. In a similar sense, an outline of the work on Alliance Theory and its important concepts will be essential in establishing the appropriate tools for interpreting the empirical research.

These literature reviews will then be tied together and will present a theoretical model of British and American affairs. This model will differentiate between Anglo-American bilateral relations and the term 'the Special Relationship'. This understanding will be the framework in which different periods are examined and will be instrumental in understanding the Brown era.

Part II of the thesis will largely be the report on the empirical research and will be divided into four chapters. In the first instance, the Blair period will be examined with special emphasis placed on his relationship with President George W. Bush. Given the length of time in office, his closeness to Bush and his complex relationship with Brown, the Blair period is an important starting point for analysing British and American affairs after 2007. On a similar path, Brown himself needs to be placed in the proper context. The second chapter of Part II will focus on Brown's relationship with Blair, the US and key advisors before examining Brown's broader approach to foreign and security policies. This chapter is aimed at providing an understanding on what kind of leader Brown was and how he reached decisions. These sections will help determine the context in which the in-depth case studies can be understood.

The third and fourth chapters of Part II will explore the military relationship between the British and the American governments. It will compare similar aspects of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan between 2007 and 2010. Drawing on a variety of primary material, UK and US military strategy, troop deployment, equipment matters and alliance relations will be examined for both conflicts to determine how compatible both forces were. These factors will be related back to their respective governments to examine the level of policy harmony that existed between these two allies. These empirical findings will then be put into the broader context of the theoretical understandings presented in Part I before drawing final conclusions and answering the research questions.

The concluding section of the thesis will draw together the different strands of research that have run throughout this work. After providing brief overviews of the key arguments, the conclusion will focus on addressing the research questions. It will also go on to suggest implications for the wider discipline. Finally, the conclusion will suggest areas of future research in order to build and develop the ideas discussed in this work.

# **Part I**

## 2. Methodology

Within the discipline of Politics and IR, choosing the correct methodology is crucial in determining the course of a project. Often, researchers in this discipline make use of quantitative data, qualitative materials or both. This thesis intends to rely largely on qualitative data to explore the nature of Anglo-American relations and the government of Gordon Brown. This chapter will explain the methods used in analysing the data selected before listing the sources used in this thesis as well as discussing the specific issues related to particular sets of sources. The considerations set out in this chapter will only be referred to in further chapters when pertinent to the discussion.

### 2.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative data has proven to be a useful tool for the study of Politics and IR. As Vromen explains, there has been a renewed focus on analysing qualitative material in Politics. She defines qualitative research as being focused on detailed text based answers which include personal reflections from participants.<sup>5</sup> In the context of this research project, qualitative material will be utilised to understand the quality of entities and personal comments rather than measuring the quantities, levels of intensity or frequency of data. As social life consists of communication and interpretation of different situations, an examination of the production of these communications will assist in analysing the relationship between Britain and America.<sup>6</sup> Within the academic work on British and American relations, the analysis of qualitative material has been the more dominant method of research and this study intends to follow this trend in utilising an interpretivist method. The empirical focus of this study is a top down analysis of the Brown government focusing on the policy motives of the key actors in the UK and the US. This approach therefor relies on the analysis of the comments and contributions from the sources that have been identified below.

In relation to understanding the New Labour government's record on foreign policy, Daddow states that there have been four categories of literature that contribute to this area of knowledge. The first category is the insider accounts from members of Cabinet, aides, and diplomats. The second is autobiographies of the top individuals, as seen with Tony Blair's *A Journey* or Brown's *Beyond the Crash*. The third category is the works of journalists and media pundits which focus on broader themes. The fourth and final category is the scholarly works carried out by

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<sup>5</sup> Ariadne Vromen, 'Debating Methods: Rediscovering Qualitative Approaches', in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) 249-266, p249-252.

<sup>6</sup> David Altheide, 'Qualitative Media Analysis', in Alan Bryman and Robert Burgess (eds) *Qualitative Research, Vol. III* (London: Sage Publications, 1999), 235-255, p241.

academics.<sup>7</sup> The following sources draw on Daddow's four categories as well as exploiting contributions from other primary materials.

## 2.2 List of Sources

The use of documents and media sources will be the most substantial material drawn on for this project. Platt explains that in different genres of documents, there are different conventions for analysis.<sup>8</sup> The concerns of authorship and reliability need to be considered when examining documentary evidence.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, in regards to media source analysis, Altheide explains that sources are reflexive of the events that create them, establishing a circular relationship.<sup>10</sup> Even from the researchers' point of view, selection bias exists.<sup>11</sup> For these reasons an outline of the material used will be undertaken to raise the appropriate issues for particular sources. Sources selected below are designed to offer a broad range of data that will appropriately contribute to answering the research questions of this project. Though each set of sources carries its own weaknesses, the combination of sources selected are designed to provide a fitting range of material to support the arguments of this thesis.

### Official Documents

A substantial part of this research project will rely on the official documents from the British Parliament and the US Congress. In both countries each institution operates a committee system for the scrutiny of the government. The various UK and US committees on Defence, Foreign Relations, and Development will be used in this study as they play an important part of holding the governments of the UK and US to account. In the case of both countries, committees have the authority to send for persons, papers or records to aid their investigations and publish reports on the governments as well as producing the records of their hearings.<sup>12</sup> These committees are usually composed of members from different political parties, yet, it has been suggested that in the US there is less emphasis on following the 'party line' on a particular policy.<sup>13</sup> This level of political freedom is an important consideration when using committee reports and hearings, taking into account political bias in the examination of witnesses and evidence. In any case, the statements supplied in these circumstances are done so under sworn oath and any wrong

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<sup>7</sup> Oliver Daddow, 'Character in Destiny': Tony Blair's Foreign Policy Leadership', *International Studies Review* vol. 13, no. 2 (2011), 342-344, p342.

<sup>8</sup> Altheide, 'Qualitative Media Analysis', p244.

<sup>9</sup> Jennifer Platt, 'Evidence Proof in Documentary Research': 1. Some Specific Problems', in Alan Bryman and Robert Burgess (eds)[There should be a comma here and in similar places] *Qualitative Research, Vol. III* (London: Sage Publications,1999) [Missing full stop]

<sup>10</sup> Altheide, 'Qualitative Media Analysis', p236.

<sup>11</sup> Vromen, 'Debating Methods', p262.

<sup>12</sup> Bill Coxall, Lynton Robins and Robert Leach, *Contemporary British Politics*,[No comma before parentheses – as indicated in Examiners' Report] (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p239.

<sup>13</sup> David McKay, *American Politics and Society*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), p142.

information would count as perjury. These are important considerations when handling official sources. However, there are other documents that can be equally useful.

Additional documents will be used from government and non-government organisations (NGOs). In both cases the goals and interests of each of these different sets of actors needs to be considered. In the case of governmental documents, most were designed to be released to the public and intended to represent the government's work in a particular field. As a result, consideration must be given to the presentation of arguments and evidence by the government. A useful counterbalance to these considerations can be found through the use of NGO documents. Many NGOs intend to hold governments to account by offering alternative analysis of evidence and challenging official government positions. However, it must also be remembered that NGOs may have their own interests to represent due to their sponsorship or the aims of their organisation. The combination of these documents with these considerations can help triangulate particular positions related to the research goals of this thesis.

#### Inquiry Evidence and Reports

In the UK there have been several public inquiries made into specific subjects relating to the research area of this project. These are usually held after a particular matter of importance or controversy with a senior figure asked to chair the inquiry and remove any partisan bias. Judges, Lords or senior Civil Servants are those likely to chair these investigations. Inquiries or reviews will usually hear evidence in public; however, in cases of national security and intelligence, closed hearings may take place. These investigations will result in a report being published by the Chair as well as the publication of the documents and the testimony of witnesses utilised in the evidence gathering phase of the inquiry. Many of these documents will be declassified letters, reports or other official document that may not have been created for public inspection. As inquiries are established to resolve issues and learn lessons, there is pressure on the Chair to produce a final report which reaches strong conclusions which can often result in assigning blame or to exonerate a particular person, group or organisation. This pressure must be considered when examining the final outcomes of inquiries. It is also worth noting that the level of scrutiny of governments that inquiries create has been more prevalent in the UK than in the US in the policy areas examined below. There have been four British reviews and inquiries utilised in this thesis, however, there have been no equivalent investigations in the US.

#### Public Statements

The nature of this study is a top-down analysis of key political figures and actors and an analysis of these players' comments allowing this study to pinpoint reflections on events and themes that help explore many of this thesis' key concerns. One of the most common forms of public

statements from both British and American figures is public speeches. When considering speeches, one has to take into account the context and audience of a speech to assess the content of the speech. The use of language and thematic elements of a speech can be affected as political figures attempt to convey certain messages to certain audience. Political bias or agenda goals need to be considered when evaluating the use of public speeches.

Another important form of public statement for both British and American officials is the press conference. Following certain speeches and special events, regular meetings with journalists have resulted in press conferences becoming an important part of political life. This is especially true in the modern era of 24 hour news where politicians need to be seen as in control of events and policies. Press conferences can be useful in forcing politicians to respond to questions on specific areas in an attempt to hold them to account. However, as politicians have become aware of the importance of 24 hour news, many have become well versed in presenting policies or 'spinning' stories. The use of other materials and public statements can be used here to establish how genuine politicians are in their public statements to the media.

A third area of public statement relates specifically to the UK and the House of Commons. Due to Britain's parliamentary democracy, members of the government have to be regularly questioned by MPs and participate in open debates. In these situations members of the government, including cabinet ministers and the prime minister have to respond to rigorous questioning on policy areas. When questioning the prime minister, debates can often become highly combative and can gain significant public attention. An important feature of statements made in the House of Commons is that they must be accurate and when inaccuracies emerge, government members must justify their comments to the House. There is no equivalent to this in the US, but, members of the government in both countries must undergo similar public discussions through committee hearings.

#### Autobiographies and Diaries

Often the types of public statement listed above are highly charged and the context of the situation may be overlooked. In the case of autobiographies and diaries more time can be spent in reflection of events. Through autobiographies, individuals can explain in detail their thoughts and provide their interpretation of events. Often, autobiographies will be organised thematically by events. This can be useful in establishing a context. However, the author may skew or misrepresent events in order to present a case or to create a more compelling autobiography. Similarly, authors may try to sensationalise events or accounts in order to entice a wider audience. A final concern for using autobiographies is that they may often be written by ghost writers who rework political figures' work into a more alluring account of events. However, given that it is

based on the individual's memories, and their name is tied to the book, an assumption must be made that the account has met the subject's approval in describing events and views.

Diaries have a slightly different function than autobiographies. By recording reflections on events in a chronological order it is possible to trace the evolution of opinions as events unfold. This style is usually less organised with views on particular themes emerging over months or even years. This does, however, provide some immediate reaction to events. A drawback of using diaries is similar to that of autobiographies in that they both would be edited and prepared for mass publication with details being refined. Diaries may also lack the broader context of events that are represented in thematic chapters of autobiographies.

### Wikileaks

In recent years, a growing amount of material has been made available on the internet via the Wikileaks website. Set up as a venue for whistle blowers to publish material to hold governments to account, Wikileaks was propelled up the political agenda with the release of thousands of US diplomatic cables in 2010. The release of these cables led to great embarrassment for the US as it exposed the candid views of US officials from around the world. In regards to Anglo-American affairs, the cables do offer some insight into the relationship. However, the exact authorship and context of these cables are not always known, nor is it always clear how high up in the US government the cables were intended to go. Making detailed use of these cables can be difficult. Instead, they will be used in this study as auxiliary evidence to other sources. Along with the cables other sensitive documents have also been released based on British and American efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. These military documents can be more useful as the authorship and purpose of the documents is clearer but may carry some of the caveats of other official documents.

### Newspapers

Beyond official accounts from political sources, the media is also an important area for gathering evidence. The publication of newspapers has remained an important consideration in politics for offering opinions and providing a form of communication for political figures. Newspapers are an especially important source when examining the Brown period given Brown's heavy interest in what they were reporting as well as the weaknesses in his Number 10 'spin' machine. Newspapers are often politically aligned and have a motive in presenting political stories in a certain way. Similarly, sources cited in newspaper stories are often unaccredited which raise questions on reliability. Within this thesis, interviews and official sources cited in newspaper stories will be the main aspects of stories that will be utilised.

### Online Media

Increasingly, media outlets are publishing material online. News agencies such as the BBC have developed a broad format for online news stories. Although these are presented online, and often have multimedia resources attached to stories, articles are presented in a similar manner to newspaper stories and carry the same strengths and weaknesses. The main difference however, is the speed in which online stories can be produced and articles can be updated and developed as events unfold.

### Documentaries TV/Radio

TV and Radio documentaries can provide important pieces of evidence in political research. High profile televised documentaries can attract important figures to reflect on events and political themes. Often, these documentaries take place after a specific period, such as the end of the Blair years, and pull in a broad range of ministers, civil servants, advisors and other figures for their views which are organised on a thematic basis. Although this is a useful outlet for thoughts and views, the nature of the presentation can be critiqued. The editing process can be used to distort interviews and the appearance on national television can lead to figures altering the presentation of their accounts. Radio documentaries may carry less of these problems and can often be produced quicker than TV documentaries. However, the same caveats on the editing process and the objectives of those giving interviews still apply.

### Interviews

Beyond recorded documents and media sources, interviews were also utilised to a limited extent to develop bespoke material for this research project. After reviewing the evidence in the selected courses of material, specific areas have been highlighted where interviews were used to fill gaps in knowledge. These gaps have largely revolved around Brown's governing approach as well as his role in military funding. The interviews undertaken for this thesis have followed a semi-structured basis providing participants the opportunity to expand on answers. Those who agreed to be interviewed have been ministers and advisors who offered insightful knowledge and information from a different perspective to other government sources. Other major politicians and actors involved in this topic were asked to be interviewed, such as Gordon Brown and his defence secretaries, however, declined to participate in this project.

### Opinion Polls and Statistical Data

Beyond the qualitative data analysed in this subject, some forms of statistical evidence will be analysed. A small amount of data derived from opinion polls and government funding data will be used to assist in establishing a context for the qualitative data and arguments presented in this thesis. This data has been compiled from media sources and official documents. The use of

quantitative data removes many of the issues of reliability and interpretation that are associated with qualitative data. However, this type of data will be limited in its ability to draw out the motives of key policy figures and actors.

#### Academic Literature

To support the primary material, secondary sources have also been utilised to develop the arguments in this thesis. By analysing the academic literature common themes in various areas can be exposed and gaps in the literature may also become apparent. Secondary literature is usually presented as either journal articles, book chapters or through complete volumes. In any of these instances, the work goes through a review process to determine the value and reliability of the research providing a useful set of sources. Additionally, academics have increasingly made use of the internet to project their views. Largely through academic blogs and online versions of Think Tanks, academics have been able to produce their work quickly in response to key events. Yet, some problems still remain with the online publication of material. Although authorship can be established, work published online does not go through the same rigorous review process as other forms of academic literature which help to refine ideas and discussions.

By selecting this variety of material, the criticisms associated with the different forms of sources can be limited and increase the validity of this study. These materials will be triangulated and used to establish the political context of this project, carry out in-depth analysis of case studies and provide an intellectual framework to achieve the research goals.

### 3. The Special Relationship: Literature Review

Over the years a considerable amount of time has been dedicated to the research of British and American bilateral relations. The study has engrossed academics from across disciplines such as history, politics, international relations, economics and cultural studies. The result has been a vast volume of literature, with British scholars providing the greater part of the work. The very fact that British scholarship has provided the larger share of literature is indicative of the asymmetric nature of the relationship. Indeed, to many American policy makers the UK is no more special than any other nation. However, in the UK it is a central plank of British foreign policy. There have been certain times when the relationship has come under new scrutiny by academics. The 1980s was one such period with the release of Second World War historical documents and the emergence of a deep bond between British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and American President Ronald Reagan. As Dumbrell explains, the relationship between the UK and the US is exemplified by the personal relationship of the president and prime minister.<sup>14</sup> By reviewing this body of work, this thesis will be setting the foundation for understanding this relationship. This review will set out the relevant material that is significant for creating an IR based view of the Special Relationship. To appreciate the nature and approaches to the relationship it is important to analyse the literature appropriately.

The structure of this literature review has been designed to highlight key debates within the academic material. For example, Anglo-American affairs have offered a variety of its own terms and theories. An analysis of these terms can contribute to the understanding of the different versions and definitions that have been identified within the relationship. The nature of interest versus sentiment will also be examined to derive what motivates the commitment between the UK and the US. Many approaches have been used to examine these factors. An understanding of the various historical and academic cycles that have grown in the field will provide important categories to organise the literature. With these areas in mind many academics have been able to make suggestions on how and where the relationship may lead. Finally, an overall survey of the literature has indicated areas that have been neglected, suitable for revision or are appropriate for further development along the lines of this research project. Firstly, however, the earliest examples of the relationship, that took place between American Independence and the Second World War, may highlight the historical foundations of the pair's association.

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<sup>14</sup> John Dumbrell, 'Personal Diplomacy: Relations between prime ministers and presidents', in Alan Dobson and Steve Marsh (eds), *Anglo-American Relations: Contemporary Perspectives*, (London: Routledge, 82-104, p82.

### 3.1. Historical Origins

Although the popular phrase the ‘Special Relationship’ was only coined in the 1940s, the interaction between Britain and America from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards can provide a useful insight into British and American contact. By examining the period from American Independence in 1783 to the outbreak of war in 1939, certain elements of the relationship can be exposed to better understand the nature and foundations of Anglo-American affairs. There has been a great offering of material covering important themes, including the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the decline of the British Empire, the First World War and the interwar period, to name but a few. Broadly speaking, the authors of such works can be put into two distinct categories: those who consider this period as a time of co-operation between the two states and those who see it as an era of competition.

#### 3.1.1. Cooperation or Competition?

Those who have concluded that the time between 1783 and 1939 was a period of co-operation highlight the cultural and legal ties between the two countries. Raymond, for one, believes that the reason the two countries have been able to work together is their linked infrastructures and customs. He identifies the documents that are at the heart of American society as being steeped in British law and customs. He supports this suggestion by pinpointing the connection of the British Magna Carta and English Bill of Rights of 1689 to the American Declaration of Independence. This American document is based on the development of Anglo-Saxon law and gave both countries a similar socio-legal structure. Raymond also stresses this link by discussing how one of the Founding Fathers, Thomas Jefferson, was inspired by the Scottish Enlightenment while writing these documents.<sup>15</sup> Leventhal and Quinault agree with Raymond. They state that the US constitution was immersed in British law and parliamentarianism, arguing that this style of governing continued after the Revolution. As a result, America and Britain would continue to look to each other for policy models and direction as well as exchanging ideas, attitudes and concepts.<sup>16</sup> These intellectual links, and particularly the extent to which American society has been inspired by Britain, suggests a close bond between the two countries. This bond has been proposed by these authors as the bedrock of the modern association, providing common ground for Britain and America to work with one another.

The later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been described by many as the time when the British Empire was at the height of its power. As a result, she had to manage her affairs with many other

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<sup>15</sup> Ray Raymond, ‘The U.S. – U.K. Special Relationship in Historical Context: Lessons of the Past’, Jeffrey McCausland & Douglas Stuart (eds), *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (2006), p7.

<sup>16</sup> Fred Leventhal and Roland Quinault, ‘Introduction’ Fred Leventhal Roland Quinault (eds), *Anglo-American Attitudes : from revolution to partnership* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 1-8, p1.

countries who could act as challengers to British power. Some writers have demonstrated that consequently this period led to Britain seeking closer relations with the US. One such writer, Fromkin, comments that, due to the size of the Empire, Britain had to be careful in how she handled her international relationships by trying to remain friendly with certain international powers.<sup>17</sup> Burk takes this further by creating a classification that separates British relations with the US from other European states. She argues that the British Empire did not see the US as a rival, which was how the British perceived other powers such as France, Russia and Germany. Burk also highlights that there was popular support in Britain for America, particularly during the Spanish-American war of 1898. She goes on to emphasise that this was not necessarily a mutual feeling. As her economy grew, America came more into contact and competition with other global markets including the British Empire.<sup>18</sup> Burk's arguments demonstrate that the British were, to some extent, prepared to accept American growth and maintain friendly relations with the US rather than risking open competition and rivalry. Russett offers a similar explanation for the closeness between Britain and the US. He claims that as the Empire fell into decline during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Britain was prepared to work more closely with the US in order to maintain friends around the world, especially as other European powers were growing into greater threats.<sup>19</sup> These authors have emphasised how the waning British Empire looked to the US as a friend to work with. This was made easier as the US was immersed in Anglo-Saxon law and customs. However, there are others who disagree with this and see this period as less co-operative and more competitive.

The idea of a competitive relationship between Britain and America also carries some weight. Reynolds engages with this argument and claims that by the 1920s there was a strong naval rivalry between the two powers.<sup>20</sup> This view is supported by Dick who also argues that the naval competition began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and continued well into the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>21</sup> Given that the British Empire was built on her naval supremacy, any threat to this authority would have been viewed seriously and could lead to tension between the two powers. Jones suggests that this type of tension existed long before the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He states that before the American Civil War, US military strength had been on the increase and that during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Britain came

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<sup>17</sup> David Fromkin, 'Churchill's way: the great convergence of Britain and the United States', *World Policy Journal*, vol. 15, no.1 (1998), 1-9, p2.

<sup>18</sup> Kathleen Burk, *Old World, New World : the Story of Britain and America*, (London: Little, Brown 2007), p386.

<sup>19</sup> Bruce Russett, *Community and Contentions*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1963), p24.

<sup>20</sup> David Reynolds, 'Rethinking Anglo-American Relations. *International Affairs*, vol. 65, no. 1, (1988), 98-111, p92.

<sup>21</sup> Charles Dick, 'The Defence Dimension of the Anglo-American Special Relationship', Jeffrey McCausland & Douglas Stuart (eds), *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (2006), p175.

close to engaging the US with military action over both countries' interests in Latin America.<sup>22</sup> Any escalating rivalries were, in fact muted until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century due to the distraction of the American Civil War, but demonstrated the precarious nature of the relationship.

For others, these debates are redundant. Bell's summary of the situation states that Britain has not been a significant consideration for American policy since before the American Revolution.<sup>23</sup> This, however, appears as an unsustainable argument as many of the debates here demonstrate that there were factors that, for better or worse, forced Britain and America to interact. These authors are suggesting that, contrary to Russett, Burk and Fromkin, there was no real closeness between the two. Any interaction was based on competition and global expansion which put Britain and America at odds with each other.

There have been others who have looked at the intellectual and cultural co-operation between Britain and America and have come to a different conclusion to the likes of Raymond, Leventhal and Quinault. Dobson, for example argues that the Anglo-Saxon influence on American law and the Constitution came to be resented by the American people. He suggests that British imperialism and class based social systems were at odds with much of American society.<sup>24</sup> Campbell adds to this by drawing a link between the strength of the British Empire and the introduction of the Monroe Doctrine to suggest that there was a lack of engagement between the two states.<sup>25</sup> Reynolds is in agreement with Dobson and Campbell that many of the ethnic groups within the US had been affected by the British Empire, such as Irish-Americans or German-Americans, and had a strong influence on shaping the US government's views.<sup>26</sup> Campbell offers further criticisms of the notion that Britain was seeking friendlier relations with the US during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He argues that Britain was actually more prepared to engage with European powers such as Spain, Portugal and Germany rather than with America. Campbell and Reynolds agree that there was a developing rivalry between the two during this time.<sup>27</sup> From these works we see that there is a large body of evidence to challenge the assumption that Britain and America had a harmonious relationship during the later 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. They describe two large and powerful states struggling to manage their interactions and relations.

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<sup>22</sup> Wilbur D. Jones, *The American Problem in British Diplomacy, 1841-1861*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1974), p207.

<sup>23</sup> Coral Bell, *The Debatable Alliance : An Essay in Anglo-American Relations*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p1.

<sup>24</sup> Alan Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century : Of Friendship, Conflict and the Rise and Decline of Superpowers*, (London: Routledge, 1995), p4.

<sup>25</sup> Duncan Campbell, *Unlikely Allies: Britain, America and the Victorian Beginnings of the Special Relationship*, (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007), p7.

<sup>26</sup> David Reynolds, 'A Special Relationship- America, Britain and the International Order since World War II', *International Affairs*, vol. 62, no.1, (1986), 1-20, p3.

<sup>27</sup> Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*, p5.

Collectively, these different views demonstrate the complexity in the history of Anglo-American relations. They also reveal a lasting influence on the nature of the relationship well into the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries. On the one hand, the impact that the Anglo-Saxon law and customs had on the shaping of the American state ensured that there were common practices and institutions to link the two powers. On the other hand, perceptions of British imperialism have influenced many Americans' views on the UK in a negative way. The British class based society seems to be at odds with the American belief of self-determination. What is certain, therefore, is that from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the two states have been tied together in a unique way.

### 3.2. Special Relationship Concepts

Metaphors and concepts are a common tool in foreign policy. As Yanik explains, they help to make difficult issues more accessible.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, metaphors and concepts have been central to the study of Anglo-American relations. The phrase the 'Special Relationship' was first coined by Winston Churchill in the 1940s to describe the close collaboration between Britain and America during the Second World War.<sup>29</sup> This partnership was to dominate British foreign policy for decades as the UK sought to re-establish her global role in the wake of her imperial decline by staying close to the Americans. As a result, a variety of phrases and terms have evolved out of this partnership. These have included Churchill's hands-across-the-sea, Harold Macmillan's Greeks and Romans metaphor, Jim Callaghan's Atlantic Bridge or a more recent description, 'Poodleism'. These various theories have become commonplace language in British foreign policy. However, Britain's relationship with America has been seen as largely asymmetrical which has led to some claiming that any such discussion is irrelevant to the US. Coker, for example, argues that the US has been deaf to these concepts.<sup>30</sup> Though the US may have not been interested in these terms they have had a prominent impact on the evolution of British foreign policy.

#### 3.2.1. Hands-across-the-sea

The views belonging to Churchill and his memories of meetings with President Roosevelt during the Second World War portrayed a sentimental collaboration that he would refer to as hands-across-the-sea. To Churchill, this was a union of friendship brought about by a shared language, similar culture, and customs. This union was epitomized in an Anglosphere of English speaking

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<sup>28</sup> Lerna Yanik, 'The metamorphosis of metaphors of vision: "Bridging" Turkey's Location, Role and Identity after the end of the Cold War', *Geopolitics*, vol. 14 (2009), 531-549, p532.

<sup>29</sup> James Wither, 'British Bulldog or Bush's Poodle? Anglo-American Relations and the Iraq War', *Parameters*, Vol. 33, (2003), 67-82, p68.

<sup>30</sup> Christopher Coker, 'Britain and the New World Order: The Special Relationship in the 1990s', *International Affairs*, vol. 68, no, 3, (1992), 407-421, p408.

nations. Vucetic explains that Churchill reached back as far as the 17<sup>th</sup> century to highlight the success and commonality among English speaking peoples.<sup>31</sup> It was this belief in the importance of a shared language and racial similarity that seemed to fuel Churchill's opinions. Baylis supports this position by claiming that the hands-across-the-sea mentality was based on a sense of mission and sentimentality.<sup>32</sup> Danchev however, highlights an alternative argument that Churchill was not always so comfortable with the US. He explains that Churchill resented the US squeezing Britain between America and Russia during the Second World War alliance.<sup>33</sup> These competing views highlight the asymmetry of power between Britain and the US. Porter offers a view in-between Baylis and Danchev. He suggests that Churchill had been affectionate toward the US but also used strategic calculations in his decision to move close to the US. Porter notes that in exchange for a European partner and air bases the US would accept British assistance in shaping her foreign policy.<sup>34</sup> This argument suggests that the US was open to being influenced by the UK and points towards the development of the working partnership between Britain and America. Porter's view on Churchill has similarities to the following concept of 'Greeks and Romans', a view that has come under heavy criticism.

### 3.2.2. Greeks and Romans

The close working co-operation seen in the Second World War was not to last. Once Churchill left office the relationship began to deteriorate. Hood notes that after the Suez crisis, which saw Anglo-American affairs reach its lowest point; a period of reconstruction had to take place which led to Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's concept of Greeks and Romans in the early 1960s.<sup>35</sup> At the heart of Macmillan's theory was the view that as Britain declined from her imperial position she would be invaluable to the US in providing advice and guidance in her foreign affairs, just as the Greeks went on to advise the Romans while the latter's power was at its height. Leuchtenburg claims that this is exactly what happened. He suggests that the US has looked to the UK's experiences and British examples in foreign policy when handling its own affairs. He sees Britain as some kind of proving ground for global concerns which the US looked to and learned from as both countries were united as modern industrial powers.<sup>36</sup> The assumption here is that the US has

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<sup>31</sup> Srdjan Vucetic, *The Anglosphere: A Genealogy of a Racialized Identity in International Relations*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press 2011), p2.

<sup>32</sup> John Baylis, *Anglo-American Relations since 1939 : the enduring alliance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p8.

<sup>33</sup> Alex Danchev, 'On specialness', *International Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 4, (1996), 737-750, p748.

<sup>34</sup> Patrick Porter, 'Last charge of the knights? Iraq, Afghanistan and the special relationship', *International Affairs*, vol. 86 no.2, (2010), 355-375, p358.

<sup>35</sup> Frederick Hood, 'Atlantic Dreams and European Realities: British Foreign Policy After Iraq', *European Integration*, vol. 30, no. 1, (2006), 183-197, p186.

<sup>36</sup> William Leuchtenburg, 'The Jubilee in the Bicentennial Era: A Series of Limits' William Leuchtenburg, Anthony Quinton, George Ball and David Owen (eds). *Britain and the United States : Four Views to Mark the Silver Jubilee*, (London: Heinemann in association with the United States International Communication Agency, 1979), p20.

filled the position that the British Empire used to hold which gave Britain the licence to use her experience to advise the US. Beloff and Louis disagree with this claim. They argue that actually the US has not been able to fill the void left by the British Empire and has not been able to act as the global security guarantor as the British once did. By comparing the two powers they find that actually the American dominance in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was nowhere near the scale of the British Empire when the latter was at its height.<sup>37</sup> Dobson and Dumbrell offer a different criticism. Instead of the US not filling the role of Rome to Britain's Greece, they claim the metaphor displays a cultural and political unawareness of Britain's actual role. They both argue that the very nature of the Greek and Roman argument was unwarranted and arrogant.<sup>38</sup> These criticisms relate back to the Churchillian arguments of an Anglosphere based on Britain's historical empire acting as a guiding influence for the US. However, as stated above, many in the US were critical of Britain's imperial past and did not necessarily reflect the America's diverse international relations beyond the Anglosphere, such as with South America. As this particular position seemed to be unwarranted a new approach evolved which sought to capitalise on Britain's membership in European institutions and close relationship to the US.

### 3.2.3. Atlantic Bridge

As the Greeks and Romans metaphor replaced the concept of hands-across-the-sea, the idea of Britain as an Atlantic Bridge developed as an alternative to Macmillan's position. Hood attributes this metaphor to the Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan who placed Britain as America's entry point into Europe. Hood describes how after the pro-European premiership of Ted Heath, Callaghan redefined Britain's international role as bridging the US and Europe.<sup>39</sup> This view, which came to be known as the Atlantic Bridge, can be seen as an attempt to give Britain a foreign policy direction after decolonisation and the loss of her Empire. This theory within the study of Anglo-American relations has been met with many positive views from academics. Dobson explains how the UK is politically tied to Europe but maintains a close connection with the US.<sup>40</sup> This, Gilbert argues, is what America needs for a balanced foreign policy which is why, according to former Under-Secretary of State George Ball in 1979, the US would be happy for the UK to engage more with Europe, sentiments echoed more recently by the Obama

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<sup>37</sup> Max Beloff, 'The end of the British Empire and the Assumption of World-Wide Commitments by the United States', William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull (eds) *The Special Relationship*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1986), 249-260, p260; William Roger Louis, 'American Anti-Colonialism and the Dissolution of the British Empire', William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull (eds) *The Special Relationship*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1986), 261-283, p261.

<sup>38</sup> Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century*, 165; John Dumbrell, 'Working With Allies: The United States, The United Kingdom and the War on Terror' *Politics and Policy*, vol. 34, no. 2, (2006), 452-472, p463.

<sup>39</sup> Hood, 'Atlantic Dreams and European Realities', p186.

<sup>40</sup> Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century*, p169.

administration.<sup>41</sup> Manon, of Chatham House, stresses that Britain needs to maintain a balanced approach to the US and Europe and not seek to improve the UK's standing with one side of the Atlantic at the expense of the other.<sup>42</sup> Shepherd, however, offers an alternative view. He argues that by attempting to appeal to both sides of the Atlantic, British foreign policy has lost its direction.<sup>43</sup> Wallace and Oliver argue further that the UK's credibility as an Atlantic Bridge has been undermined due to the excessive deference the UK displayed to the US, as seen in recent examples relating to Tony Blair.<sup>44</sup> Although the Atlantic Bridge can be seen as an attempt to demonstrate Britain having a tangible role within the Special Relationship, it has proven to be a difficult line to walk. The 2003 Iraq War has been the most striking example of this failure of the UK to unite America and Europe. It was the invasion of Iraq which suggested one of the most critical descriptions within the study of Anglo-American relations: 'Poodleism'.

#### 3.2.4. Poodleism

During his years in power, Tony Blair took Britain as close to the US as any other Prime Minister and close to one of the most unpopular Presidents in US history. Consequently, he appeared to want to encompass these different Special Relationship concepts. He aimed to create a hand in hand partnership with America, advise the US on policy and unite America and Europe. The result was that Blair appeared to slavishly follow George W. Bush's administration which was largely unpopular in Europe. This broad engagement with the US led to many in the press referring to Blair as Bush's poodle. Though he avoids the phrase poodle, Dumbrell supports this claim by stating that Blair struggled to influence Bush and in private was unable to stand up to him.<sup>45</sup> Naughtie's comments support Dumbrell by stating that Blair thought he would have more influence over US policy in the Bush administration. However, Blair was unable to exercise any significant influence with Bush.<sup>46</sup> Yet, some have argued against this notion. Porter declares that Blair was supporting Bush from a position of strength and was in fact able to guide and educate

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<sup>41</sup> George Ball, 'The 'Special Relationship' in Today's World', William Leuchtenburg, Anthony Quinton, George Ball and David Owen (eds). *Britain and the United States : Four Views to Mark the Silver Jubilee*, (London: Heinemann in association with the United States International Communication Agency, 1979), p53; Andrew Gamble and Ian Kearns, 'Recasting the Special Relationship', in David Held and David Mepham (eds), *Progressive Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 116-131, p129; The Independent, 'Obama administration warns Britain to stay in the European Union' (09<sup>th</sup> January 2013).

<sup>42</sup> Anand Menon, 'Between Faith and Reason: UK foreign policy towards the US and the EU', (Chatham House 2010).

<sup>43</sup> Alistair Shepherd, 'Blair, Brown and Brussels: The European Turn in British Defence Policy', David Brown (ed), *The Development of British Defence Policy: Blair, Brown and Beyond*, (Farnham: Ashgate 2010), 39-61, p56

<sup>44</sup> William Wallace and Tim Oliver, 'A bridge too far: the United Kingdom and the transatlantic relationship', David Andrews (ed), *Atlantic Alliance Under Stress* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2009), 152-177.

<sup>45</sup> Dumbrell, 'Working with Allies', p466.

<sup>46</sup> James Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, (London: Macmillan 2005), p207-208.

the US President.<sup>47</sup> Riddell also agrees that the term ‘Poodleism’ is a misconception. He tries to present Blair in the light of Churchill’s hands-across-the-sea by portraying him as being on the same page as Bush and remaining dedicated to working with him.<sup>48</sup> There have also been other historical examples which have drawn criticism on the British government’s closeness to America. By allowing US aircraft to launch attacks from the UK in the 1980s similar criticisms were levied at Margaret Thatcher for being too close to the US. The criticism that relates to the Poodle notion of the Special Relationship identifies the dangers that Britain risks when the UK works too closely to the US.

### 3.2.5. Lazarus

These different concepts can be seen as part of the evolution of the Special Relationship. Baylis claims that changing perceptions are part of the ebb and flow of relations between Britain and America.<sup>49</sup> This continuation has been the position that other academics have taken. They have seen the relationship expand and contract over the decades, but it has been a continuous relationship. Ball states that this ability to survive for so long and through so much shows its vitality.<sup>50</sup> Wither, Boyle and Dumbrell all highlight areas where the Special Relationship has been able to survive despite the challenges it has faced, such as the end of the Cold War.<sup>51</sup> Others have viewed the relationship as being more fragmented. Wallace and Phillips have supported Marsh and Baylis in their view that the Special Relationship has a Lazarus quality. These authors have argued that the relationship is not a continuous one but has been resurrected when necessary.<sup>52</sup> These authors have presented the relationship as continuously being renewed in light of events. Marsh and Baylis also explain that the British fear of abandonment is a major driving force for reviving the relationship.<sup>53</sup> Whether the different Special Relationship concepts are part of an ebb and flow of international affairs or have a Lazarus quality, these notions demonstrate the significance of the relationship in British foreign policy.

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<sup>47</sup> Porter, ‘Last Charge of the Knights?’, p360.

<sup>48</sup> Peter Riddle, *Hug Them Close* (London: Politico, 2003), pvii.

<sup>49</sup> John Baylis, ‘The Anglo-American Relationship and Alliance Theory’, *International Relations*, vol. 8, no. 4, (1985), 368-379, p379.

<sup>50</sup> Ball, ‘The Special Relationship in Today’s World’, p59.

<sup>51</sup> Peter Boyle, ‘The Special Relationship: An Alliance of Convenience?’, *Journal of American Studies*, vol. 22, no. 3, (1988), 457-465, 465; John Dumbrell, ‘The US-UK Special Relationship: Taking the 21st-Century Temperature’, *British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, vol. 11, no. 1 (2009), 64-78, 65; Wither, ‘British Bulldog or Bush’s Poodle?’, p68.

<sup>52</sup> Steve Marsh, and John Baylis, ‘The Anglo-American “Special Relationship”: The Lazarus of International Relations’, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, vol. 17 no.1,(2006), 173-211, 200; William Wallace and Christopher Phillips, ‘Reassessing the special relationship’, *International Affairs*, vol. 85, no. 2, (2009), 263-284, p280.

<sup>53</sup> Marsh and Baylis, ‘The Anglo-American “Special Relationship”’, p191.

These explanations can be seen as competing or evolutionary understandings of the relationship. A significant consideration has to be the flexibility in these terms for defining a relationship that has existed for over two hundred years and been seen as special for over seventy years. In regards to this flexibility, the Lazarus understanding provides a starting point for a flexible understanding of a relationship that has changed from hands-across-the-sea to Atlantic Bridge and on to Poodleism.

### 3.3 Construction

These various theories have sought to categorise and trace the evolution of the Special Relationship. Yet, there are those who aim to differentiate between the separate motives behind the association. Many have argued that, on the one hand, the idea of sentiment has been the bond that links Britain and America. The sentimental ties of having corresponding cultures based on similar laws and principles and a shared language has provided the bedrock of the relationship. On the other hand, a large amount of writers explain that it is national interest that has been the driving force behind British and American collaborations. To these writers the foundations of the rapport has been out of mutual need for one another in protecting their own international position. These different perspectives have coloured many of the understandings of the Special Relationship.

One overriding consistency is the asymmetric nature of the relationship. While Britain tried to remain close to the US, America has often showed little preferential treatment for the UK. Asymmetry is a major part of the make up of a relationship that carries more weight in the UK than in the US. Sperling, Dyson and Wither all highlight this issue.<sup>54</sup> However, as Dumbrell and Schafer point out, since World War II the US has rapidly increased in power, making her alliances asymmetric by nature.<sup>55</sup> Despite this asymmetry, there has always been a British commitment to the relationship. However, there are disputes over what drives this commitment.

#### 3.3.1 Interest or Sentiment?

The notion that Britain and America are tied together by sentimental factors has found traction with many scholars who have investigated the Special Relationship. These ties have taken the guise of a shared language, similar culture and strong personal relationships between politicians, officials and diplomats. In his hugely influential work, Richard Neustadt concludes that

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<sup>54</sup> James Sperling, 'Permanent Allies or Friends with Benefits? The Anglo-American Security Relationship', David Brown (ed), *The Development of British Defence Policy: Blair, Brown and Beyond*, (Farnham: Ashcroft, 2010), 15-37, p26; Stephen Dyson, *The Blair Identity: Leadership and Foreign Policy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), p18; James Wither, 'British Bulldog or Bush's Poodle?', p70.

<sup>55</sup> John Dumbrell and Axel Schafer, 'Introduction', John Dumbrell and Alex Schafer (eds) *America's Special Relationship*, (London: Routledge, 2009), 1-6, p1.

personality had a large impact on the handling of the Anglo-American alliances both in positive and in negative ways. For example, diplomats found it easy to work with one another, though this sometimes led to assumptions being made which would muddy the diplomatic water between Britain and America.<sup>56</sup> Reynolds also highlights the importance of the personal relationships. He identifies that the liaisons that grew out of the Second World War had a lasting impact on the nature of relations between the British and Americans.<sup>57</sup> Reynolds follows Kissinger's view by stating that this friendship was fostered by a shared language.<sup>58</sup> Nicholas portrays this as a typical part of British foreign policy. He makes the argument that British foreign policy has treated English speaking countries differently to other states, as evidenced in Churchill's Anglosphere.<sup>59</sup> Raymond goes further as he draws on the origins of the US to illustrate the similarities between the two nations. He identifies mutual promotion of liberty and freedom stemming out of their similar socio-legal principles, approaches which have survived into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.<sup>60</sup> Leventhal and Quinault also suggest a shared culture has emerged. They identify the spread of radio, television, air travel and the internet as factors which have increased the speed and level of cultural interchange between Britain and the US.<sup>61</sup> The shared language between Britain and America has been seen by many as the catalyst for a close working relationship. These similarities have led the way to a rich exchange of culture and customs. There are some however, who disagree with this position and place more emphasis on the mutual interests of both countries.

Various scholars have highlighted several areas where Britain and America have been able to collaborate based on their shared interests. The former British Ambassador to Washington, Oliver Franks, bluntly stated that the Special Relationship is based on interest, not sentiment.<sup>62</sup> These interests have come in many different forms. Hood cites the case of joint economic interest. He uses the examples of Britain's high level of American imports as well as the fact that many US banks put their money and operations in the City of London.<sup>63</sup> By ensuring a harmonious relationship both parties would be able to ensure mutual economic stability. This, Warner argues, was also the case in Britain and America's foreign policy as they had similar interests around the

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<sup>56</sup> Richard Neustadt, *Alliance Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), p56-58.

<sup>57</sup> Reynolds, 'A Special Relationship', p4.

<sup>58</sup> Henry Kissinger, *The Troubled Partnership :A Re-appraisal of the Atlantic Alliance*. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.Reynolds, 1982), 79; Dumbrell 'A Special Relationship', p5.

<sup>59</sup> H. G. Nicholas, *Britain and the United States*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 1963), p22.

<sup>60</sup> Raymond, 'The U.S. – U.K. Special Relationship in Historical Context', 4-7.

<sup>61</sup> Leventhal and Quinault, 'Introduction', p1-2.

<sup>62</sup> Oliver Franks, *Anglo-American Relations and the "Special Relationship"*, (Austin: Harry Ransom Research Centre 1990), 20.

<sup>63</sup> Hood, 'Atlantic Dreams and European Realities', p195.

world.<sup>64</sup> Boyle applies these similar interests to Britain and America's security interests during the Cold War. He argues that they were joined by opposition to the Soviet Union which took the form of a security alliance.<sup>65</sup> This relationship, according to Gowing, resulted in the development of the nuclear agreements between Britain and America which came to symbolise a large part of the Special Relationship.<sup>66</sup> These views have removed the notion of sentiment from their descriptions of Anglo-American relations. Instead the interests of both states have brought them together and also pushed them apart. The Suez crisis is perhaps the clearest example of the latter.

### 3.3.2. Middle Ground

There have been some academics that have not seen the association as this clear cut. To some, the construction of the Special Relationship sits between sentiment and interest. This view is held up by Sperling who claims that the Special Relationship rested on a shared identity, material exchange and common geo-political assumptions. These have been reinforced by connected historical legacies and joint involvement in international organisations such as NATO.<sup>67</sup> Dumbrell also highlights the intertwining of sentiment and interest. He states that the relationship rests on defence cooperation but has its origins in cultural, historical and linguistic ties.<sup>68</sup> The various metaphors of the Special Relationship also seem to support Sperling and Dumbrell as concepts such as hands-across-the-sea and the Atlantic Bridge utilise Britain and America's historical, cultural and linguistic ties to address their mutual concerns. What this debate has shown is that there is a lot of substance to bring together Britain and America. Whether sentimental ties based on a shared history, culture and language or addressing mutual concerns and threats, Britain and America have found a way to work together.

### 3.4. Historiographical Schools

Baylis has made use of the account of the different historiographical traditions within the literature on Anglo-American interaction that was developed by Alex Danchev. These schools provide an important differentiation between the various approaches, explanations and understandings on the topic.<sup>69</sup> The first school is the Evangelical approach which is coupled to the ideas of Churchill and the hands-across-the-sea mentality. The second approach has been referred to as Functional. According to Baylis, this understanding emphasises the mutual interests of

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<sup>64</sup> Geoffrey Warner, 'The Anglo-American Special Relationship', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 13, no. 4 (1989), 479-499, p479.

<sup>65</sup> Boyle, 'The Special Relationship', p464.

<sup>66</sup> Margaret Gowing, 'Nuclear Weapons and the Special Relationship', William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull (eds) *The Special Relationship*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1986), 117-128, p117.

<sup>67</sup> James Sperling, 'Permanent Allies or Friends with Benefits?', p20.

<sup>68</sup> John Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship : Anglo-American relations from the Cold War to Iraq* (2nd ed.) (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2006), 4; Dumbrell, 'Working With Allies', p457.

<sup>69</sup> Baylis, *Anglo-American Relations since 1939*, p8.

Britain and America over the sentimental factors. This school can be connected to the theories of Greeks and Romans or the Atlantic Bridge and indicates that nothing in the relationship is simply given; it has to be negotiated and worked for. The final approach has been labelled Terminal. The Terminal understanding highlights the demanding nature of the relationship and seeks to dispel the illusions of sentimentality.<sup>70</sup> This style of organisation provides a useful set of tools for arranging the vast literature on the Special Relationship.

Hahn supports Danchev and Baylis by separating different historical phases into similar cycles. He sees the years 1945 to 1956 as a period when Britain and America had a strong working relationship. This period ultimately ended in difficulty and disharmony with the Suez crisis. The second phase, from 1957 until 1963, was characterised by rebuilding the relationship. The following years until the 1970s saw a series of breaches in a similar style to Baylis' Terminal approach. Hahn recognises the re-emergence after this period into a fourth cycle. He claims that the 1980s saw an Evangelical approach re-emerge between Britain and America.<sup>71</sup> Though Hahn is able to tie these periods to the different approaches that Baylis has identified, he does not give enough flexibility within these periods. He fails to recognise that different episodes may lead to different interpretations. For example, though Hahn's third period had Terminal aspects, there were continuous areas of co-operation in nuclear defence as well as a strong cultural exchange of media and materials at that time.

#### 3.4.1. Evangelical

The Evangelical school of thought can be connected to one of the earliest scholars of the Special Relationship, H. C. Allen in his 1954 work *Great Britain and the United States*. In it he claimed that the embedded emotion towards each other allowed the UK and US to form a partnership which he referred to as the most important relationship in the Western World.<sup>72</sup> Bartlett offers some support for Allen's view by stating that the Special Relationship demonstrated a vitality, intimacy, and level of commitment that was well beyond the norms of international relations.<sup>73</sup> The bonds between the UK and US have also been stressed by Dimpleby and Reynolds. In their 1986 work, they suggest that though Britain may go further into Europe and while America may move closer to the Pacific region, the bonds of history will ensure that there will always be a

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, p9-14.

<sup>71</sup> Peter Hahn, 'Discord or Accommodation? Britain and the United States in World Affairs, 1945-92', Fred Leventhal Roland Quinault (eds), *Anglo-American Attitudes: from revolution to partnership* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p178.

<sup>72</sup> H. C. Allen, *Great Britain and the United States : A History of Anglo-American Relations, 1783-1952*, (London: Odhams Press, 1954), p19.

<sup>73</sup> C. J. Bartlett, *'The Special Relationship' : A Political History of Anglo-American Relations since 1945*, (London ; New York: Longman, 1992), p179.

Special Relationship.<sup>74</sup> Stuart raises a similar point by stating that though there may be differences; these have been infrequent and can be put aside easily when it comes to working together.<sup>75</sup> These collective views argue that there is a bond between Britain and America that is more profound than other bilateral relations. Though this may be true from a British point of view, many observers have noted that America has tended to treat the relationship more objectively inline with the Functional understandings of the relationship.

#### 3.4.2. Functional

The Functional approach is the second historiographical school on the Special Relationship and focuses more on the interests and practicalities of the relationship. The area of defence has become the most fertile ground for those working from a Functional point of view. Eberle makes the point that there are few military areas where there has been no bilateral agreement between Britain and America.<sup>76</sup> He has recognised the importance of security as the central plank in the Special Relationship. Warner, however, offers a different argument claiming that Anglo-American relations transcend Europe and NATO partnerships because both Britain and the US had larger interests after World War II, which they sought to harmonise.<sup>77</sup> Though these views represent a difference in the level of function between Britain and America, they recognise that function is the main force behind British and American co-operation. The concepts of Greeks and Romans or the Atlantic Bridge demonstrate a similar position as they highlight the role that Britain could actually play, based on the tangible interests of both countries. They differ to those in the Terminal school as they recognise that there is some continuous purpose to the Special Relationship.

#### 3.4.3. Terminal

The Terminal approach to the Special Relationship has aimed to debunk some of the myths that surround the relationship. Many scholars have signed onto this school's understanding of Anglo-American affairs. McDonald highlights the period after the Second World War as a time when the quality of relations fell as America became less interested in appearing close to Britain.<sup>78</sup> Owen argues that any appearance of closeness in this period was only because America had no other suitable partners to work with. He demonstrates this with the cases of a weak France, still

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<sup>74</sup> David Dibleby and David Reynolds, *An Ocean Apart*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988), p333.

<sup>75</sup> Douglas Stuart, "Well Isn't That Special?" Concluding Remarks on U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21st Century', Jeffrey McCausland & Douglas Stuart (eds), *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (2006), 203-210, p204.

<sup>76</sup> James Eberle, The Military Relationship. William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull (eds) *The Special Relationship*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1986), 151-161, p151.

<sup>77</sup> Warner, 'The Anglo-American Special Relationship', p479.

<sup>78</sup> Ian McDonald, *Anglo-American Relations since the Second World War*, (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1974), p12.

rebuilding after World War II, while Germany and Japan still needed to be rehabilitated as the aggressors of the War.<sup>79</sup> Similarly, after the Cold War when the US had more of a choice in partners, President George H. W. Bush announced that a newly reunified Germany was a more important European partner than Great Britain. According to Watt, any appearance of closeness that Owen suggests was over by the 1970s.<sup>80</sup> Other scholars have drawn on more recent examples to demonstrate the difficulty of relations between Britain and America. Edlin uses the case of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to show that both countries are heading in different directions as the UK recognised the ICC's authority while the US did not.<sup>81</sup> Childs also holds this opinion by claiming that Britain's declining military strength will be another matter that will draw the two states apart.<sup>82</sup> Danchev has proposed that since the end of the Cold War the literature on the Special Relationship has moved strongly toward the Terminal school. He offers 10 criteria for measuring the extent of the Special Relationship which include; transparency, generality and exclusivity. In all, Danchev finds that the relationship is not so special.<sup>83</sup> He states that sentimental arguments actually distracts from the fact that the relationship lacks any tangible foundations and has yet to find a role since the end of the Cold War.<sup>84</sup> The Terminal school of literature on the Special Relationship attempts to move discussions away from sentimentality in an attempt to objectively examine the Special Relationship. This will always be hard to do, however, as long as politicians rely on the sentiment of the relationship in creating foreign policy.

These different schools of historical thought have demonstrated some of the recurring themes in the discourse on the Special Relationship. These competing approaches can offer a powerful way to map the continuity and nature of Anglo-American affairs. By comparing and contrasting these views on the relationship it may be possible to determine a future course for the relationship.

### 3.5. Future Discourse

The body of literature on Anglo-American affairs has traced the evolution and patterns of the relationship since the Second World War. Some scholars have gone on to give their

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<sup>79</sup> David Owen, 'Britain and the United States', in William Leuchtenburg, Anthony Quinton, George Ball and David Owen (eds). *Britain and the United States : Four Views to Mark the Silver Jubilee*, (London: Heinemann in association with the United States International Communication Agency, 1979), 61-78 p62.

<sup>80</sup> Donald Watt, *Succeeding John Bull : America in Britain's Place, 1900-1975 : a study of the Anglo-American relationship and world politics in the context of British and American foreign-policy-making in the twentieth century*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p163.

<sup>81</sup> Douglas Edlin 'The Anxiety of Sovereignty: Britain, the United States and the International Criminal Court', Jeffrey McCausland & Douglas Stuart (eds), *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (2006), 55-76 p68.

<sup>82</sup> Nicholas Childs, 'Past Present and Future Foreign Policy: The British Perspective' Jeffrey McCausland & Douglas Stuart (eds), *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (2006), 125-134, p129-134

<sup>83</sup> Danchev, 'On specialness', 742-743.

<sup>84</sup> Alex Danchev, How strong are the shared values in the Transatlantic Relationship? *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol. 7, (2005), 429-436, 434.

recommendations and views on where and how affairs should progress. Two main schools of thought have emerged on this issue. The UK should either look towards Europe in her foreign policy and move away from close relations with the US, or re-evaluate and re-approach the Americans to build a stronger bilateral partnership. The different positions indicate the level of vitality that scholars think that the relationship still has.

Those who have suggested that there is still work to be done on Anglo-American relations have called for new approaches to be taken. This, according to the likes of Porter, Wallace and Phillips, should begin with an open debate in British politics on co-operation with the US. These researchers have highlighted the charged level of debate on Britain's relations with Europe and suggest that a similar approach to these subjects can help direct British policies concerning America.<sup>85</sup> If a clearer examination were to take place it would have to ask if Britain and America are on the same track which is what Howard questions.<sup>86</sup> Dumbrell suggests that Britain should take a harder line with her American partner to readdress the imbalances in the relationship.<sup>87</sup> Eberle however, states that actually Britain should remain as a faithful partner with the US to maintain a global presence.<sup>88</sup> Wither's views fall between Dumbrell and Eberle, as seen in the example of the reconstruction of Iraq. Wither states that the rebuilding of Iraq has shown to the US that they need willing partners.<sup>89</sup> Whether the UK follows Dumbrell's suggestions or continues along Eberle's advice of staunchly following the Americans has yet to be seen. What these academics agree on is that there is still a future for the Special Relationship. Others have advised that Britain should start to look elsewhere in her foreign relations.

The suggestion that Britain should turn away from the Special Relationship and look towards Europe has gathered a serious amount of momentum amongst academics and journalists. Childs, Stuart, Grayling and Langdon have all agreed that Britain should refocus her foreign policy on building stronger ties with Europe. For these scholars, being too heavily involved with the US has weakened Britain's global position and has distracted her from playing a prominent role in Europe.<sup>90</sup> Gilbert, Dimpleby, Reynolds, May and Treverton explain that the US should allow Britain to do this. They argue that though Britain may remain close to the US it is actually in both

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<sup>85</sup> Porter, 'Last charge of the knights?', p356; Wallace and Phillips, 'Reassessing the Special Relationship', p263

<sup>86</sup> Michael Howard, 'Afterword', William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull (eds) *The Special Relationship*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1986), 387-392, p391.

<sup>87</sup> Dumbrell, 'The US-UK Special Relationship', p77.

<sup>88</sup> Eberle, 'The Military Relationship', p159.

<sup>89</sup> Wither, 'British Bulldog or Bush's Poodle?', p80.

<sup>90</sup> Childs, 'Past Present and Future Foreign Policy', p134; Christopher Grayling and Christopher Langdon, *Just Another Star?: Anglo-American Relations since 1945* (London: Harrap, 1988), p205; Stuart, "'Well Isn't That Special?'" , 209.

parties best interests to allow the UK to go further into Europe.<sup>91</sup> To support this position Gamble and Kearns claim that the Special Relationship is standing in the way of Britain playing an important role in Europe.<sup>92</sup> Although these authors have highlighted that they believe that Britain should go further into Europe, there is still a long way to go before Britain re-evaluates her relations with America in favour of working closer with European partners.

### 3.6. Remarks on Anglo-American literature

To reach any specific conclusion on the nature of Anglo-American affairs, based on such a broad body of literature is a difficult task. What such a review has exposed are some of the common themes and views from academics. The most prominent of these has been on the concept of sentiment versus interest as motivation in the relationship. From America's War of Independence through to suggestions on where the relationship is heading, the notions of an Anglo-Saxon brotherhood based on shared language and values as opposed to being based on mutual interests has had a major impact on the study of Anglo-American relations. Most scholars have viewed the relationship in the context of either interest or sentiment and overlook an important distinction. It is possible that the two expressions, 'Anglo-American affairs' and the 'Special Relationship', can be divided into two separate themes. As many authors have highlighted, the joint language and similar cultures have nurtured a unique bond between the two, creating what Churchill referred to as the Special Relationship. Anglo-American affairs can be seen to represent something slightly different. Not all interaction between Britain and America can be seen as special. There have been incidents where both parties have interacted, in positive and negative ways, in a context that may not be seen as special. Conflicts such as the Vietnam War, the Kosovo crisis in the 1990s or the recent intervention in Libya saw Britain and America clash or collaborate in a manner that did not rest on a mutual bond. This kind of relationship can be compared to other bilateral relations between states such as between Britain and France or America and Japan. The development of this separation of terms could provide an interesting understanding and organisation to the wealth of material already published on the relationship between Britain and America.

One other area that has been conspicuously absent in the literature on the Special Relationship has been an engagement with IR theory. Vucetic makes reference to the three major IR schools: realism, liberalism and social constructivism, claiming that they all offer a starting point in analysing relations between Britain and America. However, his focus shifts onto the racial factors

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<sup>91</sup> Dimpleby and Reynolds, *An Ocean Apart*, p333; Mark Gilbert, 'Stranded Between Two Receding Shorelines? The Anglo-American, Special Relationship after the May 2005 Elections', Jeffery McCausland & Douglas Stuart (eds), *U.S.-UK Relations at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (2006), 77-92, p79; Ernest May and George Treverton, 'Defence Relationships: American Perspectives', William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull (eds) *The Special Relationship*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1986), 161-182, p181.

<sup>92</sup> Gamble and Kearns, 'Recasting the Special Relationship', p129.

that link the two states together, and not on any one school.<sup>93</sup> The relationship was the basis for the early IR theorists such as Morton Kaplan and Hans Morgenthau to support their theoretical discussions on realism.<sup>94</sup> However, more recent theoretical discourses have been overlooked in the literature on the relationship, something this thesis will attempt to address. Before this thesis turns its attention to IR theoretical discussion it will analyse the nature of contemporary British foreign policy and American foreign policy. These sections will be used to place this literature review on Anglo-American relations into a modern foreign policy context.

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<sup>93</sup> Srdjan Vucetic, A Racialized Peace? How Britain and the US Made Their Relationship Special. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol. 7 no.4,(2011), 403-421, p403-404.

<sup>94</sup> Morton Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*, (USA: John Wiley and Sons, 1967), p5-6; Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations, Revised by Kenneth Thompson* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1993), p198.

## 4. Contemporary British Foreign Policy

By reviewing the literature on Anglo-American relations, this thesis has demonstrated what has been one of the core British approaches to foreign affairs over the last two centuries. It is now worth considering how British foreign policy has changed in more recent times in order to appreciate the broader context of British and American affairs during the Brown years. When New Labour came to power in 1997 it won on a platform of change. In regards to foreign policy, Prime Minister Tony Blair and Foreign Secretary Robin Cook based their approach to international affairs on an ethical foreign policy fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The resulting policies of the New Labour government led to the creation of a body of literature based on British foreign affairs that takes into account ethical policies, theoretical debate and Britain's wider role in the world. Though there has been a lot of work on the foreign policy of Tony Blair and some on that of his successors, there has been less on the nature of 21<sup>st</sup> century British foreign policy. Most work that has been done has focused on the United Kingdom's position on the international stage or her foreign relations, particularly with the US and Europe.

### 4.1. America and Europe

As discussed above, the relationship with the United States has been at the centre of British foreign policy for a considerable period. To some, this position needs to be changed as the closeness that existed between Blair and Bush has compromised Britain's other foreign relations. Mephram cites the example of the Middle East where, as he claims, the war in Iraq spoiled Britain's relations with states such as Palestine and worsened relations Iran.<sup>95</sup> Hood tries to present this as an opportunity for the UK to establish a new role in the EU. He suggests that if Britain were to move away from relying on NATO and the Special Relationship, it may find a new foreign policy initiative by embracing the European Common Foreign and Security Policy as part of her own security agenda.<sup>96</sup> However, more recently, developments by the Coalition Government have made Hood's position even more unlikely due to poor relations between the British government and the EU over the Euro-Crisis and the proposed 2017 referendum.

David Brown presents a different argument. He claims that the UK and EU are more susceptible to terrorist attacks due to the diverse range of ideological beliefs in societies within the EU. By working with the US, Britain stands a better chance of guarding itself against these modern security threats.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, Marsh argues that Britain has played a significant role in NATO and

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<sup>95</sup> David Mephram, 'The Middle East: A New Agenda for UK Policy.' David Held and David Mephram (eds) *Progressive Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 153-174, 153-154.

<sup>96</sup> Hood, 'Atlantic Dreams, European Realities', p195.

<sup>97</sup> David Brown, 'Britain and the Politics of Counter-Terrorism: The 2002 New Chapter and Beyond', David Brown (ed) *The Development of British Defence Policy: Blair, Brown and Beyond*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 81-106, p88; p102.

US-led military coalitions highlighting Britain's emphasis on the Special Relationship and demonstrating a purpose on the international stage.<sup>98</sup> Marsh and Brown have identified a role for the UK as a supporting military power for the US which in turn protects British interests. However, staying close to the US may not be so simple.

Rees stresses that as the US moves away from NATO, Britain will be left in a difficult position as whether to follow the US or stick close to European allies.<sup>99</sup> Dumbrell also points out the jeopardy of the US moving away from Europe as part of the Asian pivot. As a result, the UK would have to come to better terms with a multipolar world.<sup>100</sup> Dyson puts forward the view that the UK should move away from the US and focus on a foreign and security policy closer to Europe.<sup>101</sup> Wallace adds to this by stating that Britain's relations with the US may result in her being isolated in the international community. He claims that as the US and EU move further apart, Britain's role as the 'Atlantic Bridge', holding the US and Europe together, will become redundant.<sup>102</sup> It can be claimed that the UK has other ways of maintaining her alliances other than through bilateral relations.

Clarke reports that the UK's position in institutions such as NATO is another way for her to remain close to the US.<sup>103</sup> However, institutions such as NATO, the UN Security Council or the EU are, according to Held, in danger of being unable to meet the current global challenges which suggests that the UK would be better off moving away from them and acting independently.<sup>104</sup> Hood also describes the decline of international institutions as being important to British foreign policy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by using the example of Tony Blair bypassing the wishes of the UN Security Council in favour of working directly with the US in the invasion of Iraq.<sup>105</sup> Britain's position on these issues is quickly changing as seen with the example of the Syrian crisis. What this evidence suggests is that the UK cannot act alone, and needs some form of international partnership either with the US or through the broader institutions. In any case, if the UK fails to find a policy course, she risks drifting through international affairs.

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<sup>98</sup> Steve Marsh, 'The Anglo-American defence relationship', Alan Dobson and Steve Marsh (eds), *Anglo-American Relations Contemporary Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2013), 179-207, p191.

<sup>99</sup> Wyn Rees, 'Britain and the Wider World', *Defence and Security Analysis* vol. 27, no. 1 (2011): 31-41, p38.

<sup>100</sup> Dumbrell, 'Personal Diplomacy', p101.

<sup>101</sup> Tom Dyson, 'Defence Policy under the Labour Government: Operational Dynamism and Strategic Inertia', *British Journal of Politics & International Relations* vol. 13, no. 2 (2010), 206-229, p215.

<sup>102</sup> William Wallace, 'The Collapse of British Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 1, (2005), 53-68, p58-60.

<sup>103</sup> Michael Clarke, 'Rethinking Security and Power', David Held and David Mepham (eds) *Progressive Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 18-35, p25.

<sup>104</sup> David Held, 'Multilateralism and Global Governance: Accountability and Effectiveness', David Held and David Mepham (eds) *Progressive Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 191-212, p210.

<sup>105</sup> Hood, 'Atlantic Dreams and European Realities', p189.

These discussions demonstrate the wider debate on Britain's global role. Hood claims that the attempt by the former Foreign Secretary David Miliband to recast the UK as a 'global hub' is evidence of an attempt to re-conceptualise the UK's global position, possibly closer to Europe.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, Morris indicates that Miliband's successor William Hague has also made the case for recasting British foreign policy by engaging more with the Commonwealth.<sup>107</sup> Morris then suggests that although Britain has an unusually prominent position in world politics due to her large economy, she needs to translate this into military power to maintain that global position.<sup>108</sup> For Clarke however, Britain no longer holds such a place and has gone from being a pillar of the international community to being one actor among many, working between the pillars.<sup>109</sup> There are those however, who suggest that this type of analysis is ineffective. Researchers such as McCourt, Wild and Williams stress that there is no one UK foreign policy; instead it is made up of a variety of different policies that need to be investigated individually for long term trends, examining the UK's involvement in institutions to truly appreciate her as an international actor.<sup>110</sup> What does emerge in this debate is that the UK has a difficult job to do in redefining her global position. The 2013 decision by Parliament not to join the US in military intervention in the Syrian crisis also indicates a significant shift in how Britain approaches security matters and will be a major benchmark as Britain aims to understand her international identity.

#### 4.2. British Foreign Policy and International Relations Theory

With the development of the concept of an ethical foreign policy, the notion of liberal interventionism has also advanced. Liberal interventionism turned into the main plank for ethical foreign policy makers. Countries that subscribed to such policies were prepared to directly intervene with force into countries or situations when human rights and life were in direct jeopardy. Both Bulley and Chandler highlight that New Labour made the point that an ethical domestic policy should be carried through to foreign policies.<sup>111</sup> Chandler goes on to explain that the notion of an ethical foreign policy came from the growth of 24 hour news which could broadcast issues and atrocities from around the world. As a result, other countries would be

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid, p193.

<sup>107</sup> Justin Morris, 'How Great Is Britain? Power, Responsibility and Britain's Future Global Role', *British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, vol. 13, no. 3 (2011), 326-47, p337

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Clarke, 'Rethinking Security and Power', p19.

<sup>110</sup> David McCourt, 'Rethinking Britain's Role in the World for a New Decade: The Limits of Discursive Therapy and the Promise of Field Theory', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* vol. 13, no. 2 (2011): 145-64, p149; Leni Wild and Paul Williams, 'Redesigning UK Foreign Policy', David Held and David Mephram (eds) *Progressive Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 231-251, p231.

<sup>111</sup> Bulley, 'Textualising British Politics', p292-293; David Chandler, 'Rhetoric Without Responsibility: The Attraction of 'Ethical' Foreign Policy', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* vol. 5, no. 3 (2003), 295-316, p296.

placed in a difficult position where victims of humanitarian crises could not be ignored.<sup>112</sup> He also stresses that an ethical foreign policy can result from other motives. For example, NATO's intervention in Kosovo could be seen as a way to restore the organisation's credibility and offer it a new direction after the Cold War.<sup>113</sup> This point highlights the intentions of those who intervene and questions how liberal their motives are, or if they are based on other self-interests.

Chandler explains that an ethical foreign policy has been gradually emerging for decades, and though it accelerated after the end of the Cold War it did not gain a significant amount of traction until the age of 24 hour news.<sup>114</sup> Furthermore, he argues that an ethical foreign policy is driven by the notion of responsibility yet claims there are no means to measure the success or the accountability of those who intervene.<sup>115</sup> Since 2003 however, when Chandler was writing, there has been some attempt to create an apparatus on liberal intervention. Bulley shows that the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty was designed to provide an ethical framework on intervention.<sup>116</sup> The example of Iraq, however, demonstrates the problems of intervention. Bulley makes the claim that the invasion of Iraq had only a veneer of ethical intentions, while Mepham goes further in his criticism of the UK for not taking a tougher stance against the US's abuses on human rights at Guantanamo Bay.<sup>117</sup> There have been many studies of ethical foreign policy ventures, such as Kosovo, or on those who subscribe to such policies, like Tony Blair or Robin Cook. Nevertheless, there has not been enough discussion on the impact that ethical foreign policies has had on the UK's foreign policy discourse.

More recently, Prime Minister David Cameron introduced his own theoretical approach to foreign policy similar to Blair's. Beech explains that as part of the rebranding of the Conservative party, Cameron had to introduce some new structures that highlighted the change from Thatcherite political philosophy. Liberal-conservatism was the theoretical model that Cameron endorsed.<sup>118</sup> This position has many similarities with the interventionist stance of Blair but carries more emphasis on the national interests of the UK. Many of the views shaping Liberal-conservatism have their foundations in interventionism and the neo-conservatism associated with the Bush

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<sup>112</sup> Chandler, p298.

<sup>113</sup> Dan Bulley, 'The Politics of an Ethical Foreign Policy: A Responsibility to Protect Whom?', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 20 (2010), 1-21, p8.

<sup>114</sup> Chandler, 'Rhetoric Without Responsibility', p298.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, p306.

<sup>116</sup> Bulley, 'The Politics of an Ethical Foreign Policy', p4.

<sup>117</sup> Bulley, 'The Politics of an Ethical Foreign Policy', p7-8; David Mepham, 'Human Rights, Justice and Security', David Held and David Mepham (eds) *Progressive Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 55-76, p61.

<sup>118</sup> Matt Beech, 'British Conservatism and Foreign Policy: Traditions and Ideas Shaping Cameron's Global View', *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol. 13, no. 3 (2011), 348-363, p361.

administration.<sup>119</sup> These neo-conservative views were held by key Tory ministers such as Michael Gove, who convinced Cameron to stand for the Tory leadership, and Foreign Secretary William Hague and played an instrumental role in the development of Liberal-conservatism.<sup>120</sup> It has been suggested that New Labour's foreign policy was a combination of many different positions to create an ethical foreign policy that would enable the British government to use force to intervene in humanitarian crises, in a similar way to neo-conservatism.<sup>121</sup> As these themes seem to have developed in the late 1990s and run through to the Coalition government, interventionism represents an important consideration when examining the Brown period. This discussion raises the debate as to what motivated Brown in his foreign policies.

The amount of material examining the various concepts relating to 21<sup>st</sup> century British foreign policy has been noticeably limited. Though there have been countless works about specific policies and ventures as well as investigations into Britain's role in the wider world, the field itself remains underdeveloped, particularly in regards to IR theory. What scholars have commented on suggests that Britain needs to recast its role in the world and address its apparent decline. A similar review of US foreign policy can highlight the relevant UK concerns due to the inescapable fact that British foreign policy is tethered to the US.

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<sup>119</sup> Daddow, 'The Use of Force in British Foreign Policy', p117.

<sup>120</sup> Daddow, 'The Use of Force in British Foreign Policy', p117, Klaus Dodds and Stuart Elden, 'Thinking Ahead: David Cameron, the Henry Jackson Society and the British Neoconservatives', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol. 10 no.3, (2008), 347-363, p350.

<sup>121</sup> Mark Bevir, Oliver Daddow, and Ian Hall, 'Introduction: Interpreting British Foreign Policy', *The British Journal of Politics and International Affairs*, vol. 15, no. 2, (2012),1-12, p5-6

## 5. Contemporary US Foreign Policy

This section will analyse the recent foreign policy approaches of the US. This review will be undertaken in order to complement the previous chapter's attempt to set Anglo-America relations in a contemporary context. In contrast to the literature on British foreign policy, countless amounts of academic analysis have taken place in a vast degree of areas, reflecting America's unique position in the world. By reviewing recent works on a set of specific areas this chapter will highlight pertinent debates that need to be considered when analysing British and American relations. The nature of the US in the international arena, as seen in the debate on multilateralism and unilateralism, is an important discussion to demonstrate the issues relevant to her bilateral relations. This discussion has reflections in the recent developments of transatlantic relations between Europe and America which have been seen to be diverging in recent years. Also, recent policy positions and their theoretical underpinnings found in the Bush administration will demonstrate another key line of inquiry. Following this will be a consideration of the level of continuity displayed by the Obama administration after taking office. Finally, discussions on the use of IR theory in American foreign policy can also demonstrate key concerns associated to this research project.

### 5.1. Unilateralism vs. Multilateralism

After the events of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001, the Bush administration embarked on a foreign policy course that would epitomise America's international position. As Sperling describes, the response of the US government to the attacks was largely unilateralist in nature.<sup>122</sup> In reaction to the attacks the US did reach out to some multilateral fora; however, other parties such as European nations found themselves at odds with much of the Bush administrations' approach.<sup>123</sup> What collaborations did exist after 9/11, did not last much longer after the toppling of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.<sup>124</sup> Although the US was persuaded to work through NATO to respond to the attacks, it was the subsequent approach to the wider Middle East, and specifically Iraq, which highlighted the US's unilateral stance. Dockrill demonstrates this point by stating the use of pre-emptive attacks against Iraq was a key example of the Bush administration's unilateralism.<sup>125</sup> Additionally, as Gamble and Kearns points out, Bush's approach was outside the norms of

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<sup>122</sup> Sperling, 'Permanent Allies or Friends with Benefits?', p20.

<sup>123</sup> Mark Pollack, 'Unilateral America, Multilateral Europe', John Peterson and Mark Pollack (eds), *Europe, America, Bush: Transatlantic relations in t Twenty-First Century*, (London: Routledge, 2006), 115-128, p123; Jussi Hanhumaki, Benedikt Schoenborn and Barbara Zanchetta, *Transatlantic Relations since 1945*, (London: Routledge, 2012), p156.

<sup>124</sup> Klaus Larres, 'Hillary Rodham Clinton as Secretary of State: A New Engagement with the World', in Klaus Larres (ed) *The US Secretaries of State and Transatlantic Relations*, (London: Routledge, 2010), 4-12, p17.

<sup>125</sup> Saki Ruth Dockrill, 'Dealing with Fear: Implementing the Bush Doctrine of Preemptive Attack', in John Owens and John Dumbrell (eds) *America's War on Terrorism*, (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2008), 113-38, p113;

international behaviour.<sup>126</sup> This stance was difficult to accept for some of America's allies. Scott-Smith highlights this difficulty by explaining that Bush's unilateralism put US-Dutch relations to the test.<sup>127</sup> Peterson and Steffenson also explained that the unilateral action of the US cost America her international legitimacy.<sup>128</sup> A consequence of Bush's actions has been the creation of a unilateral legacy that has been difficult to overcome.

There have been those who have called on President Barack Obama to move away from Bush's unilateral style and embrace a multilateral approach; however, there are some who see this as a difficult task. Reardon states that this multilateral engagement has occurred with the Obama administration adopting a more legalist approach to achieve long-term goals.<sup>129</sup> Contrary to Reardon, Skidmore has concluded that this has not taken place and Obama's effort during his first term in office has seen only a slight shift towards multilateralism. Skidmore identifies changes in US domestic structures after the Cold War that has led to challenges to presidential powers resulting in Obama limited to a unilateral position. For President Obama to succeed in moving towards a multilateral approach, Skidmore suggests that a strategy needs to be put in place to reform the political structures to allow the President more freedom to pursue multilateral lines.<sup>130</sup> Kelly suggests that unilateralism is inevitable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He claims that Obama's rhetoric on this subject has been at odds with his actions and was committed to unilateralism since the beginning of his presidency and remained close to the approach of the Bush administration.<sup>131</sup> Lynch and Singh make the claim that the US needs reliable partners to succeed in her ventures but warns that the difference between the US and her allies can be exaggerated.<sup>132</sup> Yet, this view is open to challenges as there has been evidence of this unilateral style altering international perceptions. For example, Tony Blair's failure to become the first EU Council President in 2009 was largely attributed to his closeness to the Bush administration's unilateral action, an attitude that seems to have remained during the Obama administration.

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<sup>126</sup> Gamble and Kearns, 'Recasting the Special Relationship', p121.

<sup>127</sup> Giles Scott-Smith, 'Testing the Limits of a Special Relationship: US Unilateralism and Dutch Multilateralism in the Twenty-First Century', in John Dumbrell and Axel Schafer (eds) *America's 'Special Relationships'*, (London: Routledge, 2009), 115-32, p117.

<sup>128</sup> John Peterson and Rebecca Steffenson, 'Transatlantic Institutions: Can Partnership Be Engineered?' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol. 11, (2009), 25-45, p38.

<sup>129</sup> Lawrence Reardon, 'Shifting Global Paradigms and Obama's Adaptive Foreign Policy', in William Crotty (ed) *The Obama Presidency: Promise and Performance*, (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2012), 103-126, p122.

<sup>130</sup> David Skidmore, 'The Obama Presidency and US Foreign Policy: Where's the multilateralism?', *International Studies Perspectives*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2012), 43-64, p44-46.

<sup>131</sup> Christopher Kelley, 'Rhetoric and Reality? Unilateralism and the Obama Administration', *Social Science Quarterly*, vol. 93, no. 5 (2012), 1146-1160, p1158.

<sup>132</sup> Timothy Lynch and Robert Singh, *After Bush: The Case for Continuity in American Foreign Policy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p235, p146-7.

Some, however, have questioned the criticisms and issues surrounding the US and unilateralism. For example, Dumbrell states that modern American interests are less connected to those of her allies and therefore it is less optimal to work closely with them. He argues that the Bush administration's unilateralism emerged from post-Cold War trends rather than neo-conservative doctrine.<sup>133</sup> Although Dockrill disagrees with Dumbrell on the neo-conservative origins of Bush's unilateralism, she does recognise this post-Cold War perspective. She relies on former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's view that the US needs to operate between unilateral and multilateral approaches.<sup>134</sup> Similarly, Pollock explains that US scepticism of multilateral fora existed before the Bush administration.<sup>135</sup> These views demonstrate that the idea of unilateralism is not one simply associated to the Bush administration's response to 9/11. They are indicative of a larger movement in contemporary American foreign policy. Beyond the causes of US unilateralism, its impact on America's partners can also offer a revealing insight into the nature of American foreign policy. As highlighted above, unilateral styles can undermine some of these relationships, such as with Europe.

## 5.2. Transatlantic Drift

One of the policy areas that demonstrate the difference between a unilateralist approach and a multilateral one is the relationship between the US and the European Union. As Pollack explains, as the EU has attempted to develop its own form of multilateralism, the US has become more suspicious of such multilateral fora.<sup>136</sup> This was recently exhibited in relation to 2014 clashes in Kiev. A senior US diplomat's conversation, which saw US officials dismiss the EU in favour of a direct American approach, was leaked online.<sup>137</sup> One of the principal foundations of the EU is its devotion to a collective response to world events, which is often time consuming and inconclusive. In contrast, the US views on the War on Terror were at odds with the EU's style. Trachtenberg makes this point in connection to the war in Iraq, arguing that the US felt they did not need EU backing to take action. While on the other hand, the response of the leading European states was a preference for the use of diplomatic and multilateral pressure rather than taking military action.<sup>138</sup> According to Howorth, there is a division of labour between the US and EU which sees the former provide military strength while the latter deliver soft power approaches such as relying diplomatic methods in periods of crisis. He sees this as a positive situation which

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<sup>133</sup> Dumbrell, 'Working With Allies', p455.

<sup>134</sup> Dockrill, 'Dealing with Fear', 123

<sup>135</sup> Pollack, 'Unilateral America, Multilateral Europe', p116.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> BBC News, 'Ukraine Crisis: Transcript of Leaked Nuland-Pyatt Call', (07<sup>th</sup> February 2014).

<sup>138</sup> Marc Trachtenberg, 'The Iraq Crisis and the Future of the Western Alliance', in David Andrews (ed) *Atlantic Alliance Under Stress*, (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2009), 201-31, p201.

plays to both sides strengths.<sup>139</sup> Alternatively, Andrews argues that, following Howorth's logic, some in the Bush administration revelled in the fact that they were not working with EU partners as they were on different courses.<sup>140</sup> This striking example suggests that the two have moved far apart from their previous collaborations during the Cold War and in the early post-Cold War period. Hallams pinpoints the Balkans crisis in the 1990s as the time when the US decided to move away from multilateralism. She states that Bush diverged from the Clinton era as he felt that it was better to follow a unilateral approach to foreign and security policy rather than be bogged down by European allies.<sup>141</sup> She also claims that after the 9/11 attacks the US needed to reassert her own credibility as a superpower which required acting alone to demonstrate American strength.<sup>142</sup> Many of these negative views were initially connected to President Bush; however, similar debates have emerged in regards to the Obama administration.

Referring to the Obama administration, Larres emphasises that there was some improved level of contact with Europe after Bush left office. He claimed that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton came to play a slightly larger role in Europe, along with a stronger presence from Vice-President Joe Biden.<sup>143</sup> Jones however, suggests that Obama's version of multilateralism is different to that of Europe's and could result in an American shift away from Europe and disputes on Afghanistan and Climate Change could still cause rifts between Europe and the Obama administration.<sup>144</sup> Niblett supports this by explaining that burden-sharing in the war in Afghanistan has been a contentious problem between the US and Europe.<sup>145</sup> Cox supports Niblett's point on Afghanistan and adds that Obama's Asian Pivot was worrying for European powers.<sup>146</sup> As Obama has moved into his second term, European hopes in his administration symbolising a convergence of EU-US styles have slipped away. A situation demonstrated in the slow process to form a transatlantic trading bloc and further strained by claims of US espionage against European officials.

Some who have looked at these issues more broadly have disputed the rifts between Europe and Obama's America. Cox claims that after the Cold War and despite the differences that emerged

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<sup>139</sup> Jolyon Howorth, 'Foreign and Defence Policy', John Peterson and Pollack (eds) *Europe, America, Bush: Transatlantic Relations in the Twenty-First Century*, (Routledge: London, 2006), 13-29, p25.

<sup>140</sup> David Andrews, 'The United States and Its Atlantic Partners', in David Andrews (ed) *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) 56-78, p56.

<sup>141</sup> Ellen Hallams, *The United States and Nato since 9/11*, (London: Routledge, 2009), p61.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid*, p63.

<sup>143</sup> Larres, 'Hillary Rodham Clinton as Secretary of State', p7.

<sup>144</sup> Bruce Jones, 'The Coming Clash: Europe and US Multilateralism under Obama', in Álvaro de Vasconcelos and Marcin Zaborowski (eds) *The Obama Moment*, (Paris: The European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2009), 63-90, p64; 77.

<sup>145</sup> Robin Niblett, 'Europe: transatlantic relations still drifting', in Robin Niblett (ed) *America and a Changed World: A Question of Leadership*, (Chichester: John Wiley and Son Ltd., 2010)185-204, p189-190.

<sup>146</sup> Michael Cox, 'Too Big to Fail?: The Transatlantic Relationship from Bush to Obama', *Global Policy*, vol. 3, Supplement 1 (2013), 71-78, p76.

between the US and Europe, they would never really fall out with one another.<sup>147</sup> Writing nearly 10 years later, Rees and Kahler also speculate that there is evidence that the US has been able to work with other powers including the EU; however, they and Devuyt agree that this is unsustainable as they are on divergent paths and will find it difficult to continue to maintain cooperation.<sup>148</sup> Referring directly to the Obama administration, Nielsen explains that poor relations existed before the Bush administration, and were not likely to completely disappear with the arrival of Obama.<sup>149</sup> Indeed, even during the Cold War there were significant splits between Europe and America and to claim the relationship as invulnerable to internal splits is wrong. What is clear is that the Bush administration's strong approach to international security during his first term represented a low in the relationship. While the Obama administration has made some attempts to rebuild relations with Europe, the US has continued to display a divergence with Europe.

### 5.3 Neo-conservatism

One of the main points of contention in America's foreign policy during the Bush era was the neo-conservative nature of many of his policies which were not popular in Europe. Neo-conservatism can trace its origins to 1940s New York, founded by a group of ethnic-American intellectuals. It was based on the idea of using America's unique power to promote democratic values.<sup>150</sup> Although today it is most commonly associated with foreign policy, neo-conservatism also has its roots in domestic politics. The intellectual basis of neo-conservatism emerged as a criticism of what intellectuals saw as the excesses of liberalism in the 1960s and opponents of the anti-Vietnam War movement, sexual liberation and Black Power. It was the focus on the domestic pressures on the Vietnam War that saw neo-conservatism move towards foreign policy.<sup>151</sup> By drawing out the links between neo-conservatism and contemporary US foreign policy, it can become clear to what extent the theoretical notions have directed US foreign policy.

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<sup>147</sup> Michael Cox, *US Foreign Policy after the Cold War*, (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1995), p82.

<sup>148</sup> Wyn Rees, 'Securing the Homelands: Transatlantic Co-Operation after Bush', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* vol. 11, no. 1 (2009), 108-121, p116; Miles Kahler, 'US Politics and Transatlantic Relations: We Are All Europeans Now', in David Andrews (ed) *Atlantic Alliance Under Stress*, (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2009), 81-101, p81; Youri Devuyt, 'Religion and American Foreign Policy: The Bush-Obama Divide and Its Impact on Transatlantic Relations', *Rivista di studi politici internazionali*, vol. 77, no. 1 (2010): 35-46, p35.

<sup>149</sup> Kristian Nielsen, 'Continued Drift but without the Acrimony: US-European relations under Barack Obama', *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, vol. 11, no.1, (2013), 83-108, p84.

<sup>150</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads* (London: Yale University Press, 2007), p4.

<sup>151</sup> Roberta Haar, 'Explaining George W. Bush's Adoption of the Neo-Conservative Agenda after 9/11', *Politics and Policy* vol. 38, no. 5 (2010): 965-90, p970; Mohammed Shareef, 'President George W. Bush's Policy Towards Iraq: Change or Continuity?', (PhD Thesis, University of Durham, 2010), 34-35.

The neo-conservatives found a home in the Reagan administration where their policy ideas could be exercised. However, in the 1990s with the arrival of the Clinton administration their views soon fell out of favour in US policy elites. Ryan describes the Clinton years as a period in the wilderness for the neo-conservatives where they emerged as a shadow government. During this time those who held neo-conservative views began to strongly advocate that the US should dominate foreign affairs as it was a unique and exceptional power.<sup>152</sup> Fukuyama's description of neo-conservatism describes a belief in US power with authority over international institutions in order to provide a moral approach to justice and democracy. The spread of democracy and greater concerns for human rights have been identified as central aspects to the neo-conservative doctrine, and should be pursued through foreign aid or military intervention.<sup>153</sup> He goes on to argue that these beliefs were skewed during the Bush administration, where neo-conservative bias led to poor judgment and over estimation of the threats facing America.<sup>154</sup> The neo-conservative arguments on the use of strength to project US values were put forward by figures in the Bush administration such as Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle.<sup>155</sup> To Woodward, this theoretical approach was visible after 9/11 when Wolfowitz wanted to use the attacks as a motive to invade Iraq in order to avoid Saddam Hussein sponsoring acts of terrorism.<sup>156</sup> The research of Cooper, Dunn and Stansfield reveal that the idea of a pre-emptive attack was needed to rebuild America's morale after 9/11.<sup>157</sup> In contrast, Dockrill believes that there is a difference between a pre-emptive attack and a preventive one. She suggests that there needs to be sufficient threat of attack, not just an immediate one. She compares Bush's approach to North Korea, who has a long record of developing a nuclear programme and Iraq, who only aspired to have one. The decision to intervene in Iraq was based on pre-emption, aimed at stopping her gaining nuclear weapons rather than actually preventing her from attacking the US.<sup>158</sup> To the neo-conservative members of Bush's government, Iraq was an easy target to project US values and promote human rights.<sup>159</sup> The use of force seems to be an important element of the neo-conservative approach which resonated with the Bush administration.

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<sup>152</sup> Maria Ryan, 'Neoconservatism and the American Public: Was 9/11 a Hegemonic Moment?', in Andrew Johnstone and Helen Laville (eds) *The US Public and American Foreign Policy*, (London: Routledge, 2010), 155-171, p159-160.

<sup>153</sup> Shareef, *President George W. Bush's Policy Towards Iraq*, p36.

<sup>154</sup> Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads*, p4-5.

<sup>155</sup> Shareef, *President George W. Bush's Policy Towards Iraq*, p35.

<sup>156</sup> Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 2004), p26.

<sup>157</sup> Danny Cooper, *Neoconservatism and American Foreign Policy* (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), p143; Tim Dunne and Gareth Stansfield, 'Realist and Reflective Perspectives on International Relations and the U.S. "War on Terror"', in John Owens and John Dumbrell (eds) *America's "War on Terrorism"*, (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2008), 139-158, p152.

<sup>158</sup> Dockrill, 'Dealing with Fear', p119.

<sup>159</sup> Shareef, *President George W. Bush's Policy Towards Iraq*, p46-47.

It is difficult to measure the impact of neo-conservatism on Bush's policies. Singh, for one, raises criticisms of the view that neo-conservative principles had an over reaching effect on Bush. He states that though Bush's unilateralism was a clear neo-conservative belief, the Bush administration did not follow neo-conservative reasoning in the public debate on the war in Iraq; nor did he appoint any neo-conservatives to important policymaking positions.<sup>160</sup> It is difficult to measure the amount of influence the neo-conservative position actually had on Bush himself or as McCrisken claims that the Obama administration continued many of Bush's policies and governing style.<sup>161</sup> Friedman supports this line of argument by drawing a link between the neo-conservative notion of spreading democracy and the Obama administration's approach to Egypt during the Arab Spring.<sup>162</sup> What is apparent from this debate is that there was a convergence of belief between neo-conservatives and the Bush administration on the belief of US strength and exceptionalism that authorised her to act unilaterally.

#### 5.4. Bush to Obama

With the election of Barack Obama in 2008, many expected a clear break from the Bush administration, particularly in the area of foreign policy. Weiss and Lindsay declare that Obama is actually moving toward a multilateral position by calling for more powerful international institutions and a renaissance for organisations such as the UN.<sup>163</sup> Reardon supports this claim by using the death of Osama bin Laden as an example of a new approach from the US in its use of force and the projection of US power.<sup>164</sup> His reluctance to follow in Bush's wake was most visible in the Libyan and Syrian crises that emerged from the Arab Spring. In both cases, he demonstrated an unwillingness to follow an interventionist stance as Obama had to be convinced to take limited action in Libya and only began to make movements on Syria after the use of chemical weapons had been revealed. In analysing the Arab Spring, Morey, Thyme, Hayden and Senters have argued that Obama broke away from Bush and previous presidents by not restricting his response to international crises through the use of presidential doctrines.<sup>165</sup> During the Libya crisis Obama appeared to be aware of the legacies of Bush's foreign policy position and seemed to want to avoid taking action that could lead to US forces being pinned down and responsible for

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<sup>160</sup> Robert Singh, 'Neo-Conservatism: Theory and Practice', Inderjeet Parmar, Linda Miller and Mark Ledwidge (eds) *New Directions in US Foreign Policy*, (London: Routledge, 2009), 32-47, p40-46.

<sup>161</sup> Trevor McCrisken, 'Ten Years On: Obama's War on Terrorism in Rhetoric and Practice', *International Affairs* vol. 87, no. 4 (2011): 781-801, p781.

<sup>162</sup> George Friedman, 'Obama and the Arab Spring', *Stratfor Global Intelligence*, p2.

<sup>163</sup> Thomas Weiss, 'Toward a Third Generation of International Institutions: Obama's Un Policy', *Washington Quarterly* vol. 32, no. 3 (2009), 141-62, p145; James Lindsay, "George W. Bush, Barack Obama and the Future of US Global Leadership." *International Affairs* 87, no. 4 (Jul 2011): 765-779, p772.

<sup>164</sup> Reardon, 'Shifting Global Paradigms and Obama's Adaptive Foreign Policy', p122.

<sup>165</sup> Daniel Morey, Clayton Thyme, Sarah Hayden and Michael Senters, 'Leader, Follower or Spectator? The Role of President Obama in the Arab Spring Uprisings', *Social Science Quarterly*, vol. 93, no. 5 (2012), 1185-1201, p1199.

a war torn country.<sup>166</sup> However, there have been other elements of Obama's foreign policies that can be compared to the Bush administration.

In one of the first autobiographies released by someone close to the Obama administration, Defence Secretary Robert Gates explained that there was a level of continuity with the Bush period, a level higher than the Obama administration expected.<sup>167</sup> McCrisken agrees with Gates by explaining that Obama has actually remained on the same policy lines as Bush by upholding many of the same policy positions.<sup>168</sup> For example, Bouchet explains that the theme of spreading democracy, closely associated with the Bush doctrine, continued under Obama.<sup>169</sup> Gerges also claims that Obama has only made a few minor changes in his policy areas. However, Gerges does highlight some larger shifts in emphasising America's role in the world, especially relating to US hegemony.<sup>170</sup> Beyond these views, in the area of military action Obama has displayed some of the similar tendencies for using force as seen in the Bush administration. Kelly uses the examples of continuing the practice of extraordinary rendition, the authorisation to use drones to kill Americans such as Anwar al-Aulaqi and his attempts to clamp down on whistle blowers.<sup>171</sup> His increased reliance on drone attacks and the questionable incursion onto Pakistani sovereignty in the assassination of Osama bin Laden are examples reminiscent to the controversial methods Bush used after 9/11. However, there is a distinct difference in how these two presidents presented America's role in the world.

### 5.5. US Hegemony

Compared with the neo-conservative belief in US exceptionalism, others claim that US hegemony is in a state of decline. Cox uses realism to illustrate this view by stating that all empires have a limited lifespan. He indicates that America's dominance was demonstrated by a youthful burst in the 1950s and 60s and has fallen into a state of decline ever since.<sup>172</sup> Cox also claims that the full extent of this decline may be concealed due to the lack of any rivals to the US. He identifies the fall of the Soviet Union, the failures of EU foreign policy and the Asian economic crisis of the 1990s as factors that contributed to the masking of America's decline.<sup>173</sup> Quinn goes further to

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<sup>166</sup> Philip Gannon, 'The Bridge that Blair Built: David Cameron and the Transatlantic Relationship', *British Politics*, (2014), p11.

<sup>167</sup> Robert Gates, *Duty*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), p261; 284.

<sup>168</sup> McCrisken, 'Ten Years On: Obama's War on Terrorism in Rhetoric and Practice', p781.

<sup>169</sup> Nicolas Bouchet, 'The Democracy Tradition in US Foreign Policy and the Obama Presidency', *International Affairs*, vol. 89, no. 1, (2013), 31-51, p31.

<sup>170</sup> Fawaz Gerges, 'The Obama approach to the Middle East: The End of America's Moment?', *International Affairs*, vol. 89, no. 2, (2013), 299-323, p299-306.

<sup>171</sup> Kelley, 'Rhetoric and Reality?', p1147.

<sup>172</sup> Michael Cox, 'Is the United States in Decline - Again?', *International Affairs* 83, no. 4 (2007): 643-53, p644.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid*, p648.

suggest that the East is growing more competent as seen with the rise of China.<sup>174</sup> Both Quinn and Cox suggest that the US needs to manage its decline or else she will cease to play a prominent part in international affairs.<sup>175</sup> Dunn uses the example of Germany to identify America's declining influence. He reports that after the Kosovo crisis Germany stopped deferring to the US on security matters and as a result of this independence opposed the US led invasion of Iraq.<sup>176</sup> Scott-Thomas makes a similar argument that due to the Bush administration, and the neo-conservative influences, America has lost credibility. As a result, this loss of credibility has led to the post-World War II international institutions, such as the UN, that were built up around US power to fall into decline.<sup>177</sup> Dunne and Mulaj point out the difficulties in these concepts. As they claim; the people who called for Bush to adopt a unilateral style are the ones who went on to criticise it and are responsible for the perception of US decline. As a result there has been a shift of power toward the East, also highlighted by Quinn and Cox.<sup>178</sup> These theorists hold the position that if America can deal with this deterioration in global power she will be able to carve out a new role for herself among international institutions and emerging powers. This however, is in direct competition with the neo-conservative belief that the US is an exceptional power and should continue to act accordingly. What both views do have in common is that they see America as a dominant global role which has links to the discussions on US imperialism.

Several academics have demonstrated that the US held a role as the dominant power in the world, able to influence the policies of other countries within her orbit. Dumbrell and Schafer have shown that this position has created an asymmetry of power in the favour of the US. The result of this power, during the Bush years, was an unconcealed imperialist approach.<sup>179</sup> Cullather has indicated that through 'welfare imperialism' known as development, the US has been able to meddle and influence the progress of third world countries such as India during the Cold War.<sup>180</sup> Lundestad discusses this effect on America's security partners by reinforcing Dumbrell and Schafer's point about the asymmetry of power. Lundestad suggests that though the EU would like

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<sup>174</sup> Adam Quinn, 'The Art of Declining Politely: Obama's Prudent Presidency and the Waning of American Power', *International Affairs* 87, no. 4 (2011), 803-824, p806.

<sup>175</sup> Quinn, 'The Art of Declining Politely', p822; Cox, 'Is the United States in Decline', p647.

<sup>176</sup> David Dunn, 'Transatlantic Relations and US Foreign Policy', Inderjeet Parmar, Linda Miller and Mark Ledwidge (eds) *New Directions in US Foreign Policy*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2009), 173-89, p180.

<sup>177</sup> Giles Scott-Thomas, 'Soft Power in the Era of US Decline', Inderjeet Parmar and Michael Cox, *Soft Power and US Foreign Policy*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), 165-181, p165-168.

<sup>178</sup> Tim Dunne and Klejda Mulaj, 'America after Iraq', *International Affairs* vol. 86, no. 6 (2010), 1287-1298, p1288.

<sup>179</sup> Dumbrell and Schafer, 'Introduction', p1-2.

<sup>180</sup> Nick Cullather, 'Model Nations: US Allies and Partners in the Modernizing Imagination', in John Dumbrell and Axel Schafer (eds), *America's 'Special Relationships'* (London: Routledge, 2009), 7-23, p8-14.

to develop an independent security policy it is still strongly attached to the US.<sup>181</sup> Scott-Smith illustrates this point further by giving the example of the Netherlands. He claims that since the end of Cold War and particularly during the invasion of Iraq the Dutch have wanted to move away from their close security alliance with the US and further into Europe, but they have been unable to do so.<sup>182</sup> Although the way the US uses her power has been widely debated the fact that she has such power has been more commonly accepted. The description of an ‘American Empire’ has existed for decades and been synonymous with America’s global role. It appears to have some similarities to the British position discussed above. As each empire has declined, both states have had to look for credible alternatives to protect their international position.

Constructivists who have looked at the actors and institutions and how they are bound by society have also made contributions to the discussions on US power. Jackson and McDonald argue that the decisions made by Bush, such as pre-emptive invasions, can change the norms of the global arena. The US can choose to use this to strengthen international society by setting a new standard of behaviour.<sup>183</sup> McCormick claims that by Bush’s second term his foreign policy represented a middle ground between liberalism and constructivism where he showed he was willing to work with EU partners to create a new role for the US.<sup>184</sup> It is difficult to ascribe a particular school of thought to Bush as he never openly embraced any one theory. This has led to a fertile ground for theoretical debate that has continued with the analysis of the Obama administration. The constellation of perspectives on US foreign policy is more developed than that on British foreign policy but demonstrates the similar considerations that both countries hold in their foreign policy.

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<sup>181</sup> Geir Lundestad, ‘Toward Transatlantic Divide’, David Andrews (ed) *Atlantic Alliance Under Stress* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 9-29, p21.

<sup>182</sup> Scott-Smith, ‘Testing the Limits of a Special Relationship’, p115-126.

<sup>183</sup> Richard Jackson and Matt McDonald ‘Constructivism, US Foreign Policy and the War on Terror’, Inder Parmar, Linda Miller and Mark Ledwidge (eds) *New Directions in US Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 2009), 18-32, p18-23.

<sup>184</sup> McCormick, ‘The War on Terror and Contemporary U.S.-European Relations’, p214-217.

## 6. Literature review highlights

These various literature reviews have highlighted some significant issues that are worth briefly reviewing and considering as part of this wider research project. Firstly, the comments on US relations with Europe and the proposal of transatlantic drift can be seen to greatly affect the UK's relation to both powers based on the argument of Britain as an Atlantic Bridge. Similarly, the weakening relations between the US and certain allies during the war in Iraq have brought into question America's key alliances as well as highlighting the important position the UK holds as close ally to America. These positions were emphasised by the unilateral arguments relating to America's power. As the US exercised such power it brought into question the influence the UK really has over such a power.

Another important case is the theoretical approach to international affairs, namely neo-conservatism and its impact on the UK. The belief in US exceptionalism and the right to intervene in other countries affairs was a key motive in the decisions to invade Afghanistan and Iraq. This was a position that was supported in the UK and reflected the recent developments in British foreign policy to create an ethical foreign policy through the spread of democracy. The belief in US exceptionalism also works to highlight the asymmetric nature of the relationship between Britain and America. It places the US firmly as the senior partner and again raises concerns on the extent of British influence with the Americans.

As stated, IR theory has an important role to play and in some of these areas has been underutilised. The work of the English School is one area where all of the above reviews have not been fully utilised. The notion of International Society has particular importance in this study and will be set out before reviewing the work on Alliance Theory. With these theoretical considerations, the above reviews can be used in this thesis to establish the framework of the Special Relationship.

## 7. The English School and International Society

The work emerging from the English School has provided a useful set of concepts for analysing international relations. The English School developed from a gathering of academics in the 1950s meeting under the banner of the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics, chaired by Martin Wight, to a widespread school of international relations theory.<sup>185</sup> It has gone on to establish itself as an alternative to the social scientific approaches of American scholars belonging to realist and liberal approaches.<sup>186</sup> What separates the English School's approach from the likes of Waltz's realism is the English School's strong engagement with historical material in exploring their theories. Where the schools of thought in the US sought to engage in scientific methods similar to the natural sciences in developing and proving theories, the English School based its findings on historical trends and patterns as well as theory. As discussed above, the body of work on the Special Relationship is largely historical in its concerns which highlight the compatibility of using the English School to understand Anglo-American relations.

The School has addressed several concerns relating to IR. The Balance of Power, humanitarian intervention and international diplomacy have all been key areas of focus for the School. However, it is the notion of International Society which is at the centre of the School's political thoughts and will be central to this study. As Barry Buzan explains, the English School has seldom been used in relation to international security which this study intends to explore by utilising Alliance Theory in conjuncture with the English School.<sup>187</sup> The development of the English School as seen through key thinkers will be undertaken here to trace the emergence of the notion of International Society.

### 7.1. Members of the English School

The work of the English School has been growing in popularity for decades as it has been increasingly accepted as a legitimate approach to IR theory. The influence of the School was demonstrated in 2010 when Barry Buzan compiled a bibliography of works on, or related to the English School naming over 1,000 volumes of work from scholars around the world.<sup>188</sup> It is not the intention of this thesis to provide a comprehensive review of this literature. Instead, this chapter will highlight four key authors to trace the development of the School and International Society.

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<sup>185</sup> Chris Brown, 'World Society and the English School: An 'International Society' perspective on World Society', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 7, no. 4 (2001), 423-422, p424.

<sup>186</sup> William Bain, 'The English School and the Activity of being a Historian', in Cornelia Navari (ed) *Theorising International Society*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 148-166, p148

<sup>187</sup> Barry Buzan, 'The English school and international security', in Victor Mauer and Myriam Dunn Cavelty (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Security Studies* (Oxon: Routledge 2010), 34-44, p34.

<sup>188</sup> Barry Buzan, 'The English School: A Bibliography', (2010).

There have been many works that have explored important elements of International Society, such as Martin Wight or Adam Watson's work on institutions in the English School. Similarly, an important amount of work has been carried out on the methodological approaches used by the English School. This chapter however, aims to identify overlapping content between the English School and the Special Relationship in connection to international security. The work of Hedley Bull will be the starting point of this examination as he has been seen as one of the earliest and most prominent advocates of International Society and his work has led to a series of discussions useful to this thesis. Alan James is another important scholar whose research has been drawn more to international law. However, the evolution of the concept of International Society can be traced from Bull's works through to the research of James, whose ideas were commented on by more recent academics also working in the same fields. Tim Dunne and Barry Buzan have been important figures who have undertaken research on International Society by remarking on the work of Bull and James. They have also contributed in other areas linked to this thesis. Dunne has produced several publications on US foreign policy while Buzan has provided a wealth of material on international security. By following the evolution of the International Society through these authors, important elements of the International Society can be connected to the key themes drawn from the literature on the Special Relationship.

### 7.1.1. Hedley Bull

Bull's position as a leading figure in the English School was cemented when he published *The Anarchical Society* in 1977, which set out key definitions for the English School's concept of International Society. In his description of IR, Bull explained that there were three categories of foreign affairs. Bull identified International System, International Society and World Society as the areas in which the international arena can be explored. By drawing on the philosophical work of Hugo Grotius, Bull aimed to develop a new approach to IR theory, a *via media* to the other main IR theories.<sup>189</sup> He did this by taking some of the key points from each of the main IR theories and incorporating them in his three positions. International System has similarities with the realist definitions of systems, with particular influence coming from Morton Kaplan and Kenneth Waltz.<sup>190</sup> This was only the starting point however. Bull argues that from an International System, an International Society can emerge if the conditions are right. To Bull:

A system of states (or international system) is formed when two or more states have sufficient contact between them, and have sufficient impact on one another's

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<sup>189</sup> Richard Little, 'The English School's Contribution to the Study of International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 6, no. 3 (2000), 395-422, p396.

<sup>190</sup> Morton Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*, p5-9; Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), p39-40.

decisions, to cause them to behave – at least in some measures – as parts of a whole.<sup>191</sup>

An International Society however, forms when a System develops common goals, shared institutions and develops a set of rules for dealing with one another.<sup>192</sup> In these situations a set of rules are established to assist in ordering International Society.<sup>193</sup> These rules go on to become a fundamental feature that holds Society together. The recognition of state sovereignty and respecting the rights of each state's ownership of territory and people is an example of these rules.<sup>194</sup> Finally, Bull theorises that the notions of International Society could be extended to form a World Society.<sup>195</sup> This element has been seen as the least developed of Bull's three concepts but could be useful in the study of Globalisation.<sup>196</sup> International Society, however, has provided some of the most useful concepts pertinent to this study.

Within this concept of International Society there are many aspects that Bull considers, including Balance of Power, diplomacy and the role of Great Powers. The Balance of Power has also been a crucial element in analysing interaction between states. Bull described the Balance of Power as a state of affairs where no one power is in a position to dominate other powers within the international arena. At the time of his writing the balance, as he saw it, was mainly between the US and USSR, but also embraced the role of China, Japan and a united Western Europe. What the Balance of Power creates is a stable environment for other institutions to operate, institutions such as diplomacy.<sup>197</sup>

As Bull puts it, diplomacy is the conduct of IR by persons who are official, which can be conducted bilaterally or multilaterally.<sup>198</sup> The existence of diplomacy supports the ideas of International System, but the rules and customs of diplomacy lean more closely towards the concept of International Society. Bull claims that International Society does not presuppose diplomacy.<sup>199</sup> Bull uses the historical development of embassies and ambassadors to demonstrate the emergence of rules in International Society. Bull goes on to explain that ambassadors were becoming marginalised as governments and executives communicate directly.<sup>200</sup> It is the goal of

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<sup>191</sup> Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, (Chichester: Columbia University Press 1977), p9-10.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid, p4.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid, p54.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid, p19.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid, p20-21.

<sup>196</sup> Brown, 'World Society and the English School', p435; Tim Dunne, 'System, State and Society: How Does it All Hang Together?', *Millennium Journal of International Studies*, vol. 34, no. 1 (2005), 157-170, p160.

<sup>197</sup> Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, p112.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid, p165.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid, p167.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid, p173.

diplomacy to maximise common interests rather than find conciliation on difficult subjects. To Bull, diplomacy is one of the key institutions of international relations and is essential in the development of foreign relations.

One of the relationships that Bull explores is the one between Great Powers and Medium Powers, particularly in alliance situations. Here, Bull claims that in International Society, Great Powers receive a wide range of support.<sup>201</sup> In these circumstances Great Powers will accommodate smaller powers. A result of this is the creation of an environment when power arrogance is checked as well as allowing the opportunity for states to work for common and unique objectives.<sup>202</sup> It is also an opportunity for Great Powers to limit the growth of potential rivals by making them into junior partners in their management of their international affairs.<sup>203</sup> What is important to the relationship between Great and Medium powers are the notions of sovereign nations and the duties they imply.<sup>204</sup> In these cases, both Great and Medium Powers have a level of respect for each other's sovereignty which creates the foundation for them to work with one another. These different concepts which Bull devised emerged from his study of history. Many of these elements are present in Anglo-American relations and allow for a connection to be made to between the Special Relationship and the concept of International Society.

In the context of Bull's definition of International Society, the relationship between the UK and US can be examined in a new light. The foundations of International Society, the combination of international institution, rules and a level of commonality, have a high level of relevance to the affectionate nature of the Special Relationship. Bull's emphasis on shared international institutions is evident in the relationship. Institutions such as NATO or the UN Security Council or other institutions such as notions on development or international security are at the centre of the relationship. These have led to the establishment of a set of rules that define the nature of the relationship. It is established that in return for British support on security matters, in fora such as NATO or the UN Security Council as well as during specific events, the US will consult and treat Britain as a security partner, despite the asymmetry of power between the UK and US. What unites the two is a level of commonality, which is one of Bull's defining aspects of International Society. Britain and America have a high level of common values that are underscored by a connected history and shared language. Finally, Bull's position of middle powers supporting great power in a junior partner capacity does bare similarities to the Special Relationship. As seen above, Britain has moved from a position of rivalry to the US to becoming her close ally, a by-

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid, p228.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid, p227-229.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid, p229.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid, p228.

product of Britain's decline to a Medium Power. Though this connects the Special Relationship and International Society there are some objections to Bull's work that must be considered.

Some of Bull's work has been left underdeveloped, including the distinction between International System and International Society. Watson claims that Bull's criteria for International System will also require a set of rules and a level of commonality.<sup>205</sup> The distinction is also confused by the levels of System and Society. Buzan and Little claim that a System can be on a different scale from state to state, regional and international levels. Similarly, the level of International Society and its scale is not fully explored by Bull in *The Anarchical Society*.<sup>206</sup> Little goes further by explaining how the European System has expanded to absorb other Systems.<sup>207</sup> However, Little does not define how this relates to the concept of International Society that has expanded to a global level. Some of these concepts have been picked up by other writers who have tried to develop them into something more.

### 7.1.2. Alan James

Writing after Bull, Alan James sought to tighten up the definition of International Society by reorienting the concept toward an explanation that places more emphasis on the agents in IR as well as the distinction between System and Society. In his work, James seeks to expand on the concepts that lead to the creation of Society. To James, not only do rules and institutions play an important part, but sovereignty, and agency in International Society as well as the grammatical usage and meaning of Society play an important role. He sets out his challenges to the difference between System and society before he makes an argument for the usage of the notion Society over System.

In his examination of the distinctions between System and Society, James identifies three components; rules, communication and commonality. In terms of rules James finds that the existence of rules to separate System and Society, as Bull points out, is not a full explanation.<sup>208</sup> James argues that even in cases where two or more states have to interact in a System-like scenario, there will always be a set of rules. He uses the example of a white flag in battle. Though two nations are at conflict within the System the rules associated with warfare still have value.<sup>209</sup> According to Bull, however, rules only exist at the Society level. James' second criticism of

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<sup>205</sup> Adam Watson, 'Hedley Bull, States Systems and International Society', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 13, no. 2 (1987), 147-153, p151.

<sup>206</sup> Barry Buzan and Richard Little, 'The Idea of "International System": Theory Meets History', *International Political Science Review*, vol. 15, no 3 (1994), 231-255, p239.

<sup>207</sup> Richard Little, 'Neorealism and the English School: A Methodological, Ontological and Theoretical Reassessment', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 1, no.9 (1995), 9-34, p23.

<sup>208</sup> Alan James, 'System or Society', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 19 (1993), 269-288, p273.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid*, p273.

Bull's System-Society distinction is on communication. Where Bull claims that a certain level of communication has to exist for an International Society to emerge, James suggests that the same level of communication can exist at the System level.<sup>210</sup> James claims that even in Systems, diplomacy as communication has to exist if states are going to become part of the calculations which Bull suggests.<sup>211</sup> Finally, James challenges the concept of common interests only existing in an International Society. James argues that common values and interests have not emerged as Bull expected them to. Instead, levels of commonality are linked by a common form of diplomacy.<sup>212</sup> Similarly James suggests that common interests can exist at the System level. In cases where contact in a System is not through warfare it is not difficult to imagine some kind of commonality among states.<sup>213</sup> With these challenges to the distinction between System and Society, James turns his support for using the term Society over System.

James puts forward several features of International Society which he believes gives the term precedence over International System. First, James finds Society a linguistically more useful term than System because it is more flexible.<sup>214</sup> The use of the term 'System' implies a far more restrictive description. By using Society, the collectiveness of states has greater meaning. Similarly, the usage of 'Society' is closer to the term community which is a phrase that is often used in the vocabulary of IR. Another benefit of using the word Society is the level of commonality it implies. Though some find this too warm and fuzzy a word; it has meaning in the sense of a European Community for example and does, rightly, according to James, suggest that IR is not as chaotic as its anarchical structure suggests.<sup>215</sup> Humanity is the next important argument for Society. The implication of a Society is that it has a human element, unlike the use of System which is more mechanical. Though some disagree with humanising international relations, James holds that it is individuals and agents that influence the nature of the Society.<sup>216</sup> Another argument for using Society over System is its volition. A Society, unlike a System, is more open to the whims of those who make it up. Those who volunteer to be a part of it, which is not everyone, are required to regularly contribute and have contact to guide the Society.<sup>217</sup> This is also James' final point, exclusivity. The fact that there are members of a Society means there are those who are not members. This gives those inside the Society greater security with one another. With these points, James dismisses Bull's distinction between System and Society in favour of simply using the phrase International Society.

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid, p275.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid, 283-284.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid, p275.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid, p276.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid, p279.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid, p281.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid, p282.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid, p283.

James' work can also be used to understand the Special Relationship in a similar fashion as in Bull's work. As James does not go too far away from many of Bull's original arguments it can be used in a related way. Many of James' central features of International Society are apparent in Anglo-American affairs. Aside from the points that James takes from Bull, his emphasis on agents and community have a clear influence on the way UK-US relations are conducted. The personal relationships between the prime minister and president, as agents, have often embodied the strength of the relationship, for example: Churchill-Roosevelt, Thatcher-Reagan, and Blair-Bush. These relationships are often cemented by a human feeling of commonality and volition to control international events. The voluntary efforts of the UK to support the US are also relevant. Finally, the usage of the term Society to emphasise a warm sense of collectiveness can be related to the language used in the Special Relationship. These notions can be associated with the sentimentality that has been highlighted in the literature on Anglo-American dealings.

There have been challenges to some of James' arguments. One criticism is that structures, which exist at the System level, play an important role in shaping IR. Little makes a similar claim for the importance of the System. He claims that James' misses the divergent level of analysis that comes from having more than one concept.<sup>218</sup> Nevertheless, James' work takes an important step forward in the development of understanding International Society and has influenced other works on International Society.

### 7.1.3. Tim Dunne

Tim Dunne's work has consisted of a wide review of the English School's thinkers and their thoughts on International Society. From this analysis of figures such as Bull and Buzan, Dunne argues for a discourse on International Society that focuses on the nature of the social constructions of International Society. Crucial to Dunne's explanations, International Society is regulated by the behaviour of member to a set of common values influencing the goals that communities should aim for.

As part of his argument, Dunne picks up the various institutions that have been discussed by previous authors but goes further to analyse the level of impact these institutions have in International Society. This is connected to the fabric that makes up the social order of International Society. This, according to Dunne, creates an identity for states which binds them through obligations. To sum up, Dunne is stating that the meanings members of International Society apply to the various institutions, highlighted by the likes of Bull, creates the binding force

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<sup>218</sup> Richard Little, 'The Balance of Power and Great Power Management', Richard Little and John Williams (eds) *The Anarchical Society in a Globalized World*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), 97-120. p104.

for International Society to exist.<sup>219</sup> This is best displayed by the use of language ascribed by members of International Society. Dunne holds this concept higher than the likes of Buzan who use rationalist calculations to describe International Society. These types of views on structures, in Dunne's eyes, limit the development of International Society. By moving away from rational choice theories to ideas of community we can learn more about International Society.<sup>220</sup> Dunne highlights political leaders as those who create policies that 'reproduce International Society' by setting norms, a similar notion to the role of leaders in Bull's work.<sup>221</sup> Dunne's writings have gone on to represent a significant development in understanding International Society. Often, Dunne's work has competed with Buzan's to explain International Society highlighting some of the divisions within the School. However, in line with the other scholars mentioned above, Dunne's work can also be used to understand Anglo-American relations.

When applied to the Special Relationship, Dunne's version of International Society comes closest to that of James'. Both writers emphasised the importance of the agent in explaining how International Society is organised. As with James, in the Special Relationship the role of the political leaders is particularly important for establishing a strong relationship. Dunne goes further by explaining that political leaders as agents are also important in establishing meaning and consciousness for the institutions of International Society. In his approach to move away from structural realist understandings, Dunne calls for more comprehension on Society rather than emphasis placed on the calculations of nations. In relation to this, a major part of Anglo-American affairs is the sentimentality that has been fostered by a shared history and values encouraged by a common language.

Some however, have also critiqued Dunne's approach. Christian Reus-Smit's chapter in *Theorising International Society* claims that Dunne relies exclusively on Alexander Wendt's constructivist approach.<sup>222</sup> In doing so Dunne does not incorporate other constructivist writings that differ from Wendt. According to Reus-Smit this is not an unusual practice. Wendt's approach is organised around social institutions, whereas the English School has more interest in making use of history.<sup>223</sup> This represents a common criticism of the English School as it is often claimed that there is not enough clarity in the distinction between it and other IR theories.

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<sup>219</sup> Tim Dunne, *Inventing International Society*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), p10.

<sup>220</sup> Dunne, 'System, State and Society', p169.

<sup>221</sup> Dunne, *Inventing International Society*, p10

<sup>222</sup> Christian Reus-Smit, 'Constructivism and the English School', Cornelia Navari (eds), *Theorising International Society*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 58-77, 60.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid, p66.

#### 7.1.4. Barry Buzan

Barry Buzan has been one of the most dominant academic figures working on the concept of International Society. He has published widely on the topic and is a major proponent of the perspectives on International Society. In his work on globalisation he makes the case that World Society is the best tool for understanding the phenomenon of globalisation.<sup>224</sup> However, in earlier work, Buzan emphasised the blurred lines of distinction between International System, Society and World Society.<sup>225</sup> He describes the International Society as the institutionalisation of shared interests and identity among states and puts the creation and maintenance of shared norms, rules and institutions at the centre of IR theory.<sup>226</sup> Many of these views are related to the work of constructivism.

Buzan's description of International Society is combined with the notion of International System, similar to James' work. According to Buzan, for an International Society to exist there first has to be a concept of International System and it is the connections between the two that should be the focus of the English School. Buzan argues that it is the level of contact in the System that brings about International Society and there can be no Society without a System.<sup>227</sup> In his definition of International Society, Buzan emphasises the social interaction among states which shape the International Society creating a set of common rules for members of the Society.<sup>228</sup> The social element that Buzan discusses is represented by the establishment of these common rules and institutions.<sup>229</sup> Buzan designates primary institutions such as diplomacy as an example of ordering countries in International Society.<sup>230</sup> He suggests there have been different types of Society, which can be associated to specific periods. For example, one such Society is the Convergence Society where shared values lead to similar forms of government. According to Buzan, the different types of Society will affect the international security environment.<sup>231</sup> He comes to the conclusion that in the post-Westphalian period European history, World Society becomes more clearly defined and a stronger model for English School theorists.<sup>232</sup> Buzan's work throughout the years has attempted to evolve these concepts of the English School using a varied set of methodologies. As a result, it can be difficult to pin down some of his notions on International

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<sup>224</sup> Barry Buzan, *From International to World Society? English School Theory and the Social Structure of Globalisation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p228.

<sup>225</sup> Barry Buzan, 'The English School: an underexploited resource for IR', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 27 (2001), 271-288, p476.

<sup>226</sup> Buzan, *From International to World Society?*, p7.

<sup>227</sup> Barry Buzan, 'From International System to International Society, Structural Realism and Regime Theory meet the English School', *International Organisation*, vol. 47, no. 3, (1993), 327-352, p331.

<sup>228</sup> Buzan, *From International to World Society?*, p8.

<sup>229</sup> Buzan, *From International to World Society?*, p99.

<sup>230</sup> Buzan, *From International to World Society?*, p161.

<sup>231</sup> Buzan, 'The English school and international security', p35-36.

<sup>232</sup> Buzan, *From International to World Society?*, p202.

Society as they have evolved through the years. However, there are certain elements which correspond with the other thinkers in the English School.

Although some of his work can be aligned to Constructivism, Buzan's definitions of the different parts of countries' international relations appear to have a considerable amount in common with the thoughts of realists. The concept of a subsystem which Buzan uses was explored by an early realist, Morton Kaplan. This approach has drawn criticism from within the English School, particularly from Richard Little and Tim Dunne. Both criticise Buzan as being out of tune with the nature of the English School. Little claims that Buzan does not appreciate how complicated the nature of ontology is within the English School. Buzan, according to Little, tries to incorporate too many other concepts and jeopardises the normative approaches of the School.<sup>233</sup> Dunne holds a similar view to Little, by particularly highlighting Buzan's methodological approach. Dunne critiques Buzan for taking a post-positivist stance in tune with neo-realism and ignoring the hermeneutic nature of the English School.<sup>234</sup> At times, Buzan's arguments do seem difficult to follow in the connections and distinctions he draws between the concepts of International System, Society and World Society. However, many of his arguments overlap with the notions of Anglo-American relations.

Applying Buzan's work to the Special Relationship may not be as simple as with other members of the English School. This is due to the length of Buzan's career and evolution of his views. Buzan arguments can be interpreted to establish Anglo-American relations as operating at the subsystem level. Buzan also goes on in his argument to discuss the importance of commonality between members. In regards to Anglo-American relations common cultures, language, interests and values have also been an important consideration. This also relates to the Convergence style of International Society where shared values foster similar government, these views are reminiscent of the shared values of the UK and US creating a similar response to security matters. From the 1940s, the UK and the US have had a high level of contact and collaboration, particularly on security issues. They are also closely linked through diplomatic practices, humanitarian cooperation and hold international law in similar regard. Buzan's work has many similarities with other works in the English School and highlights some significant common aspects of the International Society which can place the Special Relationship in an IR theoretical context.

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<sup>233</sup> Little, 'Neorealism and the English School', p9.

<sup>234</sup> Dunne, 'System, State and Society', p162.

## 7.2. International Society and the Special Relationship

These views have highlighted key debates on International Society, but have also drawn criticism. Where some have questioned these authors in particular areas, others have made more general comments challenging the English School. Devlen and James have argued that the School is not focused enough and has no concept of what is ruled out in its theories.<sup>235</sup> Copeland also stresses the lack of clarity in the English School. He demonstrates his argument by stating that a lot of the works produced by the School seems focused on recounting the history of the English School rather than developing its concepts.<sup>236</sup> As stated above, it is not the purpose of this thesis to address the concerns surrounding the English School, but rather to use the notion of International Society to understand the UK-US relationship. Several key areas put forward by Bull, James, Dunne and Buzan overlap and relate to some of the key themes highlighted in the literature review on Anglo-American relations.

The study of Anglo-American affairs has almost exclusively been a historical one. Very few scholars have sought to tie it to any one theoretical position. With this in mind, the historical approach of the English School to develop IR concepts seems a natural fit for studying this relationship. The English School, as a whole has looked to macro-history to explore the nature of international relations and develop theories on International Society. The most recent works on International Society have criticised the underdeveloped nature of the concept by theorists. By looking at International Society in relation to the Special Relationship new insight may be given to both concepts. However, as the field is split on what International Society is and how it should be studied, it does raise questions on what approach is best suited for this study.

These discussions on the works of those in the English School have highlighted the importance of political leadership, acceptance of norms and rules and, most importantly, a level of commonality. All of these are identifiable within the Special Relationship. Firstly, a key part of the relationship is the recognition of sovereignty of each state and the role of the leaders in driving through policies and building a publicly strong relationship. With this recognition, comes the notion of volition in the relationship, this is particularly relevant to the British government who have opted to become the willing junior partner to the US. Similar to this is the level of commonality between the two as seen in the similar language, culture and customs. As highlighted in the discussion on the literature on Anglo-American interaction, the relationship has significant sentimental aspects. This understanding of UK-US relations has similarities with the work offered

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<sup>235</sup> Balkan Devlen and Patrick James, 'The English School, International Relations and Progress', *International Studies Review*, vol. 7, (2005), 171-197, p184.

<sup>236</sup> Dale Copeland, 'A Realist Critique of the English School', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 29, no. 3, (2003), 427-441, p427-431.

by Dunne. The hermeneutic nature of Dunne's understanding of International Society provides the opportunity to fully appreciate the role of the agent and the significance they have in shaping International Society. More specifically, as Dunne, James and Bull highlight the role of political leadership in this area is important. This is something that academics such as Dumbrell have claimed to be common in the Special Relationship, as the relationship is exemplified by the personal relationship between leaders. With these elements, a set of norms have been established in the relationship, something central to International Society. With these definitions, a broader picture is beginning to emerge which helps in theorising the Special Relationship. To place this study into a firm security context, the work on Alliance Theory can help to develop a theoretical framework on the Special Relationship.

## 8. Alliance Theory

Within the discipline of IR a small group of academics have focused on the formation, categorising and collapse of international security alliances. In relation to the previous discussion on the English School, Martin Wight, an early English School theorist, identified alliances as an institution present in International Society, a link that has not been fully explored.<sup>237</sup> A review of the literature on alliance relations in international security will be undertaken to assist in placing the overlapping concepts on Anglo-American Relations and the English School, into a security studies context.

The area of research on alliances has resulted in a collection of academics trying to develop theories of alliances based on examples largely from the Cold War. These theorists have explained that alliances are characterised by the military co-operation between states in the face of a common enemy. These authors seek to identify the motivations behind forming alliances and the circumstances which cause them to be terminated. The different approaches to these areas offer an opportunity to measure the depth of Alliance Theory. Within the sub-discipline of the formation of alliances there have been two significant causal explanations: balancing against a threat or bandwagoning with more powerful states. Those who have focused on the end of alliances have noted several different explanations for the ending of alliances, such as the loss of the unifying threat or internal difficulties. These tools offered by Alliance Theory scholarship can be used to develop aspects of the English School's notion of International Society in order to better understand the Special Relationship.

### 8.1. Alliance Formation

One of the starting points for scholars examining security alliances has been the notion of Balance of Power. McGowan and Rood claim that the collapse of the Balance of Power system led to a strengthening of alliances which are a different form of security alignment.<sup>238</sup> The development of alliances during the Cold War seemed to demonstrate a shift in international security as states sought more direct links to international powers in pursuit of their own safety. Liska recognises these developments in the post-Cold War era. He does this by emphasising the domestic influences in finding common ground during the alignment process between perspective alliance partners.<sup>239</sup> Liska argues for the importance of having a level of commonality among those in the

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<sup>237</sup> Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1978), p111.

<sup>238</sup> Patrick McGowan and Robert Rood, 'Alliance Behaviour in Balance of Power System: Applying a Poisson Model to 19<sup>th</sup> Century Europe', *American Political Studies Review*, vol.69, no. 3, (1975), p859-870, p859.

<sup>239</sup> George Liska, *Nations in Alliance, The Limits of Interdependence*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1962), p12.

alliance which is on a similar track to the Special Relationship.<sup>240</sup> This is visible in the formation of alliances which often rely on a common theme to bring states together.

Snyder explains that alliances will be formed under two conditions. The first is that when states need greater security, they will join together and coordinate hard power, domestic policy and strategic facilities. The other option describes how states wishing to avoid isolation or circumvent states becoming enemies will form alliance partnerships with potential adversaries.<sup>241</sup> Walt describes Snyder's point as 'balancing' versus 'bandwagoning' which he differentiates as the two causes for forming alliances.<sup>242</sup> Balancing usually involves large powers joining with small powers against a common enemy. Bandwagoning tends to be smaller states seeking to join with larger states whose hegemony controls the direction of the alliance while providing protection for alliance partners. Walt goes on to suggest that balancing is a more common reason for forming alliances and recognises that balancing may not be an instant process.<sup>243</sup> He explains that states with more in common may put in a greater degree of effort to ensure that an alliance will outlast the reason it was formed. He cites NATO as the example for this as it has outlived the Soviet threat it was designed to oppose and many of its current members were aligned against NATO when the organisation was formed. However, he recognises that without a common enemy NATO is unlikely to survive.<sup>244</sup> The balancing thesis on alliance formation indicates that similar national identities are not necessary for successful alliances, but they do help. Others, however, claim that identity is an important factor in linking alliance partners, particularly when forming an alliance under the bandwagoning hypothesis.

Others have challenged this position and claimed that recent alliances have shown the increasing influence of bandwagoning. Doig, Pfiffner, Phythian, Tiffen and McHugh have all drawn on the example of the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the coalition force formed by the US government. McHugh argues that in the coalition the US would provide the decisive leadership which other states would embrace.<sup>245</sup> Doig et al. support this by highlighting the example of Britain and Australia who gave their public and private support for the invasion of Iraq.<sup>246</sup> According to Morrow the more dominant the asymmetry of power among states, the easier it will be to form a

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid, Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Glenn Snyder, 'The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics', *World Politics*, vol. 36, no. 4, (1984), 461-495, p462.

<sup>242</sup> Stephen Walt, 'Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power', *International Security*, vol. 9, no. 4 (1985), 3-43, p8.

<sup>243</sup> Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, (London: Cornell University Press, 1987), p5.

<sup>244</sup> Stephen Walt, 'Why Alliances Endure or Collapse', *Survival*, vol. 39, no. 1, (1997), 156-179, p158.

<sup>245</sup> Kelly McHugh, 'Bush, Blair and the War in Iraq: Alliance Politics and Limits of Influence', *Politics Science Quarterly*, vol. 125, no. 3 (2010), 465-491, p465.

<sup>246</sup> Alan Doig, James Pfiffner, Mark Phythian and Rodney Tiffen, 'Marching in Time: Alliance Politics in Synchrony and the case of the War in Iraq 2002-2003', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 61, no. 1 (2007), 23-40, p24-26.

long lasting alliance.<sup>247</sup> This supports Doig et al., McHugh and the bandwagoning principle that smaller states make more willing allies to the causes of larger powers. However, the assumptions of bandwagoning have been examined and rejected by Liska. He holds the position that though a community spirit found in bandwagoning is important in holding alliances together, they only really form when faced with a mutual threat.<sup>248</sup> These different views on alliance formation can indicate what each party expects to gain from the alliance and how successful it may be.

There has been some work on forming classifications of alliances. For example, Holsti, Hopman and Sullivan have suggested that there are two types of alliances; pluralistic and monolithic alliances.<sup>249</sup> Pluralistic alliances are described as having fragmented authority providing more freedom in members' social systems and beliefs.<sup>250</sup> These types of alliances have smaller policy scope resulting in less of a need for consensus, providing greater flexibility for non-conforming behaviour in the alliance.<sup>251</sup> As a result, in these alliances there will be less of a challenge to the leadership of the alliance. By contrast, monolithic alliances are based on a stronger central leader who demands conformity in public and in private.<sup>252</sup> Like many of the aspects of Alliance Theory, this distinction can be applied to different examples of alliances. It does however, provide a useful way to categorise alliances and explain how alliances are affected by the formation process.

Holsti et al. set out some of the factors they feel are important in the formation of alliances. They identify that different features have to be considered in potential alliance partners such as trustworthiness and reliability. They agree with Liski that it is not necessary to have many common ideologies. What is important is clearly setting out the goals and nature of the alliance. To Holsti et al. the larger and more complex the goals of the alliance the more likely it is that the alliance will result in failure.<sup>253</sup> What Holsti et al. do not consider in much detail is the importance of a strong hegemon within the alliance. Weber claims that the central power in the alliance becomes more dominant when smaller partners give up international manoeuvrability to the alliance.<sup>254</sup> As Doig et al. and McHugh have demonstrated with the case of Iraq, where there

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<sup>247</sup> James Morrow, 'Alliances and Asymmetry: An Alternative to the Capability Aggregation Model of Alliances', *American Journal of Political Science*, vol.35, no. 4 (1991), 904-933, p904.

<sup>248</sup> Liska, *Nations in Alliance*, p12.

<sup>249</sup> Ole Holsti, Terrence Hopmann and John Sullivan, *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies*, (London: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), p57

<sup>250</sup> Holsti et al. *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances*, p166.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid*, p170.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid*, p166.

<sup>253</sup> Holsti et al., *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances*, p57.

<sup>254</sup> Katja Weber, 'Hierarchy Amidst Anarchy: A Transaction Costs Approach to International Security Cooperation', *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 41 (1997), 321-340, p322.

was a large number of parties involved in the alliance with uncertain goals, an alliance can still be formed. The durability and strength of the alliance however, can be unreliable.

## 8.2. Alliance Disintegration

Another central concern in the literature on Alliance Theory relates to how alliances disintegrate. There are different approaches to this issue but they all tend to revolve around either the loss of an enemy or the withdrawal of alliance members for various reasons. The argument for forming an alliance based on threat balancing implies that once that threat has gone the alliance will no longer be necessary. As discussed, Walt is a proponent of this view but offers suggestions on how alliances can postpone a collapse. He argues that alliances which have greater credibility are more likely to persist. According to Walt credibility is demonstrated by a high level of institutionalism between partners and is important for holding alliances together.<sup>255</sup> De Castro uses the example of the US-Philippine alliance from the Cold War to demonstrate Walt's view that alliances will disintegrate once the threat has subsided. Once the Cold War ended, De Castro explains, the Philippines brought the security relationship with the US to an abrupt end by refusing to renegotiate American air force bases on Philippine soil. As there was no longer a Soviet threat, the Philippine government reasserted its sovereignty above the interests of the alliance. De Castro then suggests that allies may even become enemies. Proof of this can be seen after World War II when the alliance between Britain, America and the Soviet Union ended and the Cold War began. However, this is less likely when there is a shared history and shared values between states.<sup>256</sup> What Walt and De Castro demonstrate is the importance of threat perception in unifying alliance partners. Without a threat, they suggest, alliances cannot continue and partners may become enemies. NATO however, is still a sticking point in this view given its continuing, however weak, existence as an alliance. This raises important concerns about the type of collaborations and the success partners have in joining together.

It has been suggested that aside from the loss of a unifying threat, alliances may disintegrate if there is internal disharmony. Richardson argues that alliances cannot be continuous because eventually the interests of the allies will conflict and lead to difficulties. She places emphasis on the leaders of member governments to manage the relationship when difficulties arise.<sup>257</sup> Richardson's views largely reflect the work of Richard Neustadt who argues that when the high level players make incorrect decisions or do not thoroughly factor in the behaviour of allies, the

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<sup>255</sup> Walt, 'Why Alliances Endure or Collapse', p160.

<sup>256</sup> Renato Cruz De Castro, 'Special Relations and Alliance Politics in Philippine-US Security Relations, 1990-2002', *Asian Perspective*, vol. 27, no. 1 (2003), 137-164, p140.

<sup>257</sup> Louise Richardson, *When Allies Differ*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996), p1-2.

alliance will inevitably run into difficulty.<sup>258</sup> Morrow uses the autonomy-security trade off model in a similar explanation as to why alliances fail. Within this model, alliance members trade off state autonomy in the international arena in favour of increased security. However, according to Morrow there may be a point when the increase in security is no longer worth the sacrifice of autonomy.<sup>259</sup> This could be due to unfair burden-sharing, unclear goals or, as Neustadt claims, a breakdown of personal relationships.

Another internal issue of alliance management and failure has been Snyder's concepts of abandonment or entrapment. Snyder claims that alliance members risk being abandoned once an alliance partner decides to reconcile with the enemy or simply abandons the alliance goals. Alternatively, as Snyder explains, members may become entrapped in an alliance as goals shift and states become tied down in their commitments. In this case it becomes difficult for states to decide whether to stay within an uncomfortable alliance or risk going it alone.<sup>260</sup> How states manage alliances and the benefit to the individual country of staying in an alliance are all important internal factors that have to be considered, especially when external influences begin to diminish.

It appears that as long as there is an external threat there will be motivation for alliances to continue. However, they may still crumble while a threat exists. The internal problems may restrict the success of alliances especially when the nature of the threat appears to subside. The transatlantic alliance between America and Europe during the Cold War appeared at its strongest when the Soviet threat seemed the most resilient, as seen in the Berlin crisis of the 1960s. However, when the threat seemed to become less potent internal cracks began to show. The same transatlantic alliance ran into difficulty at these times on cases such as burden-sharing or security integration when the nature of the Soviet threat appeared less potent. To maintain an alliance when the threat has completely expired, such as NATO after the Cold War, creates difficulties for the alliance members in justifying the continuation of the alliance. However, it can be suggested that a level of social commonality among states can be used to hold alliance together once a threat has diminished.

### 8.3. Alliance Theory and the Special Relationship

John Baylis suggests that the Special Relationship between Britain and the United States subscribes to some of the principles of Alliance Theory. He also claims that it also contradicts

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<sup>258</sup> Neustadt, *Alliance Politics*, p56.

<sup>259</sup> Morrow, 'Alliances and Asymmetry', p910.

<sup>260</sup> Snyder, 'The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics', p471.

some of them.<sup>261</sup> The Special Relationship has, at various times, been seen as a balancing alliance and a bandwagoning alliance. It has also gone on to survive the loss of unifying threats as well as internal difficulties. The example of the Special Relationship supports Holsti et al.'s argument that it is difficult to create one effective theory on alliances.<sup>262</sup> Morrow supports this by criticising the literature on Alliance Theory as being a large body of work that says very little.<sup>263</sup> The whole field would benefit from a more coherent, single theory. However, given the unstable nature of alliance behaviour and the increase in short term multilateral co-operations to tackle single issues, such as Kosovo in 1999 or Libya in 2011, the development and impact of any such theory would be questionable. Instead the work of various writers can provide a point of reference for analysing bilateral and multilateral security operations.

One important element that has been consistent throughout this literature review on Alliance Theory has been the central role of leaders. Many authors have highlighted how the personal relationships between those in alliances can be a shaping element of how alliances are formed, managed and dissolved. In the example of the Special Relationship, some of the strongest arrangements between Britain and America have been fostered by a close relationship among actors. Equally, this has been an important theme in the English School and International Society as seen with the emphasis placed on sovereignty and the influence of the agents of international relations. Collectively, these literature reviews have highlighted significant areas that overlap and contribute to the theoretical understanding of the Anglo-American partnership.

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<sup>261</sup> Baylis, 'The Anglo-American Relationship and Alliance Theory', p378.

<sup>262</sup> Holsti et al., *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances*, p219.

<sup>263</sup> Morrow, 'Alliances and Asymmetry', p904.

## 9. The Special Relationship Alliance Theory

By examining these different academic discourses presented above, a series of notions have emerged as overlapping the work on the Special Relationship (both academically and in contemporary relations), the English School and Alliance Theory. This chapter will tie these elements together to create a framework to analyse Anglo-American relations and provide the context in which the Brown period will be examined. This chapter will begin by drawing out some of the key elements of the study of the British and American relationship.

### 9.1. The Special Relationship or Anglo-American Affairs?

Writers who have examined the themes and topics on British and American relations have tended to treat the subject as part of a single, all-encompassing discourse. This has taken the form either of large bodies of work examining the topic from the Second World War to the present day or taking on specific episodes to examine how they fit into the study as a whole. In this rests part of the problem of the approach to the study of British and American affairs. This style of work has created a singular approach which combines all the different elements of UK-US bilateral interaction. To draw any definitive conclusions from such a large body of work is a difficult task. However, what has been overlooked by scholars is a level of pluralism within the discourse. On the one hand, many have seen the foundation of these relations as sentimental and based on a shared language, similar cultures, parallel norms and values. On the other hand, some have identified national interest as the strongest motivator in the relationship. To these writers, sentimental notions of a shared background has no part in explaining why for 70 years Britain and America have been able to collaborate. Most debates in the literature on Anglo-American relations see these arguments as either zero-sum, or suggest some kind of compromise between the two trains of thought. For example, some writers have been identified as favouring sentiment over interest as the major factor in the construction of the relationship, or vice versa, while others say the truth lies in between. Equally, some academics have been placed in the Evangelical School on Anglo-American Affairs, while others have been associated with the Terminal approach. Yet, there are those who dismiss the over-affection in the relationship but will not dismiss the relationship as a whole, these tend to belong to the Functional School. However, by developing the Lazarus concept of UK-US relations presented above, a new understanding could emerge.

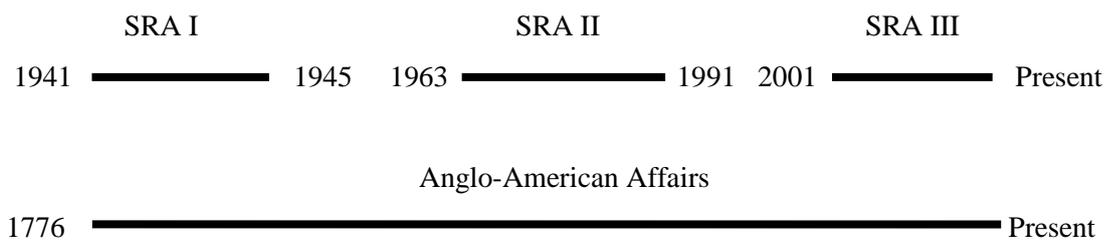
The term the ‘Special Relationship’ can be identified with those who highlight the sentiment of the association. The phrase came from Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister who forged such a close bond with the American President Franklin Roosevelt during the Second World War. It has gone on to symbolise the belief that the matching cultures of the UK and US has resulted in a

unique partnership. The phrase 'Anglo-American Affairs' demonstrates a more clinical, less warm, interpretation of UK-US relations. The scholars who identify with this approach claim it is the interests of each country that binds the relationship, and not always in a positive way. It is clearly possible to see a distinction between the two phrases, but one could argue that both approaches operate in the same space but have different meanings.

As part of international affairs, states form bilateral relationships based on a number of different principles. These can include similar languages, such as American-Canadian or British-Australian relations, or through intertwined goals and interests as exhibited in Anglo-Franco or American-Japanese affairs. They can take positive or negative forms, be seen as collaborative or competitive, and display high or minimal levels of contact. Parts of British and American interaction fit into the category of Anglo-American Affairs. These include military cooperation such as the Korean War, the First Gulf War and operations in Kosovo in the 1990s. They may also include security disagreements such as the Suez Crisis, the Vietnam War or the Falklands War. These collaborations or separations are based on context and interests without any kind of necessary special bond. They may also be present in international institutions. Organisations such as the UN Security Council, NATO or the G8 see Britain and America co-operating on a wealth of security, economic and humanitarian areas. Though there exists a high level of collaboration in some of these areas they are in the context of multilateral situations which has an effect on the circumstance and motives of British and American actions and decisions. For descriptive purposes, these types of interactions will be labelled 'Anglo-American affairs' and do not carry connotations of sentiment or warmth that the phrase the 'Special Relationship' does. What is an important factor of Anglo-American affairs is that the relationship is consistent throughout history. Though the partnership may ebb and flow, there will always be links between the two countries. These links however, are no more special than any other bilateral relationship that each country has with other parties. When these types of interactions are removed from the body of work on UK and US relations the more special aspects of the relationship become apparent.

Aside from the standard bilateral interaction between Britain and America, another type of association has emerged. This has been based on several factors: shared culture and customs, a mutual threat and what could be seen as the most important factor, and a willingness to act. Since the phrase the 'Special Relationship' was coined in the 1940s there have been three instances where an alliance has emerged based on these unifying factors creating the 'Special Relationship Alliances' (SRA). The first of these alliances, Special Relationship Alliance I (SRA I), came into being in the 1940s with the Second World War partnership fostered by the personal warmth and friendship between Churchill and Roosevelt, taking the form of an alliance. This led to a grand union and co-operation of British and American military and wartime services against the fascist

threat in Europe. Once this threat was eliminated the alliance came to an end and was not seen again for almost 20 years. It was followed by the Special Relationship Alliance II (SRA II) during the Cold War. Although working together from the origins of the Cold War in the 1940s, SRA II was based on a nuclear missile partnership in the face of the Soviet threat founded on agreements reached in the 1960s. In exchange for missile technology the British would provide the Americans the necessary facilities they needed for their own defence. The design of SRA II was that Britain would provide a supporting role for America’s confrontation with the Soviet Union. This alliance reached its end as the threat emerging from the USSR was removed with the collapse of the Soviet bloc in the 1990s. A third alliance emerged in 2001 as part of the War on Terror. In the wake of 9/11 and in the face of Islamic extremism, the Special Relationship Alliance III (SRA III) was established based on military cooperation. The nature of this alliance has been less grounded as the notions of the War on Terror were so vague a realistic end to the so-called War would be unachievable. However, the signs and patterns of SRA I and II can give some idea as to where SRA III may be heading.



The separation of ‘Anglo-American Affairs’ and the ‘Special Relationship Alliances’ highlights the ways that relations between Britain and America can be, in a sense, unique. These two concepts can be seen as connected but independent of each other. Although they have the same actors they operate at different levels and have different goals. Along with this, it is important to distinguish between the different alliances as they carry different traits and purposes that are important for understanding the development of UK-US affairs. Although both states have similar roles, each alliance is a separate entity. In a similar way, the actors and events of the First World War were related to the events of the Second World War; however, they were separate episodes. Each of the SRA can be seen as linked, but, have different demeanours which distinguishes them. This approach has some similarities to the ‘Lazarus’ understanding of the relationship, as put forward by Marsh and Baylis. They rightly point out times when the relationship returns to the forefront of international politics. However, in their approach they describe the same relationship being resurrected. Their use of words such as ‘reaffirm’, ‘replicate’, or ‘re-establish’ indicates a continuous theme of the relationship, the same Special Relationship is being brought back.<sup>264</sup>

<sup>264</sup> Marsh and Baylis, ‘The Anglo-American “Special Relationship”’, p178-182.

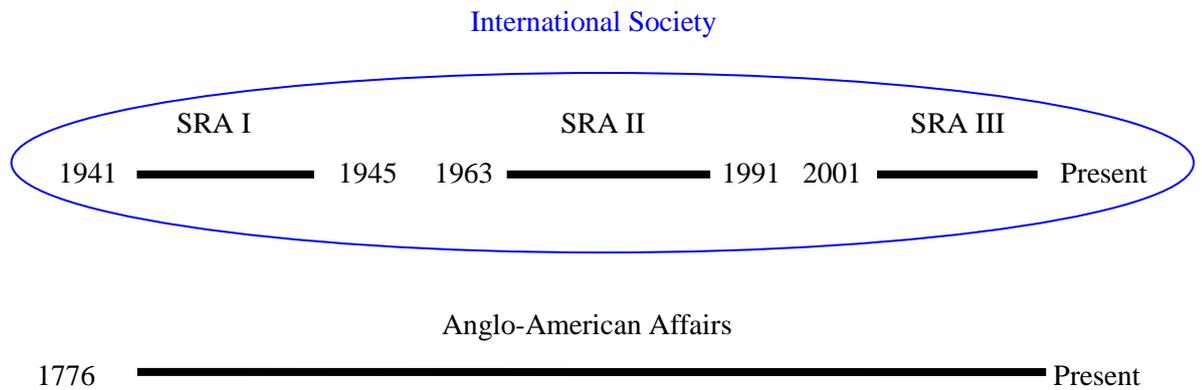
This thesis proposes that this is not quite the case. By differentiating between these concepts, and indeed between the different SRAs, more precision and measurability between historical examples can be used to understand the relationship. The use of the English School can help establish the context and theoretical underpinnings in which these alliances were formed.

## 9.2. The Special Relationship Alliance in International Society

As discussed previously, there are difficulties in using English School theory in this context. One of these difficulties is the debate within the School, particularly on how International Society is made up. By using those areas that overlap between the authors in the School, and in the areas related to the SRA, a context can be provided to explain how International Society makes the SRA singular. The emphasis on commonality, volition, sovereignty and personal leadership have found weight in both the works on British and American relations and the English School. Crucial however, to the understanding of the SRA as well as International Society is the emphasis placed on norms.

Going back to one of the founding texts on International Society, Bull's *The Anarchical Society* states that rules and customs seen in international institutions such as diplomacy exist in International Society, rather than International System. The existence of these rules and customs creates obligations for states in the Society to live up to. These are also the circumstances that create norms in International Society. As Dunne goes on to explain, it is the work of political leaders who set these norms of the Society. James also explores the notions associated with personal leadership. In his defence of using the term Society, he emphasises that Society embraces the human element of international affairs. Although this could be seen as sentimental, it highlights how the whims of those in political leadership roles have an important position in shaping the direction of the Society. Bull's work also contributes to this as he explains that with the decline of embassies and the traditional roles of diplomacy, political leaders are taking a greater responsibility in foreign affairs. James uses this argument to emphasise the voluntary nature of the Society. As political leaders are directing the development of norms in the Society, there is a level of volition necessary for states to contribute to the direction of Society. With this emphasis on volition, the notion of sovereignty is also significant, as those volunteering must have the sovereign right to choose to operate in this kind of arrangement. Bull uses the example of Great and Medium Powers to support the level of sovereignty in the Society in a similar way to James' argument. In the case of these different levels of power, each state recognises the sovereignty of other nations in the Society. Finally, Buzan's contributions also raise some useful elements for consideration. He argues that contact between states encourages a level of commonality, which will allow the evolution of the Society. Similarly, Dunne and James explain

that commonality will be important in developing the norms of the Society. With these vast notions an idea of International Society can be presented to explain how the SRA is held together.



With the use of International Society, we can see the context in which the SRA emerges and provides a distinction between Anglo-American affairs and the SRA. Due to Britain and America’s shared history and language as well as their similar cultures, a set of norms can be established in each of the alliances. These norms are built on the foundations of commonality between the two states. Similarly, in each of these cases the role and the relationship between the leaders of each country have been important in developing these alliances. The two leaders will often use a sense of commonality to establish norms and direct alliances. This is possible because, despite the asymmetry in power, both are leaders of sovereign states and are in that sense on the same footing. Finally, part of the reason that these different alliances have been forged is due to the fact that both parties have voluntarily chosen to work together. Along with these mutual elements of the English School and the Special Relationship, the tools of Alliance Theory can assist in understanding the nature of these collaborations.

### 9.3. The Special Relationship Alliances and Alliance Theory

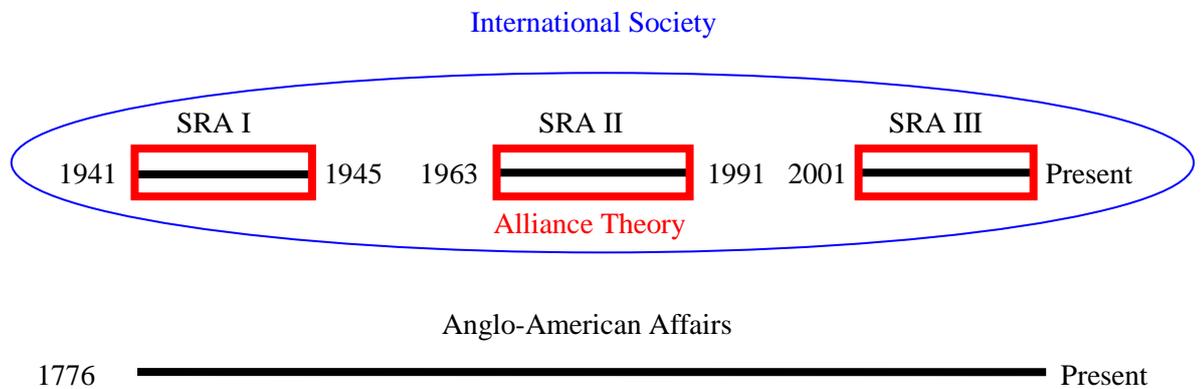
As the different SRAs were established under different circumstances, for different purposes and to achieve different goals, although at times bared similarities to previous incarnations, the tools offered by Alliance Theory provide a different approach to analysing these alliances. The explanation for the formation and disintegration of these alliances can assist in establishing the nature of SRA III.

Two explanations have been presented for the creation of alliances: balancing or bandwagoning. The first refers to the notion that when faced with a serious threat, states will align to balance against the dangers that the threat poses. In this situation alliance members are not required to have a matching ideology or similar cultures if the threat is large enough. What is required is willingness to act and an acceptance of alliance partners. However, when alliances are being

formed under the banner of balancing, similar institutions and customs can be a large asset in forming a durable alliance. These types of similarities may also assist in alliance cohesion as having matching languages and institutions may facilitate the joining of resources and create a more resilient alliance. These elements are seen to be present in the SRA and International Society as the level of commonality helps in cementing the development of the relationship in the Society. Similarly, the voluntary nature of the balancing concept reflects the SRA and International Society.

The second reason for alliance formation has been referred to as bandwagoning. This takes place when the nature of the threat may be less potent but individual states feel safer within an alliance with a strong hegemon. In these situations states would usually trade off autonomy within the international arena for security and tie themselves to the power of the leading state within the alliance. For those leading states, they may not require partners but feel that their presence creates legitimacy when tackling a specific threat. In relation to the SRA theory, this position reflects the asymmetric nature of the alliances between Britain and America, which has been a recurring aspect of the relationship as seen in the academic literature where the US wants to gain international legitimacy by working with others.

Alliances can collapse as a result of the threat disappearing or when internal disharmony makes managing the alliance too difficult. The natures of alliances that form out of balancing are reliant on threat perception to give the alliance purpose. When the threat disappears, the reasons for forming the alliance goes too. It is at this point that states need to manage the alliance disintegration. This is important as a successful management of alliance dissolution can leave the door open for future cooperation. An unsuccessful disintegration however, could risk members feeling alienated by their partners or in a state of chaos if they lose an important aspect of their security agenda. Aside from alliance disintegration, internal difficulties can emerge before the alliance formally ends. These difficulties between partners can put a strain on the relations of alliance members. Internal difficulties can arise out of the fear of abandonment and entrapment these problems may be more apparent in alliances that form as part of the bandwagoning hypothesis as the smaller states have less control of the direction of the alliances. If alliances are not disintegrated in an appropriate way, future relations and partnerships may be easier to establish. This has particular relevance to the SRA as in the case of each of these alliances there is a period of negotiation which takes place for setting the norms, roles and goals of the alliance where the tools of Alliance Theory helps to explain the nature of the arrangements. A difficult and unresolved ending can complicate future cooperation.



With these concepts of the SRA theory of British and American interaction a new, more clearly defined understanding can be conceptualised in the area of defence relations. When faced with a common threat, the UK and the US use their high levels of commonality and sentimentality to form an alliance to address the threat. In each of these alliances, a period of negotiation takes place to establish the norms, roles and goals of the alliance. This process may be an informal one where the arrangements are not codified in a treaty or institution. Instead, they rely partly on mutual understandings, often between leaders, or on the public perception of what is agreed. In these cases, the role of the executive is important in establishing the nature and direction of the alliances. Eventually the alliance will be dissolved, either when the goals have been met or for other reasons. When the succeeding alliance emerges, a new period of negotiation will begin where new norms, roles and goals will also be established. There may indeed be similarities between each alliance, nevertheless due to the changing context and nature of these alliances they should be treated separately. Through the context of International Society and its binding principles and the tools of Alliance Theory we can see emerging a more detailed and flexible understanding of the Special Relationship.

#### 9.4. Aims, Objectives and Scope of the SRA

With this outline of the theoretical positions that has led to the identification of a different perspective on UK-US relations, it is important now to consider the nature, depths and difficulties of using such a theoretical structure to examine a close relationship that has operated in one form or another for decades. The primary purpose of presenting this theory is to provide a more focused approach to the relationship with a special emphasis on the military elements. The previous scholarship on the subject of Anglo-American relations has tended to be all-

encompassing and leaving little room for flexibility in the relationship. The approach offered in this thesis attempts to address the deficiencies of previous accounts by exploring the theoretical positions of norms, roles and goals within each alliance in order to provide a framework in which to compare and measure the different academic understandings of the alliance.

Within the literature on the various elements of international relations associated with the interaction between Britain and America, there is a multitude of different terms, phrases and metaphors regularly utilised. The term the Special Relationship itself lacks any precision due to its over-usage both in the academic material and in practical usage. Very few accounts have been offered as to what constitutes or qualifies the ‘specialness’ in the relationship. This thesis offers criteria for identifying collaborations based on sentiment. In an attempt to move away from the all-encompassing phrase ‘Special Relationship’, this thesis proposes a distinction between different categories of the relationship. To identify the elements within the alliance that have been seen as special compared to examples of the relationship that fall into the Anglo-American Affairs category, the norms, roles and goals of the collaboration provide the criteria for defining and discussing the unusually close relationship found in the SRA. More precisely, the military relationship is the identifiable special aspect of the relationship.

This thesis will focus its investigations on the military relationships between the UK and US during each of the alliance identified above. The scope of this research project is to focus on the military aspects of the relationship due to the significance placed on the military compatibility by both countries’ leaders, often in a very public manner. The commitments to military partnerships and exchange of military technology present what is often the clearest and most measurable strength of the relationship. How this military partnership translates into alliance relations seen through the norms roles and goals of the alliance after 2001 is the primary focus of this thesis.

#### 9.4.1. Elements of the SRA

The previous sections of this chapter identified norms, roles and goals as the measurable factors of the British-American collaborations that can be used to analyse each alliance. This following section will explore each of these positions in more depth which will be used to discuss the different alliances that have emerged.

To review, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there have been two alliances between Britain and America that demonstrate the norms, roles and goals of the alliance. The first example of the SRA emerged during the conflict of the Second World War, often seen as the origin of the Special Relationship. This is due to the fact the term itself was coined by Winston Churchill during the war. It was Churchill who made persistent attempts to bring America into the war. These efforts culminated

in the meetings that took place between Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt in 1941 and saw an establishment of the norms, roles and goals of SRA I. With the ultimate achievements of removing the threat posed by the fascist regimes of Germany, Italy and Japan by 1945, SRA I was rapidly deconstructed. The second example of the SRA was the alliance seen during the Cold War. SRA II emerged as a missile alliance between Britain and America based on the Nassau Agreement in 1962 and lasted to the removal of the threat in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union. This alliance was unique in its continuous renewal throughout the Cold War. As will be discussed below, both of these alliances had their own set of norms, roles and goals similar to the situation seen in SRA III.

#### 9.4.1.1. Norms

A significant aspect of each of the alliances has been the different norms that have been established throughout the alliance. The norms of each SRA help provide the understandings of the behaviour that has often characterised the alliances. In the context of this thesis, norms are the expected behavioural patterns of the British and American governments in the context of the specific partnerships that they have formed. In each alliance, the norms help each partner understand the nature of the situation they are in as well as providing guidance on what type of behavioural approach each state should follow. These norms are determined by each of the actors in the alliance, namely the leaders of the UK and the US. At the beginning of each alliance, norms are set out and are usually upheld as each state attempts to follow the expected patterns of behaviour appropriate for their position in the alliance. It is through the actions of the actors involved that the norms become visible and it is through the empirical studies of the different collaborations we can examine the nature and purpose of each norm within the SRA.

Throughout the different SRA examples that have taken place, different norms have emerged in reflection of the contextual factors of the alliance such as the nature of the threat facing the UK and the US. In SRA I, certain norms emerged within the alliance which provided each partner direction on how to act within the alliance. One such norm was the complete and thorough working relationship between Britain and America. The normative behaviour in this alliance was a close cohesion of military efforts on both sides of the Atlantic. It became the normal behaviour to undertake the burden of war together and although there were difficulties in the partnership, a working relationship emerged that witnessed unusually high levels of collaborations. In contrast, SRA II had a different set of norms based on the differing nature of the alliance. One example of a norm in the alliance was the preferential treatment the US showed the UK in terms of access to nuclear technology. This type of behaviour and level of collaboration was continued throughout the alliance, even as administrations changed. In the both cases, a norm visible from the British was the dedication and acting as the driving force behind the alliance. Staying close to the

Americans was an important norm in both alliances and in return the US response was to treat the UK as a staunch and close ally.

The purpose of norms in international relations is to provide direction for states and assist in identifying their interests. In the case of the SRA certain positions come clear, namely the British dedication to the alliance. A constant norm in the different alliances has been the British commitment to the partnership. Within the Anglo-American Affairs wing of the positions set out within this chapter, relations could be close but necessarily be special and may indeed bear [?] a similar set of norms. However, it has been the arranged roles and, ultimately, the goals of the alliance that provide more distinction in separating out these two aspects of British and American affairs. It is the norms that encroach on the next element of the SRA, roles within the alliance and provide direction in drawing out the difference between Anglo-American Affairs and the SRA.

#### 9.4.1.2. Roles

The establishment of norms within an alliance is a result of the collaboration between the actors and are used to reinforce the role each state will play in the coming together of the militaries. The norms which direct behaviour of each of the members of the alliance reinforce the roles each member takes on within the alliance and it is the roles that can often be more visibly seen as states take on certain positions or policies to reflect these roles. For example, within each alliance the UK's normative behaviour of supporting the US has led to what has often been a defining role of the SRA, Britain as America's junior partner, providing vocal and visible support. The close connection between this norm and this role can be a point of confusion due to the similarities between the two notions. However, it can help demonstrate the importance of analysing the SRA within a specific set of circumstances as different threats may lead to the adoption of different roles from alliance to alliance. Whereas the UK operates in the role of junior partner, the US takes on the role of leader within the alliance due to her size, strength and international power. Often it is the case that for the appearance of being seen as having staunch international partners supporting their cause, the US will allow the UK, with a comparatively smaller footprint in international affairs, to be seen as a consulting partner to the US. Although this arrangement is driven by the goals of the alliance and governed by the norms of the alliance, it is these roles within the collaboration that are the most visible element of the SRA. The public perception of the alliance, and particularly the visible relationship between the leaders of Britain and America, is usually the basis of the alliance. The appearance of a close relationship between leaders is often the embodiment of the roles of the SRA as the British Prime Minister can be seen to influencing the most powerful elected official in the world while the US President is perceived to be able to display the ability to operate with others and be more than a unilateral, unipolar actor. Indeed it is

often the public relationship between the president and prime minister that displays these roles in the alliance and points towards the strength of the alliance.

The roles of junior and senior partner within the different alliances have been a recurring element of each SRA. There are however, other roles which have been displayed that reflect the specific concerns and norms of the different alliances. In some cases the role of Britain has been to keep America's interests focused on a certain policy area. For example, during SRA I, Churchill took on the role of keeping America's military efforts focused on the war in Europe rather than in East Asia. These efforts from the British led to the establishment of the US role in the alliance. For Roosevelt, his role was to provide US military leadership and power in the war in Europe. In comparison, the roles of SRA II revolved around the presentation of a united nuclear alliance. By offering the UK staunch nuclear support, the US was taking on the role of guarantor for European nuclear protection while the UK was taking on the role of America's underlying insurance for a nuclear retaliation in the event of an attack against the US. These roles found in the different partnerships often appear to overlap with some of the closeness that can be seen in Anglo-American Affairs. What often exists in the roles of the alliance is a public reflection of the sentimental bonds to address a mutual threat facing the allies.

The roles of each alliance are based on the norms which govern the behaviour of each member of the alliance. These roles are often the visible manifestation of the alliance and became crucial for examining the nature of the partnership. In these circumstances the media representation of the alliance and public portrayals between the leaders is particularly important and emerges as an important feature of alliance relations during SRA III. The extent of the various roles, particularly the junior-senior partner roles of the alliances, has a significant impact on the stability of the alliance. The greater the support from the junior partner of the alliance, the stronger the alliance can appear. Where the more clearly defined norms help establish the roles of the alliance leading to an indication of the strength of alliance relations, the goals of the alliance can help measure the purpose and success of the alliance and indicates the areas that separate each of SRA.

#### 9.4.1.3. Goals

The norms and roles of SRA I and II often carried many similarities. Where the allies differed was due to the nature of the threat facing each alliance. With the different threats, different goals for each alliance emerged and it was the norms and roles of each alliance that indicated how the alliances would attempt to achieve these goals. Through the analysis of the goals of each alliance the difference between each alliance becomes more evident. A significant feature of the SRA approach is the distinction between stated and unstated goals. The stated goals of the alliance have been based on the context of the alliance, namely the nature of the threat facing the alliance.

In each of the partnerships, a different threat has provided the impetus to form a new alliance to address the specific nature of the threat. In the case of SRA I it was the aggression of fascist dictators that brought the UK and US together in a military collaboration to see a complete military defeat of these aggressors. On the other hand, SRA II was a result of the ideological deadlock between the West and the Soviet Union, manifested as a nuclear standoff that provided the stated goals of each alliance which was to see the removal of the Soviet nuclear threat. These stated goals are often only one reason for forming an alliance. In each case there is another set of goals which states are seeking to achieve by forming an alliance but are not necessarily as clearly identifiable as the stated goals.

Within each alliance there are a set of unstated goals, a set of objectives each state wants to achieve that are separate to the stated aims of defeating an opponent. To an extent, these unstated goals are a reflection of each state's national interest for forming an alliance. However, it is the close and sentimental relationship between the two countries that creates to the opportunity to form an alliance to achieve any of these goals. In the case of SRA I, the unstated goals of the UK and US were, to an extent, competing. Where the UK wanted a strong partner in the US to ensure her economic imperial interests around the world, a significant goal of the US was to support the UK in return for movement on breaking up elements of Britain's empire which comprised an economic trading bloc that the US could not fully participate in. This unstated goal of the US was seen with the conditions placed on Britain at the Bretton Woods summit and the 1945 Anglo-American loan negotiations that pushed to end these practices. In SRA II, the unstated goals were based on ensuring the perception of strong international partnership. Where the UK was seen to be maintaining a top seat at the international table, the US was gaining a credible partner who could reinforce and spread America's nuclear strength. In both of these cases, there appears to be a certain undercurrent of sentimentality between the both sides of the Atlantic and particularly in the relationship between President and Prime Minister, reinforcing the norms and roles. Both Churchill and Macmillan sought a close and personal relationship with the president and were often able to obtain favourable terms for their involvement in the alliance, particularly in the area of military technology.

The stated goals of each alliance are often most clearly identifiable purpose of the alliance and are the reasons for establishing certain norms and roles which will best achieve these goals. It is usually the case that the stated goals of the alliance act as the defining feature that separates each alliance. Although different alliances feature similar norms, roles and unstated goals, the stated goals provide the context for the alliance and help to separate the similar, but independent norms, roles and unstated goals within each of the different alliances by providing a unique context for the collaboration. The three elements of the SRA are often overlapping and can be hard to clearly

identify and discuss. However, it is the tight and compounded nature of these different features that demonstrate the consistency in analysing the different examples of an alliance founded on a sentimental bond to achieve a specific set of goals.

These discussions on SRA I and II are by no means exhaustive and nor are they intended to be. It has been the purpose of this section to identify and provide more explanation on how the norms, roles and goals established between the UK and US contribute to the SRA approach.

### 9.5. Thesis Contribution

What this section of the thesis has tried to set out is a divergence on how UK-US relations are observed. The broad body of research in this field has tended to treat the subject in a historiographical approach that lacks any attempt to provide a theoretical understanding that can be fairly applied to the different periods and elements of the relationship. What this collection of literature reviews and theorised dialogue has attempted to establish is a coherent and focused approach to a relationship which has been examined under a broad scope. By exploring a way to provide distinction and categorisation of the relationship, this thesis aims to offer a more nuanced approach to the study of British and American interaction. This thesis intends to reach this research goal by focusing on what is the most clearly visible and, at times, the strongest aspect of the relationship, the military alliances. It has been put forward that, on the one hand, there are parts of the relationship that cannot be deemed as particularly special as they are based on the same principles of international affairs as seen between any [?] two countries. Yet, on the other hand, there have been times when a unique alliance has emerged where sentimental ties lead to a significant military collaboration. It is these military collaborations that display unique and irregular collaborations between Britain and America as seen with establishment of norms, roles and goals within an alliance context. The ability to identify the interlocking norms, roles and goals assists in pointing towards the significance of the military partnership between Britain and America. In the context of the theoretical views put forward pertaining to International Society and Alliance Theory, a distinction in the area of military cooperation can be identified as an area of UK-US cooperation that can be both ordinary, in the sense it is part of regular interaction between states, but also special in that some examples demonstrate a clearly special bond. Often these elements can appear to overlap; yet, it is the identification of norms, roles and goals that indicate where a collaboration graduates to a level of special cooperation based on sentimental factors between the UK and the US.

## 9.6. Limitations of SRA approach

As discussed, there has been minimal attempt in recent years to theorise the Special Relationship as well as little research focus placed on contemporary relations. The review of relevant literature, theoretical positions and historical events previously discussed has helped identify the ability to formulate a more inclusive and closely defined understanding of a relationship that has spanned decades and ranged from close and trusted partnership to distant but amicable collaboration. In many areas of the research presented in this thesis, more work can be and has been undertaken in the diverse fields of the Special Relationship, the English School and Alliance Theory. It has been the goal of this thesis to connect relevant positions to better understand the relationship. With this intent in mind, it is worth considering some of the limitations of using such a theoretical approach.

An area where the approach presented above has limits is in relation to the area of intelligence. The UK and the US have developed highly close and complex intelligence sharing relations which have been embedded through various institutions and point towards an unusually close relationship. The difficulty with the field of intelligence is by its very nature it is a redacted topic to research. Indeed, some of the major notions of the SRA are not upheld in the area of intelligence sharing due to its clandestine nature and low public profile. However, the justification in moving away from the area of intelligence sharing is that it lacks the visible collaborations found in the military partnerships. It is often the case that the significant aspects of the alliances between Britain and America are reflected in an open presentation of closeness embedded in the alliance norms and roles. Indeed, the goals of the alliances are dependent on public perceptions. The special bond demonstrated in a public military collaboration that displays the norms, roles and goals designated as part of the SRA approach to this area of study.

Another area of difficulty in putting forward a view that attempts to separate the nuances of a large and encroaching relationship is the distinction between similar areas of research. With this approach there is a danger of compromising the subtleties and differences in the body of literature to create a distinct set of principles leading to a rigidly defined theoretical understanding, effectively throwing the baby out with the bathwater. The difficulty in attempting to distinguish between two parts of a relationship that involve the same actors and often have similar features and sometimes similar functions is the clearly high levels of overlap. Doubtless, there will be some who do not agree with this theoretical approach and feel it does not adequately explain all the elements and subtleties of the relationship. Equally, given the nature of literature on Anglo-American relations, using theoretical concepts in this context of the special relationship literature is also likely to generate criticisms. As part of the research of this topic, it is an expected claim that more research needs to be conducted. However, as far as this thesis is concerned, this

research aims to create an initial stepping stone for a more considered debate on the relationship between Britain and America that takes into account contemporary issues and theoretical perspectives.

## **Part II**

## 10. Special Relationship Alliance III: Part I

The political career of Gordon Brown will always be tied to the premiership of Tony Blair. The link between the two is due to their intense relationship and Blair's powerful impact on British politics. This is especially true when examining the relationship between Britain and America and the War on Terror. Before this thesis proceeds to the Brown period, it is important to investigate the nature of British and American relations during the Blair years as well as establishing the context in which SRA III was formed. This chapter will draw on secondary and primary material to set the appropriate context for understanding the Brown years and SRA III. It will look at primary material to establish an understanding of key events that took place between the 9/11 attacks and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. These primary materials will include; memoirs, media sources, government documents and the testimonies and evidence heard by various inquiries. With this accomplished, the nature of SRA III will be explored in line with the framework established in chapter 9. The norms, roles and goals of the alliance will be set out and will be used as the context for understanding the Brown period. To begin with however, the first section of this chapter will review the academic literature on Tony Blair and his approach to foreign policy in order to highlight significant findings and understandings on Blair and his relationship with the US.

### 10.1. Tony Blair in the Academic Literature

During his period as Prime Minister, Tony Blair was one of the most dominant actors on the international stage. He was prepared to engage UK military forces on 5 separate occasions during his ten years in Number 10. He also had a presence in significant political initiatives such as the War on Terror, the Good Friday Agreement and bringing Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in from the cold. For scholars, Blair's career and policies have inspired a wealth of material and debate on his leadership, the style and the success of his policies. The organisation and critique of this body of literature highlight three key debates on Tony Blair's leadership and foreign policy discourse. The first debate relates to Blair's preparedness to tackle foreign policy. Academics have questioned whether Blair learned through his various experiences and adventures in foreign policy or if he displayed a consistent approach in style and policy from his time as Leader of the Opposition through to his resignation in 2007. The second debate examines what were the motivations for his decisions. The two major branches of this debate focus on Blair's moral certainty, which could have derived from his profound Christian beliefs, or whether his actions were based on the national interest. There are some further views which suggest that Blair was most of all concerned with history and his place within it. The final debate assesses Blair's ability as Prime Minister. These discussions take into account Blair's own relationship with power and those who wield it, his political instincts and self-confidence and finally, whether this led to him

having a successful impact in the foreign arena. These debates are crucial for understanding the Brown period as it gave him something to either push away from or move closer to during Brown's time in office.

Throughout the academic discussions two of the leading scholars on Blair appear frequently on different sides of the debates. Oliver Daddow has published widely on Tony Blair, often focusing on Blair's dealings with Europe and how they reflected his foreign policy style. Stephen Dyson has focused his studies on Blair from a psychological point of view. Dyson has analysed the various traits of leadership within foreign policy and his largest work on Blair, *The Blair Identity*, is based on the realist theory of IR. Where Daddow is a scholar from the UK who bases his conclusions from an historical interpretation and explanation, Dyson is an American academic who uses political scientific methods to create an understanding of Blair's foreign policy. These two approaches create two contrasting understandings of Blair which feature strongly in the various debates within the literature.

#### 10.1.1. Debate I: Blair and Foreign Policy

The first debate within the literature relates to Blair's understandings of foreign policy and highlights the significance of natural ability in foreign policy or developing the skills to be an effective player on the international stage. One point of view that has been put forward is that Blair's approach to foreign policy evolved the more he delved into the foreign arena. A contrasting point has been made that Blair was consistent in his approach and his policies from his time in opposition and throughout his premiership. Daddow argues the former position by claiming that Blair had little experience in foreign affairs before becoming Prime Minister, and argues that the Kosovo crisis was where Blair learned important lessons in foreign affairs, particularly the importance of appearances.<sup>265</sup> Naughtie supports Daddow's point that, though Blair had met with foreign leaders during his time in opposition he still had to learn about foreign policy on the job.<sup>266</sup> Daddow goes further, arguing alongside Gaskarth who uses evidence from one of Blair's foreign policy advisors to explain that Blair only had ideas on foreign policy. These ideas were to develop as time went on.<sup>267</sup> Hill takes this line of argument further by claiming that Blair's lack of knowledge in foreign affairs was not an issue. The improvisation skills that Blair developed while practicing law as well as support from his foreign policy team allowed Blair to

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<sup>265</sup> Oliver Daddow, 'Tony's Wars? Blair, Kosovo and the interventionist impulse in British foreign policy', *International Affairs*, vol. 85, no. 3 (2009), 547-560, p558.

<sup>266</sup> James Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, p40.

<sup>267</sup> Daddow and Gaskarth, 'Introduction: Blair, Brown and New Labour's Foreign Policy', p2-3.

develop policy quickly. This is an important factor in the days of 24 hour news.<sup>268</sup> Hill's point is an important one which Daddow and Naughtie fail to pick up. Daddow also claims that Blair learned the importance of appearances during the Kosovo crisis. It is true Blair was able to utilise the American press to push President Clinton into action on Kosovo through his speech to the Chicago Economic Club in 1999, Blair had always shown an ability to appreciate the effectiveness of creating the right image. In this argument, Blair is presented as showing the ability to adapt and learn. It may also suggest however, that Blair could be swayed or influenced into certain policy directions. This may be particularly relevant when examining his relationship with President Bush.

In opposition to this argument, Dyson explains that the traits of Blair's leadership and foreign policy style showed a consistency which undermines the idea that Blair was a developing actor on the world stage. Though Dyson recognises the importance of Kosovo for Blair as he established himself in the foreign policy arena, he also recognises the consistency in some of Blair's policies such as on Iraq.<sup>269</sup> From Dyson's position, Kosovo was more about shaping Blair's confidence in international affairs rather than shaping his thoughts on them as Daddow claims. Roper agrees with Dyson that Blair had always advocated a tough line on Saddam Hussein and Iraq which, he argues made Blair as an independent actor in the controversies surrounding Iraq after 2003 and not simply following the Bush administration.<sup>270</sup> Mumford's study of Blair looked at the type of rhetoric Blair used in comparison to former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Foreign Secretary Robin Cook and he found that Blair was consistent in his foreign policy motives.<sup>271</sup> This position presents Blair as a conviction politician who was prepared to pursue policy areas that he felt strongly about. However, given his entrenched positions on foreign policy, particularly after 2003, it demonstrates a potential problem for leaders who refuse to alter policy directions.

To support the Dyson led view that Blair was consistent in his foreign policy, there were few occasions where Blair actually changed his position. If Blair evolved his foreign policy throughout his time in office, as Daddow, Naughtie and Hill claim, there would be more instances of U-turns or contradiction in his foreign policy. This is an important factor in analysing Blair's

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<sup>268</sup> Christopher Hill, 'Putting the World to Rights: Tony Blair's Foreign Policy Mission', in Anthony Seldon and Dennis Kavanagh (eds) *The Blair Effect 2001-2005* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 384-409 p385.

<sup>269</sup> Dyson, *The Blair Identity*, p5; Stephen Dyson, 'Personality and Foreign Policy: Tony Blair's Iraq Decisions', *Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol. 12, (2006), 289-306, p290.

<sup>270</sup> Jon Roper, 'Leadership and Power: Tony Blair, George W. Bush and the War Against Iraq', in Lori Maguire (ed) *The Foreign Policy Discourse in the UK and the US in the 'New World Order'*, (New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 277-302, p278.

<sup>271</sup> Densua Mumford, 'New Labour's Ethical Dimension: Statistical trends in Tony Blair's Foreign Policy Speeches', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol. 12, no. 2, (2010), 295-312, p308.

foreign policy and his leadership style as it demonstrates that he held strong convictions and belief in the course he was on. In contrast however, Alastair Campbell once claimed that after Iraq, Blair would almost be convinced to take any kind of policy course if he was told that the public would react badly.<sup>272</sup> This indicates a stubborn streak in his policy approach. To understand what defined the style that Blair displayed, an analysis of the motivation for his foreign policy within the academic literature must be undertaken.

#### 10.1.2. Debate II: Blair's Motivations

The next debate within the body of literature on Tony Blair's leadership and foreign policy is based on what motivated him. The two most prominent positions that academics have focused on have been Blair's moralistic approach to foreign policy and his emphasis on the UK national interest. The first concept has gained a lot of traction within the academic literature as many writers have found a connection between Blair's foreign policy positions and his own moral beliefs based on his Christian faith. In his assessment of Blair's foreign policy, Roper described Blair as having a Gladstonian style based on Christian morals which Roper attributes to his moralistic approach based on a Wilsonian view of the wider world.<sup>273</sup> Roper draws on many different viewpoints to define Blair's foreign policy and is similar to many in attributing this moral certainty to the foundations of Blair's most controversial relationship with President George W. Bush. Roper, Parma, and Smith concur that Blair's shared Christian beliefs with President Bush led to his large scale commitments to the War on Terror.<sup>274</sup> Dyson takes this concept further by arguing that after the terror attacks of 9/11 Blair became determined to solve the world's problems.<sup>275</sup> These views have been drawn together by Hill, who claims that Blair's motivation for action was either political pressure from Washington or was based on his own personal belief.<sup>276</sup> Although it is known Blair has strong Christian beliefs, the study by Mumford demonstrates that in his rhetoric he remained somewhere between his own moral certainty and acting in the national interest. To Mumford, it was the notion of public approval that restricted Blair from fully following a moral based foreign policy that is related to the ethical foreign policy of New Labour discussed above.<sup>277</sup> These views on Blair demonstrate how important his faith based moralism was to the direction of foreign policy and reflect the notions of an ethical foreign

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<sup>272</sup> BBC 2, *Blair: The Inside Story: The End of the Affair*, Broadcast (30<sup>th</sup> March 2007).

<sup>273</sup> Roper, 'Leadership and Power', p280.

<sup>274</sup> Roper, 'Leadership and Power', p289; Inderjeet Parmar, 'I'm Proud of the British Empire: Why Tony Blair backs George W Bush', *Political Quarterly*, vol. 76, no. 2 (2006), 218-231, 221-228; Martin Smith, 'Tony Blair: The First Prime Minister of a Global Era', *British Politics*, vol. 2, no.3 (2007), 420-427, p426.

<sup>275</sup> Stephen Dyson, 'What difference did he make? Tony Blair and British Foreign Policy from 1997-2007', in Terrence Casey (ed) *The Blair Legacy*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 235-246, p241.

<sup>276</sup> Hill, 'Putting the World to Rights', p398.

<sup>277</sup> Mumford, 'New Labour's Ethical Dimension', p304.

policy discussed above. However, there is also evidence to suggest that other factors had an impact on British foreign policy at the time.

The idea that Blair acted in the perceived national interest rather than out of a moral belief has been stated by some academics. Coates and Krieger argue something similar to Mumford by claiming that after Blair publicly talked up the need to invade Iraq, he would have faced a political disaster if he changed his position.<sup>278</sup> Bromund supports Blair's position and argues strongly that there was a serious threat coming from Saddam Hussein in Iraq and Blair was justified in his actions.<sup>279</sup> Similarly, according to Seldon, Snowdon and Collins, Blair justified his close, and unpopular, support for the US on Iraq as being in the UK national interest and forward thinking.<sup>280</sup> These views which appear to argue along a realist understanding of international affairs overlook Blair's dedication to liberal interventionism. If we are to believe the likes of Dyson, that Blair demonstrated a consistent approach in his foreign policy, then the notion that he would change his policy course on the ever changing interests of the UK carries less weight.

A third argument is put forward by Daddow. He claims that one of Blair's biggest motivations in his foreign policy was history. Daddow argues that Blair used different examples of history when addressing different audience. For example, Daddow stated his belief that when dealing with the US Blair would draw on the Anglo-American alliance of the Second World War, but when he addressed European audiences he would call on the examples of the Cold War and the divisions it created in Europe.<sup>281</sup> Daddow critiqued Blair for lecturing on learning the right lessons from history but not giving advice on how to do so and that this approach of trying to appeal to too many audiences was bad for Blair's policies.<sup>282</sup> Similarly, Naughtie cites the example of Clare Short, Blair's first Secretary for International Development, who claimed that Blair was obsessed with history and his place in it.<sup>283</sup> Blair's own comments do support this as he states his belief that studying history would have better prepared him for the role of Prime Minister, rather than his training as a lawyer. This was characterised when Blair famously claimed he felt 'the hand of history' on his shoulder during the Northern Ireland peace talks. However, as Edwards points out, when it comes to military matters, politicians tend to learn the wrong lessons from history.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> David Coates and Joel Krieger, 'The Mistake Heard Around the World: Iraq and the Blair Legacy' in Terrence Casey (ed) *The Blair Legacy*, (2007), 247-259, p249.

<sup>279</sup> Ted Bromund, 'A Just War: Prime Minister Tony Blair and the End of Saddam's Iraq', in Terrence Casey (ed) *The Blair Legacy*, (2007), 260-272, p260.

<sup>280</sup> Anthony Seldon, Peter Snowdon and Daniel Collins, *Blair Unbound*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 2005), p557.

<sup>281</sup> Oliver Daddow, 'Playing Games with History: Tony Blair's European Policy in the Press', p588.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid*, p590.

<sup>283</sup> Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, p192

<sup>284</sup> Aaron Edwards, *Defending the Realm?* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2012), p292.

These views of Blair and history present an interesting position, but do not necessarily contradict the previous arguments.

These different debates on what motivated Blair's foreign policy may not be mutually exclusive. As Mumford claims Blair tried to navigate between his own moral beliefs and building a national consensus. In the same way, the fascination with history that Daddow attributes to Blair does not rule out other inspirations in his foreign affairs. What this debate does demonstrate is Blair's ability to move between audiences and themes to pursue the policy that he thought was best. What shapes his views appears to be too difficult to attach to any one theme or theoretical position.

### 10.1.3. Debate III: The Academic View of Blair

The body of work on Blair has delved into numerous aspects of his personality and leadership style. This brief review includes on the one hand, personality weaknesses such as being power hungry, controlling, over confident or having a low level understanding of events and, on the other hand, it demonstrates his strong political instinct, popularity with the electorate and policy success. These different positions put forward by a variety of researchers highlight the controversy that Blair creates. Dyson claims that Blair displayed a low-level of understanding of the conceptual complexity of political problems, causing him to draw absolute conclusions from complex and uncertain events.<sup>285</sup> Ralph illustrates Dyson's point by suggesting that Blair misunderstood some international institutions which led to his failure to gain a second UN resolution on Iraq.<sup>286</sup> Naughtie identifies with Dyson's view by claiming that Blair did not truly understand the nature of neo-conservatism while he was trying to work with the Bush administration.<sup>287</sup> If Blair can be described as having a low level of conceptual complexity, the notion that he tried to maintain tight control on those around him carries more weight.

O'Malley relies on the example of the information used in the run up to the war in Iraq to create a similar argument. He demonstrates this with the example of the way Blair limited Cabinet debates as well as well as suppressing discussion on the legality of the war in order to gain approval for the invasion of Iraq.<sup>288</sup> One of Blair's political contemporaries, Charles Kennedy, wrote in the journal *British Politics* that Blair and his advisors kept tight command of his portrayal as a

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<sup>285</sup> Dyson, 'Personality and Foreign Policy', p299-300.

<sup>286</sup> Jason Ralph, 'After Chilcot: The Doctrine of International Community', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol. 13, no. 3, (2011), 304-325, p305.

<sup>287</sup> Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, p91.

<sup>288</sup> Eoin O'Malley, 'Setting Choices, Controlling Outcomes: The Operation of Prime Ministerial Influence and the UK's Decision to Invade Iraq', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol. 9, no. 1, (2007), 1-19, 10-14.

conviction politician.<sup>289</sup> In a similar fashion, Hill acknowledges that Blair also tried to maintain a tight and controlling management on security policy. He illustrates this with the example of Blair pulling the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) closer to his operations in Number 10.<sup>290</sup> Hill also comments that Blair's style led to overconfidence in his leadership which resulted in splits within the EU.<sup>291</sup> Roper too highlights that Blair was bullish in his attempt to force through the war in Iraq as a response to the lack of control he experienced after the 9/11 attacks.<sup>292</sup> These views have presented a reckless image of Blair that was possibly fuelled by his negative portrayal after the war in Iraq.

In contrast to these views, a number of researchers have reported that Blair displayed a capable approach with coherent policies. Where there are those who believe that Blair expressed overconfidence and tight control, others have tried to demonstrate that Blair was able to use his personality to achieve policy success. Foley gives the examples of welfare reform, the NHS and Northern Ireland as successful policies because they were attached to Blair personally.<sup>293</sup> Bromund also makes the case for Blair's success by arguing that he was prepared to act over Kosovo, Shepherd supports this by explaining that it was the ineffectiveness of the EU and US that led to Blair taking the lead.<sup>294</sup> Giddens has also criticised Blair's detractors for claiming that he was controlling yet also arguing he ruled over a divided party.<sup>295</sup> These views can be sustained by the fact that even after an unpopular war, Blair was re-elected for a third term.

As seen above, the premiership of Blair has generated a considerable amount of literature and debate. What these discussions have shown is that Blair was a defining political figure in British politics. Whether he was a strong leader or influenced by broad factors from religion to personal relationships, Blair's control of policy is clearly well defined. These positions will be important for working with the primary material to understand the events discussed below. It will also be crucial for the study of Gordon Brown who, in some ways sought to separate himself from Blair but in other ways sought to continue his work.

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<sup>289</sup> Charles Kennedy, 'Britain after Blair: The Issue of Trust', *British Politics*, vol. 2, no. 3, (2007), 435-440, p438.

<sup>290</sup> Hill, 'Putting the World to Rights', p391.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid*, p394.

<sup>292</sup> Roper, 'Leadership and Power', p292.

<sup>293</sup> Michael Foley, 'The Presidential Dynamics of Leadership in Decline in Contemporary British Politics: The Illustrative case of Tony Blair', *Contemporary Politics*, vol. 14, no. 1, (2008), 53-69, p60.

<sup>294</sup> Bromund, 'A Just War', 262; Shepherd, 'Blair, Brown and Brussels', p42.

<sup>295</sup> Anthony Giddens, 'New Labour: Tony Blair and After', *British Politics*, vol. 2, (2007), 106-110, p107.

## 10.2. Blair and America

Tony Blair's premiership became synonymous with his close association to George W. Bush. This was clear when Blair was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal and was asked to address a joint session of Congress in 2003.<sup>296</sup> However, Blair's relationship with the US ran deeper. Going back to his early years in Parliament, Seldon et al. explain that Blair, and Brown, had deep empathy for the United States. They even provide an account of one of Blair's earliest engagements with America. They explain that in 1986, the US government paid for Blair and a group of MPs to visit Washington to lobby for British support on nuclear deterrence and the Strategic Defence Initiative with Blair holding over 50 meetings while there.<sup>297</sup> As Seldon et al. point out; this trip alone did not turn Blair into an America-phile.<sup>298</sup> Blair's attachment to the US truly emerged before he became party leader by finding policy inspiration from President Clinton. From the rise of the Clinton administration, the Labour Party took lessons on election strategy, social and economic policies as part of the Labour Party's own modernisation process which Blair led. The relationship between Bill Clinton and Blair developed quickly and had a profound impact on Blair's premiership. Radice explains that at the beginning of the relationship Blair was like Clinton's younger brother; however, by 2000 when Clinton left office they were in a more equal partnership.<sup>299</sup> Collaboration on events such as the Northern Ireland peace process, the bombings of Iraq in Operation Desert Fox and joint efforts on the Kosovo crisis showed the ability of Blair and Clinton to work together.<sup>300</sup> Kosovo was perhaps the most significant of these events as it demonstrated the level of influence Blair had over the US when he convinced the Clinton administration to commit to making troop deployments in the conflict.<sup>301</sup> This occurred after Blair's 1999 Chicago speech where he told the US, specifically aiming at the Clinton administration, they needed to engage more with the world and if America did so, Britain would be there to support her.<sup>302</sup> Perhaps the greatest impact for Blair's premiership was the advice given by Clinton to Blair just before he was replaced by George W. Bush as Clinton told Blair to stay close to Bush.<sup>303</sup> Given the advice, guidance and example that Clinton had provided for Blair in the 1990s, there is every reason to assume that Blair took this advice seriously, if he had not already arrived at the same conclusion.

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<sup>296</sup> The Daily Telegraph, 'Tony Blair to receive highest civil award in ceremony', (13<sup>th</sup> January 2009).

<sup>297</sup> Seldon, et al., *Blair Unbound*, p120.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid, Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> Giles Radice, *Trio: Inside the Blair, Brown, Mandelson Project*, (New York: I B Tauris & Co Ltd. 2010), p150.

<sup>300</sup> Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, p52; Seldon, et al. *Blair Unbound*, p81.

<sup>301</sup> Bromund, 'A Just War', p263.

<sup>302</sup> Tony Blair, 'Doctrine of the International Community', (24<sup>th</sup> April 1999).

<sup>303</sup> The Office of Tony Blair, 'Tony Blair in conversation with President Bill Clinton at the NCC, Philadelphia', (15<sup>th</sup> February 2011).

The closeness between Blair and Bush emerged during their first meeting. The British Ambassador to Washington at this time commented in a television documentary that the first meeting between Blair and Bush saw Blair locking onto Bush's 'signal' early on in their meeting.<sup>304</sup> This first meeting became affectionately known as the Colgate summit after it was revealed in a press conference that both leaders used the same brand of tooth paste; but it also demonstrated the informal and warm relationship the two leaders were developing. This was not by chance, as Naughtie explains; Blair had spent a considerable amount of time preparing for the summit.<sup>305</sup> The two leaders already had a considerable amount in common. Both had a deep interest in history as well as sharing a strong sense of Christian faith. As discussed above, faith and history were powerful motivators for Blair in his policy discourse. The closeness between these two leaders did have its difficulties. For example, the 'Yo Blair!' incident where microphones picked up an unguarded conversation between the two leaders saw Blair offering to do work preparing the way for the US Secretary of State's visit to the Middle East.<sup>306</sup> This episode showed Blair to be offering to take on duties to support the US Secretary of State, playing into the 'Poodle' notion of the Special Relationship. However, Blair always remained resolute in his support for Bush. As he told the Labour Party conference in 2005, he would not have a 'Love Actually' moment, referencing the popular film which saw a British Prime Minister scolding a US President.<sup>307</sup> These considerations demonstrated a consistency in Blair's approach, following the advice of Clinton to build a strong relationship with Bush. These arguments are also important when analysing a crucial phase in their relationship between the event of 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003. It was in this time that SRA III was established.

### 10.3. The Formation of SRA III

The following discussion will examine the evolution of SRA III by tracing the historical track from 9/11 through to the decision to invade Iraq. It will take into account key episodes such as the formulation of the War on Terror and the Axis of Evil as well as important events such as the meeting between Tony Blair and George Bush at Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas. With the investigation of these episodes, the discussion will turn to identifying the norms, roles and goals of SRA III. The purpose of section is to set the criteria for which the Brown government had to operate under.

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<sup>304</sup> BBC 2, *Blair: The Inside Story, A Man with a Mission*, Broadcast (23<sup>rd</sup> March 2007).

<sup>305</sup> Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, p60.

<sup>306</sup> The Daily Mail, 'Bush: 'Yo, Blair, they've got to stop doing this s\*\*\*', (18<sup>th</sup> July 2006).

<sup>307</sup> Tony Blair, 'Party Conference Speech', (27<sup>th</sup> September 2005).

### 10.3.1. 9/11: 'Shoulder to shoulder'

The sudden attacks of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 had a lasting impact on the shaping of international security. They represented the rise of a new type of enemy to the western powers using methods that the rest of the world had to come to terms with. It was uncertain how the Bush administration were going to react to the attacks due to the neo-conservative and unilateral influences in the White House. Haar suggests that it was the attacks that allowed the neo-conservatives to assume a dominant role in Bush's White House.<sup>308</sup> Lindsay supports this by stating that Bush's response was to go on the offensive and attack his enemies.<sup>309</sup> For Blair, it became clear, quickly, that he had to reach out in some way to the Bush administration after the attacks. As Naughtie explains, Blair knew that Bush would respond with military action.<sup>310</sup> As a result, while Bush was taken onto Air Force One immediately after the attacks, Blair took to the television cameras and declared:

We therefore here in Britain stand shoulder to shoulder with our American friends in this hour of tragedy and we like them will not rest until this evil is driven from our world.<sup>311</sup>

It was Blair's clear and consistent support for the Bush administration that cemented this shoulder to shoulder role that Blair proposed. Bush himself explains in his autobiography that this support from Blair solidified their close relationship, which was clear as the years went on and other allies wavered in their support.<sup>312</sup> Blair discussed this issue with journalist Michael Cockrill, explaining that he wanted to let Bush know that he could identify with him and let him know that the US was not alone.<sup>313</sup> As Dumbrell explains, any concerns about differences between Blair and Bush over policies were put aside after 9/11.<sup>314</sup> What followed these events was a process in which Blair sought to bolster his position as being as close to the US as possible.

The role that Blair assumed after the attacks was centred on building international support in order to avoid unilateral action from the US. Alastair Campbell explained in his diaries that Blair's response was to pursue a political strategy which would support the US.<sup>315</sup> Blair himself expanded on his role:

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<sup>308</sup> Haar, 'Explaining George W. Bush's Adoption of the Neo-Conservative Agenda after 9/11', p966.

<sup>309</sup> Lindsay, 'George W. Bush, Barack Obama and the Future of US Global Leadership', p765.

<sup>310</sup> Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, p43.

<sup>311</sup> BBC News, 'Blair's Statement in Full', (11<sup>th</sup> September 2001); Radice, *Trio*, p148.

<sup>312</sup> George Bush, *Decision Points*, (New York: Crown Publishers, 2010), p140.

<sup>313</sup> BBC 2, *Blair: The Inside Story, A Man with a Mission*.

<sup>314</sup> Dumbrell, 'Working With Allies', p456.

<sup>315</sup> Alastair Campbell, *The Alastair Campbell Diaries: Volume III: Power and Responsibility* (London: Random House, 2012), p694.

I spoke in turn to Putin, Schroeder, Chirac and Berlusconi, and the next day President Bush. The collective sense of solidarity was absolute. Everyone was feeling behind the US. It is hard now to realise just how fearful people were at that time...I saw my role as that of galvanising the maximum level of support.<sup>316</sup>

Radice explains further that Blair held over 54 meetings with heads of states in the eight weeks following the attacks.<sup>317</sup> This included bringing the key powers of Europe on board. However, Naughtie points out that there was scepticism in Paris and Berlin regarding Blair's efforts.<sup>318</sup> As discussed above, the US and Europe have been seen as being on diverging paths since before 2001. The arguments on military action and multilateralism verses unilateralism help to highlight this split. 9/11 also provided institutions such as NATO with a new direction as well as offering Eastern European states an opportunity to support the US.<sup>319</sup> All of these points represent a dramatic shift in the makeup of international security. However, the Bush administration was less keen to use such organisations and preferred a singular US response.<sup>320</sup> It could therefore be a sign of Blair's credibility that he was in fact able to deliver support for the US and convince Bush to accept it. Parma draws historical parallels between this period and the relationship between Churchill and Roosevelt. He explains that the Blair-Bush correspondence after 9/11 was reminiscent of the Second World War correspondence between Churchill and Roosevelt.<sup>321</sup> Nevertheless, relations between the US and other NATO members soon became strained, leaving Blair in a difficult position.<sup>322</sup> These displays from Blair demonstrated the adoption of the roles of the SRA as Blair was offering strong and public support to the Bush administration's security policy. This will be an important consideration when examining the construction of action against Iraq and emphasising the UK's close relationship to the US.

While Blair had taken to the international stage, efforts began in the UK to draw closer links with the US after the attacks as international security rose to the top of the political agenda. Hill explains how it was after the attacks that Blair tied Number 10 to the JIC and tried to bring Europe and the US even closer together through the UK via intelligence sharing.<sup>323</sup> Some in Blair's Cabinet however, were less supportive. Naughtie explains that some Cabinet members were uncomfortable with the closeness Blair was displaying to President Bush and the policy directions being suggested.<sup>324</sup> Development Secretary Claire Short explained in her memoirs that Blair relished this position on the international stage and the appearance of being shoulder to

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<sup>316</sup> Tony Blair, *A Journey* (London: Hutchinson, 2010), p351-352

<sup>317</sup> Radice, *Trio*, p151.

<sup>318</sup> Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, p48

<sup>319</sup> Lynch and Singh, *After Bush*, p229.

<sup>320</sup> Hallams, *The United States and Nato since 9/11*, p107.

<sup>321</sup> Parmar, 'I'm Proud of the British Empire', p219.

<sup>322</sup> Rees, 'Britain and the Wider World', p38.

<sup>323</sup> Hill, 'Putting the World to Rights', p391.

<sup>324</sup> Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, p24.

shoulder made Blair appear equal to President Bush.<sup>325</sup> This can be identified with the partnership that Blair had established with Bill Clinton where Blair was able to influence US policy on Kosovo and may have created an impression in Blair that he could demonstrate the same influence with Bush. Yet, the relationship with Bush became significantly more controversial.

One of the major consequences of the 9/11 attacks was the opportunity it provided the US and the UK for taking action against Saddam Hussein in Iraq. In his witness testimony to the Chilcot Inquiry, the in-depth investigation into the Iraq War set up by Brown after 2009, Campbell explained that Blair and Bush shared the same analysis of events after 9/11 which involved dealing with terrorism, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and Iraq.<sup>326</sup> Within the Bush administration, there were some who wanted to use the opportunity of 9/11 to take action against Iraq.<sup>327</sup> Secretary of State Colin Powell warned that the multilateral efforts that emerged out of the invasion of Afghanistan would be undone if the US were to invade Iraq without strong international support.<sup>328</sup> Naughtie suggests that Blair embraced a similar line of thought to Powell by stating that Blair did not believe the events of 9/11 gave licence to the US to tackle Iraq.<sup>329</sup> For these policy makers, it was essential that after 9/11, Afghanistan should be the focus of attention and not Iraq. Ultimately, the Blair-Powell line was adopted by the Bush administration who acted through NATO to invade Afghanistan and remove the Taliban government who supported al Qaeda in the attacks of 9/11. Nevertheless, the events of 9/11 set a policy course for the UK and the US to follow, and resulted in the establishment of SRA III. In this alliance certain features were developing which saw a close military relationship between the UK and the US which reflected the close and public bond between both leaders.

### 10.3.2. The War on Terror

In the days following the attacks, President Bush addressed a joint session of Congress to respond to the events. After praising the support that the US had received and the Americans affected by the attacks, Bush turned his attention to those who were responsible for the attacks and how his government would respond.

Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists...

Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there.

It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.

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<sup>325</sup> Clare Short, *An Honourable Deception*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 2004), p109.

<sup>326</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Alastair Campbell', (12<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p28.

<sup>327</sup> Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, p26.

<sup>328</sup> Doig et al., 'Marching in Time', p24.

<sup>329</sup> Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, p60.

From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.<sup>330</sup>

Bush's speech gave birth to the term 'War on Terror', which would go on to define the security agenda that Bush followed. His speech was characterised by strong, absolute language about states that were designated as being against the US. Bush defended this course in his autobiography by stating that his administration was breaking from the past in treating terrorists and their sponsors separately by going on the offensive.<sup>331</sup> Jackson and McDonald use constructivist positions to comment that the War on Terror was one way to interpret the attacks with the phrase being widely adopted in the media.<sup>332</sup> McCrisken goes further to explain that Bush institutionalised the War on Terror within the US government with examples such as the Department for Homeland Security, or the military base on Guantanamo Bay.<sup>333</sup> The views that Bush was developing as part of the War on Terror went on to become controversial with some figures such as US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld claiming that he felt uncomfortable with the phrase.<sup>334</sup> Similarly, diplomat Sir Peter Ricketts told the Chilcot Inquiry that the War on Terror was a phrase that was never adopted by the British foreign services. He even described ministers as being unimpressed with the concept.<sup>335</sup> Nevertheless, it was the umbrella term which established the policy positions that followed. It was also a term that was not used by America alone.

The presentation of the War on Terror was being connected to the UK despite the concerns raised by Ricketts. This was apparent when Bush used his Joint Session of Congress speech to thank those nations who supported the US, particularly Britain.

America will never forget the sounds of our national anthem playing at Buckingham Palace...

America has no truer friend than Great Britain. Once again, we are joined together in a great cause.

I'm so honored the British prime minister has crossed an ocean to show his unity with America.

Thank you for coming, friend.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>330</sup> CNN, Transcript of President Bush's address, (21<sup>st</sup> September 2001).

<sup>331</sup> Bush, *Decision Points*, p137.

<sup>332</sup> Jackson and McDonald, 'Constructivism, US Foreign Policy and the War on Terror', 18-24.

<sup>333</sup> McCrisken, 'Ten Years On', p786-788.

<sup>334</sup> Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown* (London: Penguin, 2011), p352

<sup>335</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Sir Peter Ricketts, (24<sup>th</sup> November 2009), p107.

<sup>336</sup> CNN, 'Transcript of President Bush's address'.

In his speech, Bush made references to the previous collaborations between Britain and America highlighting shared history as a key motivator for both the Special Relationship and for the partnership between the individual leaders. As well as being highlighted in his speech to the joint session of Congress, Dumbrell explains that the US sought UK involvement in the War on Terror.<sup>337</sup> Vice-President Dick Cheney supports this in his autobiography by explaining how:

...one of America's closest and best allies in the War on Terror, (was) Prime Minister Tony Blair. I have tremendous respect for Prime Minister Blair. He is a Labour Party liberal and I am a conservative Republican, and we didn't always agree on strategy and tactics. But America had no greater ally during our time in office.<sup>338</sup>

Blair and Cheney would often struggle to find areas of agreement on the methods of the British and American governments in the War on Terror.<sup>339</sup> Despite these differences, Blair and Cheney's working relationship characterised the role Blair was adopting. As the notion of the War on Terror was taking hold, the UK and Tony Blair were being increasingly linked to the concept as a reliable ally to the US.

The first visible action in the War on Terror was the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan. From October 2001 onwards, campaigns began under the direction of the US, with leadership being rotated amongst allies on a 6 month basis with NATO eventually taking full command in 2003.<sup>340</sup> With the fast and powerful approach of the US and her allies, the toppling of the Taliban government occurred quickly. The UK support for the US was visible in the fact that the UK provided the second largest troop contributions to the conflict.<sup>341</sup> Once the toppling of the terrorist supporting Taliban government occurred, the US quickly lost interest in Afghanistan.<sup>342</sup> What followed was the extension of the War on Terror into a broader doctrine of tackling other problematic states and spreading democracy.

A trait of the War on Terror is the public debate and media perceptions of the War. This dynamic reflected the importance of public perceptions of the SRA and particularly the public view of Britain and America's relationship. The roles of the alliance were based on popular representation of the UK and Blair as staunch partner of the US. These roles were further contextualised with the establishment of the enemies designated by the Bush administration for the US and her allies to target.

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<sup>337</sup> Dumbrell, 'Working With Allies', p459.

<sup>338</sup> Dick Cheney, *In My Time*, (London: Threshold Editions, 2011), p372.

<sup>339</sup> Radice, *Trio*, p159.

<sup>340</sup> NATO, 'NATO and Afghanistan' (18<sup>th</sup> June 2013).

<sup>341</sup> BBC News, 'Q&A Foreign Forces in Afghanistan', (18<sup>th</sup> June 2013).

<sup>342</sup> Hill, 'Putting the World to Rights', p393.

### 10.3.3. Axis of Evil

During this period, Bush's policies were developing. Jonathan Powell, Blair's Chief of Staff and close advisor throughout Blair's ten years in office, tried to suggest that a shift in focus from Afghanistan to other nations such as Iraq was a gradual change. However, it must be remembered that there were those who said that members of the Bush administration were open about taking action against Iraq since before 9/11.<sup>343</sup> In the annual State of the Union speech following the attacks of 9/11, Bush had defined his security agenda which elaborated on the War on Terror. He presented a connection between the states he recognised to be key threats to the US:

States like these (North Korea, Iran and Iraq), and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.<sup>344</sup>

This approach became the central concern of the War on Terror and was established as the Bush Doctrine of foreign policy with the term Axis of Evil taking hold in the public eye. In 2002, US attention was focused on Iraq as Saddam had been presenting himself as a leader trying to develop weapons of mass destruction. There were concerns in using this concept as these states were not necessarily connected and in the case of Iran had a democratically elected government.<sup>345</sup> It was also criticised by Bush's allies. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw wrote in his memoirs that it was a terrible concept, sentiments also felt by Claire Short.<sup>346</sup> Part of the problem, which Straw raised at the time, was why the case for military action was being taken against Iraq and not the other states

By linking these countries in his "Axis of Evil" speech, President Bush implies an identity between them not only in terms of their threat, but also in terms of the action necessary to deal with the threat. A lot of work will now need to be done to delink the three, and show why military action in Iraq is so much more justified.<sup>347</sup>

The case for taking military action against Iraq in this doctrine was never clearly made and, as Dockrill explains, no other action was taken against the other states in the Axis of Evil, nations

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<sup>343</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Jonathan Powell' (18<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p16; Robin Cook, *The Point of Departure*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 2003), p49.

<sup>344</sup> BBC News, 'Full Text: State of the Union Text', (30<sup>th</sup> January 2002).

<sup>345</sup> Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, p87.

<sup>346</sup> Jack Straw, *Last Man Standing*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p366; Short, *An Honourable Deception*, p127.

<sup>347</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Letter from Jack Straw to Tony Blair', (25<sup>th</sup> March 2002).

that had greater desire and ability to obtain WMDs.<sup>348</sup> Diplomat, Sir Peter Ricketts was also sceptical about the extent to which these links could be drawn. He explained to the Chilcot Inquiry that although the US was drawing a connection between the al Qaeda attacks and Saddam Hussein, there were no documents or evidence to support this link.<sup>349</sup> Despite these problems, Blair did not disassociate himself from the term Axis of Evil. Blair himself explained in his autobiography:

Leaving those problems (with the term Axis of Evil) aside, I had reached the same conclusion from a progressive standpoint as George had from a conservative one.<sup>350</sup>

Despite his objections to the term, Straw too demonstrated his support for action in his testimony to the Chilcot Inquiry;

I had had no difficulty about President Bush highlighting the problems of Iraq and North Korea, although I wouldn't have used the Axis of Evil analogy because I didn't think it was an axis. I had profound objections to him bracketing Iran with Iraq and North Korea.<sup>351</sup>

Straw did not distance himself from taking action on Iraq, but instead objected to the way Bush contextualised the issue. The Axis of Evil continued the absolute tones of Bush's speech on the War on Terror and was something key figures did not publicly distance themselves from. Though Blair and many others were aware of the problems of contextualising the conflicts in this way, none of these figures chose to move away from Bush and his usage of these terms. In doing so, these actors were signing onto the norms of the importance of British commitment and an emphasis on the public perception that Bush was presenting in the War on Terror. Any claims of signing onto these norms due to working in the national interest or a UK-US merger of foreign policy perspectives between Britain and America were eclipsed by Blair's record of working closely with the Americans. Blair had already been successful in shaping foreign policy on Kosovo and the Irish peace process by basing certain UK policies on the close and personal working relationship with Clinton and the influence that relationship brought. Blair expected the same level of influence again through the same approach and the result was a commitment to the norms Bush was setting out. These norms were fully established with the movement to invade Iraq in 2003. Blair's support can also be seen in the light of anti-American, or more accurately

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<sup>348</sup> Dockrill, 'Dealing with Fear', p118-119.

<sup>349</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Sir Peter Ricketts', p79.

<sup>350</sup> Blair, *A Journey*, p388.

<sup>351</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Jack Straw', (02<sup>nd</sup> February 2011), p7-8.

anti-Bush, sentiment that was present in the UK and Europe at this time.<sup>352</sup> Blair could have utilised the genuine concerns of Bush's rhetoric presented by other European states to ensure political popularity as well as enhancing his international position as a dynamic international statesman. However, this was not a position Blair was prepared to adopt and he stuck close to Bush and his aggressive approach.

#### 10.3.4. The Crawford Meeting

As the UK was a key ally to the US in Afghani operations from October 2001, there was a strong working relationship between the two countries and their militaries. Officers from both countries' armed forces were working with one another at the US Central Command (CentCom) in Florida. These relationships would have a strong impact on the expectations and events surrounding British military commitments in Iraq. As previously stated, the Bush administration was making preparations for dealing with Saddam Hussein for some time and, as discussed above, Blair had been vocal on taking action against Saddam Hussein since before 2002. In April that year, Blair and Bush were set to meet face to face at Bush's Crawford ranch to discuss the UK's involvement in the invasion of Iraq. The former Ambassador to Washington put forward a view that at this crucial meeting Blair did not withhold support for the war in order to protect his influence with the US.<sup>353</sup> Blair himself denied this.<sup>354</sup> With evidence from the Chilcot Inquiry and through the use of memoirs, a clearer picture begins to emerge on what was agreed during and after the Crawford meeting.

Three central concerns shaped the preparations for the meeting. The first was on the rationale for invading Iraq, namely the existence of WMDs. The motivations for attacking Iraq were set out in Bush's 2002 State of the Union:

The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax, and nerve gas, and nuclear weapons for over a decade. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilised world...

"They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred..."

"We will develop and deploy effective missile defences to protect America and our allies from sudden attack. And all nations should know: America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security."<sup>355</sup>

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<sup>352</sup> John Dumbrell, 'Hating Bush, Supporting Washington: George W. Bush, anti-Americanism and the US-UK special relationship' in J. Dumbrell & A. Schafer (ed), *America's Special Relationship*, (Oxford, 2009), 45-59, p46.

<sup>353</sup> Christopher Meyer, *DC Confidential*, (London: Orion Books, 2005), p247.

<sup>354</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Tony Blair', (29<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p40.

<sup>355</sup> BBC News, 'Full Text: State of the Union Text' (30<sup>th</sup> January 2002).

These views were reflected by the British JIC, and as stated above, intelligence sharing was a tool which Blair used in order to stay close to the Americans.<sup>356</sup> In 2004 a committee was set up to review this intelligence used in the run-up to the war. Known as the Butler Review, named after its chairman Lord Butler, it made public the following evidence from the JIC in 2002:

Although there is very little intelligence we continue to judge that Iraq is pursuing a nuclear weapons programme. We assess the programme to be based on gas centrifuge uranium enrichment . . . Recent intelligence indicates that nuclear scientists were recalled to work on a nuclear programme in the autumn of 1998, but we do not know if large scale development work has yet recommenced.<sup>357</sup>

This document, which was part of Blair's background briefing for the meeting at Crawford, demonstrates a clear alignment of policies.<sup>358</sup> Particularly, in the public perception, removing WMDs was a central aim of the invasion of Iraq. However, the validity of this argument has been challenged and ultimately discredited.<sup>359</sup> Along with the motivations for the invasion, the methods for tackling the threat designated by Bush were also an important point for Blair in his preparations for the meeting, namely using the UN.

The second problem surrounding the meeting was the extent to which the Americans were prepared to take a multilateral, UN route for dealing with Saddam by asking for a UN resolution on taking action. Though Tony Blair was a strong advocate of this position, other influences in the White House were less enthusiastic. Quoting Blair's foreign policy advisor David Manning's advice to the Bush government, former ambassador to the US Sir Christopher Meyer told the Chilcot inquiry;

You (the US) can do it on your own, you have got the power to do it, but if you are going to do this and you want your friends and partners to join you, far better then that you should do it inside an alliance, preferably taking the UN route.<sup>360</sup>

This argument reflects the complexities of the alliance that was forming. The US had the power and the inclination to act unilaterally. However, pressure from the UK to use a multilateral

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<sup>356</sup> For further investigation see Richard Aldrich, 'Transatlantic intelligence and security cooperation', *International Affairs*, vol. 80, no. 4 (2004), 731-73; Robert Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2010); Adam Svendsen, *Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror: Anglo-American Security Relations after 9/11*, (London: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>357</sup> Butler Review, 'Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction', (14<sup>th</sup> July 2004), p88.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>359</sup> For further investigations see Michael Heazle, 'Policy Lessons from Iraq on Managing Uncertainty in Intelligence Assessment: Why the Strategic/Tactical Distinction Matters', *Intelligence and National Security*, vol. 25, no. 3 (2010), 290-308; Andrew Wilkie, *Anatomy of Deceit: The Story of the Intelligence Office who risked all to tell the truth about WMD and Iraq*, (Australia: Black Inc. Agenda, 2004).

<sup>360</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Sir Christopher Meyer', (26<sup>th</sup> November 2009), p38-39.

institution approach by working through the UN demonstrated the contention between Britain and America. It was at Crawford these positions would be challenged and the norm, roles and goals of the alliance were formed.

A third important consideration for the meeting concerned the level of commitment that Blair was going to offer Bush. In his discussions on this topic, Campbell explained that there was no US decision at that point on military support and Blair had no intention of making military commitments at that time.<sup>361</sup> Jonathan Powell supported this by explaining that the goal of the meeting was to convince the Americans not to be hasty rather than agreeing on any particular military commitment.<sup>362</sup> However, a letter from Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon sent to Blair before the meeting explains;

I suggest one of your objectives at Crawford should be to secure agreements to the UK's participation in US military planning, recognising that we shall have to give assurances on operational security.<sup>363</sup>

Hoon's suggestions can also be associated with the testimony of diplomat Matthew Rycroft who claimed that by this point in 2002, British officers were getting ahead of themselves and gave the impression that the UK would contribute land forces to an invasion of Iraq.<sup>364</sup> This was supported by a report from Blair's foreign policy advisor David Manning on a trip to America in May 2002 where Secretary of State Powell explained to Manning that he was surprised to learn of a UK military officer claiming that the UK would offer an armoured division for action in Iraq.<sup>365</sup> This could have emerged from the fact that British officers were embedded with US counterparts in CentCom in Florida for Afghan operations. Ultimately however, it was Jack Straw who provided the most cautious voice regarding the meeting. Straw told Blair that the meeting carried few rewards and was risky for Blair and his government.<sup>366</sup> These lines of argument have demonstrated the difficult situation Blair was in as well as showing how important the meeting was for the decision on Iraq. As Blair and Bush were alone for large portions of the meeting it is difficult to know what was agreed. Looking at the evidence available and the course of events that followed the meeting, some insight can be gained.

With these issues in mind, a deeper analysis of the Crawford meeting can be undertaken. Although Meyer described the meeting as crucial, he informed the Chilcot Inquiry that;

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<sup>361</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Alastair Campbell', p30.

<sup>362</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Jonathan Powell', p23.

<sup>363</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Letter from Geoff Hoon to Tony Blair', (22<sup>nd</sup> March 2002).

<sup>364</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Matthew Rycroft', (10<sup>th</sup> September 2010), p19

<sup>365</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'David Manning's visit to Washington', (21<sup>st</sup> May 2002), p1.

<sup>366</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Letter from Jack Straw to Tony Blair'.

I know what the Cabinet Office says were the results of the meeting, but, to this day, I'm not entirely clear what degree of convergence was, if you like, signed in blood, at the Crawford ranch.<sup>367</sup>

The picture Meyer presented here and in his memoir is that Blair was not withholding support for Bush yet, it was unclear how future action was going to be taken. In his own testimony to the Chilcot Inquiry, Blair explained that there were no outcomes to the Crawford meeting. The only commitment Blair said he made was to deal with Saddam.<sup>368</sup> This was challenged by Robin Cook who stated in his autobiography that after Blair returned from the meeting it was clear he was going to support Bush, which translated to preparedness for military action.<sup>369</sup> Similarly, Condoleezza Rice came to the conclusion that Blair and Bush had found a common understanding through their private conversations.<sup>370</sup> What became apparent however, according to David Manning, was that the Bush administration had stepped up a gear for taking action against Iraq.<sup>371</sup> What Blair was able to achieve was apparently convincing Bush to go to the UN to try and gain international support.<sup>372</sup> However, the level of influence that Blair actually had with the Americans has been questioned. Meyer speculated that any agreements made between Blair and Bush was not upheld. He referenced an American diplomat as saying:

The "yes" was greedily devoured by the American administration, but the "buts" had kind of faded away.<sup>373</sup>

From this it can be extrapolated that British support for an invasion of Iraq was accepted but her conditions were overlooked. It can be said, in Blair's favour, that his argument for using the UN route was taken seriously by Bush.<sup>374</sup> However, the breakdown of the UN process and decision to invade without a clear UN mandate remained as a strong failing of the invasion of Iraq. What has appeared as the main point from the Crawford meeting, as far as this thesis is concerned, is the extent to which it was a major turning point. There have been arguments that nothing was decided as well as claims that Blair had made commitments to support Bush. As Alastair Campbell wrote in his diary at the time of the meeting, Blair intended to give Bush an ultimatum that to gain British military support he must first go to the UN.<sup>375</sup> It appears that Blair may have done just this

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<sup>367</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Sir Christopher Meyer', p29.

<sup>368</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Tony Blair', (29<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p40-41.

<sup>369</sup> Cook, *The Point of Departure*, p135.

<sup>370</sup> Condoleezza Rice, *No Higher Honour*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 2011), p40.

<sup>371</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of David Manning', (24<sup>th</sup> June 2010), p39.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid*, p50.

<sup>373</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Sir Christopher Meyer', p64.

<sup>374</sup> John Dumbrell, 'UK-US Relations: Structure, Agency and the Special Relationship' in Terrence Casey (ed) *The Blair Legacy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 273-285, p279.

<sup>375</sup> Alastair Campbell, *The Alistair Campbell Diaries: Volume IV: The Burden of Power, Countdown to Iraq*, (London: Hutchinson, 2012), p201.

as President Bush agreed to try the UN. As a result, Britain was therefore committed to supporting the US, whatever happened next.

A recent article from *The Independent* sheds more light on the topic. Private evidence from the Chilcot Inquiry showed that Blair was told by intelligence officers that Libya was a far more pressing concern and should be the focus of discussions at the Crawford meeting in 2002.<sup>376</sup> However, the preparations and discussions for the meeting remained focused on Iraq. This demonstrates Blair's position of driving forward cooperation with the US, above the concerns of Britain's security institutions. Another piece of evidence that can assist in determining the importance of Crawford is Blair's political management. Former minister in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), Chris Mullin, explained that Blair regularly made promises he did not keep.<sup>377</sup> With this evidence it is even more difficult to understand what was agreed between Blair and Bush due to the confidential nature of their meetings. Both Jonathan Powell and Blair highlighted the high level of discretion that is required when reaching an agreement with the US.<sup>378</sup> However, with the evidence that is available, and the knowledge that Blair wanted to deal with Saddam and remain close to the Americans it is possible that the Crawford meeting witnessed Blair providing support in some form or another which was readily accepted by the US. Although there is evidence to show there were still areas of uncertainty on the type of commitment that Britain would make and that this was an ongoing process until 2003, Crawford appears to be a fixed point where UK military involvement was being committed.<sup>379</sup> Matthew Rycroft also told the Chilcot Inquiry that in June 2002;

The Prime Minister told him (Donald Rumsfeld) \*\*\*Redacted\*\*\*, which could sound like a pretty firm commitment in the event the Americans took action.<sup>380</sup>

Although it is not known what conditions Blair offered to Rumsfeld, this testimony suggests to a seasoned diplomat that Blair was offering support in some kind of context. With Campbell's account of Blair making an ultimatum to Bush at Crawford to go to the UN, which Bush did, the UK would provide support. This may be why David Manning referred to the Crawford meeting as a 'crystallising' moment.<sup>381</sup> In relation to the academic literature discussed above, it appears Blair was being consistent in his foreign policy goals; however, he was less consistent in the methods

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<sup>376</sup> The Independent, 'Tony Blair and Iraq: The Damming Evidence', (07<sup>th</sup> April 2013).

<sup>377</sup> Chris Mullin, *Decline and Fall, Diaries 2005-2010*, (London: Profile Books, 2010), p10.

<sup>378</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Jonathan Powell', p28; Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Tony Blair', (21<sup>st</sup> January 2011), p47-48.

<sup>379</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Letter from MoD to No. 10', (29<sup>th</sup> October 2002), p2; Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Lord Jay', (30<sup>th</sup> June 2010), p2; Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Admiral Lord Boyce', (27<sup>th</sup> January 2011), p4; Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Tim Dowse and William Ehrman', (25<sup>th</sup> November 2009), p22.

<sup>380</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Matthew Rycroft', p19.

<sup>381</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of David Manning', p39.

in which he achieved them. The interaction between the allies from 9/11 through to the Crawford meeting and beyond demonstrates the nature of the agreement between the two and assisted in establishing the norms, roles and goals in SRA III.

#### 10.4. SRA III

The period between 9/11 and the 2003 invasion of Iraq saw Britain and America go through an informal period of negotiation to establish the key features of SRA III. This reflected the informality of the Bush administration as well as Bush's relaxed relationship with Blair, as seen at the Colgate summit. This was in contrast to SRA I and SRA II, where formal agreements were reached such as Lend-Lease or the Polaris missile deal. In SRA III, no similar formal partnership was established. In this alliance, the use of military force was the method to achieve the goals with the British armed forces contributing a considerable amount of troops to join the US forces in both Afghanistan and Iraq. This commitment meant, according to Blair, that Britain was prepared to pay the 'blood sacrifice' through the military conflicts to support the US in the War on Terror.<sup>382</sup> As Christopher Meyer explained, the alliance was an informal one as the Bush administration preferred to avoid sovereignty issues associated in formal alliances.<sup>383</sup> The emphasis placed on sovereignty resonates with the theoretical discourse on the SRA and identifies the equality amongst the UK and US as free and independent countries, one of the few areas where these two countries are equal. Where there are distinct differences between Britain and America in terms of capabilities and functions within an alliance both states have the freedom and sovereignty to make decisions on behalf of their own country and neither are restricted by institutional practices for the area of their independent military decisions. The following discussion will explore the makeup of the alliance and establish what were the key norms, roles and goals of the alliance. As stated in chapter 9, it is these features that create the alliance and set the tone for its progress.

##### 10.4.1. Norms and Roles

As there was no formal treaty or agreement signed between Britain and America in the War on Terror, deciphering the norms and roles of the alliance must be undertaken through an interpretative approach. By studying the comments of key figures and evidence of themes and events, light can be shed on these aspects of the alliance. This section will begin with an analysis of the norms of the alliance. One of these key norms was the commitment to the War on Terror and the associated Axis of Evil. This exemplified the US role as leader of the alliance. Condoleezza Rice claimed that this occurred as Blair and Bush developed a set of shared values

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<sup>382</sup> BBC 2, *Blair: The Inside Story, A Man with a Mission*.

<sup>383</sup> Meyer, *DC Confidential*, p220.

and a willingness to act on difficult and controversial tasks.<sup>384</sup> Tony Blair was quite clear in his support for Bush in this area. Other key figures such as Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott also explained that most in Blair's Cabinet supported him in moving close to the Americans.<sup>385</sup> Similarly, a Cabinet document from 2003 showed the Cabinet opinion that the relationship was collaborative.<sup>386</sup> These views suggest Blair had political support in the alliance to tackle the terrorist threat. Campbell also stated in his dairies that Blair and Bush both viewed Iraq as a matter of conviction.<sup>387</sup> According to diplomat Sir Stephen Wall, this led to Blair seeing UK and US interests as indistinguishable.<sup>388</sup> Chris Mullin also reported that according to one of Blair's foreign policy mandarins, Blair had completely bought in to the US plan for reorganising the Middle East.<sup>389</sup> Some however, have questioned how closely linked the UK and US actually were. Former Home Secretary David Blunkett wrote in his autobiography that after the initial invasion of Afghanistan, there was no coordinated strategy between Britain and America.<sup>390</sup> Despite these concerns, as top Labour advisor Philip Gould wrote, Blair was determined to make the relationship with Bush work and try to bring the US and Europe together.<sup>391</sup> It was this kind of determination that represented a key role in the alliance for Blair. He was tying his own credibility and personal reputation to the US and the War on Terror. As discussed above, the importance of personal commitments from the political leaderships in Britain and America has been established in the discourses of the English School, Alliance Theory and the Special Relationship. In SRA III, Blair had identified the UK interests with that of America's interests and although it is questionable how far this went into the structures of the relationship, as seen with Blunkett's comments, this highlights an important norm of the alliance.

Another significant aspect of the alliance was the public perception of both the UK and the US. As stated by Clare Short, Blair relished his place on the international stage. It became Blair's role within the alliance to build support for the US and the War on Terror. This role began with the backing for America that Blair built after the 9/11 attacks and continued with him trying to convince others of the need to deal with Saddam. In part, this even meant having to convince members of Bush's administration to follow a UN route to dealing with Saddam. In her memoirs, Rice explained that taking the UN approach was important for Blair to gain political support from the UK Parliament which Bush recognised, as also stated in his memoir.<sup>392</sup> However, as Campbell

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<sup>384</sup> Rice, *No Higher Honuor*, p40.

<sup>385</sup> John Prescott, *Prezza*, (London: Headline Review, 2008), p284.

<sup>386</sup> Hutton Inquiry, Cab /1/0341 Press Briefing, (26<sup>th</sup> June 2003), p3

<sup>387</sup> Alastair Campbell, *The Alastair Campbell Diaries: Volume IV*, p204.

<sup>388</sup> BBC 2, *Blair: The Inside Story, A Man with a Mission*.

<sup>389</sup> Mullin, *Decline and Fall*, p387.

<sup>390</sup> David Blunkett, *The Blunkett Tapes* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), p310.

<sup>391</sup> Philip Gould, *The Unfinished Revolution*, (London: Abacus, 2011), p453.

<sup>392</sup> Rice, *No Higher Honour*, p201; Bush, *Decision Points*, p232; p244.

told the Chilcot Inquiry, Bush relied on Blair to convince key figures to take the UN route. Dick Cheney was one such person who had to be persuaded to use the UN.<sup>393</sup> Cheney however, explained in his memoir that he remained unconvinced that the UN sending in more weapon inspectors would resolve anything in Iraq.<sup>394</sup> Nevertheless, Bush decided to take the UN route. Dyson explains that though it appeared Blair was the convincing force here, the role of Colin Powell who was also calling for similar action could have been just as important a factor in shaping Bush's policy.<sup>395</sup> Yet, it was part of Blair's role to demonstrate the multilateral approach to the War on Terror.

The emphasis on multilateral institutions was exhibited when Blair tried to convince European leaders of the necessity to deal with Saddam Hussein. At an EU meeting in October 2002, Blair found heavy opposition to this argument, led by the French and Germans. Diplomat Sir Stephen Wall elaborated that the French President Jacques Chirac resorted to personal attacks on Blair for wanting to go to war. Despite Chirac's arguments which were based on his own experiences as a soldier Blair left the meeting completely unchanged in his support for Bush and taking action on Iraq.<sup>396</sup> As discussed in the earlier literature review, Blair appeared to have a weak understanding of international institutions. His failure at the EU could be a reflection of this view as he was unable to build an argument that convinced the EU more used to soft power tactics to embrace military action. Any popularity Blair had in Europe from the beginning of his premiership was quickly disappearing as he drew closer to Bush. Chirac's comments to Blair at the EU meeting demonstrated the weakening relationship with key European leaders. Whereas it can be argued that France and Germany gained politically from not supporting Blair, this case shows Blair's increasingly limited ability to act as America's spokesman and operative to galvanise international support for the US led invasion. Although he failed to deliver the support of key European powers such as France and Germany, Blair was living up to his role in the alliance of publicly supporting the war and in return the US was taking the UN approach. A result of this support could be, as Jack Straw suggested to Blair in the summer of 2003;

We risk being caught in a position of sharing responsibility for events in Iraq without holding the corresponding level of influence.<sup>397</sup>

Straw warned of the asymmetric nature of the alliance where the UK may be taking responsibility for decisions they had little influence over. These concerns reflect those from MI6 Chief Richard Dearlove's private secretary. He wrote to David Manning in December 2001 warning that the

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<sup>393</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Alastair Campbell', p34.

<sup>394</sup> Cheney, *In My Time*, p389.

<sup>395</sup> Dyson, *The Blair Identity*, p100.

<sup>396</sup> BBC 2, *Blair: The Inside Story, A Man with a Mission*.

<sup>397</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Letter from Jack Straw to Tony Blair', (5<sup>th</sup> June 2003), p1.

UK's reputation would be damaged due to its connection with the US if they mishandled this policy area.<sup>398</sup> This was a by-product of Blair's public and unwavering support for Bush's War on Terror. The level of influence that Britain had within the relationship is another aspect of the norms, and roles of the alliance.

From the British perspective, a major norm of the alliance related to the level of influence Blair would have with the Bush administration. This was supported by the final report of the Butler Review which stated that one of the UK's goals for the war in Iraq was to moderate US policy.<sup>399</sup> Blair explained to the Chilcot Inquiry that he did not aim to gain influence with the US by supporting them, however, he expected some influence due to the size of the British contribution.<sup>400</sup> Blair recounted that after diplomatic efforts on Iraq were exhausted he was prepared to use military force and wanted to make sure that it would be a significant contribution.<sup>401</sup> Blair expected that having a degree of influence over Bush would be a norm of the alliance, which was reminiscent of his earlier collaborations with President Clinton. However, David Manning informed the Chilcot Inquiry that Blair found his influence was more limited than he would have hoped.<sup>402</sup> The type of problem Jack Straw predicted became a norm of the alliance. The UK would have limited influence with the US, but remained visibly just as responsible for the War on Terror. This position helped fuel the notion of poodleism within the discourse of British and American relations.

The final norm of SRA III was that the alliance was tied into the position of the Prime Minister and President. Much of the available primary evidence is based on Blair and Bush's positions as leaders. However, this does not mean that there were no other important influences who opposed the war. Naughtie explains that both the FCO and MI6 had misgivings about the commitments on Iraq.<sup>403</sup> Colin Powell and Jack Straw also shared concerns on the direction of US leadership.<sup>404</sup> These actors represent an attempt to balance the power of the leaders. Similarly, much of the British credibility in the War on Terror was connected to the ability of the British armed forces. However, from the UK, the direction of policies, setting goals and constructing the nature of the alliance were locked into what Jonathan Powell described as Blair's Napoleonic governing style.<sup>405</sup> Similarly, it has been suggested by Hill that Foreign Secretaries Robin Cook and Jack

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<sup>398</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Letter from Richard Dearlove's Private Secretary to Sir David Manning', (03<sup>rd</sup> December 2001), p7.

<sup>399</sup> Butler Review, 'Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction', p64.

<sup>400</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Tony Blair', (29<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p63.

<sup>401</sup> Ibid, p48; p61.

<sup>402</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of David Manning', p39.

<sup>403</sup> Naughtie, *The Accidental American*, p83.

<sup>404</sup> Ibid, p126-127.

<sup>405</sup> BBC 2, *Blair the Inside Story: The New Leader*.

Straw were moved from the FCO due to pressure from the US, highlighting the weaker positions of Cabinet members in comparison to the prime minister.<sup>406</sup> These views reinforce the norm that it was the relationship between the leaders that guided the alliance as well as emphasising US leadership and expectation of conformity to this leadership in SRA III.

The above norms of SRA III were underpinned by the roles of each member of the alliance. A crucial aspect of these roles was controlled by the level of influence that Britain had over US policies. This has been a contentious debate within the relationship as Meyer and Straw have been recorded as saying above; it was questionable to what extent the Bush administration was swayed by the UK. According to Christopher Meyer, Blair offered Bush unconditional support for the War on Terror while Robin Cook described the Bush administration as a power that did not need to rely on her allies.<sup>407</sup> Both David Manning and Matthew Rycroft also agreed that it was hard to influence US policy decisions and the planning for the invasion of Iraq.<sup>408</sup> Philip Gould and Alastair Campbell supported this as Gould explains that he cannot remember a time when Blair challenged Bush. Similarly, Campbell described in his dairies conversations between Blair and the Americans where he quotes Jonathan Powell referring to them as a ‘fuck me’ call.<sup>409</sup> Cook also described his and other Labour supporters’ discontent that Britain was in a junior partner role.<sup>410</sup> Nevertheless, the above evidence does suggest that in SRA III, Britain had taken on the role of junior partner to America’s leadership. Using the tools of Alliance Theory and with these norms and roles in mind and due to the strength of US leadership, we can classify this alliance as a monolithic alliance relying on clear and dynamic leadership from the leading state while other members of the alliance provide resolute support in private and in public. In the case of SRA III, Blair was conforming to US leadership with minimal influence taking on, with the US, public responsibility for the alliance.

#### 10.4.2. Goals

It can be argued that there were two goals in SRA III which ultimately support the bandwagonging concept set out in Alliance Theory. The first involves addressing the threats recognised by the US in the War on Terror by using military methods. This broad goal was characterised by individual aims for particular countries. In the case of Afghanistan this was displayed with the ultimatum that Bush delivered in his 2001 speech to a joint session of Congress.

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<sup>406</sup> Hill, ‘Putting the World to Rights’, p388; Stephen Dyson, ‘What difference did he make?’, p243.

<sup>407</sup> Meyer, *DC Confidential*, p241; Cook, *The Point of Departure*, p105.

<sup>408</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, ‘Witness Testimony of David Manning’, p43; Chilcot Inquiry, ‘Witness Testimony of Matthew Rycroft’, p7.

<sup>409</sup> BBC 2, *Blair: The Inside Story, The End of the Affair*, (30<sup>th</sup> March 2007); Campbell, *The Alastair Campbell Diaries: Volume IV*, p475.

<sup>410</sup> Cook, *The Point of Departure*, p2.

By aiding and abetting murder, the Taliban regime is committing murder. And tonight the United States of America makes the following demands on the Taliban:

-- Deliver to United States authorities all of the leaders of Al Qaeda who hide in your land.

-- Release all foreign nationals, including American citizens you have unjustly imprisoned.

-- Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country.

-- Close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan. And hand over every terrorist and every person and their support structure to appropriate authorities.

-- Give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating.<sup>411</sup>

The Bush administration announced these demands as a way to avoid taking military action. However, these demands were not accepted by the Taliban which provided the opportunity for US led forces to invade and take control of Afghanistan. In regards to Afghanistan, it was a clear aim to remove the opportunity for an Afghan government to sponsor acts of terrorism. In regards to Iraq the goals were not as lucid.

The notion of regime change in Iraq was a contentious issue in the run up to the invasion and during the formation period of SRA III. In the final report from the Butler Review on intelligence used in the run-up to the war, the goal of regime change had no basis in international law.<sup>412</sup> However, the view from the US side of the Atlantic was that regime change had to happen. Alastair Campbell told the Chilcot Inquiry that regime change had been a goal of the Clinton administration as well as of George W. Bush's government.<sup>413</sup> This was supported by Christopher Meyer who also told the Inquiry that the US had given up on following a policy of containment with Saddam Hussein and moved towards regime change.<sup>414</sup> In his first testimony to the Chilcot Inquiry, Blair said that the US would have to alter this position of regime change if Saddam agreed to the return of UN weapons inspectors.<sup>415</sup> However, he did not state his own position on regime change. In his second witness testimony in the following year, Blair explained that the US had begun to pursue this course straight after the 9/11 attacks.<sup>416</sup> David Manning suggested that Blair was sympathetic to the idea that Iraq would be a better place without

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<sup>411</sup> CNN, 'Transcript of President Bush's address'.

<sup>412</sup> Butler Review, 'Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction', p66.

<sup>413</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Alastair Campbell', p28.

<sup>414</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Sir Christopher Meyer', p40.

<sup>415</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Tony Blair', (29<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p50.

<sup>416</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Tony Blair', (21<sup>st</sup> January 2011), p43

Saddam.<sup>417</sup> Additionally, Manning claimed that Blair saw his aim as shaping the regime change argument.<sup>418</sup> This evidence however, is contradictory to the testimony of Admiral Lord Boyce who told the Chilcot Inquiry that regime change was absolutely not British policy.<sup>419</sup> The debate on whether the UK actually supported regime change in Iraq is, to an extent, superfluous as the UK were committed to an alliance with the US and her policies leading the way. What was important for the British position was how she could use her influence to affect how these goals were reached. What influence Britain had rested on her credibility as a useful military ally.

The second goal of SRA III was to project a particular image of America and Britain. In America's case, as Hallams explains, after the attacks of 9/11 the Bush administration needed to reassert US credibility.<sup>420</sup> This represented an unstated aim of the US in the War on Terror. By displaying a strong level of force that could be deployed to tackle the enemies highlighted as being part of the Axis of Evil, the US was able to project an image of power. To some, this meant that the US should act alone. Those who supported the neo-conservative positions held the view that due to US exceptionalism there was no need to rely on or complicate the military operations through alliance politics.<sup>421</sup> Although the US did take on a multilateral approach by returning to the UN and building informal coalitions, she remained in a leadership position, seldom being influenced by allies, including the UK.

From Blair's perspective, a major goal was to project a similar image of power by linking the UK to the US in this policy area. In a report published in 2007 by the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee (HCFAC), the words of Professor Theo Farrell were strongly emphasised. He was quoted as saying that an unstated aim of Britain's military commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan was to ensure her reputation and closeness to the US.<sup>422</sup> This view was also supported by former British Army Officer Frank Ledwidge who supposes from his own experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan that staying close to the US was a goal for the British in the War on Terror.<sup>423</sup> These positions on the demonstration of power have been heavily tied into the roles of the US President and British Prime Minister. The combination of this second set of goals firmly placed Britain as the junior partner.

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<sup>417</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of David Manning', p26.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid, p31.

<sup>419</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Admiral Lord Boyce', p10.

<sup>420</sup> Hallams, *The US and NATO since 9/11*, p63.

<sup>421</sup> Hallams, *The US and NATO since 9/11*, p59; Ryan, 'Neoconservatism and the American Public', p165.

<sup>422</sup> HCFAC, 'Global Security: Afghanistan and Pakistan', (21<sup>st</sup> July 2009), p100.

<sup>423</sup> Frank Ledwidge, *Losing Small Wars*, (London: Yale University Press, 2011), p97.

Military action was the key mode for achieving the above aims and came to be the method of choice in the alliance which did not extend to other policy areas or methods. This was clear by the diverging positions between Britain and America on the efforts on nation building and reconstruction. This was evidenced as Donald Rumsfeld announced in February 2003, “the objective is not to engage in what some call nationbuilding”, while Peter Mandelson recalled in his memoir;

I had other concerns, however, even if we did attack and defeat Saddam...’who is going to run the place?’ Tony replied: ‘That’s the Americans’ responsibility. It’s down to the Americans; I said I certainly hope they knew what they were doing.’<sup>424</sup>

David Manning highlighted to the Chilcot Inquiry that Blair did try to make it clear to the US that long term consequences needed to be considered.<sup>425</sup> However, these discrepancies, according to senior British military leader, General Mike Jackson, were what led to the difficulties in Iraq, and was due to poor American leadership.<sup>426</sup> Similarly, as seen in the Brown period, British and American efforts on development and reconstruction were separate affairs.<sup>427</sup> Additionally, intelligence was an area where there was close collaboration between the UK and the US. However, this area lacked the public element of SRA which demonstrated the roles of the alliance as being visible to the wider public in order to demonstrate the unstated aims of the alliance. These points emphasise the military nature of the alliance. Nation building and reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan were never a major concern in the goals of the alliance.

To sum up, SRA III went through a formation process between 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 and the 2003 invasion of Iraq, characterised by an informal establishment of norms, roles and goals based on military action. After the 9/11 attacks the US set upon a course to address the rise of potential threats against America that may come in similar forms to the al Qaeda attacks. To begin with, the US turned its attentions to Afghanistan with its military invasion in October 2001. From then onwards, a discourse emerged for dealing with states that were perceived by the US to pose a similar threat. Under the umbrella of the War on Terror, some states associated to the Axis of Evil were targeted for action. Iraq was the embodiment of this initiative while North Korea and Iran were tackled differently. Throughout the period between September 2001 and March 2003, Britain held a significant position in these events resulting in the formation of SRA III. With commitments to stand shoulder to shoulder with the US and pledges of support and with the

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<sup>424</sup> Donald Rumsfeld, ‘Beyond Nation Building’, (14<sup>th</sup> February 2003); Peter Mandelson, *The Third Man*, (London: Harper Press, 2010), p359.

<sup>425</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, ‘Witness Testimony of David Manning’, p18.

<sup>426</sup> The Daily Telegraph, ‘Gen Sir Mike Jackson condemns ‘war on terror’, (03<sup>rd</sup> September 2007).

<sup>427</sup> House of Commons International Development Committee, ‘Reconstructing Afghanistan Vol. II’, (05<sup>th</sup> February 2008), p10.

caveat of using the UN in the invasion of Iraq, Prime Minister Blair embodied this support for President Bush with the alliance tied to these two leaders. This period was important for the establishment of the norms, roles and goals of the alliance. Despite the similarities with other military cooperation between the UK and the US, this case relied on the close relationship between the leaders to establish an arrangement to secure the stated and unstated goals of the alliance. On the surface, there are similarities between these commitments and the Korean War. However, the dedication of the British partners and the warmth in the personal relationships differed from the diverging personalities of Attlee and Truman as well as the degree of support the British offered the Americans from the use of nuclear weapons to the external pressure of Britain's seat on the UN Security Council.

SRA III was characterised by the UK offering backing for the US after the 9/11 attacks. This was visible with the military commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as Blair's open allegiance for President Bush and the US. This was one of Blair's roles in the alliance as he tried to build support in the international arena for the War on Terror. This feeds into the goals of the alliance that Britain would show public support for the US in return for the UK appearing as America's closet ally. Blair thought this would develop his level of influence in the alliance. However, the norm that emerged was that the UK had limited influence over US policy. Instead it was the place for the British to supply a strong military commitment and follow America's lead as junior partner to the US. This was exemplified with Blair as the British leader supporting the American President. This support saw Blair fully commit to Bush's terms in the alliance, namely the War on Terror and the Axis of Evil acting as the key driver of the alliance. With these norms and roles informally established in the alliance, the goals of the alliance can also be identified. The stated aims of SRA III were to eliminate the threat of states, as designated by the Bush administration, which may sponsor terrorist acts similar to 9/11. Although the Bush administration's definition of states who pose a terrorist threat to the US and her allies was conceptually unspecific it allowed for the US to pursue any threat that it designated reflecting the unilateralist and determined stance of the Bush administration. The unstated aim of the alliance was the projection of American and British power. From the American perspective, the need to reassert her power after 9/11 and to re-establish her role as a superpower was one of these aims. For the British, the unstated aim was to project her role on the international stage as being America's closest ally and America's bridge to the rest of the world. There has been a considerable amount of work looking at this relationship during the Blair premiership from 2003 onwards.<sup>428</sup> However, this thesis will use these

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<sup>428</sup> See John Kampfner, *Blair's Wars*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 2007), Jonathan Bailey, Richard Irwon and Hew Strachan (eds) *British Generals in Blair's Wars*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013); Frank Ledwidge, *Losing Small Wars*, (London: Yale University Press, 2011).

understandings of SRA III to examine the Brown period and to determine the alliance's strength between 2007 and 2010.

## 11. Gordon Brown: Prime Minister

With an understanding of the origins of SRA III established in the previous chapter, some time will now be taken to explore views of Brown, his governing style and his approach to foreign and security policy. With this background, the management of SRA III between 2007 and 2010 can be more deeply understood. This chapter will begin with a review of the academic literature on Gordon Brown's leadership and his foreign and security policies. This section aims to highlight the academic views and debates on Brown as well provide a context for analysing the empirical data. This will be followed with an analysis of his period as Chancellor of the Exchequer between 1997 and 2007 in order to relate relevant areas of his experience to the foreign and security policies he pursued as Prime Minister. From here, a broad analysis of his governing style and experience in foreign policy as Prime Minister will be undertaken. This section will explore some of Brown's policy positions, key appointments and scrutinize his ability in this area of his premiership. Finally, this chapter will relate Brown and his premiership to SRA III through the use of documents and the views of key figures. Many of these areas have not been fully explored within the academic literature and will be the basis for one of the original contributions of this thesis.

### 11.1. Gordon Brown in the Academic Literature

The premiership of Gordon Brown has intrigued writers and scholars for different reasons. On the one hand, researchers have investigated the circumstances in which he governed during the recent global recession, his involvement in two conflicts in the Middle East and the way he responded to the natural and manmade crises that occurred during his time as Prime Minister. On the other hand, it seems that the larger portion of the work assessing the premiership of Gordon Brown aimed to draw a deliberate comparison between the Brown premiership and that of his predecessor, Tony Blair. This comparison seems to be fixated on the personal animosity that existed between the two and the shadow that the Blair government cast over the Brown years. Despite the fact that Gordon Brown was in government for thirteen years, ten as Chancellor of the Exchequer and three as Prime Minister, the body of literature on his foreign policy is still developing and has not reached the extent of work that has been written on Blair. Though there has been some focus on his foreign and security policies, the academic debates tend to centre on his leadership style, successes and shortcomings. As this collection of work is still growing there are only a few works which provide a full summary of Brown's time as Prime Minister: Andrew Rawnsley's *End of the Party*, Steve Richards' *Whatever it Takes* and Anthony Seldon and Guy Lodge's *Brown at 10*. These works which draw on interviews with key figures will provide the foundations for the academic understanding of Gordon Brown's government and be used in conjunction with the other works pertinent to this project.

These three works offer different approaches to the study of Brown. The work of journalist Andrew Rawnsley examines the New Labour project over two volumes and looks at the Brown premiership by focusing on Brown's political relationships as well as his personality. Rawnsley presents a negative portrayal of Brown as a 'bully' in an attempt to produce a sensational account of the period. The structure of Richards' book takes a similar approach to Rawnsley's work. Richards' book dedicates its entire analysis to Brown's personality and leadership style. Although their arguments differ, they both concentrate on Brown's handling of the 2008 global financial crisis. Although both based their work on interviews, Richards does not provide the same level of detailed references as Rawnsley who is meticulous in providing citations of the interviews he undertook. However, his style comes under criticism from Seldon and Lodge who claim that Rawnsley drew on information from people who did not know they would be cited in his book.<sup>429</sup> Seldon and Lodge claim that their work aims to examine the negative aspects of Brown's years as Prime Minister as well as acknowledging the good that resulted from his premiership. In a similar fashion to Rawnsley, Seldon and Lodge fastidiously cite numerous interviews in their work and organise it in a clear chronological order. However, their chronology does not include Brown's life before he entered Number 10 and the influences that could have affected his premiership. Though there are other biographies of Brown and numerous articles on his leadership, these three works represent the most in-depth studies of Brown's overall premiership. Of the three, Seldon and Lodge's discussion takes the most balanced approach while Rawnsley gives a more dramatic account of events. By using a combination of these works as well as other academic material, certain debates within the literature become visible.

#### 11.1.1. Debate I: Gordon Brown and Foreign Policy

One debate within the literature on Gordon Brown relates to his foreign policy. From his broad approach to foreign affairs to more detailed policies related to particular countries and regions, academic analysis of Brown has been divided. One debate has centred on the lucidity of Brown's approach to foreign relations. Richards' work on Brown's career before entering Number 10 describes how Brown would remain aloof on policy areas that did not directly concern him as Chancellor. This allowed him to take credit for popular policies and distance himself from unpopular ones.<sup>430</sup> Beech and Lee agree that this was the case, despite Brown's deep intellectual understanding of politics.<sup>431</sup> One area where Brown's method was particularly clear was in foreign and security policy, where the agenda was clearly in Blair's hands while Brown was

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<sup>429</sup> Anthony Seldon, and Guy Lodge. *Brown at 10* (London: Biteback, 2011), p434.

<sup>430</sup> Steve Richards, *Whatever It Takes* (London: Fourth Estate, 2010), p42; 83.

<sup>431</sup> Matt Beech and Simon Lee, 'Editorial: The Brown Government' *Policy Studies* vol. 30, no. 1 (2009), 1-3, p1; Matt Beech, 'A Puzzle of Ideas and Policy: Gordon Brown as Prime Minister' *Policy Studies* vol. 30, no. 1 (2009), 5-16, p5.

Chancellor. Hood speculates that this remained a feature of Brown's premiership as a conscious choice. As Prime Minister, Brown appeared less interested in foreign affairs in order to allow him to focus on domestic issues.<sup>432</sup> Whitman contributes to this discussion by explaining that confusion has emerged over Brown's foreign policy positions because on the one hand, he wanted to move away from Blair's foreign policy while, on the other hand, continue the more popular foreign policies from before 2007.<sup>433</sup> The result of this, as Rawnsley suggests, is that in the first two years of his premiership, Brown failed to put forward a coherent strategy for the war in Afghanistan.<sup>434</sup> Also, Lee reports that this remote approach was visible in Brown's foreign secretary David Miliband proposing the idea of Britain as a 'Global Hub', bringing together the developed and developing world to establish a role for the UK.<sup>435</sup> These arguments create an image of Brown that he had only a limited interest in foreign affairs, which is possibly why the academic field is so limited. By exploring some of the reactions to certain policy areas by academics and commentators, it may become clear how successful Brown was in his foreign policies.

Certain policy areas such as bilateral relations or relations with institutions have shown to be important areas when examining the Brown period. For example, Honeyman explains that Brown's suggestions for reforming multilateral institutions such as the UN Security Council were too unclear to be achieved.<sup>436</sup> While in regard to the EU, Holden explains Brown's period in office began with difficulty when he missed the signing of the Lisbon Treaty. However, as the period went on, it appeared that Brown found he had more in common with EU counterparts.<sup>437</sup> Others have made similar claims by tracing policy similarities with the EU while Brown was Chancellor. Areas such as the deregulation of the Bank of England and certain social policies are examples where Brown was influenced by the EU and other European states.<sup>438</sup> Honeyman and Holden seem to agree that at the beginning of the Brown period, his position on multilateralism were unclear. However, through his works on the G20 and the economic crisis, Brown did

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<sup>432</sup> Hood, 'Atlantic Dreams and European Realities', p192..

<sup>433</sup> Richard Whitman, 'The Calm after the Storm? Foreign and Security Policy from Blair to Brown', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol. 63 (2010), 834-48, p836.

<sup>434</sup> Andrew Rawnsley, *The End of the Party* (London: Viking, 2010), p664.

<sup>435</sup> Simon Lee, *Best for Britain? The Politics and Legacy of Gordon Brown* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2007), p157; p232.

<sup>436</sup> Victoria Honeyman, 'Gordon Brown and International Policy', *Political Science*, vol. 30 (2009), 85-100, p95.

<sup>437</sup> Patrick Holden, 'Still Leading from the Edge?: New Labour and the European Union', in Oliver Daddow and James Gaskarth (eds) *British Foreign Policy: The New Labour Years*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 157-169, p160-162.

<sup>438</sup> Andrew Rawnsley, *Servants of the People* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p32 ; Desmond King and Mark Wickham-Jones, 'From Clinton to Blair: The Democratic (Party) Origins of Welfare to Work' *The Political Quarterly*, vol. 70, no. 1 (1999), 62-74, p70.

improve in these areas.<sup>439</sup> These arguments demonstrate a development of policy ideas during the Brown government showing he was able to cooperate with others in the international arena. This can be seen in contrast to Brown's predecessor's later work in failing to work with the UN effectively over Iraq and siding with a US sceptical of multilateral institutions. This leads onto another important area that can be used to examine Brown's foreign policies, namely, his relationship with the US.

Many studies of Brown have identified the key contacts Brown developed in the US, largely, but not exclusively, in the Democratic Party. Bill Clinton, Al Gore, Joe Biden, John Kerry, Henry Kissinger, Stan Greenberg and Alan Greenspan were all people Brown developed strong connections with and provided important inspiration and support for Brown during his time as Chancellor and in Number 10.<sup>440</sup> Rawnsley adds to this by explaining that despite Brown's distaste for wealth, he would often mix with the wealthy elites of Wall Street and the Democratic Party.<sup>441</sup> Brown also regularly holidayed in Cape Cod which helped reinforce key relationships, notably with Ted Kennedy.<sup>442</sup> Lee follows the Kennedy link further by explaining that Brown looked to the 1960s Democratic Party for inspiration when he was preparing to take over the premiership in 2007.<sup>443</sup> This was also reiterated by Brown himself shortly before entering Number 10 when Brown published a series of essays on his political inspirations, one of whom was Bobby Kennedy.<sup>444</sup> When entering Number 10, Phythian suggests that Brown walked a tightrope between being close to the US and avoiding the overly affectionate relationship that Blair had with the Bush administration. As a result there appeared to be a cooling of relations. Similarly, any coolness in the relationship once Brown took over was exacerbated by Brown's low profile in foreign affairs after 9/11.<sup>445</sup> Dumbrell claims that the presentation of coolness in the relationship was due to domestic pressure on Brown to move away from some of Blair's unpopular relationships.<sup>446</sup> Daddow also suggests that the Brown period saw a break from the Blair years. He highlights five components of Brown's foreign policy that were distinctive to the Blair period. A more refined use of foreign policy language, greater emphasis on institutions such as NATO, more focus on development policy, moving away from the term War on Terror and the financial crisis which engulfed Brown's premiership were the elements that led to Brown

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<sup>439</sup> Seldon and Lodge, *Brown at 10*, p221.

<sup>440</sup> David Coates, 'Life After Blair', *British Politics*, Vol. 2 No. 3 (2007), 418-434, p432; Seldon and Lodge, *Brown at 10*, p23; Dumbrell, 'The US-UK Special Relationship', p66.

<sup>441</sup> Rawnsley, *The End of the Party*, p477.

<sup>442</sup> Seldon and Lodge, *Brown at 10*, p23.

<sup>443</sup> Simon Lee, *Best For Britain?*, p177.

<sup>444</sup> Gordon Brown, *Courage: Eight Portraits*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), p115.

<sup>445</sup> Mark Phythian, 'From Asset to Liability: Blair, Brown and the Special Relationship', in Oliver Daddow and James Gaskarth (eds) *British Foreign Policy: The New Labour Years*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 188-204, p198-199.

<sup>446</sup> Dumbrell, 'The US-UK Special Relationship', p67.

establishing a different type of foreign policy to Blair.<sup>447</sup> Honeyman also contributes to this discussion by stating that Brown had to change his approach to the US in the light of the Blair era.<sup>448</sup> Nevertheless, as Phythian explains, Brown was able to rebuild relations with the US with the arrival of the Obama administration.<sup>449</sup> This image of Brown and his relationship with the US suggests he was keen to remain close to the Americans but was biding his time in order to avoid being associated with the negative opinions of the Bush-Blair years. What is clear from this discussion is the impact the Blair era had on Brown as he sought to develop his own premiership as well as the importance of the US to Brown.

### 11.1.2. Debate II: Blair's Legacy and Brown's Leadership

Another important debate in the literature on Gordon Brown is on establishing a link between the Brown premiership and the Blair years. Given the turbulent nature of the relationship between Brown and Blair, which lasted for over 25 years, there is clear evidence that the approach that Brown took to foreign policy, as well as his premiership in broader terms was a reaction to the Blair years. This position has led to many scholars and writers comparing and contrasting the styles and types of policies of the two Prime Ministers. Bergeron makes the argument that Brown did make a significant change to the British approach to the 'War on Terror'. He claims that Brown wanted to focus on cultural education to stop people joining terrorist organisations rather than following Blair's moralistic approach of attacking terrorism itself.<sup>450</sup> Peston expands on this by stating that after the unpopular invasion of Iraq, Blair, in order to stay in office, was dependent on Brown providing economic credibility thus demonstrating Blair's weakened credibility.<sup>451</sup> Whitman, on the other hand, places Brown in a position where he did want to break away from the Blair years but still wanted to enjoy the success that Blair achieved on the world stage.<sup>452</sup> Whitman agrees with Bergeron that Brown did change the government's approach to dealing with terrorism but still held Anglo-American relations at the centre of the British security strategy, as did Blair.<sup>453</sup> This argument is also supported by Shepherd and Smith.<sup>454</sup> Alternatively, Radice argues, that it was Brown's desire to be seen as Prime Minister in his own right, not just hanging onto his predecessor's coat tails in a similar fashion to the portrayals of Anthony Eden or John

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<sup>447</sup> Oliver Daddow, 'The Use of Force in British Foreign Policy: From New Labour to the Coalition', *Political Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 84, No. 1 (2013), 110-118, p114.

<sup>448</sup> Honeyman, 'Gordon Brown and International Policy', p98.

<sup>449</sup> Phythian, 'From Asset to Liability', p199.

<sup>450</sup> James Bergeron, 'Tales of the Transatlantic: "War on Terror" as Semantics and Strategy', Lori Maguire (ed) *The Foreign Policy Discourse in the UK and the US in the 'New World Order'* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2009), 303-324, p321.

<sup>451</sup> Robert Peston, *Brown's Britain*, (London: Short Books, 2005), p333.

<sup>452</sup> Whitman, 'The Calm after the Storm?', p836.

<sup>453</sup> Ibid, Ibid.

<sup>454</sup> Shepherd, 'Blair, Brown and Brussels', p56; Martin Smith, 'The UK and Nuclear Weapons', in David Brown (ed) *The Development of British Defence Policy: Blair, Brown and Beyond*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 169-188, p179.

Major.<sup>455</sup> These authors agree that there was a desire in the Brown administration to break free of the 10 years of Blair's government.

To achieve this independence, Brown needed to develop a distinct policy and leadership style. This was not straightforward however, as Foley claims that though Brown did want to separate his political persona from the Blair government he realised the advantages of the Blair model of leadership, which proved well suited to the modern world of 24 hour news and fast communication.<sup>456</sup> On the other hand, Bulmer makes the argument that the reason that Brown never really broke away from the Blair style of leadership and foreign policy was that he was more attracted to the unilateral approach in British politics that Blair displayed, suggesting that Brown had the same desire for power as Blair.<sup>457</sup> Whitman, Seldon and Lodge contend that Brown attempted to establish himself in his own governing style. However, Blair remained a continuing influence on Brown's politics through the advisory role he had with the Brown government which prevented Brown from creating a fully distinctive style while in Number 10.<sup>458</sup> Though there is debate on the scale and nature of Blair's influence on Brown's premiership, it is clear that the literature agrees that Brown's period as Prime Minister was chained to ten years of the Blair government.

Also in the academic literature, there is a discussion on the level of Brown's personal orderliness and the administrative organisation which he displayed as Prime Minister. Diamond, Griffiths and Hickson all agree that Brown wanted his style of governing to be different from that of Blair. In their view, Brown moved to restore more power to the Cabinet and tried to implement a top-down style of modernisation at Number 10, as he had done when he entered the Treasury in 1997. This was done in order to distinguish his governing style from that of Blair.<sup>459</sup> In opposition to this, Kettell and Kerr argue that this was not the case, and that Brown struggled to maintain a top-down leadership fit for modern times.<sup>460</sup> Richards offers a slightly different view. According to him, Brown liked to maintain tight control over others around him and this was coupled with other personality problems such as the claim that his policy ideas tended to be half baked and that

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<sup>455</sup> Radice, *Trio*, p208.

<sup>456</sup> Michael Foley, 'Gordon Brown and the Role of Compounded Crisis in the Pathology of a Leadership in Decline', *British Politics*, vol. 4, no. 4 (2009): 497-513, p502.

<sup>457</sup> Simon Bulmer, 'New Labour, New European Policy? Blair Brown and Utilitarian Super-Nationalism', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol. 61 (2008), 597-620, p605.

<sup>458</sup> Seldon and Lodge, *Brown at 10*, p24.

<sup>459</sup> Patrick Diamond, 'Governing as New Labour: An inside Account of the Blair Brown Years' *Political Studies Review*, vol. 9, no. 2 (2011), 145-162, p158; Simon Griffiths and Kevin Hickson, *British Party Politics and Ideology after New Labour*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p88.

<sup>460</sup> Steven Kettell and Peter Kerr, 'One Year On: The Decline and Fall of Gordon Brown' *British Politics*, vol. 3 (2008), 490-510, p491.

he had an obsession with controlling the stories in the media.<sup>461</sup> This approach is most clearly displayed in Rawnsley's work with accounts such as Brown closing in on himself and surrounding himself with advisors who brought out his worst qualities.<sup>462</sup> Seldon and Lodge also highlight that Brown failed to implement any strong organisation on the Number 10 machine and had little patience for many of his Cabinet colleagues.<sup>463</sup> Based on the analysis of this literature, the image that has been created is one that Brown was unable to implement a coherent and individual approach to his premiership.

### 11.1.3. Debate III: The Academic View of Brown

The literature that discusses the Brown years appears unusually polarised. Most writers tend to agree that his leadership and his foreign policy were something of a failure. Beech, Lee, Kavanagh and Cowley hold that Brown was a disappointment in the eyes of his supporters and, although he was the most intellectually literate of any Labour leader in the history of the party, his policies seemed to lack coherence.<sup>464</sup> Theakston describes Brown as wanting in his communication ability, organisation capacity, political skills, judgment, cognitive style and emotional intelligence, all suggesting that he considered that Brown was unfit for the job.<sup>465</sup> Rawnsley, too, focuses on the psychological flaws of Brown which, as Richards suggests, resulted in Brown desperately seeking approval from the press.<sup>466</sup> In contrast however, some writers have tried to present a more balanced picture of Brown. Foley has provided evidence that Brown was stuck in the situation he inherited when he began his premiership. He describes how Brown was subject to a series of crises when he took on what was already a tired and worn out administration that was also tied closely to the Blair style of government which was unpopular and difficult to move away from.<sup>467</sup> Seldon and Lodge agree that Brown took over the job of Prime Minister in a time of mounting troubles. However, they also state that Brown was the creator of many of his own problems through indecisive decision making.<sup>468</sup> They also admit, however, that when he was forced to act in policy areas such as in the financial crisis he could do so effectively. The sum of these views creates a confused image of Brown. It is true he faced many difficulties in coming to terms with his leadership role. However, this is a common situation for any new leader. These debates are also further confused by the raised level of

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<sup>461</sup> Richards, *Whatever it Takes*, p50-51.

<sup>462</sup> Rawnsley, *The End of the Party*, p520.

<sup>463</sup> Seldon and Lodge, *Brown at 10*, pxxxii.

<sup>464</sup> Beech and Lee, 'Editorial', p1; Dennis Kavanagh and Philip Cowley, *The British General Election of 2010* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p56.

<sup>465</sup> Kevin Theakston, 'Gordon Brown as Prime Minister: Political Skills and Leadership Style', *British Politics* vol. 6, no. 1 (2011), 78-100, p97.

<sup>466</sup> Rawnsley, *End of the Party*, p685; Richards, *Whatever it Takes*, p249.

<sup>467</sup> Foley, 'Gordon Brown and the Role of Compounded Crisis in the Pathology of a Leadership in Decline', p506.

<sup>468</sup> Anthony Seldon and Guy Lodge, 'How Will History Judge Gordon Brown?', *Public Policy Research* vol. 17, no. 1 (2010): 23-28, p28.

expectations facing Brown in a period when the public were becoming sceptical of a Labour government that had been in power since 1997.

Those who wrote about Gordon Brown in 2007 expected him to show more substance than Blair, while they were also convinced he would follow the same approach to the US as his predecessor.<sup>469</sup> The literature since then has picked up on these themes and has gone further in analysing the success of Brown's time in Number 10. This body of work has focused on Brown in reference to his predecessor, his personal abilities and his shortcomings. Very few have taken a broad look at Brown's foreign policy and even fewer have spent much time focusing on particular policy areas. Through the use of primary material, some of these assumptions on Brown will be challenged in the following section.

### 11.2. Brown as Chancellor

As Peston argued, Blair relied on the economic credibility that Brown created as Chancellor of the Exchequer for the longevity of his premiership. After the death of Labour leader John Smith in 1994, a deal was allegedly reached between Blair and Brown to decide who would lead the Labour Party. It was eventually agreed that Brown would stand aside to allow Blair to become leader in 1994 and in return Brown would have free rein on economic and social policy with Brown also understanding that he would be Blair's successor.<sup>470</sup> This deal, as Brown saw it, set the tone for the following 13 years of Blair's leadership seeing Brown exercising more political power than any other Chancellor in history. Brown argued that his experience as Chancellor and the economic growth he oversaw qualified him for the role of Prime Minister.<sup>471</sup> Yet, the British premiership is strongly based in foreign and security policy which was an area that Brown as Chancellor was rarely associated with. By exploring his positions on key policies and involvement in important decisions, an image of Brown and foreign policy can begin to be established.

#### 11.2.1. Defence Spending

During Brown's time as Prime Minister, one of the strongest criticisms made against him was that as Chancellor, Brown had starved the armed services of adequate support and funding. A review of defence funding during Brown's period does show a steady increase in the defence budget. Figure 1 highlights that from 2001 the UK defence budget steadily increased, rising by a total of

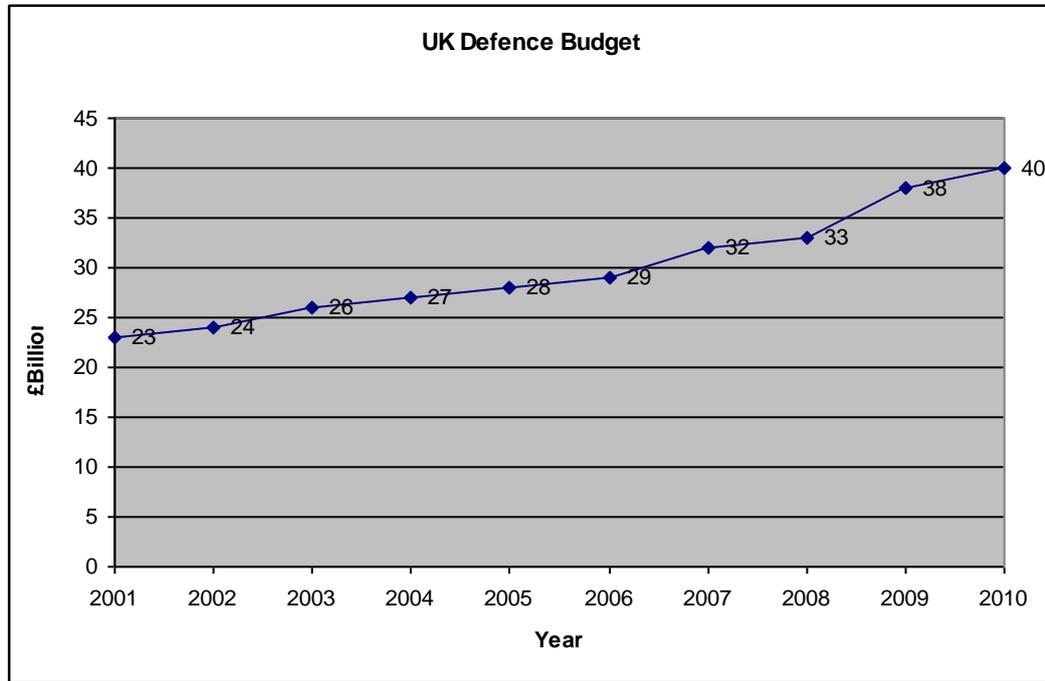
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<sup>469</sup> David Coates, 'Life after Blair', p431; Tom Bower, *Gordon Brown Prime Minister* (London: Harper Perennial, 2007), p429; Clara O'Donnell and Richard Whitman, 'European policy under Gordon Brown: perspectives on a Future Prime Minister', *International Affairs* vol. 83, no. 1 (2007), 253-72, p253.

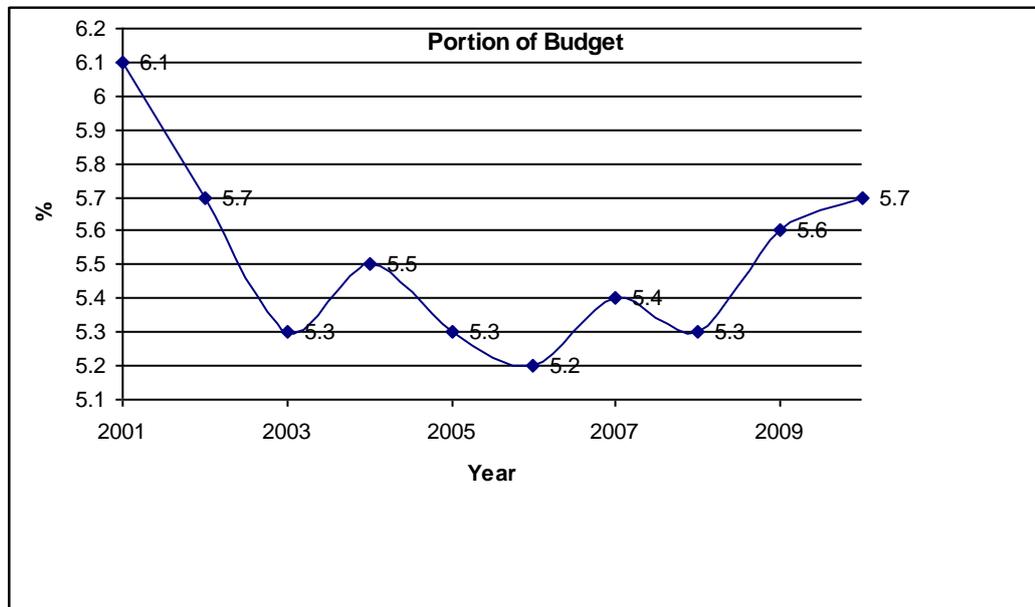
<sup>470</sup> Richards, *Whatever It Takes*, p76.

<sup>471</sup> Foley, 'Gordon Brown and the Role of Compounded Crisis in the Pathology of a Leadership in Decline', p504.

£17 billion during the New Labour years. This was fuelled by the period of prosperity in the UK that Brown oversaw as Chancellor. In comparison to this economic growth however, the portion of the overall budget allocated to defence decreased.



**Figure 1: UK Defence Budgets**



**Figure 2: Defence Portion of Annual Budget**

In contrast to the increase of the defence budget, Figure 2 highlights an interesting trend that during Brown’s time as Chancellor the portion of the annual budget reserved for defence spending dropped by nearly 1%. However, once he left the Treasury, this trend began to climb

again. One explanation for this could be that this was in response to the heavy criticism the Brown government was receiving over its support for the armed services. As a result Brown authorised an increase in defence spending. This overall trend was in contrast to the increase of budgets in other departments such as the Department for International Development (DFID). Although the British economy was thriving throughout Brown's period as Chancellor, the defence budget was not increasing proportionally. Brown himself acknowledged that the defence budget did not grow annually in real terms for 'one or two' years during his time as Chancellor.<sup>472</sup> As a result of these perceived limitations, military figures attacked Brown during his premiership and linked Brown's time as Chancellor to the increasing military difficulties that emerged during his premiership due to a lack of resources.<sup>473</sup> Similarly, civil servant and the Cabinet Office's Security and Intelligence Coordinator Sir Bill Jeffrey described the situation after 2005 as one where problems emerged from management issues. As will be seen in the following chapters, the concerns over defence funding became a central issue during Brown's period as Prime Minister.<sup>474</sup> Some however, have claimed that this argument was not so clear cut. In interviews with the author, former FCO Minister and long serving Labour MP Chris Mullin as well as one of Brown's business advisors Nick Butler, both stated that the military did well under Brown but would always want more from politicians.<sup>475</sup> Mullin also argued in his diaries that much of this criticism was created by parts of the Conservative Party and the media.

A visit from a soldier just back from Afghanistan. 'We had a delegation of Tories out', he said, 'just interested in looking for sticks with which to beat the government.'<sup>476</sup>

It is difficult to establish the true worth of these arguments. It has been claimed that Brown was not transparent enough during his period as Chancellor on the level of military funding; this appears consistent with the academic arguments above that Brown could be aloof on certain policy areas.<sup>477</sup> Although Brown did continue to increase the defence budget, it is questionable to what extent those increases reflected the British involvement in two foreign wars. That does not necessarily mean that Brown starved the armed forces of resources. As the British Ambassador to Afghanistan Sherard Cowper-Coles explained:

In general, however, I felt that such criticism...was a bit unfair. At almost every stage, the expansion of our military strategy, whether in terms of number of troops

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<sup>472</sup> The Independent, 'Gordon Brown admits inquiry slip over defence spending', (17<sup>th</sup> March 2010).

<sup>473</sup> BBC News, 'Soldiers tell of 'low morale'', (23<sup>rd</sup> November 2007).

<sup>474</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Sir Bill Jeffrey', (08<sup>th</sup> March 2010), p12.

<sup>475</sup> Interview with Chris Mullin, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013; Interview with Nick Butler, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

<sup>476</sup> Interview with Chris Mullin, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013; Mullin, *Decline and Fall*, p378.

<sup>477</sup> Iraqanalysis.org, 'The Rising Costs of the Iraq War', (21<sup>st</sup> March 2007).

or of territory, had been agreed often by sceptical politicians on the basis of upbeat military advice.<sup>478</sup>

Cowper-Coles' argument suggests that the reason for the British military difficulties at this time was due to the overconfident reports the British military were delivering to politicians. If Cowper-Coles' explanation is accurate, bias reports from the military could have shaped Brown's views on how to support the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Brown has always strongly refuted claims that he denied the military resources; however, some have suggested that it should be to his credit. Mullin explained that New Labour politicians were often taken in by the armed services and too prepared to offer support in order not to be seen as anti-military.<sup>479</sup> To what extent Brown was working to change this is not clear and it is not the purpose of this thesis to understand the relationship between the military and politicians during the wars. However, these criticisms would hang over Brown during his premiership and were an important aspect of the military decisions being made after 2007.

### 11.2.2. Iraq Decision

Another important consideration in analysing Brown's period as Chancellor, is establishing his position on the decision to invade Iraq. Reflecting on events leading up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, Brown told the Chilcot Inquiry;

I think we had no alternative but to intervene in situations where there are two risks to the post-Cold War world. The first has been, as I mentioned, the action of non-state terrorists; and, the second has been the action of rogue states, or, in the case of Iraq, aggressor states. And if the world community is going to mean anything in terms of our ability to cohere and our ability to live at peace, then we have to be prepared to take international action.<sup>480</sup>

The Chilcot Inquiry was an important opportunity for Brown to display his arguments for taking action against Iraq. He also used it as an opportunity to defend his relationship with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and armed services while he was Chancellor:

My role in this was not to second guess military decisions or options. My role was not to interfere in what were very important diplomatic negotiations – that was what the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary and the Defence Secretary were involved in. My role in this was first of all, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, to make sure that the funding was there for what we had to do and we did make sure that happened; and, secondly to play my full part as a Cabinet member in the discussions that took place, and that is indeed what I did.<sup>481</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> Sherard Cowper-Coles, *Cables from Kabul*, (London: Harper Press, 2012), p177.

<sup>479</sup> Interview with Chris Mullin.

<sup>480</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Gordon Brown', (5<sup>th</sup> March 2010), p6.

<sup>481</sup> *Ibid*, p43.

Brown appeared to be using the Chilcot Inquiry to attempt to answer the criticisms levied against him. As this testimony came seven years after events and after intense attacks on Brown it carries politicised connotations. Many of Brown's claims relate to criticisms that had been levied against him based on his support for the armed forces. In contrast, it is noteworthy that there was minimal involvement from Brown in the public debate before the Chilcot Inquiry. Directly after 9/11 and before the invasion of Iraq, Brown rarely joined the public debate on the War on Terror. This was seen in his low media profile on these discussions or his lack of contribution to House of Commons debates on this area at this time. As he was Prime Minister at the point when he was giving evidence to the Chilcot Inquiry his presentation of evidence is important for displaying his recollected understandings of the wars. What Brown displayed in his testimony was that he agreed with the argument presented regarding the Axis of Evil and that rogue states needed to be dealt with. Given his strong Atlanticism, as seen in other policy areas, it is possible to conclude that Brown indeed followed in Blair's policy path on committing to the War on Terror in the period after 9/11. As discussed above, some writers have highlighted that Brown was drawn to Blair's style of policy making. Yet, the case Brown made was being presented seven years after events, furthering Brown's reputation for being aloof on these policy areas.

In contrast to Brown's argument in 2010, some of Brown's contemporaries have questioned his commitment and cooperation on the decisions being made on the War on Terror. Campbell argued in his diaries that Brown's support for action after the 9/11 attacks was minimal.

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2001

GB at Cobra only contributed when asked to, but otherwise pretty much sat there, or muttered out of the side of his mouth to Jack. He clearly hated it, possibly hated the fact that TB was so clearly in charge in these crisis management situations.<sup>482</sup>

Campbell's assessment supports the discussion of Brown's involvement in policy areas that did not relate to his remit as Chancellor. Given that in the wake of 9/11 the major policy decisions were based on security and coordinating the international response, Brown's role was minimal. This could have been exacerbated by the worsening relationship between Blair and Brown. As Mullin explained in his diaries, from 1999 Brown was building pressure on Blair's control of government through his role as the Chancellor.<sup>483</sup> He is reported to have continued this behaviour beyond this time. According to Jonathan Powell:

When we were deciding whether to deploy more troops in Afghanistan in 2003, Gordon arrived at the beginning of the relevant Cabinet meeting, announced the

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<sup>482</sup> Campbell, *The Alistair Campbell Diaries: Volume IV*, p7-8.

<sup>483</sup> Chris Mullin, *A View from the Foothills, Diaries 1999-2005*, (London: Profile Books, 2009), p45.

date for the Budget and left to make a speech in Scotland, so that no one later could say whether he had supported or opposed the decision to deploy more troops.<sup>484</sup>

After 9/11 the political agenda dramatically changed with international security becoming a central concern for the British government. For Brown, this change meant that his dominance in British politics became lessened as he did not have the background in security. Therefore, in response to losing the authority he had over Blair through the economy, he privately displayed an uncooperative approach to security matters which had implications for his role in key policy decisions.

In relation to Iraq, there remained a fear from Blair's Number 10 that Brown would capitalise on the controversial support Blair was offering for the war, and oppose military action in order to undermine Blair. Mullin recorded a conversation with one of Brown's close political companions, Nick Brown in 2002:

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2002

Nick Brown...says relations between Gordon and the Man are 'poisonous'...He says there have been some big rows, one or two of which he witnessed...He says Gordon is against an attack on Iraq.<sup>485</sup>

Mullin also reports that those in the Blair camp were saying the same thing as Nick Brown.<sup>486</sup> Gordon Brown continued to put pressure on Blair throughout 2002 by leveraging his economic role in the Government. Given his tight control over the budget he was able to assert influence in all Government departments, this included the defence budget. Campbell recounts that;

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2002

TB had just seen GB. 'He was totally ridiculous. Even Balls looked shocked. He was basically saying we could not afford a military conflict and making clear he had to be consulted on every piece of spending.'<sup>487</sup>

It appears from this passage that Brown was offering some support for the war as long as he remained firmly in control of the cost. This again could be seen as an attempt to keep the policy area as close to his position in the government as possible and to avoid Blair gaining too much leverage. However, the above views which defend Brown's position on defence spending must also be remembered. It is also worth noting that the accounts from Campbell and Powell came from inside the Blair camp. This does raise the question of bias, especially when Mullin's comments on the factional divides within Blair's government are taken into account.

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<sup>484</sup> Jonathan Powell, *The New Machiavelli*, (London: Viking Books, 2010), p118.

<sup>485</sup> Chris Mullin, *A View from the Foothills, Diaries 1999-2005*, p308.

<sup>486</sup> *Ibid*, p370.

<sup>487</sup> Campbell, *The Alistair Campbell Diaries: Volume IV*, p306.

Nevertheless, there has been little evidence to dispute these claims. These arguments display an important concern in understanding Brown's role in the War on Terror while he was Chancellor.

On the one hand, Brown could have decided that he was better challenging Blair's leadership in the economic sphere, such as on Britain's entry into the Euro, rather than in the security sphere which was not his territory. As a result he went along with the Iraq war but continued to make Blair's life as difficult as possible. On the other hand, an argument could be made that Brown genuinely supported the war in Iraq and the wider War on Terror and accounts of his delinquency may have been exaggerated. Mullin even states that Blair told Campbell to 'stick it to Gordon a bit more' in his dairies.<sup>488</sup> Further research into his premiership may reveal more on this area. However, his non-committal attitude on these conflicts seems to match the negative academic views of Brown's political methods.

### 11.2.3. Brown, Blair and the US

One of the defining aspects of Brown's period as Chancellor and the New Labour years was the turbulent relationship between Brown and Blair. As seen in the areas of foreign and security policy, it was difficult for the two to cooperate. The origins of this relationship can help provide an understanding on how their partnership soured to such a serious extent. Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott described the original nature of the relationship between the two as Brown as the teacher and Blair as the subservient pupil. This, according to Prescott led to a constant feeling of tension between the two.<sup>489</sup> Peter Mandelson agreed with Prescott by explaining that Brown found it difficult to reconcile himself to the fact that Blair became leader in 1994.<sup>490</sup> In the late 1990s these tensions were becoming increasingly more apparent to others. In January 1998 Labour MP Tony Benn reflected that it was clear that Brown was trying to build a position as an alternative to Blair.<sup>491</sup> Benn's description of Brown portrays him as determined for the leadership. One source also reported to Mullin that this was due to Brown not accepting the change in the relationship after 1994, as Prescott also stated. To Mullin, in 2001, Brown was characterised as being obsessive, paranoid, secretive and lacking in personal skills.<sup>492</sup> Blair's wife, who was often at the centre of the very personal disputes between Blair and Brown, made similar comments that Tony and Gordon were initially in a relationship where both recognised Brown as the senior partner. She also described Brown as so ambitious for the premiership that he did not realise that

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<sup>488</sup> Mullin, *Decline and Fall*, p197.

<sup>489</sup> Prescott, *Prezza*, p170.

<sup>490</sup> BBC 2, *Blair: The Inside Story: The End of the Affair*, (30<sup>th</sup> March 2007).

<sup>491</sup> Tony Benn, *Free at Last: Diaries 1991-2002*, (London: Hutchinson, 2002), p461.

<sup>492</sup> Mullin, *A View from the Foothills*, p213.

by working with Blair he was more likely to speed up the handover of power.<sup>493</sup> It appears that to many, this relationship ran deeper than professional politics and represented a far deeper rivalry.

Offering a different interpretation, Jonathan Powell described how, on the one hand, Blair would string Brown along without addressing the issue of who was in charge but on the other hand, Brown continued to display shocking behaviour. Powell recounted one incident where he believed Brown to be disloyal in the way he talked to Blair and refused to take responsibility for decisions, such as on the 2005 European constitution.<sup>494</sup> Jack Straw commented further that after 2001 Blair and his staff were increasingly complaining about Brown's behaviour as Brown was recorded to be walking into Number 10 in order to shout at Blair.<sup>495</sup> Similarly, Alistair Darling explained that Brown's behaviour resulted from Blair taking on the leadership of the Party in 1994 which led to a festering conflict that, by 2005, dominated much of the day-to-day life of Government.<sup>496</sup> Some of these views were presented by those inside Blair's circle; however, many of these accounts belong to figures that were less tribal in their political loyalties. However, they all agree that the relationship was unstable due to Brown's uncooperative style and Blair's inability to manage him and remained a central subject of the New Labour government.

A different analysis of these events, from a figure closer to Blair and a key figure in the Labour party, points towards a different explanation for the rift between Blair and Brown. According to Philip Gould, it was less to do with Brown's personal ambition and more associated with his fear of missing the opportunity to implement the ideas which he had been developing throughout his life.<sup>497</sup> Blair himself, in the forward for Gould's book, explained that Brown was an enormous creative power.<sup>498</sup> Gould goes on to describe the two as having the potential to be a balance political force.<sup>499</sup> Brown was seen as solid, consistent and unstoppable, while Blair was learning, changing and renewing. Nevertheless, as Gould explains, the relationship was a fragile one and had the potential for splits. After years of pressure from Brown and through the unrest of his backbenches, Blair announced in 2006 that he would leave Number 10 in the following year.

Brown's campaign to remove Blair from office was a prolonged affair with many of his advisors using underhanded political techniques. This was seen in 2011 when *The Daily Telegraph* released a series of e-mails relating to Ed Balls' efforts to push Blair out of office.<sup>500</sup> Similarly,

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<sup>493</sup> Cherie Blair, *Speaking for Myself*, (London: Little, Brown and Company, 2008), p115; 308.

<sup>494</sup> Powell, *The New Machiavelli*, p108; p117-118.

<sup>495</sup> Jack Straw, *Last Man Standing*, p491.

<sup>496</sup> Alistair Darling, *Back from the Brink* (London: Atlantic Books, 2011), p244.

<sup>497</sup> Gould, *The Unfinished Revolution*, p190.

<sup>498</sup> *Ibid*, p190.

<sup>499</sup> *Ibid*, p425.

<sup>500</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, 'Gordon Brown's transition plan', (19<sup>th</sup> July 2005).

Brown's Director of Communications, Damian McBride also describes the unscrupulous actions he took against Blair and his followers on behalf of Brown.<sup>501</sup> An important consequence of these efforts to force Blair out of power, was how the US viewed events and what that meant for Brown when he took over the premiership. A Congressional research report assessed these situations;

Brown and Blair have been both close political partners and rivals for over two decades, and Brown has long aspired to succeed Blair.<sup>502</sup>

Several junior ministers in Blair's government resigned, and Blair apparently faced a threatened coup from within the Labour Party. As a result, in September 2006, Blair publicly announced that he would resign within a year.<sup>503</sup>

Seldon and Lodge suggest that the appearance of Brown being responsible for Blair's downfall made relations with the Americans difficult for the new Brown government. They state further that Brown had to rely on Blair to help improve his partnership with the Americans at this stage.<sup>504</sup> The reputation for rivalry between Blair and Brown came to be a defining political aspect of the period that went beyond Party politics and affected Britain's key security relationship. A broad overview of Brown's premiership can indicate the impact of some of these issues.

### 11.3. Brown as Prime Minister

By the time Brown entered Downing Street in 2007, British foreign policy was closely tied to the role of the prime minister. Brown was now exposed to a new wave of problems and concerns which affected his style of Government. This was clearest in the economic crisis that emerged from the US in 2008. According to Nick Butler, this was one of two issues that dominated the agenda of Brown's Government. The other concern was Britain's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>505</sup> By exploring the decisions Brown made in his foreign and security appointments as well as the policies he pursued in this area, a sense of Brown's approach to his premiership becomes clearer as well as shining light on the important aspect of the SRA which is the relationship between the leaders. To begin with, this section will explore the reflections on Brown's leadership style and ability by those who worked with him as Chancellor and Prime Minister.

#### 13.3.1. Style and Ability

When he became Prime Minister, Brown wanted to demonstrate that he had made a clear break in his style of governing from the Blair era. To this extent, Cabinet member Peter Hain explained,

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<sup>501</sup> Damian McBride, *Power Trip*, (London: Biteback Publishing, 2013), p196.

<sup>502</sup> CRS, 'The United Kingdom: Issues for the United States', (16<sup>th</sup> July 2007), p6.

<sup>503</sup> Ibid, p9-10.

<sup>504</sup> Seldon and Lodge, *Brown at 10*, p23.

<sup>505</sup> Interview with Nick Butler.

nobody was quite clear what kind of governing style Brown would have.<sup>506</sup> He particularly aimed to move away from the notion of ‘denocracy’ or sofa-government found in Blair’s Number 10.<sup>507</sup> As Brown explained in his first speech as Prime Minister:

I will build a government that uses all the talents; I will invite men and women of goodwill to contribute their energies in a new spirit of public service to make our nation what it can be.<sup>508</sup>

What became known as ‘GOATS’ (Government of All-The-Talents) symbolised a new style in governing that attempted to reunify the Labour Party and reached out to other political parties and individuals. In a similar fashion, it was expected that Brown would restore the power of Cabinet discussions, again breaking from the Blair period. However, as discussed above in the literature review on Brown, he appeared to have been unable to implement a coherent approach to the running of Number 10. Brown’s Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, explained further that ‘Cabinet meetings were inclusive in that everyone had a say’ however, qualified his comments by adding that meetings were ‘inconclusive in that it was never quite clear on what would happen afterwards’.<sup>509</sup> Miliband’s comments demonstrate the complexity in understanding Brown’s governing style as he presented an uneven development of ideas and proved indecisive in taking action or running Number 10.

Before becoming prime minister, Brown’s experience of running the Treasury had been well established. Powell described how Brown divided the world into those who were with him and those who were against him.<sup>510</sup> This is similar to Straw’s comments when he explained that Brown established a cell-structured style of working while in the Treasury.<sup>511</sup> Darling expands further that Brown would work by taking advice from a wide range of people, but on a smaller basis rather than in a group meeting, such as in Cabinet, which made it harder to reach a detailed position.<sup>512</sup> Although Brown claimed he wanted to run a government with a broad level of discussion, in practice this seems not to have taken place, or where it did happen, discussions only created unclear results. This view is also supported by Seldon and Lodge who explain that Brown did not hold many of his Cabinet colleagues in high regard.<sup>513</sup> Similarly, Radice explains that

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<sup>506</sup> Channel 4, *Dispatches: Where did it all go wrong? (The Financial Crisis)*, (09<sup>th</sup> June 2008).

<sup>507</sup> Foley, Gordon Brown and the Role of Compounded Crisis in the Pathology of a Leadership in Decline’, p503.

<sup>508</sup> The Daily Telegraph, ‘Gordon Brown’s First Speech as Prime Minister’, (27<sup>th</sup> June 2007).

<sup>509</sup> BBC Radio 4, *The Brown Year, Episode 1*, (21<sup>st</sup> September 2010).

<sup>510</sup> Powell, *The New Machiavelli*, p107.

<sup>511</sup> Straw, *Last Man Standing*, p493.

<sup>512</sup> Darling, *Back from the Brink*, p33.

<sup>513</sup> Seldon and Lodge, *Brown at 10*, pxxxii.

Brown did not appoint any Cabinet ministers who could challenge him.<sup>514</sup> This style suggests that Brown wanted to appear more in-line with the traditional prime-ministerial model of leadership rather than the presidentialism seen with Blair. However, as Peter Mandelson explained, Brown was a risk-averse politician.<sup>515</sup> As a result, it appeared that Brown did intend to limit the opportunity to be challenged in order to keep control of his political agenda. Brown seems to have intended to keep working closely with his tight knit followers at the expense of broader Cabinet cooperation.

One of the earliest complications of Brown's premiership was whether to hold an early general election in the autumn of 2007. There have been several accounts of this episode; however the result was that Brown was left with the reputation of a 'ditherer'.<sup>516</sup> In contrast to this however, during the economic crisis, Brown showed decisive leadership not seen in any other world leader at the time.<sup>517</sup> Nevertheless, more broadly, as Brown's Director of Strategy Spencer Livermore and closest political ally, Ed Balls stated, Brown never set out his core purpose for his premiership.<sup>518</sup> This lack of direction that Livermore and Balls suggested is related to his reputation for indecision. What decisiveness Brown displayed in the economic crisis, however, did not translate to other aspects of his premiership. This absence of a governing style also led to negative reflections on Brown's ability in the role of prime minister.

In a similar manner to the views on Brown's governing style, many have commented on his ability to carry out the role of prime minister. There have been several views as to why Brown was unfit to take on the role of prime minister. One time temporary leader of the Liberal-Democrats, Vince Cable argued that once Brown had finally reached office he appeared to have run out of energy.<sup>519</sup> This argument can be supported by the fact that Brown had been an MP since 1983, Chancellor since 1997 and spent a considerable amount of energy trying to remove Blair from office. In contrast, Darling presented a slightly different view. He explained that Brown would have been a good Prime Minister in another period.

As prime minister he seemed, often, like a man out of his time. The skills learned as a young politician...were out of date.<sup>520</sup>

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<sup>514</sup> Radice, *Trio*, p206.

<sup>515</sup> Peter Mandelson, *The Third Man*, (London: Harper Press, 2010), p4.

<sup>516</sup> See Seldon and Lodge, *Brown at 10*, Rawnsley, *The End of The Party*, Richards, *Whatever it Takes*.

<sup>517</sup> Interview with Nick Butler.

<sup>518</sup> BBC Radio 4, 'The Brown Year Episode 3', (5<sup>th</sup> October 2010); BBC Radio 4, 'The Brown Year Episode 1.

<sup>519</sup> Channel 4, *Dispatches: Where did it all go wrong? (The Financial Crisis)*.

<sup>520</sup> Darling, *Back from the Brink*, p322.

This position is also supported by Mullin. In his early descriptions of Brown from the 1990s he explained that:

Gordon is a very bright man, a workaholic who is burning himself up for no apparent purpose... When most of us go home to our families at the weekend, he goes home to work out how to get on the weekend news bulletins. And the chilling thing is that one weekend in two he succeeds but, having got there, he has nothing to say beyond calling for a 'package of measures'.<sup>521</sup>

Mullin added to this in an interview with the author, explaining that;

The thing about being prime minister is that you have stuff coming at you the whole time and you have to take instant decisions very often, whereas Gordon was used to staying up on the mountain top and contemplating, taking weeks at a time before making pronouncements. Of course, as soon as he got into Number 10 he found that he couldn't cope with the volume of stuff coming towards him.

These comments support Darling's argument that Brown's political skills were not up-to-date by the time he entered Number 10. By 2007, the importance of digital communication and 24 hour news put the role of prime minister in the constant spot light where there was a need for fast and clear responses to events. Brown's reputation for indecision would seem incompatible with the modern premiership.

The views above were held by many before 2007. As Chris Mullin explained in his diaries;

There wasn't a single member of the Cabinet who didn't at one time say that Gordon wasn't up to being prime minister.<sup>522</sup>

Campbell supported this in his diary entry from 1995 by naming Robin Cook and John Prescott as figures that felt negatively about Brown.<sup>523</sup> Similarly, Mandelson's description of Brown's political abilities was just as negative. Mandelson described Brown as paranoid and lacking perspective which led to Blair questioning Brown's ability to lead.<sup>524</sup> These views came from senior politicians who either served with Brown in the Cabinets of Tony Blair, or in Brown's own Cabinet and work to demonstrate Mullin's point that Brown was not fit for the premiership. Very few believed Brown would be able to carry out the role of Prime Minister. As described above, Brown's political skills and abilities developed during the 1980s and led to him becoming Blair's political mentor. The 1994 leadership contest which saw Brown step aside to Blair resulted in a

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<sup>521</sup> Chris Mullin, *A Walk-On Part: Diaries 1994-1999* (London: Profile Books, 2012), p76.

<sup>522</sup> Mullin, *Decline and Fall*, p197.

<sup>523</sup> Alastair Campbell, *The Alastair Campbell Diaries: Volume I: Prelude to Power, 1994-1997*, (London: Random House, 2011), p326.

<sup>524</sup> Mandelson, *The Third Man*, p377.

stalling of Brown's political development. From that point on, his efforts were aimed at removing Blair from the premiership rather than preparing for his own. As some have claimed, Brown did have a level of success in political strategy and tactics.<sup>525</sup> However, many have argued that more was needed for his premiership to succeed. These views seem to be reflected in the academic literature which offers a polarised and largely negative view of Brown's leadership skills and ability.

### 11.3.2. Appointments

One of the few clearly defined powers the British Prime Minister has is the power of appointment. The ability to appoint a strong team to Cabinet and Ministerial positions can represent a Prime Minister's policy interests as well as establishing their political strength.<sup>526</sup> During Blair's period one of his biggest problems when selecting his Cabinet was Brown. Between 1997 and 2007, Brown had eliminated all potential challengers to his power within Cabinet. Brown was able to force out the likes of Peter Mandelson and Alan Milburn in order to secure his own political position. As mentioned above, when it came time to form his own Cabinet, the decisions he made reflected his style of governing by not promoting any challengers to his own position, particularly from the Blair camp. His decisions also reflected the policy areas in which Brown had more interest.

After taking office Brown delayed the announcement of his Cabinet. Seldon and Lodge explain that the reason for this was because Brown did not want to share the attention he received as prime minister with anyone else during his first days in office.<sup>527</sup> The manner in which Brown finally made his appointments demonstrates his policy priorities. Alan Johnson explained that when he was offered the Health Service he found Brown had thought very hard about the topic of healthcare.

He had thought very long and hard about health...He set out a very clear strategy. He was amazingly lucid in what he wanted to see...He set that out very clearly, the job specification that took me over the next two years.<sup>528</sup>

Similarly, Jack Straw found Brown had put a lot of thought into his role as Justice Secretary explaining that Brown had done a huge amount of thinking on the Constitution.<sup>529</sup> These examples however, were not widespread throughout Brown's Cabinet.

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<sup>525</sup> Gould, *The Unfinished Revolution*, p187; Blair, *A Journey*, p616; Powell, *The New Machiavelli*, p116.

<sup>526</sup> Dennis Kavanagh, 'The Blair Premiership', in Anthony Seldon and Dennis Kavanagh (eds) *The Blair Effect, 2001-5*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 3-19, p8.

<sup>527</sup> Seldon and Lodge, *Brown at 10*, p5.

<sup>528</sup> BBC Radio 4, 'The Brown Year, Episode 1'.

<sup>529</sup> *Ibid.*

In contrast to these cases, Brown seemed to have placed less emphasis on the appointment of one of Blair's close colleagues, David Miliband, to the role of Foreign Secretary. As Miliband explained; 'It wasn't a great occasion where we agreed our 5 year foreign policy strategy.'<sup>530</sup> In Miliband's account, where he also stated that Brown made the offer over the phone rather than inviting him to Downing Street, Brown seemed more remote with this policy area. Similarly, Brown drew heavy criticism for retaining Des Browne as Secretary of State for Defence from Blair's government while also making him the Secretary of State for Scotland. This led to some figures criticising the importance Brown placed on defence policy. As former military chief, Admiral Lord Boyce explained:

When you have got people who have been killed and maimed in the service of their government, and you put at the head of the shop someone who is part-time, that sends a very bad message.<sup>531</sup>

Within a few months of taking office Brown was already coming under fire from military chiefs who saw decisions such as Des Browne's dual portfolio as proof that Prime Minister Brown was not interested in defence. Evidence for this can also be seen in the fact that during Brown's three years in office, he had three different Defence Secretaries.

Beyond these criticisms, these appointments suggest a continuation of the Blair period in regards to foreign and security policy. Appointing the Blairite Miliband and retaining Des Browne as Defence Secretary demonstrated that Gordon Brown signalled that he was not prepared to make a huge break from Blair in these areas. These appointments support the arguments from the likes of Bulmer who claim that Brown did not go far from the Blair period. Another important appointment was Douglas Alexander as Development Secretary. Alexander was one of Brown's key followers and during Brown's time as Chancellor the DFID's budget steadily increased demonstrating the greater emphasis Brown placed on development.<sup>532</sup> Cabinet Secretary Gus O'Donnell provided evidence to the Chilcot Inquiry that supported this argument:

In the sense that I knew it was going on, and also when Gordon Brown came in he wanted to look at the committee structure... having what we called NSID, National Security, International Relations and Development. The interesting part about that is it did reflect Gordon Brown's particular interest in the development aspects.<sup>533</sup>

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<sup>530</sup> Ibid.

<sup>531</sup> BBC News, 'Browne defends dual minister role', (13<sup>th</sup> November 2007).

<sup>532</sup> Honeyman, 'Gordon Brown and International Policy', p91.

<sup>533</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Gus O'Donnell', (28<sup>th</sup> January 2011), p7.

According to O'Donnell, from the time Brown entered Number 10 he was preparing new approaches to security. In this example, Brown was suggesting that a committee based style could be an alternative way to make security policy as well as emphasising his own interests, namely development. With these appointments, Brown was signalling where he intended his foreign policy interests to rest. Yet, as his premiership continued the break from the Blair period became less clear. This suggestion of continuation indicated that the significant role of political leaders within the SRA would endure.

### 11.3.3. Foreign and Security Policy

With his appointments of Foreign Secretary and retaining Blair's Defence Secretary, Brown was demonstrating a level of continuity with the Blair government after 2007, which challenges some of the views previously put forward by Daddow. This can also be seen in Brown's comments on his foreign and security policy positions. One of Blair's most tangible legacies was his attempt to act as an Atlantic Bridge between Europe and America. This was seen in his approach to global security after 9/11 and his attempts to create a transatlantic consensus on tackling the perceived threat of Saddam Hussein. In Brown's 2007 Lord Mayor's Banquet speech, he did not distance himself from these views:

It is no secret that I am a life long admirer of America. I have no truck with anti-Americanism in Britain or elsewhere in Europe and I believe that our ties with America - founded on values we share - constitute our most important bilateral relationship. And it is good for Britain, for Europe and for the wider world that today France and Germany and the European Union are building stronger relationships with America.<sup>534</sup>

These were sentiments he continued to display at the same function in 2008:

And I believe that with the farsighted leadership we have in Europe, the whole of Europe can and will work closely with America and with the rest of the world to meet the great challenges which will illuminate our convictions and test our resolution.<sup>535</sup>

In these annual speeches at the Lord Mayor's Banquet, Brown explained how it was important that key European states such as France and Germany should build better relations with America and that the alliance between Britain and America could help facilitate better transatlantic relations, demonstrating an important norm of the alliance; dedication to the US and the common cause. He discussed these views further in the Chilcot Inquiry where he explained that one lesson

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<sup>534</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Lord Mayor's Banquet Speech', (12<sup>th</sup> November 2007).

<sup>535</sup> Brown, *The Change we Choose*, p35.

that needed to be learned after the war in Iraq was that Europe and America needed to work closely on security concerns.

Brown held onto this view as a defining aspect of his premiership. This was apparent in his 2008 Labour Party conference speech as well as the second 2010 leader's debate where Brown identified himself as the only leader being able to work with both sides of the Atlantic.

And unlike the Conservatives who are extremists and isolationists on Europe, we will work with our partners in the European Union.<sup>536</sup>

I'm afraid David (Cameron) is anti-European, and Nick (Clegg) is anti-American and both are out of touch with reality.<sup>537</sup>

Many of Brown's attacks were difficult to uphold. However, his argument in the televised debates in 2010 aimed to place him as the only political figure capable of working with both sides of the Atlantic. This was reminiscent of Blair's belief in the Atlantic Bridge and supports the academic argument that Brown was committed to a continuation of Blair's policies. This background shows how Brown positioned himself in the British political environment as someone who would largely continue along Blair's path of staying close to the Americans, as well as dismissing opponents as being unable to follow the same path. How Brown characterised Anglo-American relations demonstrates the significance it had on his foreign policy discourse.

In regards to security and defence, Brown presented a shift in how the UK would continue its involvement in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In his acceptance speech as Labour Party leader, Brown explained that:

In Iraq, which all of us accept has been a divisive issue for our party and our country, in Afghanistan and in the Middle East, we will meet our international obligations, we will learn lessons that need to be learned, and at all times be unyielding in support for our dedicated armed forces, and resolute in our determination to take the tough decisions to ensure the long term defence and security of our country.<sup>538</sup>

In this speech, Brown seemed to be recasting the war away from the international battle against terrorism and towards arguments that it was in the national interest to engage in these conflicts. This change could be due to Brown shifting away from positions associated with Blair. Nevertheless, Brown stated his commitments to the wars and in turn his dedication to the alliance.

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<sup>536</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Speech to Labour Party Conference', (23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008).

<sup>537</sup> Sky News, *Second Leaders Debate*, (23<sup>rd</sup> April 2010).

<sup>538</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Leadership Acceptance Speech', (28<sup>th</sup> June 2007).

Although he did present a desire to change how the direction of the wars was managed by working through NSID, Cowper-Coles explains that it turned out to be a difficult place to discuss sensitive issues and Brown went on to use private meetings with his military advisors.<sup>539</sup> Miliband's comment on the unclear outcomes of Cabinet meetings supports this argument as it appears that Brown moved towards Blair's style of closed off discussions. On a similar note, Cowper-Coles explains further that Brown's Foreign, Defence and Development secretaries would meet informally to discuss the war in Afghanistan.<sup>540</sup> These claims indicate that although Brown may have intended to take a different approach to the management of the wars, he found himself pulled back to a similar style that Blair pursued.

Beyond Brown's reasoning and extent of his support for these conflicts, criticism was directed at Brown throughout his premiership on his commitment to defence and the armed forces. This was seen in an announcement on troop levels in Iraq which was made during the Conservative Party conference, supposedly to draw attention towards him.<sup>541</sup> As a result, Brown was seen as attempting to score political points by using the armed forces, further damaging his reputation on security. In his resignation speech however, Brown's final comment with regards to policy was in relation to the armed forces.

And let me add one thing also. I will always admire the courage I have seen in our armed forces.

And now that the political season is over, let me stress that having shaken their hands and looked into their eyes, our troops represent all that is best in our country and I will never forget all those who have died in honour and whose families today live in grief.<sup>542</sup>

This was Brown's final policy point as Prime Minister in which he stressed he was committed to supporting the armed forces while he was in government. At this point, Brown had little left to gain in making these kinds of comments suggesting a strong element of truth in his remarks. His relationship with the armed forces had a large impact of his management of SRA III, particularly as after 2007 there were dramatic shifts in the political makeup of both the UK and America. It is important to measure how these changes affected the alliance.

#### 11.4. SRA III: 2007-2010

This section of the chapter will determine how the nature of SRA III changed between 2007 and 2010. Not only was there a change in leadership in the UK, but following the 2008 presidential

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<sup>539</sup> Cowper-Coles, *Cables from Kabul*, p178.

<sup>540</sup> *Ibid*, p177.

<sup>541</sup> Rawnsley, *The End of the Party*, p506.

<sup>542</sup> Sky News, 'Gordon Brown's Full Resignation Speech', (11<sup>th</sup> May 2010).

elections in the US, Bush was replaced by Barack Obama as the Democrats returned to power. With these changes of government, it is worth reflecting on how views on both sides of the Atlantic developed after 2007. Before looking at America's positions as well as the Congressional and Parliamentary opinions, this chapter will turn its attentions to the British Government's point of view.

#### 11.4.1. The British Government's Views

At the start of Brown's premiership, there were some signs that a new approach was going to be taken to Britain's relationship with the US which would have an impact on SRA III. McBride described how Brown set out to demonstrate a respectful but distant tone with President Bush, largely for the benefit of the media.<sup>543</sup> After his first meeting with President Bush, media reports began speculating that the relationship between Britain and America had become more formal under Brown. As the BBC's political editor reported, Brown did not return personal compliments made by President Bush in their first press conference together.<sup>544</sup> These sentiments were repeated by the New York Times who described a lack of chemistry between Bush and Brown.<sup>545</sup> These views in the press followed earlier claims in the media that some of Brown's ministers, Douglas Alexander and UN and Africa Minister in the FCO Mark Malloch-Brown, made speeches that were interpreted to signal a break from the close relationship with the US.<sup>546</sup> Both ministers however, went on to deny these claims. Many of the arguments which have suggested that a break emerged between the UK and the US under Brown, appeared from the media. As Mullin explained, press reports emphasising splits in the relationship were exaggerated and a recurring problem for the Brown government during this period.<sup>547</sup> Many of these claims can be challenged by analysing the comments made by the leaders and certain ministers of each country during this period.

The personal relationship between President and Prime Minister has been highlighted as one of the most crucial elements of SRA III. After Brown and Bush had become more acquainted, Brown stated he could affirm and celebrate the partnership between Britain and America.<sup>548</sup> This led to Tony Benn describing Brown as coming out as a neo-conservative, Republican by agreeing with President Bush on Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>549</sup> Despite low expectations, it appears that Brown was able to develop a good relationship with Bush. In Brown's address at the Kennedy Library in

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<sup>543</sup> McBride, *Power Trip*, p294.

<sup>544</sup> BBC News, 'Still Guessing', (30<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

<sup>545</sup> New York Times, 'Brown and Bush Project Unity at Talks', (30<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

<sup>546</sup> BBC News, 'US and UK 'no longer inseparable'', (14<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

<sup>547</sup> Mullin, *Decline and Fall*, p236.

<sup>548</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Press Conference with the President of the United States', (17<sup>th</sup> June 2008).

<sup>549</sup> Tony Benn, *A Blaze of Autumn Sunshine: The Last Dairies*, (London: Hutchinson, 2013), p142.

April 2008, he praised President Bush's leadership in rooting out terrorism in the world.<sup>550</sup> These sentiments were continued by Brown during Bush's final visit to the UK as President in 2008, by highlighting that both leaders shared a love of history.<sup>551</sup> In a similar fashion, when Brown was asked during a joint press conference if he shared the same philosophy on terrorism as Bush, Brown replied 'absolutely'.<sup>552</sup> With the end of the Bush era and the arrival of Obama, Brown expressed, in an even friendlier manner, his commitment to the American administration. In April 2009, Brown explained that he expected the UK and the US to continue to work for the same, common good.<sup>553</sup> Brown expanded on these views to emphasise his support by stating that the relationship was one of purpose, and one that was resilient and constant. Brown signalled his strong support for the Obama administration by reportedly telling his Cabinet that there would be a close relationship with the Obama administration because of the shared values between the UK and US.<sup>554</sup> Brown also had some experience of the Obama administration's policy direction as he had already worked with Obama's Secretary of State Hillary Clinton when the two had collaborated as part of the closeness between the Blair and Clinton administrations in the 1990s.<sup>555</sup> Throughout the Bush years and the arrival of Obama, Brown remained steadfast in his commitments to the US.

To Brown, there were clearly visible connections between British and American political ideologies which he displayed in his 2008 Lord Mayor's banquet speech by comparing Winston Churchill and Obama. He described both leaders' devotion to principles of freedom and opportunity as an example of the closeness between Britain and America.<sup>556</sup> To Brown, as he explained in his speech at the Kennedy Library in 2008, the Special Relationship was not just rooted in shared values and history, but in the hearts and minds of both Britons and Americans.<sup>557</sup> David Miliband supported Brown's arguments. In his 2007 Party conference speech he claimed that the core values shared with the US should allow the UK and the US to come together in a great project.<sup>558</sup> Equally, in a press conference in February 2009 with Hillary Clinton, Miliband explained how these shared values were needed in difficult areas.<sup>559</sup> In May 2008, Miliband also

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<sup>550</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Kennedy Library Speech', (18<sup>th</sup> April 2008).

<sup>551</sup> Brown, 'Press Conference with the President of the United States', (18<sup>th</sup> June 2008).

<sup>552</sup> The Daily Telegraph, 'Transcript of Brown-Bush Press conference', (30<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

<sup>553</sup> The White House, 'Joint Press Conference with Gordon Brown', (01<sup>st</sup> April 2009).

<sup>554</sup> The Independent, 'Brown to battle for Obama's ear; Special relationship', (21<sup>st</sup> July 2009).

<sup>555</sup> Hillary Clinton, *Living History* (London: Scribner, 2003), p423-426.

<sup>556</sup> Brown, *The Change we Choose*, p35.

<sup>557</sup> Brown, 'Kennedy Library Speech'.

<sup>558</sup> BBC News, 'Conference Speech', (25<sup>th</sup> September 2007).

<sup>559</sup> US State Department, 'Issues Facing the United Kingdom, the United States and the World', (03<sup>rd</sup> February 2009).

endorsed US leadership by stating none of the world's big problems will be solved without it.<sup>560</sup> These public statements from Brown and Miliband were upheld by a Wikileaks cable from 2009 recounting a meeting with Brown, Miliband and military figures including US General Stanley McChrystal, leader of US forces in Afghanistan. In the cable the British view was explained as calling for more US leadership in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which the UK would support.<sup>561</sup> These positions upheld the informal agreements established by Blair and Bush between 2001 and 2003. SRA III was based on shared values, with the UK following US leadership in the military aspects of the War on Terror. Many of these positions were also reflected on the US side of the Atlantic.

#### 11.4.2. The American Government's Views

After his first meeting with Gordon Brown as Prime Minister, President Bush told journalists that he and Brown had found common ground for a meaningful discussion. He reflected that Britain and America share the same values and uphold an obligation to spread freedom and justice around the world. From here, Bush elaborated that this made strategic discussions easier. Bush also explained that he expected to be kept abreast of UK military decision making.<sup>562</sup> These comments reinforce the positions established between 2001 and 2003 with UK-US shared values creating a military partnership with the UK following the lead of the US. These views did not disappear after Bush left office.

After President Obama had his first face to face meeting with Brown he described the significance of the shared values between Britain and America. He explained how the shared language, shared culture, similar legal and governmental systems made Britain important to America and important to him. On the discussions on security, Obama praised aspects of Brown's and the UK's handling of the war efforts in Afghanistan. On the issue of Iraq, Obama commended British support despite the debates surrounding the nature of the war.<sup>563</sup> Building on these comments in the following April, Obama linked the attacks in London and the US by al Qaeda as creating a common cause to draw out terrorists from Pakistan.<sup>564</sup> In a similar fashion, Obama explained to a press conference in London in April 2009 that the alliance between Britain and America was based on more than just national interest. He described it as a kinship of ideals

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<sup>560</sup> US State Department, 'Remarks With U.K. Foreign Secretary David Miliband After Their Meeting', (21<sup>st</sup> May 2008).

<sup>561</sup> Wikileaks, 'British perspectives on the way forward in Afghanistan – Counting on U.S. Leadership and Empowering the Afghans', (07th October 2009).

<sup>562</sup> The Daily Telegraph, 'Transcript of Brown-Bush Press conference'.

<sup>563</sup> The White House, 'President Obama and Prime Minister Brown Speak to the Press', (3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009).

<sup>564</sup> The White House, 'President Obama and Prime Minister Brown's Joint Press Conference, (01<sup>st</sup> April 2009).

which must constantly be renewed.<sup>565</sup> Many of these principles that Obama set out are in line with SRA III by emphasising the role of the military in the alliance as well a level of commonality and British commitment to the alliance.

Both of these US presidents emphasised the importance of commonality in the alliance based on the shared values and customs with the UK. They also recognise Britain as an important security partner in the War on Terror. Given the level of continuity found between the Bush and Obama administrations, as seen by Secretary Gates, it is not surprising that both countries still appeared to be compatible in security areas. There is, however, a clear difference in the level of warmth between Bush and Obama in their description of UK-US relations. This was also displayed in the comments made by the two Secretaries of State between 2007 and 2010. By looking beneath the executive level of the relationship it can become clear how deep these differences ran.

During his time as Foreign Secretary, David Miliband had close relationships with the Secretary of State for both the Bush and Obama administrations. Miliband regularly worked closely with Secretary Rice and the two were often visible together. As Rice explained:

The United Kingdom is...as solid (a partner) as any in international politics. There is a kinship and a deep sense of shared values forged through years of shared sacrifice.<sup>566</sup>

However, it is noteworthy that in her public statements with Miliband, Rice rarely singled out the UK as a key partner in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Similarly, at times she even distanced herself from the UK's policy positions, including policies on NATO.<sup>567</sup> These different views highlight the complex practice of the alliance and the asymmetric nature of their partnership. In comparison, Secretary Clinton demonstrated a closer relationship to the UK. In October 2009 during a press conference with David Miliband, Clinton explained that the US and the UK were partners working to advance their shared values around the world. Clinton even went on to use the phrase 'shoulder to shoulder', reminiscent of Blair's original position.<sup>568</sup> She also drew attention to political difficulties facing the British government in its commitments in Afghanistan and thanked the UK for its efforts. These comments from Rice and Clinton reflect the views displayed by their respective presidents. The higher level of warmth in Clinton's comments could have been due to the Obama administration's attempts to move away from the

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<sup>565</sup> Ibid.

<sup>566</sup> Rice, *No Higher Honour*, p35.

<sup>567</sup> US State Department, Remarks on the NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting, (26<sup>th</sup> November 2008).

<sup>568</sup> US State Department, 'Joint Press Availability With U.K. Foreign Secretary Miliband', (11<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

unilateral appearance of the Bush administration. By contrast, as discussed in chapter 5, there has been an identifiable level of continuation between Bush's and Obama's foreign and security policies. This appears to be true in the management of UK-US relations as seen with SRA III. As Rice explained in her autobiography, the relationship transcends changes in administrations in London and Washington.<sup>569</sup> The UK and the US views appeared to demonstrate that in the areas of security and alliance cooperation the changes in administration between 2007 and 2010 represented a level of continuity where the norms, role and goals established in SRA III were upheld.

#### 11.4.3. Parliamentary and Congressional Views

The final set of evidence in this area comes from both the US Congress and UK House of Commons which undertook research and hearings into the nature of Anglo-American relations between 2007 and 2010. In the US, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) presented a report in 2007 explaining the history and the contemporary nature of the relationship. In 2010 the House of Commons Committee on Foreign Affairs (HRCFA) also conducted hearings into the same subject area. Marsh explains that although this report from the HRCFA gained a considerable amount of attention upon its release, it soon drifted into obscurity. Nevertheless, it did highlight some important issues, such as a level of duality in the relationship.<sup>570</sup> The result of these reports was a collection of events and data that led to some important conclusions for both countries to reflect upon.

What has been a central aspect of SRA III has been the asymmetry of the relationship. The CRS report highlighted this case by discussing the perception of Britain as the junior partner in the relationship. In connection to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the report explained how some British officers felt that Britain was expected to be America's aircraft carrier. Consequently, the report warned of the dangers of taking British support for granted, especially in relation to Iraq and Afghanistan where UK support was described as bring important to America.<sup>571</sup> The concerns of the US were also picked up by the British report. The HCFAC warned that even as policies aligned the UK with the US, it will not necessarily equate to the British having more influence with the Americans. It also suggests that what influence exists is due to the military commitments Britain had made.<sup>572</sup> The British FCO, as stated in the report, concluded that the US will always need effective international partners to work with, a role Britain could fill.<sup>573</sup> These views

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<sup>569</sup> Rice, *No Higher Honour*, p35.

<sup>570</sup> Steve Marsh, 'Global Security: UK-US relations': lessons for the special relationship', *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2012), 182-199, p195-196.

<sup>571</sup> CRS, 'The United Kingdom: Issues for the United States', p5.

<sup>572</sup> HCFAC, 'Global Security: UK-US Relations', (18<sup>th</sup> March 2010), p6.

<sup>573</sup> *Ibid*, pEv57.

represent the difficulties in managing the alliance, particularly in the area of alliance entrapment and abandonment. However, both reports reinforced the roles of the alliance which were established between 2001 and 2003. Britain would remain a strong partner to the US with the expectation that in return she would wield some influence on US policies on the War on Terror. However, the strong leadership that the US gained in the alliance demonstrated the asymmetric nature of SRA III.

A review of this material suggests that Brown's government and the US during this period were committed to the foreign policy agenda set by Blair and Bush between 2001 and 2003. Although there were some changes in the focus and approach to the War on Terror, there was overall a binding level of continuity. With this continuity as well as Brown's dedication to Atlanticism, it can be determined that the agreements made in the negotiation phase of SRA III were intended to be upheld by both sides of the Atlantic. However, the military methods of the alliance and the use of the armed forces represent a significant issue for the success of SRA III.

## 12. Special Relationship Alliance III: Part II – Iraq 2007-2009

This chapter will explore the war in Iraq during the Brown years as an example of the military efforts carried out as part of SRA III. This is an especially important period as it saw the end of war in Iraq for British armed forces and represented the end of Britain's involvement in one part of the War on Terror. The discussions in this chapter will assist in establishing how successful SRA III was by 2009. During the formation stage of the alliance, the military methods seemed to have been taken for granted as during the negotiation there was never any deep questioning between the Prime Minister and President on how the military alliance should be managed. As will be seen in this chapter and in the following chapter, it was the military failings that strained the alliance and challenged the norms, roles, and goals of the alliance. This will be demonstrated by comparing the British and American approaches to key military areas to assess how compatible both forces were

The first area of analysis will concern the nature of resources and equipment available to both UK and US armed forces. Following this discussion, a similar examination of British and American troop commitments will be undertaken to establish the levels and nature of troop deployment in Iraq. From here, an investigation into the strategic choices of the war in Iraq will be carried out in relation to both British and American forces. Finally, the issues of alliance relations in this conflict will be examined. The purpose of this discussion is to determine the reliability of the UK as a partner to the US in the War on Terror. These different, but connected subject matters will demonstrate the compatibility and success of British and American forces working together under the norms and roles of SRA III to achieve the goals of the alliance. These four military aspects of the alliance were common concerns in both the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and represented significant discussions that help to measure the nature of the relationship and the success of the alliance during the Brown period.

### 12.1. Background

As part of the War on Terror, the British Government supported the US in taking action against Iraq which was designated a member of the Axis of Evil. As Britain made the second largest contribution to the coalition in this conflict and due to Blair's close relationship and vocal support for Bush in this area, Britain was the second most visible power in the invading force. By reviewing some important elements of the conflict between 2003 and 2007, an appropriate context for what took place in the Brown period can be established. To begin with, a brief review of the nature of the invasion of Iraq and the division of control of different Iraqi territories will be explored. This will help establish the different threats and different forms of conflict British and American forces faced in Iraq. Following on from this section, a brief analysis of British

problems in 2007 will be undertaken. These difficulties that Britain faced from the period before Brown entered Number 10 had a significant impact on Britain's ability to carry out her duties in the war in Iraq and strained relations with the US. From this background information, a more detailed analysis of the Brown period can be undertaken.

### 12.1.1. UK and US deployment – 2003

In March 2003, the US led the initial invasion of Iraq with support from the UK, Poland and

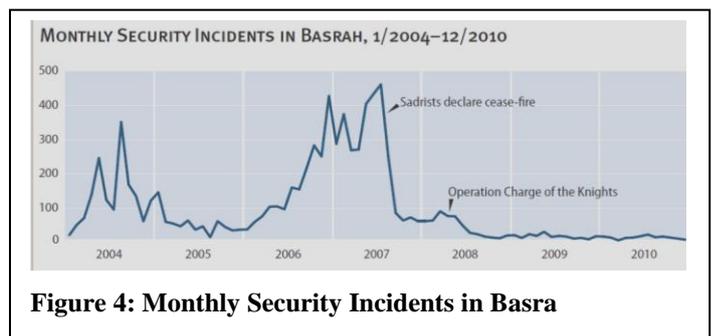


**Figure 3: 2003 bombings of Baghdad**

Australia with the aim of depriving Saddam Hussein of WMDs and stopping his support of terrorism. The US strategy for the invasion was to use shock and awe tactics where the sheer power and strength of the invading force would cause military opposition to dissolve. This was visible in the heavy bombing campaign at the start of the war. Figure 3 became one of the images quickly broadcast around the world,

creating a negative reaction in the world media and set the tone for the war.<sup>574</sup> The nature of the conflict worsened shortly after the initial invasion when the proposed paralysis of Iraqi opposition to coalition forces never materialised. What emerged after the invasion were a series of 'fanatical' assaults and a rise of an insurgency against the invading forces.<sup>575</sup> Following the initial invasion, the US led coalition was left being held responsible for the country with its different regions put under the command of different members of the coalition. While the US remained in control of the capital, Baghdad, UK forces took command of the southern city of Basra. Both countries faced different threats in each city.

Following on from the invasion, the occupation of Iraq saw the US controlling the city of Baghdad. As the capital of Iraq, Baghdad was predominantly a Sunni area with the largest population of any city in Iraq. As a result, there was



**Figure 4: Monthly Security Incidents in Basra**

considerable opposition to the US throughout the conflict. While the American efforts were focused in Baghdad, British forces were deployed to Iraq's second largest city, the port city of Basra. The population of Basra was largely Shi'ite and were expected to support the overthrow of

<sup>574</sup> Harlan Ullman, 'Shock and Awe Revisited', *The RUSI Journal*, vol. 184, no. 3, (2003), 10-14, p10.

<sup>575</sup> Kalev Sepp, 'From 'Shock and Awe' to 'Heats and Minds': the fall and rise of US counterinsurgency capability in Iraq', *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 2, (2007), 217-230, p217.

the Saddam regime.<sup>576</sup> However, even after coalition forces took control of Basra, the rivalry between different Shi'ite militias kept the area in a state of conflict and insurgency. As Figure 4 demonstrates, after the initial invasion aggressive clashes did drop. However, the period of 2006-2007 saw a dramatic increase in violence as efforts were stepped up to force out the local militias. This area was also significant for its large oil fields and became one of the initial success stories of the war.<sup>577</sup> However, as the insurgency grew, the British led forces found it harder to keep control of this strategically important city.

#### 12.1.2. Operation Sinbad and the loss of Basra Palace

Between 2006 and 2007, British forces had to cope with a sudden and dramatic increase in violence which was visible in a series of sieges of British forces from February 2007. Operation Sinbad saw Iraqi forces, supported by UK, Danish and other coalition members, attempt to force out Shi'ite militias and the corrupt police and army officers who were supporting them. This led to the initial success that allowed Prime Minister Blair to announce a drawdown of British forces. However, this was directly followed by an increase in violence. British forces were targeted in their main bases in Basra; Basra Palace and Basra Airport. Under increasing pressure, British troops withdrew from the Palace to their stronghold of the airport. This was seen as a huge blow to British credibility to control the area and had a direct impact on the Brown period.

This brief overview has aimed to set the context in which British and American forces operated in Iraq prior to the arrival of the Brown Government and only summarises a broad body of literature.<sup>578</sup> With these understandings, a detailed analysis can be carried out on the developments of both countries' military efforts from June 2007 to ascertain how well the alliance held up during Brown's period in office.

#### 12.2. Equipment

Before looking at the broader strategic issues and alliance relations of the war in Iraq between 2007 and 2010, there are some important matters that need to be explored to highlight the difficulties facing British and American forces during this time. An analysis of the equipment concerns facing the UK in Iraq and how these problems affected SRA III will demonstrate the practical nature of the alliance and how effectively both countries were able to carry out their operations. This section will begin by exploring the nature and origins of these matters and how

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<sup>576</sup> Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, 'Basra, Southern Iraq and the Gulf: Challenges and connections'.

<sup>577</sup> Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, 'Focus on Basrah', (2011).

<sup>578</sup> For further reading see Rick Fawn and Raymond Hinnebusch (eds) *The Iraq War: Causes and Consequences*, (London: Boulder, 2006); Anthony Cordesman, *The Iraq War: Strategy: Tactics and Military Lessons*, (Westpoint: Praegar, 2003); John Keegan, *The Iraq War*, (London: Hutchinson, 2004).

they relate to Brown's government. Following this discussion, this section will explore how these types of troubles affected the US and SRA III.

### 12.2.1. British Funding and Equipment Issues

A recurring criticism levied at Brown while he was in Number 10 was the British Government's inability to properly supply the armed services with the provisions they needed to operate in Iraq and Afghanistan. Although this was more prevalent in the debates surrounding the conflict in Afghanistan, they were also an important topic regarding the war in Iraq. As discussed above, Brown's period as Chancellor was the root of many of these criticisms which were commonly referred to during the Chilcot Inquiry and can be seen to have damaged some of the roles of the alliance such as being a staunch and significant partner to the US. The Inquiry itself was set up by Brown in order to ascertain what lessons could be learned from the conflict. However, due to its high profile, many of the arguments were picked up by the media and were used to criticise the Government.

The BBC was often an outlet for sources to criticise the British government's record on the war in Iraq as well as drawing on the material from Chilcot Inquiry. In November 2008, BBC News quoted military personnel such as Steve McLoughlin who claimed that the vehicles for the armed forces were inadequate.

You drive over a landmine in a very-lightly armoured Land-Rover Snatch - it's not much different from driving over it in a Ford Escort.

At the very least you're going to lose limbs - horrific injuries if you survive - you're probably going to get killed outright.

The government doesn't like talking about this issue. They get some faceless MoD bureaucrat to issue a two-line statement, then it's gone and forgotten.<sup>579</sup>

McLoughlin used the example of military vehicles as an area where British troops were under-equipped and left exposed. These types of problems were commonly tied to Brown's period as Chancellor. For example, Civil Servant Sir Kevin Tebbit explained that Brown had cut the defence budget. Similarly, Admiral Lord Boyce, who acted as Chief of Defence staff during the initial invasion of Iraq, claimed that Brown had been disingenuous in his remarks on defence spending.<sup>580</sup> By March 2010, the BBC reported a response from Downing Street to these types of criticisms. The report suggested that Brown had refuted these claims, insisting that he had been clear on his record of military funding. However, in the same story, General Richard Dannat, who

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<sup>579</sup> BBC News, 'SAS commander quits 'over kit', (01<sup>st</sup> November 2008).

<sup>580</sup> BBC News, 'Brown 'guillotined' MoD funding', (03<sup>rd</sup> February 2010); BBC News, 'Brown Iraq inquiry evidence disingenuous - Lord Boyce', (06<sup>th</sup> March 2010).

acted as Chief of Defence staff up until 2009, told the BBC that Brown's argument was narrowly and precisely correct, but had not addressed the impact of other cuts he had made as far back as 1997. Dannatt explained further that the Treasury essentially cut £1 billion of funding for the armed forces.<sup>581</sup> Admiral Lord Boyce was also quoted as describing Brown as being disingenuous in his comments of support to the armed forces as he did not provide the MoD everything it needed.<sup>582</sup> These voices demonstrated a strongly held view in the military that censured Brown's record on defence funding. It was these types of criticisms that can be seen to have shaped Brown's agenda. More detailed discussions from the various political actors go on to highlight the nuances in the concerns over equipment funding for the war in Iraq.

The House of Commons Defence Committee (HCDC) in 2007 spent a considerable amount of time examining this issue and emphasised certain, specific examples. In the case of the UK Army 10<sup>th</sup> Division, the Committee argued that although their equipment was at an acceptable level they lacked supporting capacities. 'Rear-end' support, such as intelligence assets or logistical support was seen as being absent in assisting in the frontline operations.<sup>583</sup> These matters were emerging as Britain struggled to control the Basra region and this accusation that Britain was lacking in non-frontline capabilities could be an explanation as to why forces found it so difficult to operate. In comparison to the 10<sup>th</sup> Division, the 14<sup>th</sup> found problems that were more related to front line equipment. The 14<sup>th</sup> Division was presented as being under-equipped with the Committee noting that militia groups and tribes often had better equipment than the British forces.<sup>584</sup> Given the heavy attacks that British forces had received from militias as well as the concerns about not having the appropriate vehicles, these comments carry a heavy resonance. To the Committee, these problems were seen as emanating from the budget of the MoD. The Committee raised concerns that as a result of the MoD's tight budget, older equipment was not being refurbished properly.<sup>585</sup> This, according to the Committee, could result in a capabilities gap which would undermine the introduction of new equipment as any benefits that brand new equipment could provide would be lost due to the difficulties that forces were still overcoming. At the point when the Committee was holding its hearings and publishing its final report, Brown was still new to the premiership and was taking over the situation left by the Blair Government. However, many of these arguments were presented as being systemically related to under-funding from the Treasury. These sentiments were seen in the media reports and in evidence from the Chilcot Inquiry as well as Alastair Campbell's claims stated above that Brown himself wanted to remain firmly in charge of the budget of the war from 2002.

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<sup>581</sup> Ibid.

<sup>582</sup> Ibid.

<sup>583</sup> HCDC, 'UK land operations in Iraq 2007', (20<sup>th</sup> November 2007), p22.

<sup>584</sup> Ibid, Ibid.

<sup>585</sup> Ibid, p27.

In order to defend his position, Brown often presented his arguments in House of Commons debates where he would argue his support for the war efforts in Iraq. As the need for more funds and equipment became clearer, Brown still tried to defend his position. This was seen in a House of Commons debate from July 2008 where Brown had to defend his record on this topic on two different occasions:

As for equipment, we have been able to meet the urgent operational requirements of the Army and the other forces. We have put aside, as a matter of policy, money to meet all the urgent operational requirements, which have run into substantial figures in the past few years. When the Army, the Navy or the Air Force make requests for us to meet those urgent operational requirements, we do our best to fulfil them.

Of course, at all times we would like to do more with the defence budget, but it will be some 11 per cent. higher in real terms than it was in 1997. We have made major commitments of resources and capital in recent years and the defence budget rises every year.<sup>586</sup>

Despite Brown's attempts to defend his position, by December 2008 he acknowledged to the House of Commons that the inadequacy of defence equipment would be a lesson that would have to be learned from the Iraqi conflict. However, Brown continued to defend his commitment to this subject by stating that £150 million had been spent to provide Warthog and Viking vehicles to ensure the armed services' ability to operate in the Iraqi terrain.<sup>587</sup> These sentiments were repeated by Brown's ministers. Defence Secretary Des Browne explained to the Chilcot Inquiry that there were problems with equipment but, they had been addressed. The difficulty was that it took a lot of time to go from providing new equipment to it being used in the field. For example, Merlin helicopters were made available however, it took a long time to prepare them and train the crews to pilot the vehicles. Des Browne also explained that the Americans faced similar problems even with their larger defence budget.<sup>588</sup> John Hutton, Browne's successor at the MoD, supported this claim by highlighting the length of time it took for equipment to be deployable in the field.<sup>589</sup> These views coming from Brown and his ministers demonstrate the Government's efforts to address the criticisms of British equipment, yet still refute the claim that it was due to Government funding that these complications arose. An explanation for this was that these issues only became apparent during Brown's premiership and he was only at the beginning of finding a solution to resolve the problem. Nevertheless, Brown was largely responsible for the funding of the war before 2007. Despite concerns whether these problems stemmed from Brown's period as

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<sup>586</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Iraq', (02<sup>nd</sup> July 2008).

<sup>587</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Iraq', (18<sup>th</sup> December 2008).

<sup>588</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Des Browne', (25<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p49.

<sup>589</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of John Hutton', (25<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p22.

Chancellor or could be more attributed to the generally overstretched nature of the British armed forces, it weakened the British position in terms of carrying out operations in Iraq.

The argument that was being put forward in this period was that there was a serious problem of under-equipped troops in the field ranging from vehicles to other capabilities such as logistics and intelligence. Although the Brown Government tried to address the issues, criticism remained and was commonly associated with Brown's time as Chancellor creating a perception that Brown was challenged to meet the norms of the alliance. These problems were also related to Britain's relationship with the US as British forces had to rely heavily on the US to compensate for their difficulties.

### 12.2.2. British Reliance on the US

The equipment problems of the British armed forces helped to highlight the UK's reliance on the US in the war in Iraq. As Hutton told the Chilcot Inquiry, a large amount of equipment was being shared between the coalition partners.<sup>590</sup> The Americans in particular made helicopters available to UK forces.<sup>591</sup> However, Simon McDonald, Brown's foreign policy and security advisor, made clear to the Inquiry that British Merlin helicopters were kept in Iraq for as long as necessary, rather than being redeployed to Afghanistan.<sup>592</sup> Despite McDonald's claims that Britain was providing important helicopter capabilities in Iraq, there was still a reliance on US support to sustain operations in Basra. Nevertheless, the US had its own equipment concerns in Iraq.

From early 2007, Defence Secretary Gates had been working to provide vehicles that could cope with the threat posed by Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). To protect US forces more adequately, Gates called for the introduction of MRAP strongly armoured vehicles. Although he describes the effort and time it took to provide this new equipment, the result was a significant decrease in deaths caused by IEDs.<sup>593</sup> By the time military operations were beginning to wind down in Iraq and US forces were faced with different challenges relating to the equipment they had been operating during the war. Acting Deputy Under Secretary of Defence for Logistics and Material Readiness, Alan Estevez, informed the House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services (HRCAS) of the challenges that US forces faced in regards to the deployment of equipment. In his testimony, Estevez informed the Committee that the US had over 3 million pieces of military equipment in Iraq, with tens of thousands of tonnes of ammunition, all of which needed to be moved and redeployed from Iraq. Estevez reassured the committee that clear

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<sup>590</sup> Ibid, Ibid.

<sup>591</sup> House of Commons International Development Committee, 'Reconstructing Afghanistan Vol. I', (05<sup>th</sup> February 2008), p16.

<sup>592</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Simon McDonald', (05<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p10.

<sup>593</sup> Gates, *Duty*, p119.

planning was in place for the redeployment of this equipment.<sup>594</sup> The differences between the US and British capabilities in terms of availability and deployment of equipment were stark. The weaker capabilities of the British military in this area limited their ability to carry out the duties of war in Iraq and this issue proved to be a barrier to effective collaboration between the two countries in this period. With the US as a unipolar power, the difficulties of supporting weaker allies came with the territory of leading an alliance. However, by this point in the conflict, the British inability to meet her military commitments was creating a strain on the day to day running of the alliance.

There were also alternative views on America's military equipment management. The HRCFA heard that the quality of equipment being used by US forces was also unsatisfactory. As a strong critic of the war in Iraq, General John Batiste provided the harshest attacks on the US approach to equipping troops. As he described it to the Committee, equipment was in an unsatisfactory condition, requiring billions of dollars to refit force equipment. Batiste cited several examples in this area; Bradleys and Abrams tanks were left in depots needing repairs leaving forces with no strategic tank reserves, helicopters taking years to be replaced and the US army was competing with golf club manufacturers for specialist metals.<sup>595</sup> Committee member Eni Faleomavaega (D) also raised these concerns to General David Petraeus who was leading US forces in Iraq at the time before moving on to guiding forces in Afghanistan from October 2008. Petraeus responded by calling for a need to reshape US strategy to reflect the difficulties facing the US in maintaining forces in Iraq.<sup>596</sup> These concerns for the US may not have been on the same scale as that of the UK. In both cases however, the issues seemed to revolve around the age of equipment being used and indicated the misconceptions about how long the war would last. Petraeus' argument suggested a new way of thinking was required in that strategy should reflect capabilities rather than capabilities trying to keep up with military strategy. This approach pointed towards a poor conceptual understanding by both countries on what the invasion of Iraq entailed. Due to the strain of carrying out two foreign wars for over half a decade, both the UK's and the US's military capabilities were struggling. From the UK's position however, these concerns were more critical.

### 12.3. Troop Power

As the arguments about military equipment helped establish the practical aspects of British and American military efforts in Iraq, so too can the debates related to troop power in Iraq be used to

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<sup>594</sup> HRCAS, 'U.S. Military Redeployment from Iraq: Issues and Challenges', (29<sup>th</sup> October 2009), p1.

<sup>595</sup> HRCFA, 'Iraq: Is the Escalation Working', (27<sup>th</sup> June 2007), p35-37.

<sup>596</sup> House of Representatives Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Affairs, 'The Status of the War and the Political Developments in Iraq', Services', (10<sup>th</sup> September 2007), p51.

achieve similar ends. The debates on the UK level of forces were closely linked to the broader strategic policy of military drawdown and handover of power, which took place at this time. Although this important area will be discussed in the following section of this chapter relating to strategic decisions, the concern about the number of British forces is an important element that must be analysed in its own right and in comparison to similar discussions in the US. The substantial part of this section will examine the levels of troop power each country was able to maintain in Iraq during this period. Beyond this, the nature of British and American troop deployment will be examined to ascertain how compatible the different military practices of the UK and the US were.

### 12.3.1. Troop Levels

After the initial increase of violence during Brown's entry to Number 10, due to an increase in attempts to force out local militias in Operation Sinbad, his period in office saw a stabilisation of security in Basra which allowed a reorientation of British troop levels in Iraq. As Figure 4 demonstrates, by 2008 violence was decreasing which gave Brown the chance to begin changing the level of troops in Iraq. As part of this reorientation, Brown defended the decision to reduce troop numbers by 1,000:

Every decision that we have announced has been based on the best military advice that we can have. It was right to reduce the numbers from 5,500 to 4,500. The reason why we did that was because we were moving...from direct combat to overwatch.

“It was also right to listen to the advice of military commanders when the situation changed on the ground in Basra—I have always said that—and to take the right decision, which was to support the training of Iraqi forces after the operation (Charge of the Knights).<sup>597</sup>

Brown cited the example of the Iraqi-led operation Charge of the Knights which forced out militias from Basra. The success of this joint effort with Iraqi, British and American troops was the evidence used to argue that it was the right decision to reduce troop numbers in Basra. This number, as Brown would tell a press conference with President Bush, was kept higher than hoped for but necessary to ensure success and stability.<sup>598</sup> President Bush added to Brown's statements by explaining that;

We are withdrawing troops. We expect 30,000 of the first troops to be coming home by July... I have no problem with what Gordon Brown is doing with Iraq, he

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<sup>597</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Iraq', (2<sup>nd</sup> July 2008).

<sup>598</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Press Conference with the President of the United States, (17<sup>th</sup> June 2008).

has been a good partner, and as I told you we are bringing ours (troops) home too.<sup>599</sup>

Bush's comments suggested he was supportive of Brown and the British decisions being made on Iraq. In relation to troop power, these comments highlight the shift in the war where a reduction in troop levels could be achieved. As discussed below however, the difference between the UK and the US on troop numbers stemmed from the broader strategic issues of the war in Iraq.

Throughout 2008 Brown had to continue to defend the reasoning behind the lowering of troop numbers. In December, Brown explained to the House of Commons that the level of troops would be reduced further, resulting in a troop level of less than 500. This, he claimed, was a reflection of the growing security in Basra as well as the competence of Iraqi forces.<sup>600</sup> Brown wanted to make it clear that these decisions were being made in conference with military commanders and were based on military needs and not on a political agenda. This argument was seen at a press conference in May 2008 where Brown overtly stated he was in consultation with British military leaders.<sup>601</sup> Similarly, Defence Secretary Des Browne further explained that the drawdown of troops was in line with military commanders and in conjunction with the work of Britain's allies in Iraq. As Des Browne went on to say, these reductions could be seen as part of a shift to overwatch of Iraqi forces.<sup>602</sup> By regularly referencing the collaboration with the military, Brown and his Government appeared to be attempting to avoid claims that he was unable to work with the armed services as well as seeking credibility for the military decisions being made. The role of the President and the Prime Minister has been established as an important element of SRA III. Brown relied on military credibility to ensure the success of the alliance and relationship with the US president.

As part of learning the lessons from the war in Iraq, the Chilcot Inquiry was also informed on the nature of troop deployment and the impact that had on the overall strategy of British forces in Iraq. Simon McDonald informed the inquiry that Brown was following the plan set out by Tony Blair in February 2007 to begin the drawdown of UK troops in Iraq.

A key statement was Prime Minister Blair's of February 2007, which laid out a process of transition and drawdown of military forces for the rest of 2007. Prime Minister Brown took that up. I think, the broad outlines described in February 2007 were reinforced by Prime Minister Brown's first visit to Iraq (and) his first contacts with President Bush of the United States.<sup>603</sup>

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<sup>599</sup> Ibid.

<sup>600</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Iraq', (18<sup>th</sup> December 2008).

<sup>601</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Prime Minister's Press Conference, (16<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

<sup>602</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Iraq' (01<sup>st</sup> April 2008a).

<sup>603</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Simon McDonald', p1.

McDonald's view supported the arguments that Brown's premiership demonstrated a level of continuation of the Blair period. Similarly, the mention in McDonald's testimony of the concerns of the US is also an important point which aims to support the notion that there was a strong level of consultation with the US after the Blair period. Sir Mark Lyall Grant, Director-General for Political Affairs at the FCO during this period, also stated that the original transition period actually called for a faster withdrawal of troops.<sup>604</sup> Brown's own testimony to the inquiry explained that the withdrawal of troops only took place at the appropriate time and speed. He argued that troop numbers had even stayed up at 4,100 when it would have been easier to pull out and it was through discussions with Blair, the Americans and the British military commanders that Brown authorised the lower level of withdrawal of troops.<sup>605</sup> This evidence was aimed at challenging some of the criticisms of Brown's defence policy that claimed he was trying to wind down the war quickly to move on from the Blair years. It also demonstrated the broader approach Brown was taking on security matters by showing he was not only working with the military and the US but also Blair himself. Despite the arguments that Brown would shift away from the Blair era and the connected relationship with the US, his claims indicated an effort to continue a collaborative attitude for progress on Iraq.

Brown's position was being reflected in the US. As Bush explained, US forces were also looking to begin drawing down troops and to some this was due to America's own troop difficulties. One area where the HRCFA heard evidence was on the level and quality of troop deployment in Iraq. Criticism again came from General Batiste who argued that the amount of troops available for engagement with insurgent forces was insufficient.

Young officers and non-commissioned officers are leaving the service at an alarming rate...Active duty companies preparing for deployment to Iraq within the next 6 months are at less than 50 percent strength, are commanded by young, inexperienced lieutenants.<sup>606</sup>

The number of combat troops matter, and we have always lacked the right numbers.<sup>607</sup>

Some of Batiste's comments were supported by others such as Senator Richard Lugar (R) who described how the situation was made worse with the fall in recruitment numbers. As the war went on and the public criticism continued, it became increasingly hard to recruit and retain

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<sup>604</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Mark Lyall Grant', (20<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p12.

<sup>605</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Gordon Brown', p157-160.

<sup>606</sup> HRCFA, 'Iraq: Is the Escalation Working', p35.

<sup>607</sup> Ibid, p37.

troops.<sup>608</sup> General Batiste explained that the situation in 2007 was so inept that the troops being prepared to be deployed in 2008 were at less than 50% of acceptable strength. General Jack Keane, who was a retired military officer and advisor to the Bush government at this point, criticised Batiste's claims by arguing that he was mired in the realities of the previous years of the war and did not recognise the change of strategy that was brought about by the troop surge introduced in 2007.<sup>609</sup> He went on to explain that any war will cause stress and strain on the army. Be that as it may, many of the themes raised by Batiste had an impact on how the war was being fought and reflected not only the difficulties and issues facing the US but many of her allies as well.

US General Barry McCaffrey, who had retired from the US forces at this point, was another observer who offered a report and comments on the falling numbers of troops. In his evidence to the HRCAS on troops and the importance of contractors in allowing the US military to operate, he explained that:

We would have come apart already were it not for our Reserve components and National Guard. The Army should be 850,000 people. The Marines are short 25,000 at a minimum. We have 124,000 contractors on the ground in Iraq, without which communications doesn't work, logistics doesn't work. Almost no military function can be carried out except manoeuvre warfare because we lack the uniform capability to carry out these operations.<sup>610</sup>

The position was supported by General Clark who identified to the Committee that the Army was struggling to recruit.<sup>611</sup> The testimonies from these two generals demonstrated to the Committee some of the practical elements that could impact on the overall strategy of the US in Iraq. The importance of these subjects becomes more lucid when certain aspects of US troop deployments are compared to other nations' military practices.

### 12.3.2. Troop Compatibility

An important way to measure the success of the alliance is to assess how concerns relating to troop deployment called into question the compatibility of British and American forces. As David Miliband explained in his evidence to the Chilcot Inquiry, the British contribution was significantly different to the Americans contribution.

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<sup>608</sup> Ibid, p3.

<sup>609</sup> House of Representatives Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Affairs, 'Beyond the September Report: What's next for Iraq?', (06<sup>th</sup> September 2007), p6.

<sup>610</sup> HRCAS, 'A Third Way: Alternatives for Iraq's Future (Part 4 of 4)', (31<sup>st</sup> July 2007), p11.

<sup>611</sup> HRCAS, 'A Third Way: Alternatives for Iraq's Future (1 of 4)', (12<sup>th</sup> July 2007), p5.

What is remarkable about Basra -- 95 per cent Shia -- is quite how different the issues were there than in Baghdad or in -- I mean, the north is a different case altogether.<sup>612</sup>

The demographic differences between the north and south of Iraq created two very different situations which further separated British and American experiences. The British for example, were able to make different contributions such as political engagement with the Iraqis. Miliband's evidence highlighted the comparison that was being made by the Inquiry between Britain and America. Their line of questioning was on how the British troop levels were perceived by the American government. As the British were recalibrating their troop commitments in Iraq, many raised concerns on how changes in troop numbers would reflect alliance relations with the US. Although both countries' troops were serving in Iraq, they were found to be having very different experiences due to their geographical location. However, from the British perspective, it was important not to let these differences hamper the alliance. The position of British and American troops reinforces the roles of the alliances and its asymmetrical nature.

Through the Wikileaks website, information on the rule of engagement for both countries' troop forces also highlighted the differences in military methods. When placed in a position to use force, US documentation stated that:

If individuals pose a threat to Coalition Forces by committing a hostile act or demonstrating hostile intent, US forces may use force, up to and including deadly force, to eliminate the threat.<sup>613</sup>

These instructions emphasised the freedom for US troops to use deadly force in certain circumstance but also stated that when time and circumstance permit, graduating measures should be used. In contrast British and Danish instructions in this area explained that:

The use of lethal force is permitted only to prevent loss of life or to protect material, the loss or destruction of which could be potentially life threatening to Coalition Forces...Force should be used as a last resort only. Whenever feasible other means of escalation control should be applied.

The degree of force must be no more than is reasonably necessary to control the situation. In all cases the utmost care must be taken to avoid harm to civilian or damage to civilian property.<sup>614</sup>

The British and Danish instructions offered more detailed guidance for forces as well as providing a heavier emphasis on protecting civilians in the use of force. These subtle examples

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<sup>612</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of David Miliband', (08<sup>th</sup> March 2010), p32.

<sup>613</sup> Wikileaks, 'US Rules of Engagement for Iraq', (04<sup>th</sup> February 2008).

<sup>614</sup> Wikileaks, 'UK and Danish Rules of Engagement for Iraq 2006', (18<sup>th</sup> June 2008).

demonstrate that although British and American forces were described as working together in Iraq, they actually had quite separate practices for operating on the ground.

A significant difference between the nature of British and American troop deployment was also visible in the length of tours of duty each country implemented. As Senator Lugar and General Batiste pointed out, tours of duty for US troops were being extended by up to three months and forces were being put in the field with inexperienced leaders.<sup>615</sup> Bush himself tried to explain in July 2008 that he would lower tours of duty from 15 months to 12.<sup>616</sup> In comparison however, British tours of duty were significantly less.<sup>617</sup> John Tucknott, deputy head of the Mission to Baghdad, explained to the Chilcot Inquiry that relations between British and American forces became strained due to the continuous rotation of British Army officers. He elaborated further on the difficulties and confusion for the Americans who had to work with new Brigadiers every few months.<sup>618</sup> As will be seen in the discussion on Afghanistan, these differences represented a real problem in relations between British and American armed forces. With these different durations it became harder for officers who needed to interact with each other to build a workable relationship and reduced morale when fellow troops were in the field for shorter periods. Troop levels became a way of measuring the commitments being made by both parties and the direction of the military strategies in the war in Iraq. These strategies would go on to affect the success of the alliance in the War on Terror. These concerns highlighted the weakening of the alliance as the norms and roles were becoming increasingly unstable and difficult for UK forces to live up to. The differences in the nature of the troop deployment between the UK and the US were a result of the significant variations that emerged in both countries' strategies for Iraq.

#### 12.4. Strategy

During the Brown period, the war in Iraq was faced with one, broad strategic topic that demonstrated the importance of troop power in the war. This strategic issue revolved around the debate about whether to increase troop numbers through a surge of forces into Iraq or whether to begin drawing down troop levels and handing power over to the Iraqis. This debate was seen as evidence of the divergence between Britain and America on the strategy of the war after the summer of 2007. This section of the thesis will explore each side of this debate in turn before examining how it impacted on the alliance. To begin with, the US decision making on surging troops will be explored.

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<sup>615</sup> HRCFA, 'Iraq: Is the Escalation Working', p4

<sup>616</sup> George Bush, 'Speech on Iraq', (31<sup>st</sup> July 2008).

<sup>617</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, Witness Testimony of Jonny Baxter, Richard Jones, Kathleen Reid, Rob Tinline and John Tucknott', (24<sup>th</sup> June 2010), p38.

<sup>618</sup> Ibid, p38.

#### 12.4.1. Surge

One of the greatest problems that faced the US military in Iraq by 2007 was what kind of strategy to pursue. The main strategic options appeared to be either to build on the troop levels of previous years or to pull troops out, as many other countries in the coalition were considering. Some of those who testified before the HRCAS highlighted that there was no clear cut decision to be made between these different strategies in 2007. Observers such as Stephen Biddle described to the Committee how he thought that after 4 years of mistakes, the US was left with no ‘good options’ for military strategy in Iraq. Under whichever strategy the US stayed in Iraq, they would remain a target for insurgents as well as a source for sectarian violence.<sup>619</sup> In 2007 the HRCFA was also informed that the previous years of warfare in Iraq had lacked a proper strategy. In one of his critical attacks on the Bush administration, General Batiste told the Committee that the administration’s strategy lacked focus.<sup>620</sup> This was supported by Professor Anthony Cordesman, who often advised members of Congress on security matters. He told the Committee that the US had not appreciated the risk, costs or time involved in creating a workable strategy in Iraq.<sup>621</sup> These criticisms came at a time when the Bush administration was trying to reassert its control over the war. In May 2007 President Bush discussed the strategic options that were available for the US:

They staged sensational attacks that led to a tragic escalation of sectarian rage and reprisal. If the sectarian violence continued to spiral out of control, the Iraqi government would have been in danger of collapse.

So I had a choice to make: withdraw our troops, or send reinforcements to help the Iraqis quell the sectarian violence. I decided to send more troops with a new mission: to help the Iraqi government secure their population and get control of Baghdad.<sup>622</sup>

By choosing to send reinforcements, as Bush explained in a press conference in July 2007, the war in Iraq had reached a fourth phase where more troops would help the Iraqis stabilise the security situation on the ground.<sup>623</sup> By the time Bush was making these announcements, scepticism had built up regarding the US strategic decision making ability. The decision to rapidly and vastly increase the level of troops in Iraq was an attempt to regain the strategic initiative in the war.

Once the decision on the surge had been announced and after its initiation, many were still unconvinced about how successful this new approach had been. The logic behind the decision to

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<sup>619</sup> HRCAS, ‘A Third Way: Alternatives for Iraq’s Future (3 of 4)’, (25<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

<sup>620</sup> HRCFA, ‘Iraq: Is the Escalation Working’, p34.

<sup>621</sup> HRCFA, ‘Iraq: Is the Escalation Working’, p20.

<sup>622</sup> George Bush, ‘The Iraq War and Osama bin Laden: Commencement Address at the United States Coast Guard Academy’, (27<sup>th</sup> May 2007).

<sup>623</sup> George Bush, ‘Press Conference: Iraq Benchmark Report’, (12th July 2007).

send more troops was challenged by many through the Congressional Committee fora in the US. For example, HRCAS member Loretta Sanchez (D) simply said the surge was not working, while retired General and former contender for the Democratic presidential nominee in 2003, Wesley Clark explained that:

I think we need over a six-month period to pull a couple of brigades out so we have the possibility there of a strategic reserve in the United States... I think that Congress needs to demand of the Administration a suitable strategy for the region, a realistic strategy. The idea that we can continue to bludgeon away in Iraq with the blood and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform... is counterproductive.<sup>624</sup>

Clark's views suggest scepticism that the US had not put enough consideration into this new strategy. These views were also shared by many including General Batiste, Committee-member Robert Wexler (D) and even HRCFA Chairman Tom Lantos (D), all of whom argued against the surge citing it as misguided. As Committee-member Gary Ackerman (D) summarised: it did not matter how many or how hard US troops fought in Iraq. For success to occur the Iraqi political situation had to be improved.<sup>625</sup> It is a noticeable trend that these critical voices came from the Democratic Party in a period immediately before a Presidential election. Robert Gates explained further that, years after the surge, Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton both admitted that their opposition to the surge had been politically motivated.<sup>626</sup> At the time however, these views aimed to suggest that the US strategic surge was another bad decision in the war and was unlikely to yield any real progress.

In contrast to the critics of the surge, there were others who saw the benefits of putting more troops into Iraq. William Perry, former US Defence Secretary to the Clinton administration and Senior Fellow of the Hoover Institute, and General Petraeus came to the defence of the surge. They argued that eventually the surge of troops would lead to a more stable environment but, it would be up to the Iraqis to continue the effort.<sup>627</sup> This was a major part of the strategy that would eventually lead to the withdrawal of American troops. The ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Crocker, and General Petraeus elaborated in 2008 that the right conditions could lead to a withdrawal of troops. But, as Petraeus stated, it had to happen in the proper way, otherwise the situation in Iraq could worsen.<sup>628</sup> Petraeus presented a cautious view on the success of the surge, lending some weight to the criticisms above. However, the emphasis of these views is placed on providing the opportunity to hand power over to the Iraqis. An important consequence of this strategy was the opportunity to shift strategic focus from troop surge to troop drawdown.

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<sup>624</sup> HRCAS, 'A Third Way: Alternatives for Iraq's Future (1 of 4).

<sup>625</sup> HRCFA, 'Iraq: Is the Escalation Working', p12.

<sup>626</sup> Gates, *Duty*, p357.

<sup>627</sup> House of Representatives Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Affairs (Joint Hearing), 'Beyond the September Report: What's next for Iraq', p9; HRCFA, 'Report on Iraq to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs', (09<sup>th</sup> April 2008), p21.

<sup>628</sup> *Ibid*, p40-42.

As seen, the virtues of the surge were debated back and forth in the US in 2007. Ultimately however, as Bush explained and most observers eventually agreeing, the decision to surge troops was to stop violence spreading through Iraq and create an environment that the Iraqis themselves could manage.

The surge of operations that began in June is improving security throughout Iraq. The military successes are paving the way for the political reconciliation and economic progress the Iraqis need to transform their country. When Iraqis feel safe in their own homes and neighborhoods, they can focus their efforts on building a stable, civil society with functioning government structures at the local and provincial and national levels.<sup>629</sup>

In September 2007 Bush explained further during a visit to Iraq that security was improving after the surge, this was supported by comments from General Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker's testimonies to the HRCFA.<sup>630</sup> In 2007 many academics and journalists also showed support for the surge strategy as the HRCAS heard how it was successful in creating a stable environment for US troops to operate in. However, there were still concerns on the duration of the strategy. When questioned on the length of this new surge strategy, Bush said he would rely on the advice of General Petraeus as well as working with Congress to make that decision.<sup>631</sup> In relation to the duration of the surge, observers such as neo-conservative commentator Max Boot and academic Daniel Byman argued that the surge should continue into 2008 and that without American troops, Iraq would fall into chaos.<sup>632</sup> General Keane supported this position by stating that the surge had to continue, otherwise the security gains from the surge risked being lost.<sup>633</sup> However, as a result of this success, Bush did go on to declare that US troops leaving Iraq would not need to be replaced, effectively beginning the drawdown of American troops. He claimed that troop levels could be reduced by 5,700 troops.<sup>634</sup> By 2009, the surge of troops had taken place and appeared to have achieved the goal of stabilising the US areas of Iraq. With this success, debate and discussions focused on troop drawdown and withdrawal. General Kathleen Gainey, Deputy Chief of Staff, Resources and Sustainment in the Iraq war, reflected on the withdrawal strategy in 2009 by explaining how equipment could be directed out of Iraq efficiently to facilitate a lucid drawdown strategy.<sup>635</sup> Here, she emphasised that preparations were in place for the drawdown of troops as other countries, such as the UK, had already done.

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<sup>629</sup> George Bush, 'Visit to Iraq: Address to Troops in Anbar Province, (03<sup>rd</sup> September 2007).

<sup>630</sup> House of Representatives Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Affairs (Joint Hearing), 'The Status of the War and the Political Developments in Iraq'.

<sup>631</sup> George Bush, 'Press Conference: Iraq Benchmark Report'.

<sup>632</sup> HRCAS, 'A Third Way: Alternatives for Iraq's Future (1 of 4); HRCAS, 'A Third Way: Alternatives for Iraq's Future (2 of 4)', (18<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

<sup>633</sup> HRCAS, 'A Third Way: Alternatives for Iraq's Future (Part 4 of 4).

<sup>634</sup> George Bush, 'The Progress and Future of the "Surge"', (13<sup>th</sup> September 2007).

<sup>635</sup> HRCAS, 'U.S Military Redeployment from Iraq: Issues and Challenges', p10.

After being the focus of military operations since 2003, the situation in Iraq required a different type of strategy. As Chairman Carl Levin (D) of the Senate Committee on Armed Services explained in 2008,

Clearly, the Iraqis have not taken the lead in— on security in “all of Iraq’s provinces.” As a matter of fact, as of March of 2008, the Iraqi government had not assumed security responsibility for the most populous provinces.<sup>636</sup>

Levin’s argument was fuelled by concerns that the success from the surge had not been consolidated by the Iraqis. As a result, the circumstances that would allow for a handover of power had not been met. This is in stark contrast to countries such as the UK who were preparing to pull out of Iraq based on the premise that the Iraqis were able to take control of certain provinces. These differences represent the unbalanced nature of the relationship with the UK. However, General Mark Kimmitt, Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military affairs under Bush, drew on the example of British forces in Basra handing over some control to Iraqi forces:

But there is a model already on the ground and that is what has happened in the south and what the British have done with their provinces is they have handed three of the four provinces over to provincial Iraqi control.<sup>637</sup>

The reason for such progress, as the HRCAS heard, was the significance of the troop surge. However, as Levin explained, any success depended on a responsible handover of power to the Iraqis as part of a withdrawal strategy. Throughout this period, British strategy had been focused on withdrawing troops and handing over power but it can be questioned how successful this was. With this strategic approach, the British were given an impression of moving away from the goals of the alliance in relation to the Iraq War as the US was left to decide on what was the best way to move forward.

#### 12.4.2. Force Commitment

The discussions on the troop surge were largely an American concern. For the UK there was no debate on increasing the level of troops in Iraq. The strategic agenda that emerged during this period was on the gradual reduction of UK troop levels, leading to a full military withdrawal from Iraq. The following discussions of this section will examine how both Britain and America managed this strategic topic.

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<sup>636</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, ‘The situation in Iraq, progress made by the Government of Iraq in meeting benchmarks and achieving reconciliation, the future U.S. military presence in Iraq and the situation in Afghanistan’, (10<sup>th</sup> April 2008).

<sup>637</sup> HRCAS, ‘The role of the Department of Defence in provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan and Iraq’, (04<sup>th</sup> October 2007).

#### 12.4.2.1. Reduction

While the US side of the Atlantic was debating whether to send more troops to Iraq, a different discussion took place in the UK. In July 2007, shortly after moving into Number 10, Brown explained how he saw the way in which operations in Iraq were changing. Talking to BBC Radio 4's Today Programme, Brown explained that the British strategy was moving away from a combat role and towards an overwatch role. In the interview however, Brown would not go as far to declare a full withdrawal of troops as he explained that British forces still had an obligation to the United Nations and the Iraqi Government.<sup>638</sup> Nevertheless, speculation on how long Brown would keep forces in Iraq continued. A news report from 7<sup>th</sup> October 2007 quoted Brown as telling the BBC that he would go to Basra and Baghdad to see the situation.<sup>639</sup> His findings suggested that power could begin to move to the Iraqis.

Nor will we shirk our obligations to the people and new democracy of Iraq and to the international community. As we move next month from our combat role to 'Overwatch' in Basra Province, we will support economic development to give the people of Basra a greater stake in the future.<sup>640</sup>

This transition, according to Brown's July 2008 statement to the House of Commons, was something accepted and sought after by Britain's allies in Iraq, including the US.<sup>641</sup> As Brown was presenting this case, the opportunity was arising in Iraq where a reduction in troop numbers could be responsibly managed. A significant area of the military strategy was shifting to 'overwatch' by training Iraqi personnel and security forces to undertake the security work themselves. After the Charge of the Knights operation, the opportunity for the British government emerged to pass more powers over to the Iraqis. Diplomat Nigel Haywood and Simon McDonald both told the Chilcot Inquiry that the UK had been offering more training to Iraqi forces to help them stabilise the situation in Basra.<sup>642</sup> By July 2008 Brown had announced further plans to encourage the growth of Iraqi forces by further training, handing control of Basra airport over to the Iraqis and developing the Iraqi navy.<sup>643</sup> According to the Brown Government, the strategy in Iraq emerged from the improvements on the ground as the Iraqis became more prepared to take on the security of Basra. This situation was supposedly demonstrated by the Charge of the Knights operation. The British position however, was in stark contrast with the American decision to surge troops.

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<sup>638</sup> BBC News, 'Brown downplays Iraq terror link', (11<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

<sup>639</sup> BBC News, 'Brown defends Iraq announcement', (07<sup>th</sup> October 2007).

<sup>640</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Speech to Lord Mayor's Banquet', (12<sup>th</sup> November 2007).

<sup>641</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Iraq', (02<sup>nd</sup> July 2008).

<sup>642</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimonies of Nigel Haywood and Keith MacKiggan' (07<sup>th</sup> January 2010), p15; Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Simon McDonald', p33.

<sup>643</sup> Hansard, House of Commons Debate: Iraq (01<sup>st</sup> April 2008a).

This debate on troop numbers stemmed from a wider discussion on Britain's overall intention to withdraw from Iraq. Many have viewed this strategic development in the light of the British alliance with the US. HCDC member, David Hamilton (Lab), argued that British strategy had been successful enough to allow for troop withdrawal and this is something the Americans may have been envious of.<sup>644</sup> Similarly, in October 2007 a journalist from Associated Newspapers, which owns *The Daily Mail*, published a story citing US Defence Secretary Robert Gates supporting the British drawdown of troops from Basra. Gates' comments came after a meeting with his opposite number in the UK.<sup>645</sup> This story does suggest a level of collaboration with the US and argues against the view that there were fundamental difficulties in the relationship. However, academic Glen Rangwala claimed to the HCDC that the reason that the UK and the US were presenting different troop policies was because they had been on differing strategies since the war began. Rangwala pointed out that the UK has always pursued a hands-off approach and aimed not to become embroiled with disputes between factions in Basra. The US, by contrast, dealt with disputes by sending in large troop numbers to impose a new type of order. These different approaches highlighted several elements of the SRA. The military commitments were shifting as the practicalities of the war were taking a toll on British forces the role of the UK as a reliable junior partner was becoming less tenable.

It is noteworthy, that in Brown's 2007 Lord Mayor's Banquet speech, it was the UN and Iraqis who the UK had obligations to, not the US. Similarly, *The Scotsman* published an article on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2007 which cited retired US General Jack Keane who criticised British moves to withdraw from Basra. General Keane was quoted as describing the situation in Basra as deteriorating and described general disagreements within the military in Basra.<sup>646</sup> Keane explained to the HRCFA;

The British, as you know, are pulling back to the airport. There are problems in the south, nonetheless, and some of those problems are serious because the Shia gangs are fighting one another. But it still is an example of the Iraqis taking over. And they have to be reinforced because (the) 10th Division cannot handle it, particularly with the Brits pulling back the way they are.<sup>647</sup>

Keane's argument, which was picked up by the media in the UK, expanded on the situation to reflect upon how the British withdrawal affected the relationship between Britain and America. The initiation of the British drawdown of troops appears to have created a divide among policy makers and commentators. The move to an overwatch role was something that the Americans

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<sup>644</sup> HCDC, Examination for Witnesses; 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2007', (23<sup>rd</sup> October 2007).

<sup>645</sup> Associated Newspapers, 'Gates defends British drawdown in Iraq', (11<sup>th</sup> October 2007).

<sup>646</sup> *The Scotsman*, 'British forces' effort in Iraq criticised by US general', (23<sup>rd</sup> August 2007).

<sup>647</sup> House of Representatives Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Affairs, 'Beyond the September Report: What's next for Iraq?', p41.

were also aiming to achieve, however, the US were similarly placing strong emphasis on the preparedness of Iraqi forces.

#### 12.4.2.2. Withdrawal

When Brown became prime minister, many expected him to distance himself from the war in Iraq and end Britain's involvement quickly. Brown however, followed a slower policy of withdrawal and handover of power. In December 2008, Brown reported to the Commons that by May 2009 he expected it to be the case where there could be a rapid drawdown of troops from over 4,000 personnel to less than 400.<sup>648</sup> As he explained when questioned by David Cameron, US presence in the area would remain once the British troops had left Basra to assist the Iraqis in dealing with any aftermath problems. While in response to Nick Clegg's (Lib-Dem) questioning, Brown argued that Iraq was in a far more open and democratic situation since the invasion. Yet, when asked by Patrick Mercer (Con), what contingency plan Brown had in place in case the British withdrawal led to a power vacuum the Americans and Iraqis could not cope with, he avoided answering.<sup>649</sup> Although Brown was steadfast in his belief that it was suitable for British troops to leave Basra, it demonstrates the way Brown relied on the Americans to take on the burden of Basra. Some however, have challenged the prudence of this approach.

Views on Brown's strategy were divided between those who saw the withdrawal of British troops as likely to increase violence, and others who saw the Iraqis as ready to take on the responsibility. Director of YouGov, Nadhim Zahawi described to the HCDC how polling in Iraq indicated that a silent majority wanted British forces to remain to ensure stability.<sup>650</sup> According to Zahawi, many Iraqis in Basra feared a return of militia violence once British forces left. In contrast however, academic Eric Herring informed the Committee that Britain was actually unable to implement any kind of long-term control in Basra. He argued that things could only begin to improve when British troops withdrew.<sup>651</sup> Similarly, Defence Secretary Bob Ainsworth highlighted that it was in the best interest of the Iraqis to hand over power.<sup>652</sup> This was a difficult position to resolve and required a strong decision from Brown. The success of the Charge of the Knights operation led to Brown believing that the Iraqis were capable of managing security, with the help of the US. However, this decision was seen to reflect poorly on British and American collaborations.

Although Britain was moving ahead with the withdrawal strategy, there were suggestions that the US wanted UK forces to remain in Iraq for longer. This was visible when the process of British

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<sup>648</sup> Hansard 'House of Commons Debate: Iraq', (18<sup>th</sup> December 2008).

<sup>649</sup> Ibid.

<sup>650</sup> HCDC, 'UK land operations in Iraq 2007', pEv13.

<sup>651</sup> Ibid, pEv12.

<sup>652</sup> Ibid, pEv17.

military drawdown was paused so that British and American troops could continue to assist the Iraqis in Basra. Simon McDonald told the Chilcot Inquiry that the British withdrawal from Basra had been adjusted after discussions with the Americans.<sup>653</sup> This was supported by Brigadier James Bashall's claim that the UK withdrawal from the British held Basra Palace was delayed by five months because of pressure from the US. In response to these claims, Downing Street was reported to downplay these views. In the same news story however, Professor Mike Clarke of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) was quoted as saying that a withdrawal of British troops while the US was saying they needed more time there, demonstrated a contradiction between British and American strategies.<sup>654</sup> However, with the comments from those such as General Kimmitt as well as Bush's remarks on being informed of British military plans, which Bush made during a press conference with Gordon Brown in July 2007, it can be suggested there was a high level of consultation between the two allies.<sup>655</sup> The following discourse supports this position, as after the success of the surge, US strategy also turned to withdrawal. The notions that the UK were being held back in their process of withdrawal by the Americans highlighted not only the influence the US had over British forces, but raises concerns on how the US felt about the UK's attempts to leave Iraq. Nevertheless, US strategic thinking followed the British position.

By 2008, British and America's strategies appeared to have converged presenting a return to the roles of the relationship established during the Blair-Bush years. In his final State of the Union speech, President Bush declared that his troop surge had given the US a new mission to better prepare the Iraqis to manage their own security.

While the enemy is still dangerous and more work remains, the American and Iraqi surges have achieved results few of us could have imagined just one year ago. When we met last year, many said that containing the violence was impossible. A year later, high profile terrorist attacks are down, civilian deaths are down, sectarian killings are down.

American troops are shifting from leading operations, to partnering with Iraqi forces, and, eventually, to a protective overwatch mission.<sup>656</sup>

With this change in the emphasis of US strategy, other aspects of America's relations to Iraq were also being developed to continue the transfer power. One of the crucial developments in the relationship between America and the people of Iraq occurred during Rice's time as Secretary of State. By 2008 the option of handing the management of security to Iraqi forces and drawing down the US military had become more realisable. As Rice said in February 2008, progress on

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<sup>653</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Simon McDonald', p12.

<sup>654</sup> BBC News, 'Petraeus proves 'tricky' for UK', (11<sup>th</sup> September 2007).

<sup>655</sup> The Daily Telegraph, 'Transcript of Brown-Bush Press conference'.

<sup>656</sup> George Bush, 'State of the Union', (28<sup>th</sup> January 2008).

US-Iraqi relations was forthcoming as both parties tried to normalise their relationship. Rice asked for Congressional and public support for the senior military and diplomatic staff to facilitate this as part of the drawdown strategy.<sup>657</sup> In the following April, Rice cited the work of the Iraqi forces in Basra as an example of security responsibilities being passed onto the Iraqis.<sup>658</sup> This development in Basra emerged as British forces prepared to withdraw from the area in their own drawdown strategy. The Bush administration was appearing to follow the UK example in handing over power. With the end of the Bush administration and the arrival of President Obama, this process continued.

While campaigning in the 2008 presidential election, Senator Obama had called for a refocusing of US military concerns away from the war in Iraq and towards the conflict in Afghanistan. This position was similar to arguments that Brown would move away from the war in Iraq when he entered Number 10. Obama's comments reflected both the continuation of the Bush strategy of withdrawal and his own position on moving away from Iraq. In one of his earliest speeches as President in February 2009, Obama told a joint session of Congress that he would announce a way forward in ending the war in Iraq.<sup>659</sup> He followed this speech by reiterating a point he made during the 2008 presidential campaign. He explained that he wanted to drawdown troops from Iraq in less than a year and a half as the US mission was moving to overwatch.<sup>660</sup> By April 2009 Obama found the conditions to be favourable for this timeline as he announced violence in Iraq was decreasing, however, there was still work to be done.<sup>661</sup> By July 2009 Obama declared he was also facilitating the handover to Iraq security forces by working closely with Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki before warning that there would still be attacks on American and Iraqi security forces.<sup>662</sup> Robert Gates explained that with the agreements reached between the Bush administration and the Iraqi government, the situation in Iraq had become quieter by the time Obama arrived in office.<sup>663</sup> As a result, Obama's first months in office, he pursued a dedicated course of removing US forces from Iraq, as had Brown. For the US, this was a difficult task given the scale of American resources that were tied up in Iraq.

As US forces prepared to drawdown from Iraq, the CRS published a report discussing the relationship between the US and Iraqi Governments. In April 2009 the report was published explaining that the agreement between Iraq and the US would see US military support coming to the aid of Iraq if requested. Equally important, it also established that the Iraqi government had

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<sup>657</sup> US State Department, 'What we need next in Iraq', (13<sup>th</sup> February 2008).

<sup>658</sup> US State Department, 'Moving forward in Iraq', (20<sup>th</sup> April 2008).

<sup>659</sup> The White House, 'Address to Joint Session of Congress', (24<sup>th</sup> February 2009).

<sup>660</sup> The White House, 'Responsibility for ending the War in Iraq', (27<sup>th</sup> February 2009).

<sup>661</sup> The White House, 'Remarks by President Obama and Prime Minister Maliki', (07<sup>th</sup> April 2009).

<sup>662</sup> The White House, 'President Obama Meets with Prime Minister Maliki', (22<sup>nd</sup> July 2009).

<sup>663</sup> Gates, *Duty*, p281.

the right to request the departure of US forces at any time.<sup>664</sup> With a balanced agreement between the US and Iraq, efforts began to relocate the US military resources from Iraq to Afghanistan. One Government Accountability Office (GAO) report from November 2009 explained that the drawdown process was well under way. The report stated that by November 2009 5,300 US servicemen had left Iraq with the expectation that a further 4,000 would also leave in the following year. These efforts had exceeded the targets for the US drawdown with more due to take place as withdrawal plans were implemented through to the end of 2011.<sup>665</sup> These efforts were aimed at relocating US resources from Iraq to Afghanistan. However, this strategic shift was not reflected in the UK. This was an important point that Brown made and was quoted by the US based *Associated Press Online*. On 17<sup>th</sup> December 2008 Brown claimed that, unlike the US, the UK would not redeploy troops from Iraq to Afghanistan.<sup>666</sup> By 2009 the British ability to undertake two wars was weakening which was reflected in the different strategies of the UK and the US. Although there was a level of convergence, it has been questioned how in sync these strategies were.

#### 12.4.3. Strategic Harmony

It has been unclear the extent to which there was strategic harmony between the UK and the US when they were operating together in Iraq during the Brown period. Further analysis can highlight to what extent the norms and roles of the alliance were still an important factor in the working relationship between the UK and the US. The first important difference is that the US surged troops and the British did not. Although the security situations in Baghdad and Basra were not similar ones, these differences raised an important concern on British military capability. It is not clear if the British were asked to contribute to a surge, as was subsequently the case for the similar surge in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the above discussion on troop numbers demonstrates that Britain would have been unlikely to contribute to any surge. Similarly, British forces were not relocated to other areas of Iraq to assist in stabilising the country. The British strategic, position, by contrast, was to push for a gradual withdrawal of troops. As Frank Ledwidge explained:

A British senior officer summarized the situation: ‘The Americans decided they were going to win; the British decided they were going to leave.’<sup>667</sup>

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<sup>664</sup> CRS, ‘US-Iraq Withdrawal/Status of Force Agreement: Issues for Congressional Oversight’, (24<sup>th</sup> April 2009).

<sup>665</sup> GAO, ‘Preliminary Observations on DOD Planning for the Drawdown of U.S. Forces from Iraq’, (02<sup>nd</sup> November 2009).

<sup>666</sup> Associated Press Online, ‘Britain to pull troops from Iraq by May 31’, (17<sup>th</sup> December 2008).

<sup>667</sup> Ledwidge, *Losing Small Wars*, p4.

Given that the US asked the UK to slow this process of withdrawal, as well as Brown's comments suggesting that the US would be a guarantor for security in Basra after the British left, this guarantor position demonstrated the weakness of the British military position in Iraq. British forces appeared to be leaving Basra too soon for the Americans and, as a result, according to General Keane, there was an increase in violence after the British withdrawal which the US had to handle. With this information, it is important to undertake a detailed analysis of alliance relations between Britain and America during this period.

### 12.5. Alliance Relations

The discussions above have demonstrated the complexity of the conflict in Iraq from the summer of 2007 onwards. The difference and similarities between Britain and America can be seen through equipment and troop issues as well as strategic approaches. These concerns can be used to make broader reflections on the nature of the alliance in Iraq during the Brown period. Much of the available evidence points towards diverging views of Britain as both a reliable and unreliable ally.

#### 12.5.1. Reliable Ally

Based on British military efforts in Iraq after the summer of 2007, many officials in the UK and the US praised the alliance and the efforts of the British. In these accounts some have explained the level of collaboration that took place between the two allies. For example, successive Defence Secretaries Des Browne and Bob Ainsworth both highlighted to the House of Commons and the HCDC that the UK was in constant discussions with their coalition partners, including the US and had their support for reducing the level of troops during this period.<sup>668</sup> Similarly, Malloch-Brown explained that the Americans had been 'too alone' in Iraq and needed wider international support.<sup>669</sup> From the US position, General Kimmitt identified the British strategy of handing provinces over to provincial Iraqi control as a potential model for the US in stabilising and rebuilding the country.<sup>670</sup> Similarly, General Petraeus explained how the Iraqi forces in Basra were relatively well trained, well equipped and had reliable leadership which would ultimately lead not only to a stable area in Iraq but would provide some useful lessons for other areas such as Ninevah and Anbar. However, Petraeus did note that different areas required different solutions.<sup>671</sup> These views suggested that any decisions being made were in full consultation

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<sup>668</sup> Hansard, 'Hansard, House of Commons Debate: Iraq', (01<sup>st</sup> April 2008b); HCDC, 'UK land operations in Iraq 2007', pEv21.

<sup>669</sup> HCFAC, 'Global Security: Afghanistan and Pakistan', pEv61.

<sup>670</sup> HRCAS, 'The role of the Department of Defence in provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan and Iraq'.

<sup>671</sup> House of Representatives Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Affairs, 'The Status of the War and the Political Developments in Iraq'.

between Britain and America and try to imply that the British withdrawal was an example for the Americans and not a problem.

There is evidence to suggest that a lot of effort was put into the presentation of a harmonious alliance. Defence Secretary Hutton claimed that there was a high level of choreography with the US when preparing strategy.<sup>672</sup> This was also highlighted by a diplomatic e-telegram sent around British embassies in 2007. The e-telegram recognised the consultation and agreement between British and American forces but states that more work had to be done to shape public perception of the war and to protect Britain's reputation.<sup>673</sup> This effort represents the importance of the alliance as well as producing the right perception of each country, which is part of the unstated goals of SRA III.

Throughout the criticisms during this period, the Brown Government maintained its commitment to the war in Iraq by working with the Americans. In response to the hearings held by the HCDC, Brown's government stated that;

We are continuing to refine our detailed plans, in consultation with the US...the final force package will be balanced and robust, and capable of carrying out the full range of military tasks required in southern Iraq in 2008.<sup>674</sup>

Published six months after a report from the Committee, and throughout the debates on British troop deployment, the official position of the Brown Government was to continue working with the Americans. McDonald too highlighted to the Chilcot Inquiry that while preparations were underway for British troops to be withdrawn, protecting the strategic relationship with the US was a central concern.<sup>675</sup> While British diplomat Mark Lyall Grant went further to argue that there was a level of consultation with the US on the withdrawal of troops as well as a discovery that the British plans fitted in with the new Obama administration's own proposals for Iraq.<sup>676</sup> These arguments reinforced the collaborative nature of the relationship between Britain and America. They also support the arguments within the academic literature on Britain's dedication to the relationship.

Beyond these comments on the working relationship between Britain and America, some emphasised the difficult nature in which the alliance operated. Retired US General Gregory

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<sup>672</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of John Hutton', p12.

<sup>673</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'TelNo 3677/07, Prentice egram, Iraq: future UK posture: what is at stake', (13<sup>th</sup> September 2007), p2-3.

<sup>674</sup> HCDC, 'UK land operations in Iraq 2007: Government Response to the Committee's First report of Session 2007-08', (21<sup>st</sup> February 2008), p13.

<sup>675</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Simon McDonald', p4.

<sup>676</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Mark Lyall Grant', p39.

Newbold described to the HRCAS how the American people were weary of shouldering the burden of Iraq, but, singled out the British alone as helping with the war efforts.<sup>677</sup> Lyall Grant also explained that the UK had been with the US from the beginning of the war and as a result, her dedication benefited the strategic relationship with America.<sup>678</sup> By being America's first and closest ally, Britain was being presented as an almost equal to the US, reminiscent of Blair's original aims of being shoulder to shoulder with the Americans and a role of the SRA. Yet, many went on to argue that this was not the case.

### 12.5.2. Unreliable Ally

In contrast to those officials and military leaders in the UK and the US who saw Britain as a reliable ally, there have been those who took the opposite view. Academic Toby Dodge reported to the HCDC that there was a feeling of resentment in Washington and with Americans serving in Iraq toward the British over their intentions to pull back troops. He argued further that it was the way the withdrawal was announced that led to friction between the two countries.<sup>679</sup> This was something the British government tried to actively avoid. The perception of the relationship has always been a crucial part of British and American collaborations as it can be the difference between standing shoulder to shoulder and notions of poodleism.

Another important comment in Mullin's diaries concerned the differences between the British and American forces. Quoting from a leaked Defence document in *The Daily Telegraph*, Mullin described how military personnel were questioning the amount of influence the British actually had with the US in Iraq and how one British military figure experienced better relations with European and Arab counterparts compared to working with American forces.<sup>680</sup> This was supported by testimonies from deputy head of DFID Jonny Baxter and the deputy head of the British Mission to Baghdad John Tucknott who told the Chilcot Inquiry that there were some compatibility problems with British and American forces and development teams. For example the differences in tours of duty raised some concerns as the Americans would serve in Iraq for longer periods than the British. Building on these views, Ledwidge explained that by August 2007 the Americans had come to the conclusion that the British had been defeated in the south of Iraq. The US viewed Basra as being connected to systemic abuses of office, tribal war and a rise of criminal influences. This was coupled with a perceived arrogance of British officers trying to tell the Americans what they should be doing in Iraq. The British armed forces, according to Ledwidge went in with collective cynicism and blamed others for their failures.<sup>681</sup> Ledwidge's

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<sup>677</sup> HRCAS, 'A Third Way: Alternatives for Iraq's Future (Part 4 of 4)', p7

<sup>678</sup> Chilcot Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Mark Lyall Grant', p40.

<sup>679</sup> HCDC, 'UK land operations in Iraq 2007', pEv12.

<sup>680</sup> Mullin, *Decline and Fall*, p396.

<sup>681</sup> Ledwidge, *Losing Small Wars*, p128.

views presented an extremely dysfunctional relationship which fits into a wider picture of the Americans being unhappy with the British pulling out of Iraq. This can be seen as being partly due to the American's being left responsible for Basra. As Brown said, the US would still be in Basra to assist in security. However, as HRCAS member Mike Conaway (R) also highlighted, after the British pullback of troops in Basra there emerged a power struggle between Shi'ite militants and tribes.<sup>682</sup> As a result, it appeared the British were abandoning Iraq and leaving it to the Americans to manage. With these views in mind, it is important to return to the initial agreement between Britain and America in SRA III to examine how experiences in Iraq supported the norms, roles and goals of the alliance.

### 12.6. Iraq and SRA III

Through the analysis of specific details of the war, a broader picture emerges of UK-US interactions. From 2007 until 2009, Brown upheld the British commitments even when it would have been easier to draw back troops. However, his own, personal resolve did not guarantee a successful alliance. The war in Iraq proved to be a crucial test for SRA III and would characterise the relationship between Britain and America and hang over similar security scenarios, such as the Arab Spring.

In relation to the norms and roles of the alliance, Blair established that Britain would stand shoulder to shoulder with the Americans by supplying a reliable military commitment. The result of this commitment would be that the UK would act as the junior partner to the US in military areas. Although both parties agreed that from 2007 efforts should be made to hand power over to the Iraqis, the pace of Britain's withdrawal due to the low troop numbers and ill-equipped forces suggested that Britain could not live up to these norms and roles of SRA III. Similarly, despite the high level of consultation between the British and Americans, Brown insisted that British efforts were inline with the UN and the Iraqis, rather than the US. As a result, achieving some of the unstated aims of the alliance became difficult as the projection of British power was weakened. The consequence of this was strained relations within the alliance. These complications can be traced back to Brown. The driving force behind the alliance has usually been a British effort. However, despite Brown's government's cooperation with the US, his emphasis on UN and Iraqi accountabilities as well as his role in directing military efforts as the prime minister undermined the nature of the alliance, particularly as Brown left the situation in Basra for the Americans to manage. Brown himself was committed to the alliance; however, his government was unable to undertake the necessary, practical functions of the alliance to support this commitment.

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<sup>682</sup> House of Representatives Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Affairs, 'The Status of the War and the Political Developments in Iraq'.

An important conclusion relates to Britain's ability to act as a reliable partner to the US. The speeches from leaders and efforts from armed services seemed to emphasise Britain's desire to remain close to the Americans, as a useful ally. However, issues due to the overstretch of British forces as seen with troops and equipment, limited Britain's strategic choices. Consequently, the early withdrawal from Iraq and decisions not to redeploy forces to Afghanistan suggested that, in practical terms, the UK was not a reliable military partner to the US. In relation to this conclusion, SRA III can be examined. Britain's withdrawal heralded a poor end to the war that characterised half of the alliance. Accordingly, Britain had been exposed as being unable to live up to the commitments that had been made before 2003. With attention turning quickly to the war in Afghanistan during Brown's period in office, it becomes appropriate to compare these findings to the other part of SRA III, the war in Afghanistan.

### 13. Special Relationship Alliance III: Part III – Afghanistan 2007-2010

This chapter will follow a similar structure used in chapter 14 to explore the war in Afghanistan during the Brown period to determine the progress of SRA III. This chapter will review the military situation in Afghanistan and the consequential strategic considerations. Before 2007, the war in Afghanistan had been a largely overshadowed conflict due to the close attention paid to the war in Iraq. After Brown became prime minister, attention began to return to this war and represents a fundamental measure in determining the level of success of SRA III at this time.

#### 13.1. Background

Whereas the provocations and decisions leading to the invasion of Iraq were often complex and ambiguous, the invasion of Afghanistan was relatively clear. After the attacks of 9/11 support was delivered to the US to take action against the Taliban government in Afghanistan who supported the al Qaeda terrorist network responsible for the attacks. The results of the initial invasion and the subsequent developments of the war will be briefly explored here to establish the appropriate context to understand the developments of the war during the Brown period.

##### 13.1.1. Initial Invasion

As mentioned previously, after the 9/11 attacks President Bush delivered a series of demands to the Taliban government. Bush refused to negotiate on these demands which the Taliban did not surrender to. As a result, on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2001, Operation Enduring Freedom began with British and American forces launching attacks in Afghanistan. Following these attacks, in December 2001, the UN established a multilateral force known as the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to oversee the rebuilding of Afghanistan and training the Afghanis National Army (ANA).<sup>683</sup> By 2003, the nature of the occupation developed further when NATO forces took command of ISAF with a revolving leadership of forces by NATO members. For the British and Americans during this period, it was not simply a case of removing the Taliban, but replacing it with a democracy to avoid a similar situation emerging which led to 9/11.<sup>684</sup> Consequently, forces were committed to staying in Afghanistan until a democracy could be created and there was an independent national force to protect it.

##### 13.1.2. British Deployment to Helmand

In 2006, the British deployment dramatically changed with the movement of forces into Helmand province in order to tackle the insurgent threat while US forces remained largely concentrated in the Eastern provinces surrounding the capital city of Kabul. After the initial invasion in 2001, the

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<sup>683</sup> Edwards, *Defending the Realm*, p265-266

<sup>684</sup> *Ibid*, p266

Taliban was forced into the mountain and rural regions of Afghanistan as well as relocating into Pakistan. As part of the alliance's efforts to defeat the Taliban, a commitment was made to redeploy forces in the south of Afghanistan. What resulted was some of the most intense fighting of the war which saw dramatic increases in the level of injuries and fatalities. By the time of Brown's arrival in Number 10, efforts in Helmand were beginning to struggle and became a lasting problem beyond Brown's departure in 2010.<sup>685</sup> Although the invasion and expansion of the mission in Afghanistan presented less contentious issues than Iraq, it would prove to be the foundations for significant and deadly problems during the Brown period.

### 13.2. Equipment

During the war in Afghanistan, criticisms and concerns about the nature of military equipment were common and had important consequences on the way in which the war was conducted. As was the case in Iraq, accusations that Brown had been starving the armed forces of resources were widespread during this period and were often the central argument of Brown's critics. However, these problems were not limited to the UK. The US did have some problems of their own in this area, yet, it was the ability of America's allies to equip their troops that concerned the various voices in the US the most. These discussions will highlight the practical ability of the UK to uphold the norms and roles of the alliance. As both partners had ventured into military conflicts with specific goals in mind, the ability to conduct the war was dependent on the strength of each partner's military capabilities. This section will begin by setting out the nature and broad arguments of this problem between 2007 and 2010, followed by a more in-depth analysis on the shortages of helicopters in Afghanistan. This particular problem was characteristic of much of the criticisms of the war and was seen as one of the most contentious debates during the Brown period.

#### 13.2.1. Equipment Problems

Throughout his time in office, Brown had to strongly defend the Government position on equipment funding. As attention was returned to the war in Afghanistan and away from Iraq, it became clearer that there was a serious deficiency in the quality and quantity of equipment being used in the theatre of war. For many, these deficiencies resulted from Brown's approach to military funding. This was apparent from Brown's 2008 interview with Al Jazeera and his comments in the House of Commons in the following year:

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<sup>685</sup> Anthony King, 'Understanding the Helmand campaign: British military operations in Afghanistan', *International Affairs*, vol. 86, no. 2 (2010), 311-332, p311.

Now I think we are spending a considerable amount of money on equipment so I don't agree with those people who say that we are not making the investment in equipment.<sup>686</sup>

Since 2006-07, we have increased annual military spending on the Afghan operation—spending from the Treasury reserve, in addition to the defence budget—from £700 million to £1.5 billion to £2.6 billion, and now to more than £3.5 billion this year. We are determined to provide our forces with the resources that they need to keep them safe, and to make the right decisions about equipment and troop deployments as part of our wider strategy.<sup>687</sup>

The theme of defence funding remained with Brown as his approach to meeting the needs of the armed forces was criticised. The wherewithal to fund new equipment to be deployed in Afghanistan came from the urgent operational requirements (UOR) part of the defence budget.<sup>688</sup> This, however, was a worrying sign to some as a Wikileaks cable explained that this approach indicated that the UK defence budget was not being expanded to reflect the needs of the war.<sup>689</sup> This position is supported by an article in *The Times* which referred to US Defence Secretary Gates' misgivings that the UK had under-equipped troops, resulting in the British military using more cautious tactics.<sup>690</sup> The American view was important because it was US forces that were making up for the shortfall in her allies' military equipment deficiencies. This attitude was demonstrated when the HCFAC noted that, through the Americans, new resources and equipment would be made available for British forces.<sup>691</sup> This development was reported as good news for British armed services as Mark Malloch-Brown described to the Committee that the UK was struggling to equip its troops.<sup>692</sup> According to Malloch-Brown, the UK had under performed in meeting schedules and providing reinforced equipment, namely vehicles that could cope with IED used by the Afghan insurgency and al Qaeda. From this evidence, a negative view on Britain's ability to conduct warfare without relying on the US became clear.

A significant aspect of these equipment problems was related to the types of vehicles available to the British armed forces. In October 2009, Brown explained to the House of Commons that:

Increased flying hours for unmanned aerial vehicles for surveillance—a 33 per cent. increase for Hermes, 50 per cent. for Desert Hawk and next year 80 per cent. for Reaper. It also includes an extra £20 million committed to a fourfold increase in the total number of Mastiff and Ridgback mine-protected vehicles since April.<sup>693</sup>

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<sup>686</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Interview with Al Jazeera', (02<sup>nd</sup> November 2008).

<sup>687</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (14<sup>th</sup> October, 2009).

<sup>688</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (12<sup>th</sup> December 2007).

<sup>689</sup> Wikileaks, 'MoD announces plus up for Afghanistan spending – Matched by cuts in other areas', (18<sup>th</sup> December 2009).

<sup>690</sup> *The Times*, 'US accuses Britain of Afghan failings', (16<sup>th</sup> December 2008).

<sup>691</sup> HCFAC, 'Global Security: Afghanistan and Pakistan', p72.

<sup>692</sup> *Ibid*, pEv56

<sup>693</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (14<sup>th</sup> October, 2009).

These increases were an important point given the more common usage of IEDs for killing and injuring British forces. Brown tried to reconceptualise these IED concerns. He explained in two other occasions in one Commons debate that many of those injured by IED explosions were done so on foot patrol and therefore vehicles were not the concern.<sup>694</sup> In relation to this, in January 2010, the Defence Undersecretary supported Brown's claims by explaining how new body armour was being deployed, which demonstrated that continuous pipeline improvements that were being made to the British forces.<sup>695</sup> These comments were intended to highlight that the Brown government was taking action on this issue. They also sought to display the complexity of the argument by suggesting better equipped and strongly armoured vehicles would not resolve the problems facing British forces in Afghanistan.

Many of Brown's ministers also had to explain how the British government was addressing these concerns. In June 2009 the new Defence Secretary John Hutton was confident in telling the Commons that British forces had the equipment and troops needed for success.<sup>696</sup> Similarly, in October 2009 David Miliband went further and explained to the Commons that extra funding had been made available to provide new armour and protection kit as well as funding for 1,200 new vehicles. This did not stop the Government's critics however, as MPs such as David Laws (Lib-Dem) and Hugo Swire (Con) claimed that troops on the ground did not have the equipment they needed.<sup>697</sup> The comments of Brown and his ministers indicate that increasing level of resourcing for the armed services was taking place but, as with Iraq, it often took time for new equipment to reach the field.

A damaging aspect of this debate for the Brown government was that many of the criticisms levied against Brown came from the armed forces. For example, troops in Afghanistan anonymously criticised the government's record in this area. These soldiers claimed that they were told to downplay their equipment problems.<sup>698</sup> In relation to the discussion of the equipment available to the armed services in Afghanistan, the BBC drew on an article from *The Daily Telegraph* citing the case of an SAS reservist in Afghanistan resigning over equipment failures.<sup>699</sup> This problem was then exacerbated when former military officer and Parliamentary Private Secretary in the MoD, Eric Joyce, resigned from the government due to Brown's handling of the

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<sup>694</sup> Ibid.

<sup>695</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Body Armour', (11<sup>th</sup> January 2010).

<sup>696</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (1<sup>st</sup> June 2009).

<sup>697</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan and Pakistan', (16<sup>th</sup> July 2009).

<sup>698</sup> BBC News, 'Soldiers tell of 'low morale'.

<sup>699</sup> BBC News, 'SAS commander quits 'over kit'.

war.<sup>700</sup> With the criticisms seen from military chiefs in Iraq as well as Afghanistan, Brown's reputation for not connecting with the armed forces was causing significant difficulties. These concerns from military figures were often displayed through the media.

Newspapers in particular were a consistent source of criticism of how the Brown Government supported the armed forces in Afghanistan. This was evidenced in examples from the UK and abroad. On 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2008, *Agence France Presse* reprinted a story from *The Daily Telegraph* explaining that more than 10,000 British troops from the 59,000 field army were unfit to be sent to the frontline in Afghanistan.<sup>701</sup> In the following October the same agency published another story explaining the need to increase the amount of equipment and vehicles for British forces. The article quoted Brown and states that up to 700 new and upgraded vehicles would be supplied to bolster forces in Afghanistan.<sup>702</sup> Nevertheless, again the *Agence France Presse* published an article in May 2009 quoting the UK National Audit Office as saying that British forces were still under-equipped and was cannibalising older pieces of equipment to keep aircraft operational.<sup>703</sup> On a similar note, the *Independent on Sunday* published an article on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2009 citing troop complaints that vehicles needed to be updated for the conflict in Afghanistan.<sup>704</sup> This argument was also supported in an article with quotes from General Lord Guthrie who claimed that Brown's period as Chancellor had played a big part in the problem.<sup>705</sup> Four days later, *Agence France Presse* released a story that cited General Dannatt as saying he had to rely on US helicopters to get around Afghanistan.<sup>706</sup> Even by March 2010, the final months of Brown's premiership, these criticisms had not disappeared. *The Deutsche Presse-Agentur* explained in a story that an additional £18 million was planned for equipment and training of troops in Afghanistan after senior military officers had criticised Brown for being disingenuous.<sup>707</sup> What is noticeable about many of these stories is that they were picked up abroad by other leading NATO countries. This is significant as it not only damaged the British armed forces' reputation abroad but also had a related impact on the nature of burden-sharing by other allies in the war.

Beyond this array of newspapers criticising Brown and his government, the newspapers of the Murdoch press provided the harshest attacks on Brown. *The Sun* in particular launched heavy and personal assaults on Brown over the armed forces. The Leveson Inquiry into press standards

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<sup>700</sup> BBC News, 'Aide quits over Afghan Strategy', (03<sup>rd</sup> September, 2009).

<sup>701</sup> Agence France Presse, '10,000 British soldiers unfit for frontline: report', (22<sup>nd</sup> July 2008).

<sup>702</sup> Agence France Presse, 'Britain bolsters forces in Afghanistan with new vehicles', (29<sup>th</sup> October 2008).

<sup>703</sup> Agence France Presse, 'Britain struggling to re-supply Afghan frontline: watchdog', (14<sup>th</sup> May 2009).

<sup>704</sup> The Independent on Sunday, 'So, just what are we fighting for?', (12<sup>th</sup> July 2009).

<sup>705</sup> BBC News, 'Gordon Brown admits error on defence spending evidence', (17<sup>th</sup> March 2010).

<sup>706</sup> Agence France Presse, 'British MPs set to challenge Brown over Afghanistan', (16<sup>th</sup> July 2009).

<sup>707</sup> Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 'Brown promises new kit for soldiers in surprise Afghan visit', (06<sup>th</sup> March 2010).

revealed some of the major problems facing Brown's handling of the war in Afghanistan. The Inquiry gave Brown an opportunity to defend his record on this area as he gave several documents to support his testimony to the Inquiry. In a letter sent directly to *The Sun's* owner Rupert Murdoch, Brown tried to highlight what he described as the 'narrowness' of the newspaper's reporting:

Dear Rupert...

To my knowledge no essential equipment needs of the armed forces have been refused. Four years ago we spent hundreds of millions on Afghanistan. This has rightly risen by a large multiple to an estimated £3.5bn this year with more next year. And the defence budget continues to rise.

Taking criticism is part of my job. And I know the public are rightfully concerned about the loss of lives to IEDs.

But I have to say that it is the repeated assertion of 'the Sun' that

a) we have the worst equipment (when, while I want it to get even better all the time, it is now the best ever)

And b) We have insufficient troops (when we are far above any other country except the US and still offering more) that is a factor in explaining why two thirds of British people are currently against the UK being in Afghanistan.

My only request is not about me: it is that newspapers and broadcasters expose both Al-Qaeda and the Taliban for the threat they are.<sup>708</sup>

Brown appeared to be going to serious lengths to try and convince the public through the media that he was not starving the armed forces of resources. However, Brown's effort to convince Murdoch to change his paper's tack in criticising the Government appears to have had little impact. In his witness statement to the Inquiry, Brown argued that *The Sun's* portrayal of the war in Afghanistan did serious damage to UK operations.<sup>709</sup> To an extent, this position was upheld by former Prime Minister Tony Blair who also stated to the Leveson Inquiry that he believed that *The Sun* went too far in its attacks on Brown.<sup>710</sup> The evidence from the Leveson Inquiry indicates the extent to which Brown was going to in order to convince others he was taking the appropriate response to equipment concerns. As some have suggested however, Brown's political opponents had found a good position on which to attack his government.

In his dairies, Chris Mullin cited Colonel Richard Wetlet as going to pains to stress that the government was investing significantly in military equipment. Similarly, in July 2009, Mullin

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<sup>708</sup> Leveson Inquiry, 'Evidence GB1', (10<sup>th</sup> November 2009).

<sup>709</sup> Leveson Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Gordon Brown', (11<sup>th</sup> June, 2012), p62.

<sup>710</sup> Leveson Inquiry, 'Witness Testimony of Tony Blair, PM', (28<sup>th</sup> May, 2012).

recounted being at a meeting with a British officer who had recently returned from Helmand claiming that British forces were better equipped than ever. Mullin expanded in an interview with the author that many of these criticisms were coming from the Conservative Party and its affiliated newspapers.<sup>711</sup> Cowper-Coles supported this by elaborating on the pressure that the Conservatives and newspapers like *The Daily Telegraph* were placing on the government to provide more resources. He thought this was unfair as any expansion of territory or troops, which put a strain on equipment and resources, was argued for by upbeat military advisors who were trying to convince often sceptical politicians.<sup>712</sup> In this sense, the government was going along with bad advice. Lord Robertson, the former secretary general of NATO also argued that Brown had been tremendously generous towards the armed forces.<sup>713</sup> This evidence suggests that the criticisms against the Brown government were politically motivated. With the argument that the military would always want more and better resources as well as the political nature of some of the attack on Brown, it is possible that there was a public misrepresentation that Brown starved the armed services of resources.

The debates that were taking place in the UK were also evident in the US. For example, the Afghanistan Study Group called for a greater increase in troops and equipment from NATO members as well as calling for the US to redeploy efforts from Iraq to Afghanistan.<sup>714</sup> This report was influential and went on to inform various US committee hearings. Similarly, in February 2009 one of the main oversight managers for military equipment, Janet St. Laurent, informed the HRCAS that unlike Iraq, Afghanistan lacked the necessary stocks of theatre provided equipment.<sup>715</sup> Secretary Gates supported these comments by reflecting in his autobiography that counter IED equipment needed to be moved from Iraq to Afghanistan more efficiently.<sup>716</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter, US forces had substantial amounts of equipment that needed to be transferred from Iraq to Afghanistan. Although there were plans in place to do this, it appears from St. Laurent's testimony and Gate's autobiography that equipment did not easily reach Afghanistan. Assistant Secretary of Defence, James Shinn, challenged this perception by citing General Sattler, claiming that the US troops in Afghanistan have never been under-resourced.<sup>717</sup> The debate in the US was less heated compared to the UK as the views of the US critics were less personal on the administration. A common aspect of the debate on equipment in Afghanistan was

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<sup>711</sup> Mullin, *Decline and Fall*, p535; Interview with Chris Mullin.

<sup>712</sup> Cowper-Coles, *Cables from Kabul*, p177.

<sup>713</sup> BBC News, 'Robertson defends PM on military', (24<sup>th</sup> November 2007).

<sup>714</sup> Afghanistan Study Group, 'Afghanistan Study Group Report', (30<sup>th</sup> June 2008), p13-14.

<sup>715</sup> HRCAS, 'Addressing US Strategy in Iraq and Afghanistan: Balancing Interest and Resources', (12<sup>th</sup> February 2009), p14.

<sup>716</sup> Gates, *Duty*, p452.

<sup>717</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, 'Hearing to receive testimony on the strategy in Afghanistan and recent reports by the Afghanistan Study Group and the Atlantic Council of the United States', (14<sup>th</sup> February 2008).

characterised by the poor helicopter capabilities of forces at this time. A discussion on helicopters can offer more insight into how serious these problems were for British and American forces.

### 13.2.2. Helicopters

One of the largest equipment difficulties facing allied forces in Afghanistan was helicopter capability. Although there were political influences on the general concerns of equipment problems, most commentators agreed the UK was struggling in this specific area. For example, Officer in the British Army, Doug Beattie defended the British Government's record of providing equipment for troops, stating that he has never been so well equipped than he was when he served in Afghanistan. However, he claimed that despite this view there were not enough helicopters available for British armed forces.<sup>718</sup> Due to the geographical terrain in Afghanistan, as well as an increase in IED attacks, helicopter travel was often the quickest and safest way to move through the country. The importance of helicopters in Afghanistan was regularly emphasised by those who saw operations in Afghanistan during this period. The memoirs of Beattie and journalist Stephen Grey described the importance of helicopters as most operations required some kind of aerial assault capability for success.<sup>719</sup> Britain's equipment deficit in this area was a regular theme in both author's works. Beattie explained that a hostile Afghan commander often complained about the British failures to use aircraft and artillery compared to other allies.<sup>720</sup> This was supported back in the UK as a HCDC report from the summer of 2007 on Afghani operations explained that more helicopters had been made available however; UK helicopter operations were deemed as unsustainable by the Committee.<sup>721</sup> Some of Brown's Ministers tried to offset these concerns. As Miliband explained, British forces did have use of helicopters through NATO partners.<sup>722</sup> However, this point illustrates the weakness in Britain's own capabilities. The notion that the British had to rely on the Americans for helicopter use was seen as a large problem for the British in presenting their ability to carry out operations in Helmand. This also contributed to the strains on US forces.

Many reports and testimonies to US based Congressional fora showed the difficulties the US faced in carrying out operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan as well as having to support allies. The testimonies from both St. Laurent and General Clark pointed out the difficulty for forces to travel in and around Afghanistan and the shortages of helicopters.<sup>723</sup> American forces also faced

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<sup>718</sup> Doug Beattie and Philip Gomm, *Task Force Helmand*, (London; Simon and Schuster, 2009), p315.

<sup>719</sup> Ibid; Doug Beattie, *An Ordinary Soldier*, (London; Simon and Schuster, 2008); Stephen Grey, *Operation Snake Bite*, (London: Penguin, 2009).

<sup>720</sup> Beattie, *An Ordinary Soldier*, p229.

<sup>721</sup> HCDC, 'UK Operation in Afghanistan', (03<sup>rd</sup> July 2007), p5.

<sup>722</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan and Pakistan', (16<sup>th</sup> July 2009).

<sup>723</sup> HRCAS, 'Addressing US Strategy in Iraq and Afghanistan: Balancing Interest and Resources', p14; HRCAS, 'Afghanistan and Iraq: Perspectives of US Strategy – Part 3', (17<sup>th</sup> November 2009).

problems with equipment levels as essential military materials were still based in Iraq. As the focus of US military efforts switched from Iraq to Afghanistan, a GAO report raised concerns that the US military may struggle with the war in Afghanistan due to the country's weak infrastructure and difficult terrain.<sup>724</sup> Before equipment could be redeployed in Afghanistan, the report noted, a clearer assessment of the types of operations, force structure and capabilities needed for operations would be required. Similarly, General John Craddock, who worked between American and European militaries, drew the HRCFA's attention to intelligence and surveillance equipment and helicopters which the US had but NATO partners seemed to lack.<sup>725</sup> As a result, President Obama explained that as part of refocusing on the war in Afghanistan, he was going to ensure that forces had the resources needed to succeed. Efforts were also taking place in the UK to resolve this problem.

The most obvious action to tackle the shortage of helicopters was to increase funding and, thus availability. From December 2007 Brown had been preparing the way for new equipment to reach Afghanistan. As he commented to the House of Commons:

150 new protected patrol vehicles specially procured for Afghanistan, bringing to 400 the total of new protected vehicles bought in the last 18 months for Iraq and Afghanistan. We will combine that with increasing numbers of Sea King helicopters in Afghanistan, and through NATO, new contracts will be negotiated for leasing commercial helicopters to move routine freight, freeing up military helicopters for military tasks.<sup>726</sup>

However, despite these increases, Brown also reminded the House of Commons that it would take time for these new vehicles to reach the field. Brown's Defence Secretary also told the BBC that more helicopters would be supplied when ready but emphasised the difficulties in preparing the helicopters for Afghanistan.<sup>727</sup> As Des Browne told the House of Commons:

We have increased helicopter flying hours in Afghanistan by over a third since March last year, including uplifts to Chinook and Apache hours; we have deployed upgraded Sea King helicopters there as well, and we are converting eight Chinook helicopters to a support role. The Merlin helicopter is deployed to Iraq; the six additional Merlin aircraft that we procured from Denmark will augment our fleet by 25 per cent.<sup>728</sup>

These efforts were elaborated on in a story published for the *Press Association Mediapoint* in October 2007. The story reported that the announcement of new helicopters was used to show

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<sup>724</sup> GAO, 'Afghanistan: Key Issues for Congressional Oversight', (21<sup>st</sup> April 2009), p17.

<sup>725</sup> HRCFA, 'The Future of NATO: How Valuable an Asset?', (22<sup>nd</sup> June 2007), p48.

<sup>726</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan' (12<sup>th</sup> December 2007).

<sup>727</sup> BBC News, 'No rush' to redeploy helicopters, (11<sup>th</sup> August 2009).

<sup>728</sup> Hansard, House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan' (12<sup>th</sup> December 2007).

how Brown's government was moving forward on military equipment resourcing. The article explained that the Danes had allowed the British forces to be pushed to the head of a queue waiting to have new Merlin helicopters five years earlier than expected.<sup>729</sup> These efforts were continued in 2009 with the announcement that the UK would increase its investment in military equipment which included 22 new Chinook helicopters. Brown also pointed out how some equipment such as Merlin helicopters had been repaired earlier than expected and ready for deployment resulting in a 33% increase of vehicles in Afghanistan.<sup>730</sup> However, as a Wikileaks cable noted, these Chinooks would not reach Afghanistan until 2012-2013, further illustrating the difficulties of providing new equipment.<sup>731</sup> This evolution of policy saw Brown attempt to address the issue by actively gaining more helicopters and making sure there was the ability to pilot them. Despite Brown's efforts however, the criticisms remained throughout his premiership. There were others however, who pointed towards the war in Iraq as being a source of helicopters that could be made available.

The second concern in resolving the lack of helicopters was the transfer of British helicopters from Iraq to Afghanistan. Lord Drayson, the minister in charge of kit and equipment across the whole of the armed services, discussed how British equipment was spread across both wars. He also explained that in addition to new Merlin helicopters, eight Chinook aircraft were being updated to operate in the Afghan terrain.<sup>732</sup> These, he suggested, would be in place by 2009. The HCDC also heard from John Hutton that, with the wind-down of operations in Iraq, Merlin helicopters could be made available for operations in Afghanistan.<sup>733</sup> However, part of the problem, as Brown explained, was that helicopters such as Merlins, Chinooks and Lynxes needed to be refitted from Iraq and made suitable for Afghani conditions and terrain.<sup>734</sup> The attempt to redeploy helicopters and other equipment from Iraq and its importance in assisting the situation in Afghanistan reinforced the notion that British forces were overstretched. Others have argued that the problems were less to do with the amount or location of British military equipment. What was required for success was a rethinking of how the war was being conducted.

A final way to resolve these helicopter deployment concerns was to suggest a new way of approaching the problem. One BBC news story drew on advice from experts at the RUSI. Mr Godfrey of the RUSI was quoted as saying that the answers to the problems of Afghanistan were more complicated than a lack of equipment. Another RUSI fellow explained that it was how

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<sup>729</sup> Press Association Mediapoint, 'RAF Unveils New Merlin Helicopters', (03<sup>rd</sup> October 2007).

<sup>730</sup> Hansard, House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (30<sup>th</sup> November 2009).

<sup>731</sup> Wikileaks, MoD announces plus up for Afghanistan spending – Matched by cuts in other areas'.

<sup>732</sup> Press Association Mediapoint, 'RAF Unveils New Merlin Helicopters'.

<sup>733</sup> HCDC, 'Defence Committee Minutes', (28<sup>th</sup> October 2008).

<sup>734</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (14<sup>th</sup> October, 2009).

equipment had been used and the level of service helicopters require that were the important concerns. Peter Felstead of *Jane's Defence Weekly* was also quoted as explaining that due to modifications made in 2001, several Chinook helicopters were left un-airworthy.<sup>735</sup> Also, as Cowper-Coles discussed, 27% of helicopter journeys in Afghanistan at this time were used for VIPs visiting the country, many of whom would have been visiting from London suggesting that the helicopters that were in Afghanistan were not being used to their full capability.<sup>736</sup> In support of Brown, the Commons Committee on International Development highlighted its satisfaction that Brown authorised more helicopters. They go on to raise the subject of the US and helicopters. Up until 2007 the UK had been using US helicopters in Helmand province, the Committee therefore raised the matter of whether these new helicopters would replace or supplement the US ones in operation.<sup>737</sup> These concerns of the Committee pointed towards a dependency of the British on US equipment. These views highlight a different way to contextualise the problem, moving away from blaming Brown. As the Committee on International Development highlighted, these apprehensions also had an impact on the US and their ability to deploy helicopters in the field of combat.

In his pledges on military equipment, Obama told the Veterans of Foreign Wars in August 2009 that his budget would fund more helicopters, crews and pilots. As well as other equipment and vehicles and for troops serving in both Iraq and Afghanistan, there would be better body armour and armoured vehicles to protect lives.<sup>738</sup> However, for the capabilities of the US to improve, she needed her allies to take on more of the burden. Although US forces faced challenges, it did not result in the level of criticism that the Brown Government faced. However, it created a situation where the most visibly dedicated partner of the US appeared unable to keep up with the burden of war, reminiscent of Britain's record on troops and equipment in Iraq.

Many attacked Brown for not providing the appropriate equipment for the war in Afghanistan. However, equipment concerns only emerged as public attention turned away from Iraq and towards Afghanistan. When the problems became visible, Brown did begin to supply the necessary equipment, but due to the nature of equipment logistics, it took time for the changes to become observable. Nevertheless, Brown funded these changes from the UOR without increasing the overall defence budget, thus keeping the debates on Brown's commitment to defence spending alive. The ability to demonstrate the UK as a staunch and reliable partner to the US appeared to be weakening every time criticisms of the UK's ability to conduct the war were

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<sup>735</sup> BBC News, 'Helicopters 'are no magic wand', (13<sup>th</sup> July 2009).

<sup>736</sup> Cowper-Coles, *Cables from Kabul*, p178.

<sup>737</sup> House of Commons Committee on International Development, 'Reconstructing Afghanistan, Vol. I', (14<sup>th</sup> February 2008), p16.

<sup>738</sup> The White House, 'President Obama Speaks to the Veterans of Foreign Wars', (17<sup>th</sup> August 2009).

raised. These equipment concerns damaged the public representation of the alliance and endangered the role of the UK in the alliance.

### 13.3. Troop Power

Whereas troop commitments were a greater concern during operations in Iraq, equipment problems seemed to dominate the public discussion on Afghanistan. However, there were some anxieties that were related to British troop deployment in Afghanistan and how it affected alliance relations with the US. As in Iraq, troop levels were an important aspect of the war in Afghanistan. Although this theme is more deeply explored as part of the discussion on military strategy in Afghanistan, there are some concerns which impact on the practical aspects of the war. Along with the levels of troops in Afghanistan, there were some important concerns about where troops were deployed and how compatible British and American troops were while serving together.

#### 13.3.1. Troop Levels

Throughout the Brown period, British troop levels in Afghanistan steadily increased. Before Brown came to Number 10 in June 2007 a decision had been made, in February 2007, to increase the number of troops in Afghanistan by 1,400 personnel.<sup>739</sup> By 2008 the number of British troops in Afghanistan was less than 8,000. By the end of Brown's premiership that number had nearly reached 10,000. These increases were also taking place with US forces. During this period and with the arrival of the Obama administration, US troop numbers also increased. First by 17,000 within his first month of taking office and followed by a surge of 30,000 troops by the end of 2009.

Brown's decisions to change the level of troop numbers in Afghanistan were a part of the new strategic approach discussed below. However, from the summer of 2008, Brown explained how his decision making was influenced. In June 2008 Brown explained in a press conference with President Bush the nature in which troop numbers were going to be increased:

We have resolved, first of all, as we did some years ago, that it is in the British national interest to confront the Taliban in Afghanistan... And so today Britain will announce additional troops for Afghanistan, bringing our numbers in Afghanistan to the highest level.<sup>740</sup>

Brown followed this up in the following month by highlighting that he had also discussed this subject with Senator Obama with whom he found consensus. Similarly, in an interview from September 2008 with Sky News, Brown was trying to establish that he was accepting British

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<sup>739</sup> HCDC, 'UK Operation in Afghanistan', p9.

<sup>740</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Press Conference with the President of the United States', (17<sup>th</sup> June 2008).

military advice to increase forces by providing 600 extra troops to the Afghan theatre of war, taking the total to 8,000 troops.<sup>741</sup> The decisions that Brown was making seemed to be strongly influenced by the Americans as well as having a strong military input. Despite trying to seek legitimacy in his decisions by emphasising these influences, scepticism on the success of Brown's management of the war remained.

While Brown was making these statements, his Cabinet Ministers were supporting the commitments he was making. In July 2008, Des Browne explained there would be a slight uplift of 250 additional troops sent to Afghanistan, but added that this did not mean the mission was expanding.<sup>742</sup> However, in February 2009 when the Afghan strategy was changing, Des Browne's replacement John Hutton was non-committal on the possibility of further troop deployments by stating that any increase will depend on the conditions on the ground. This was a decision that Hutton said would be made in consultation with the new Obama administration.<sup>743</sup> Similarly, during a debate in June 2009 Hutton also maintained that the Chief of Defence Staff was satisfied with the level of troops in Afghanistan.<sup>744</sup> The comments from Brown's Defence Secretaries mirrored what Brown was saying and presented a consistent message. However, even by March 2010, Miliband still had to defend the levels of troop numbers in Afghanistan after one MP claimed that British troop levels were so low that UK forces were ceding ground which American forces had to take over. Although this claim was rejected not just by David Miliband but by Shadow Defence Secretary Liam Fox (Con), this allegation demonstrated the reputation that Brown had created for his management of troops in Afghanistan.<sup>745</sup> The ability of the UK to maintain a disproportionately high amount of troops compared to other countries emerged during the 2007-10 period as a major concern. The official view of this was one of consultation with allies. Given the change in administration in the US, the Brown Government waited in its decision making on increasing troop numbers further in order to be in line with the new Obama administration. While the British position on troop numbers was designed to reflect the views of the Americans, the national and international media took the opportunity to continue its criticism of Brown and his government.

A variety of newspapers examined Brown's management of troop deployment by looking at the motivation behind the decisions as well as the decisions themselves. In September 2008, *The Times* quoted a senior defence official who refuted the idea that there would be any increase in

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<sup>741</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Interview with Sky News', (19<sup>th</sup> September 2008).

<sup>742</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Helicopters', (21<sup>st</sup> June 2008).

<sup>743</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (23<sup>rd</sup> February 2009).

<sup>744</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (01<sup>st</sup> June 2009).

<sup>745</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (14<sup>th</sup> January 2010).

troop numbers stating that the 8,000 level of British troops would not increase.<sup>746</sup> However, analysing troop numbers, *The Sunday Times* stated that Brown's military decision making had begun to ring alarm bells in Washington. The article explained that the perception from US military commanders was that Brown would rather pander to war fatigue at home than provided more troops to Afghanistan. The article cites an advisor to Secretary Gates who explained that the withdrawal from Iraq could lead to the UK pulling back on its commitments in Afghanistan.<sup>747</sup> *The Daily Mail* presented a similar argument by explaining on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2009, troop requests had been ignored by the Brown government according to General Sir Richard Dannatt. The story went on to quote Colonel Tim Collins who explained he was not surprised by this as Brown had never been a friend of the armed services.<sup>748</sup> These stories emphasised the idea that Brown was deemed to be out of touch with the US and the military. *The Independent* also criticised Brown in October 2009 by describing his offer of a further 500 troops for Afghanistan as a ploy to appease military leaders. Similarly, the article cites Brown's emphasis on NATO allies doing more as evidence that he was trying to evade responsibility.<sup>749</sup> These opinions on the amount of troops in Afghanistan and their increasing levels display a high level of scepticism of Brown's ability to conduct the war and highlight the effort that would be needed to convince others that progress was being made.

Between October and December 2009 new efforts from the Brown government were made to boost the war efforts in Afghanistan. *The Sunday Mirror* published a story on the 18<sup>th</sup> October stating that retired General Graeme Lamb was brought in to try and turn the war around with new strategies.<sup>750</sup> By December 2009, *The Times* was reporting that British troop numbers in Afghanistan were about to reach 10,000. The article quoted US General McChrystal who praised the increased efforts from the SAS.<sup>751</sup> The announcement by the British armed services came the day before the US announced its own surge of troops. *The Daily Express* quoted Robert Gibbs of the White House in saying that with more troops over a shorter period, the easier it would be to deliver a tougher punch to the Taliban.<sup>752</sup> These newspapers emphasised the importance of a high level of troop numbers, based on military advice. However, even in cases where Brown was reported as providing more forces, some media sources were sceptical about why Brown made these decisions. It also demonstrated the state of flux of troop levels as claims that there would be no more increases were often followed with a commitment of more troops. A reason for these

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<sup>746</sup> The Times, 'No more troops to be deployed despite Taleban resurgence', (27<sup>th</sup> September 2008).

<sup>747</sup> The Sunday Times, 'US opens fire on Brown's 'war fatigue'; American defence chiefs believe Britain is not pulling its weight in Afghanistan', (21<sup>st</sup> December 2008).

<sup>748</sup> The Daily Mail, 'Brown did veto plea for more troops, says Dannatt', (07<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

<sup>749</sup> The Independent, 'A modest contribution to keep the top brass at bay', (15<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

<sup>750</sup> The Sunday Mirror, 'Lamb's Plan to Halt Slaughter', (18<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

<sup>751</sup> The Times, 'Special forces in Afghanistan push British troops over 10,000', (01<sup>st</sup> December 2009).

<sup>752</sup> The Daily Express, '30,000 more US troops sent to smash Taliban', (02<sup>nd</sup> December 2009).

inconsistencies could be the response to military criticisms that were being made against Brown via the media. An important aspect in many of these stories and the comments of Brown and his ministers was the views of the Americans.

Different sources from the US at this time presented conflicting views about British troop levels. As stated in some newspaper stories, US views ranged from fearing Brown's approach on troop levels, to praising his commitment to provide more troops. Material from official US sources presents a similarly divided view. For example, by the end of 2009, Senate Committee on Armed Services Chairman Carl Levin claimed that the US now had enough troops in Helmand province, with the possibility of extending these levels with support from the British, as pledged by Gordon Brown.<sup>753</sup> In contrast however, during this period in 2009, Britain appeared to be feeling the stretch of the war as one Wikileaks cable described how an increase in the number of troops in Afghanistan was only supposed to be temporary. However, this level of troop numbers had to be maintained despite the difficulties that the UK faced in recruiting and funding the costs of war.<sup>754</sup> Other cables released by Wikileaks dated in 2010 show the impact the global recession was having on Britain's armed forces with cuts causing civilian employees to lose their jobs as recruitment fell.<sup>755</sup> To some in the US, there was the potential for real danger in the weaknesses in Britain's ability to conduct the war. As seen with Iraq, US forces expect UK counterparts to present a certain level of strength and ability. These concerns were connected to the broader strategic decisions being made and offer more insight into how troop levels affected relations between Britain and America.

### 13.3.2. Other Troop Issues

Beyond the actual number of troops deployed in Afghanistan, there were other concerns related to the nature of troop deployment. The types of troops, their location and the ability of UK and US troops to work together all appear as important issues for measuring the successful convergence of British and American efforts in Afghanistan. Many of the new troops that the British were providing for the war in Afghanistan had specialised roles. For example, in October 2009, Brown explained to the House of Commons that different types of troops would be deployed to assist the war effort in Afghanistan, namely engineers. Brown explained that these engineers were essential for dealing with the IED threat facing British forces.<sup>756</sup> As Defence Secretary Browne told the House of Commons, more troops would also be deployed with specialist training to operate

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<sup>753</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, 'Hearing to receive testimony on the strategy in Afghanistan and recent reports by the Afghanistan Study Group and the Atlantic Council of the United States'.

<sup>754</sup> Wikileaks, 'Afghanistan: UK will say no to a request for more troops beyond 1,200 already promised', (23<sup>rd</sup> November 2009).

<sup>755</sup> Wikileaks, 'HMG agrees on need for ISAF contributions for ANSF trainers – but offer no new commitments', (19<sup>th</sup> February 2010).

<sup>756</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (14<sup>th</sup> October, 2009).

Viking and Mastiff vehicles. As well as these increases, more specialist crew support for Chinook and Apache helicopters would increase the total amount of flying time undertaken by British forces making it safer for them to travel around Afghanistan.<sup>757</sup> This was supported by the arguments of Professor Theo Farrell:

We are about to deploy another 1,500 troops probably, into Afghanistan, most of whom will be enablers, which are desperately needed, such as engineers and electronic warfare specialists. I would like another battle group to go in, because, my God, we could use another battle group.<sup>758</sup>

This discussion highlighted the subtleties in the argument on troop numbers. It was not just a simple case of sending more troops to Afghanistan but deploying the types of soldiers who could make the best contributions. Given the time it took to train these specialists and falling recruitment numbers, it presented another challenge for the government. For others however, it was where troops were being sent that was important.

The location of British forces represented another important concern due to the circumstances in the south of Afghanistan where troops were operating. This was highlighted by Rory Stewart, the former diplomat and academic who argued that it was not in fact how many troops were deployed but how and where they were deployed.<sup>759</sup> These views were reflected by some in America. US National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley and Secretary of State Rice told journalists in November 2008 about future plans to increase the contribution of troops to Afghanistan. Hadley told the press that 3,500 troops would be moved into the south of Afghanistan, into Kandahar.<sup>760</sup> These comments from Hadley seem to be in line with the concerns raised by other allied forces who wanted more support in the south of Afghanistan. Similarly, an article in *The Sunday Times* on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2008 recounted the US criticism of the UK as Britain was described as not pulling its weight. The article quoted US General John Craddock who told the paper in an interview that Britain needed to put more troops into Helmand.<sup>761</sup> Along with Craddock's comments, Dr Giles Dorransoro explained further to the HRCAS that the strategy in Helmand Province was not working;

Twenty thousand men in Helmand is exactly the kind of thing that is going to (bring) victory to the Taliban. We have lost control of Kunduz Province. We have lost control of part of Baghlan Province. We have lost control of Badghis Province.

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<sup>757</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (16<sup>th</sup> June 2008).

<sup>758</sup> HCDC, 'Global Security: Afghanistan and Pakistan', pEv9.

<sup>759</sup> HCDC, 'UK Operations in Afghanistan', pEv34.

<sup>760</sup> US State Department, 'Press Briefing by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley', (03<sup>rd</sup> April 2008).

<sup>761</sup> *The Sunday Times*, 'US opens fire on Brown's 'war fatigue'; American defence chiefs believe Britain is not pulling its weight in Afghanistan'.

That is in the north, and the city of Herat is now directly threatened by the Taliban. We cannot spend all our resources in the south when the north is becoming the major, major problem.<sup>762</sup>

These comments suggested that the US were unhappy with the way the war was being conducted in the south of the country where British forces were in operation. Concerns were also raised on how British and American troops operated in these areas.

As with Iraq, the difference in British and US military practices created difficulties in collaboration amongst troops. Captain Doug Beattie reported a dysfunctional relationship between British and American Officers. He cited examples of US Army Officers shouting at British troops, while journalist Stephen Grey explained that due to Britain's shorter troop rotations, US officers were working with continuously changing British counterparts.<sup>763</sup> Going further, Beattie explained how US troops had no real engagement with the Afghan community or with partnered Afghan soldiers.

Just as Tombstone was American, so too was FOB Price. You could tell that by the Stars and Stripes that flew sneeringly above the base. In full sight of the local populations, this wasn't the way to win friends and influence people but there wasn't much I could do about it because once again we were squatters in a US facility.<sup>764</sup>

Every time I thought my disillusionment with the Americans couldn't get any greater, it did, despite the change in personnel.

We were all out on a patrol. Us. Them. And the Afghans. And from the start it was clear to me the US ETT had lost it. They stood back as the ANA soldiers acted with impunity, doing what they wanted, when they wanted...At this particular moment they happened to be looting a shop. And the ETT clearly had next-to-no idea how to halt it.<sup>765</sup>

Beattie was presenting here an image of US forces who would not integrate in their Afghan environment which was in contrast to British practices in counter-insurgency. Similarly, he displayed a negative attitude of US forces in training the Afghans. Throughout the war in Afghanistan, corruption and abuses of power by Afghans was a significant problem. Beattie's example demonstrated the US inability to deal with this problem. These concerns were also due to the fact that British and American forces had different codes of conduct for operations.

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<sup>762</sup> HRCAS, 'Afghanistan and Iraq: Perspectives of US Strategy – Part 3', p10.

<sup>763</sup> Beattie and Gomm, *Task Force Helmand*, p27; Grey, *Operation Snakebite*, p147.

<sup>764</sup> Beattie and Gomm, *Task Force Helmand*, p32.

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid*, p254.

Most of the raids that killed civilians were led by US special forces, who operated under rules of engagement which allowed them to judge the prize of a high-value target as worth the risk of some civilian deaths. British special forces, under NATO command, operated under different rules.<sup>766</sup>

This example demonstrated the difference in approach to engagements with civilians, similar to the practices seen in Iraq. To the US, the main concern was to achieve goals and protect American life while to the UK it was just as important to protect civilian life. The different approaches and caveats put on troops by members of the alliance became a major problem in alliance relations. Gates tried to emphasise a strategy that engaged more with the local Afghan community.<sup>767</sup> However, it appears that achieving this would require a considerable break from US military methods and protocol. This argument is supported by previous claims that British forces could work better with European or Arab counterparts.

The debate on troop levels had similarities with the concerns about equipment which helped in creating uncertainty of Britain's position in the alliance. Both discussions highlighted the changes the Brown, and to an extent the American government had to undertake as they refocused on the war in Afghanistan. Although many of the concerns relate to the strategic decisions being made, it also demonstrated the practicalities of British and American forces working together and the uncertainty of living up to the norms and roles of the alliance. A major analysis of the strategies pursued by the UK and the US during this period can indicate how in sync the two forces really were.

#### 13.4. Strategy

During the Brown period there were several strategic developments which affected the way the war was managed by Brown, Bush and Obama. A key issue related to the introduction of a similar troop surge strategy that was seen in Iraq. How this surge was carried out and the nature of the British contribution to it is an important area for measuring UK-US convergence. Another crucial strategic development was the extension of Afghan strategy to include Pakistan. To begin with however, this section will analyse the strategic difference between British and American forces as they engaged with local Afghans through a counter insurgency strategy (COIN) in an attempt to shift to an overwatch position, similar to that seen in Iraq.

##### 13.4.1. Overwatch/Engagement with Locals

Many of the strategic developments in Afghanistan during this period reflected what had taken place in Iraq. This was true of the attempts to handover more responsibilities to Afghani forces

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<sup>766</sup> Grey, *Operation Snakebite*, p329.

<sup>767</sup> Gates, *Duty*, p336.

through an overwatch approach. Shortly after assuming office in 2007, Brown told BBC Radio 4's Today programme about the importance of making military progress. He explained that British forces could match the Taliban threat in Afghanistan and force them out of Afghan communities which, in turn would allow the opportunity to develop local, provincial and central government in a sustainable way.<sup>768</sup> He added to these comments in the following December by stating he would never negotiate with the Taliban, demonstrating his tough stance on terrorism.<sup>769</sup> An analysis of Brown's comments throughout 2009 demonstrates the evolution of this position of handing over power. By October 2009 Brown was explaining that it was his desire for the Afghan government to provide a stable military that could be trained by NATO forces, something in line with American thinking. With this shift there would be a greater role for Afghani forces to take the lead in stabilising areas of the country.<sup>770</sup> This, according to Brown, was something the British had been working towards for some time. Following these remarks, in November 2009, Brown explained that the changing situation on the ground warranted more British troops to be sent in and increase partnering between British and the ANA.<sup>771</sup> David Miliband also took the opportunity to call for a move beyond the military focus to provide space for political and economic solutions as well as providing overwatch for Afghani forces.<sup>772</sup> The view being put forward here was a shift in the nature of the conflict from the British point of view and was something that Brown wanted to stress was in line with US thinking.

On the surface, the British approach appeared to be in sync with the attitudes displayed by the Obama administration. In his final comments of 2009, Obama said in a public address to the US people that as part of his strategy for Afghanistan, there would be better coordination between civilian and military efforts.<sup>773</sup> As he also explained in March 2010, the US mission was to secure Afghanistan and create a situation for a peaceful handover of power to Afghani security forces, sentiments similar to Brown's comments.<sup>774</sup> As a result of this effort, Secretary of State Clinton explained in March 2009 that further US troops would be deployed to assist in creating a better security environment.<sup>775</sup> This was an important theme that Clinton regularly referred back to during the period. As she explained in October 2009, security in the region had to precede any development projects. Clinton observed that US military officers were undertaking both military

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<sup>768</sup> BBC News, 'Brown downplays Iraq terror link'.

<sup>769</sup> The Guardian, 'We will not negotiate with the Taliban, insists Brown', (12<sup>th</sup> December 2007).

<sup>770</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (14<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

<sup>771</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan and Pakistan', (29<sup>th</sup> April 2009).

<sup>772</sup> David Miliband, 'Conference Speech', (25<sup>th</sup> September 2007).

<sup>773</sup> The White House, 'Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan', (01<sup>st</sup> December 2009).

<sup>774</sup> The White House, 'Remarks by the President to the Troops', (28<sup>th</sup> March 2010).

<sup>775</sup> US State Department, 'Remarks at the International Conference on Afghanistan', (31<sup>st</sup> March 2009).

and development roles which contributed to the overstretch of forces both in Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>776</sup> As a result, there needed to be an approach that went beyond military means.

In their description of how US strategies should develop in this area, many important figures provided views about how this particular part of the Afghan strategy was developing. For example, Secretary Flournoy highlighted that in 2009, 4,000 additional US troops were serving as trainers for the ANA.<sup>777</sup> Similarly, Secretary of Defence Gates told the Committee how partnering American and Afghani forces led to a better form of contact with the local population.<sup>778</sup> The HRFAC also heard evidence from Admiral Mullen:

At its core our strategy is about providing breathing space for the Afghans to secure their own people and to stabilize their own country. It is about partnering and mentoring just as much, if not more, than it is about fighting. Where once we believed that finishing the job meant to a large degree doing it ourselves, we now know it cannot truly or permanently be done by anyone other than the Afghans themselves. Fully a third of the U.S. troops in theatre are partnered with Afghan forces, and I expect that number to rise significantly over the course of the next year.<sup>779</sup>

General Petraeus also highlighted this approach:

As we did in Iraq, establish combat outposts or patrol bases together with our Iraqi partners. So here, what we need to do is literally talk to the locals, the mullahs, the tribal elders and so forth, typically locating on the edge of a village.<sup>780</sup>

Similarly, General McChrystal supported these points by explaining to the HRCFA that once this security environment had been established a drawdown of US troops as early as July 2011 could take place.<sup>781</sup> However, as seen with the ANA example offered by Beattie, the aims of the strategy set out by policy makers and military officials did not always translate to success on the ground.

To some, the operations carried out by British forces were evidence that there was an opportunity to offer a different approach to dealing with the insurgents in Afghanistan. By late 2007 *The Daily Mail* quoted a senior British source as they described how the Brown government was

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<sup>776</sup> US State Department, 'Town Hall with Secretary of Defence Gates on American Power and Persuasion', (05<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

<sup>777</sup> HRCAS, 'The New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan: Developments in US Special Command and Special Operations Command', (02<sup>nd</sup> April 2009), p6.

<sup>778</sup> HRCAS, 'Afghanistan: The result of the strategic review, Part I', (03<sup>rd</sup> December 2009).

<sup>779</sup> HRCFA, 'US Strategy in Afghanistan', p20.

<sup>780</sup> HRCAS, 'The new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan: Developments in US Special Command and Special Operations Command', p37.

<sup>781</sup> HRCFA, 'US Strategy in Afghanistan', p107.

preparing to talk with the Taliban over the town of Musa Qala. The official source was later cited in the article as saying that this move was being made in full consultation with the White House.<sup>782</sup> However, this attempt to talk to the Taliban would have been at odds with much of the rhetoric of the Bush administration and ultimately ended in further conflict. It also contradicted Brown's earlier statements of not engaging in discussions with the Taliban. As Cowper-Coles explained, the whole Musa Qala episode was scorned by the Americans.<sup>783</sup> In contrast to this, Bob Ainsworth tried to use the example of Operation Moshtarak to demonstrate the close cohesion between Britain and the US as both forces launched a large-scale mission to break the largest Taliban stronghold in Helmand.<sup>784</sup> Despite this collaboration the British approach was still generating concern in the US. The point of being overstretched was discussed in a cable relating to Operation Moshtarak, as the mission drew British personnel from overwatch duties rather than deploying new forces.<sup>785</sup> Although there was convergence in the rhetoric of the UK and the US, there still appeared to be great differences in how this translated into the field of operations.

For many, there was a need to develop new strategies beyond military force. These views were often displayed in the media. In December 2008 *The Guardian Unlimited* published an article which questioned whether victory could be achieved in Afghanistan. Quoting British military officers in Afghanistan during a visit from Brown, the article presented the view that the Taliban could never truly be defeated in Afghanistan which was described as being a 'daft' notion.<sup>786</sup> In the following months, disapproval of Brown and the war became more apparent. A traditional Labour supporting newspaper, *The Mirror*, criticised the US for trying to bomb its way to victory as it was making it harder to achieve a favourable outcome.<sup>787</sup> This point was reinforced by *The Daily Telegraph's* article discussing British attempts of interacting with the Taliban which demonstrates a different approach between the Americans and the British.<sup>788</sup> *The Mirror's* position would imply that it would be difficult to talk to anyone in Afghanistan based on the US approach. These positions seem to support the notion of dialogue with Britain's opponents in Afghanistan. However, the failure at Musa Qala set these efforts back.

In contrast to these critical views, *The Detroit News* cited the Michigan Senator and Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman, Carl Levin as using the example of the UK as one which could offer inspiration for the US. He used the episode of the British approach to place less

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<sup>782</sup> The Daily Mail, 'Brown to talk to the Taliban', (12<sup>th</sup> December 2007).

<sup>783</sup> Cowper-Coles, *Cables from Kabul*, p117.

<sup>784</sup> HCDC, 'Afghanistan and the Green Paper', (09<sup>th</sup> February 2010).

<sup>785</sup> Wikileaks, HMG agrees on need for ISAF contributions for ANSF trainers – but offer no new commitments'.

<sup>786</sup> Guardian Unlimited, 'Gordon Brown in Afghanistan', (11<sup>th</sup> December 2008).

<sup>787</sup> The Sunday Mirror, 'Lamb's Plan to Halt Slaughter'.

<sup>788</sup> The Daily Telegraph, 'PM opens door to Taliban talks hours after soldier is killed', (30<sup>th</sup> August 2009).

emphasis on troop numbers and more on obtaining a winnable strategy.<sup>789</sup> However, Frank Ledwidge described one officer's account of US COIN in Afghanistan as immature.<sup>790</sup> This was supported by Cowper-Coles who explained how it was a British aim to get the Americans to see that a successful COIN required more than force.<sup>791</sup> These arguments suggested that opening a dialogue with the Taliban and other insurgents was necessary for moving forward. Sentiments also felt by some Afghans.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of March the *BBC World Service* produced an article citing an Afghani MP who criticised the actions of forces in southern Afghanistan as standing in the way of working with the Taliban to find a settlement to the conflict.<sup>792</sup> *The Independent* also published a story based on senior diplomatic sources saying that allied forces in Afghanistan were turning a blind eye to corruption.<sup>793</sup> These views presented a position that despite the British and American desires to move forward they were unable to coordinate a productive path in this strategic area. Although Brown clearly stated at the beginning of his premiership that he would not negotiate with the Taliban, the words and deeds of his ministers and military were displaying a different approach. This evidence highlights the difference between the British and American styles on the ground as they presented very different attitudes towards working with the Afghans and moving towards overwatch.

#### 13.4.2. Troop Surge

One of the major results of the Obama's administration's new approach to the war in Afghanistan was to surge troops into the country in a similar fashion to the troop surge in Iraq. Obama's approach came after several years of criticism of neglect of Afghanistan by the Bush administration who were more concerned with the war in Iraq.<sup>794</sup> As General Petraeus' testimony to the HRCAS shows:

The CHAIRMAN. Did the previous administration honor all of the requests of the general for forces in Afghanistan?

General PETRAEUS. Again, there has been a series of those.

The CHAIRMAN. No, no, no. Answer my——

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<sup>789</sup> The Detroit News, 'Levin: Use U.K. as model', (16<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

<sup>790</sup> Ledwidge, *Loosing Small Wars*, p150.

<sup>791</sup> Cowper-Coles, *Cables from Kabul*, p110.

<sup>792</sup> BBC World Service, 'Afghan MP says Gordon Brown's visit motivated by image at home', (09<sup>th</sup> March 2010).

<sup>793</sup> The Independent, 'Allies to turn blind eye to corruption as Afghan exit strategy agreed', (24<sup>th</sup> April, 2010).

<sup>794</sup> Gates, *Duty*, p187.

General PETRAEUS. Some of those that were submitted before the inauguration were dealt with by the previous administration. Others were not dealt with by the previous administration, I think with a view that they wanted to allow the next administration to make those decisions.<sup>795</sup>

Where Petraeus tried to avoid engaging in a political debate on the armed forces, others giving evidence to the Committee also pointed toward the previous six years of fighting in Afghanistan as the reason for having a weak strategy by 2007. Ranking HRCFA Member Gary Ackerman (D) stated in 2009 that the problem with the Bush administration was that it lacked any central military or political leadership.<sup>796</sup> This was similar to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, US Admiral Michael Mullen's statement which told the HRFAC:

In my view, when you under resource an effort for an extended period of time, when you in many ways starve an effort, the impact—and I don't just mean with forces because we have done it with training, we have done it intellectually, we have done it diplomatically, politically, you name it. We were focused on the other war, and that was a priority. And the impact of that, I think, is evident in where we are right now.<sup>797</sup>

US Ambassador to Afghanistan, Karl Eikenberry also supported Admiral Mullen's argument by informing the Committee that the mission in Afghanistan had been under resourced for years.<sup>798</sup> Many of these negative views of the Bush administration were reflected in the UK. A HCDC report also stated that many of the problems in Afghanistan by 2008 stemmed from the direction of US policy under the Bush administration.<sup>799</sup> For some, the Bush administration had not engaged with the war properly. It is true that, during the Brown period, Bush rarely mentioned the war in Afghanistan in his public comments. For others including General Petraeus, with the transition from one administration to another, space was left in the decisions being made by the Bush administration for the Obama administration. With the arrival of Obama there was a reengagement with the war in Afghanistan with an introduction of a troop surge.

Throughout 2009 Obama made several comments supporting this expansion of US strategy in Afghanistan:

But for six years, Afghanistan has been denied the resources that it needed because of the demands of war in Iraq. Now, we must make a commitment that can accomplish our goals.

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<sup>795</sup> HRCAS, 'The new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan: Developments in US Special Command and Special Operations Command', p44.

<sup>796</sup> HRCFA, 'U.S. Strategy for Afghanistan: Achieving Peace and Stability of the Graveyard of Empires', (02<sup>nd</sup> April 2009), p2.

<sup>797</sup> HRCFA, 'US Strategy in Afghanistan', p48.

<sup>798</sup> Ibid, p67.

<sup>799</sup> HCDC, 'UK land operations in Iraq 2007', p9.

I've already ordered the deployment of 17,000 troops that had been requested by General McKiernan for many months. These soldiers and Marines will take the fight to the Taliban in the south and the east, and give us a greater capacity to partner with Afghan security forces and to go after insurgents along the border.<sup>800</sup>

Obama's comments set the tone for other allies such as the UK to follow as his increase in troop numbers refocused attention on the war in Afghanistan. Due to this, generals and cabinet members would further explain, Obama's approach aimed to provide a safer environment to allow the situation in Afghanistan to be stabilised.

While Obama explored plans for moving forward in Afghanistan, those associated with the administration set out in more detail the reasons why it was necessary. Secretary Clinton described Obama's approach as undertaking a 'stripped down' investigation of the assumptions of the war in Afghanistan in order to determine a way forward and also suggested any that change in troop numbers would reflect the best possible method for reaching President Obama's goals.<sup>801</sup> Deliberation in the White House on how to proceed in Afghanistan based on this stripped down investigation was slow and divided. Memos demonstrated that Ambassador Eikenberry was uncertain how reliable a partner the Afghan government was to consolidate the gains from any increase in troop numbers. Eikenberry's position was similar to Vice-President Joe Biden's fears that more troops were not the answer. Biden was more favourable to the notion of refocusing the war towards counter-terrorism and moving away from a COIN strategy.<sup>802</sup> In contrast, military figures were calling for a troop surge of 40,000 US soldiers. Obama's final decision was to increase troop numbers, to 30,000 with a view to begin a drawdown timetable by the summer of 2011.<sup>803</sup> Obama's decision reflected the advice from Secretary Gates who wanted to see NATO forces offer the remaining 10,000 troops.<sup>804</sup> Once Obama agreed to this compromise between a surge with a timetable for exit, the likes of Clinton began presenting the policy. As Clinton explained, Obama's decision to authorise the deployment of 30,000 more troops was to ensure that victory in Afghanistan task could be achieved.<sup>805</sup> Publically, Ambassador Eikenberry spoke of the progress that could be made with the extra 30,000 troops to help break the insurgent's momentum.

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<sup>800</sup> The White House, 'A New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan', (27<sup>th</sup> March 2009).

<sup>801</sup> US State Department, 'Secretary Clinton's Interview with Ann Curry of the Today Show'.

<sup>802</sup> Bob Woodward, *Obama's Wars*, (London: Simon and Shuster, 2010), p200; The Huffington Post, 'Joe Biden, In Leaked Memo, Told Obama Afghanistan Plan Flawed', (25<sup>th</sup> June 2012).

<sup>803</sup> Bob Woodward, *Obama's Wars*, p291

<sup>804</sup> Gates, *Duty*, p362.

<sup>805</sup> US State Department, 'Remarks At Press Conference at NATO Headquarters', (04<sup>th</sup> December 2009).

During these developments in the US, evidence began to emerge that questioned the usefulness and reliability of the UK to support the US in this strategy area. Brown's intention to increase British troops at this time was dependent on what form a future US deployment would take.<sup>806</sup> The HCFAC raised the discussion of British troop deployment with Defence Secretary John Hutton in the context of a possible surge of US forces. Hutton flatly stated that no request for the UK to contribute to a surge had been made by the Americans. He followed this statement up by explaining that any decision to increase troop numbers would be based on the proper military advice.<sup>807</sup> Cowper-Coles described in more detail his suspected reasoning for providing more troops. He explained that part of the reason was that the military were putting more pressure on Brown in order to re-establish British military capability after the failures in Basra.<sup>808</sup> However, a Wikileaks cable from the end of 2009 cited FCO and Cabinet Office officials such as Philip Barton, the Cabinet Office's Afghanistan/Pakistan Coordinator, who explained that any such request to take part in a further surge would be denied by the UK as she did not have the equipment or capabilities to properly supply fresh troops.<sup>809</sup> These explanations demonstrate the difficulties in the decisions being made as different actors were struggling with the war but wanted to continue to display a strong appearance.

An American special report on this area explained that the UK was stretched to the point that by 2009 they could only offer a further 300 troops.<sup>810</sup> Cables also indicate that there was mounting pressure on Brown to rethink his Afghan strategy and to introduce more troops and equipment. What the embassy cables made clear, however, was that the UK was unwilling to announce any major changes to her own strategy until they knew what path the US was taking. Following this, a cable from October 2009 saw Brown's foreign and security advisor tell US officials that if the UK were to increase force levels in one area it may result in pulling troops out of other key parts of Afghanistan and could possibly result in a capabilities gap.<sup>811</sup> As a result, the British views reflected the US position and called for NATO partners to be doing more. Britain is also mentioned as displaying a balance between military efforts and reconstruction to create a situation where there could be attempts to reconcile elements of the insurgency with the Karzai government.<sup>812</sup> If this were to take place it would provide an opportunity to consider withdrawing forces. By late 2009, after the surge of US forces, thoughts appear to turn to this idea of withdrawal. General Clark raised the argument to the HRCAS that the new Afghan strategy

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<sup>806</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (14<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

<sup>807</sup> HCFAC, 'Minutes of Evidence Iraq and Afghanistan'.

<sup>808</sup> Cowper-Coles, *Cables from Kabul*, p176.

<sup>809</sup> Wikileaks, 'Afghanistan: UK will say no to a request for more troops beyond 1,200 already promised'.

<sup>810</sup> CRS, 'NATO in Afghanistan: A Test of the Transatlantic Alliance', (03<sup>rd</sup> December 2009), p20.

<sup>811</sup> Wikileaks, 'British perspectives on the way forward in Afghanistan – Counting on U.S. Leadership and Empowering the Afghans'.

<sup>812</sup> *Ibid*, p21.

should be based around exiting the country.<sup>813</sup> Many, such as Committee member Congressman Philip McKeon (R), raised concerns on this point that even stating a withdrawal date could be seen by America's enemies as a commitment to leave the country.<sup>814</sup> These examples display the pressure that was on the UK and the US to make progress in Afghanistan. However, as troop numbers were rising, the geographical remit of the strategy of the war was expanding.

### 13.4.3. Pakistan

As part of his first major foreign policy speech, Brown announced at the Lord Mayor's Banquet in 2007 that Britain would support both Afghani and Pakistani governments in tackling the security difficulties on the Pakistani border. This was a recurring theme in Brown's Lord Mayor's Banquet speeches as the importance of Pakistan became more apparent in managing the security situation in Afghanistan.<sup>815</sup> According to Brown, in December 2007, he was able to find agreement with President Karzai of Afghanistan on this issue of working with Pakistan.<sup>816</sup> In the following September, a journalist for *Associated Press Worldstream* stated that after a video conference with President Bush, Brown elaborated on a similar desire in the US to extend the fighting against the Taliban into neighbouring countries such as Pakistan. This was followed by a quote from Bush's national security spokesman who said that the two leaders discussed 'the need to remain committed' in the fight against extremism.<sup>817</sup> It appears that during his first years in office, Brown was moving to work on this strategically important issue. In October 2009 Brown had found that opinions in America were in line with this part of the British strategy in Afghanistan. As Brown explained to the Commons, President Obama and President Zardari of Pakistan were putting a plan together for stabilisation in the area.<sup>818</sup> A month later, Brown was able to report that Pakistan was taking action in regards to the border region but, as Brown also explained, he and Obama had been putting pressure on President Zardari to do more to tackle this threat.<sup>819</sup> Brown's comments demonstrated the similarities between the British and US strategy. Although the HCFAC suggested that the UK had been following the US on Pakistani strategy since 2001, Brown proved to be more vocal in this area than the Americans before 2009.<sup>820</sup> The evolution of this position seems to have brought the UK and the US together and was an important part of Brown's agenda.

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<sup>813</sup> HRCAS, 'Afghanistan and Iraq: Perspectives of US Strategy – Part 3'.

<sup>814</sup> HRCAS, 'Afghanistan: The result of the strategic review, Part I'.

<sup>815</sup> Brown, 'Lord Mayor's Banquet Speech'; Brown, *Change we Choose*, p37.

<sup>816</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (12<sup>th</sup> December 2007).

<sup>817</sup> Associated Press Worldstream, 'UK's Brown seeks new approach on Pakistan border', (11<sup>th</sup> September 2008).

<sup>818</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (14<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

<sup>819</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (30<sup>th</sup> November 2009).

<sup>820</sup> HCFAC, 'Global Security: Afghanistan and Pakistan', p102.

The attempts to focus on this border area saw the war in Afghanistan being opened up to include other countries. As Defence Secretary Browne said in 2008, it was crucial that battle groups could operate around the border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan.<sup>821</sup> Hutton, as Browne's replacement at the MoD, also made a similar claim in January 2009 by arguing that focus on the border area came from discussions with British military advisors.<sup>822</sup> In relation to the motivation behind this decision, Prime Minister Brown was moving the discussions to a basis of national interest. In Brown's statement to the House of Commons in April 2009 he elaborated that:

The greatest international priority (is)... the border areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan. They are the crucible for global terrorism, the breeding ground for international terrorists, and the source of a chain of terror that links the mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan to the streets of Britain.<sup>823</sup>

However, Wikileaks cables pointed out how Brown's emphasis on Pakistan breeding terror plots in the UK was largely overlooked by the British press.<sup>824</sup> This example demonstrates the troubles Brown had in getting his message through to the media and the public. In contrast, this was a problem that did not seem to affect the Americans to the same extent.

Many of President Obama's comments displayed a similar approach to the position Brown had been calling for since 2007. In February 2009 at one of Obama's first major speeches as President, he told a Joint Session of Congress that he would forge a new comprehensive strategy for Afghanistan that would also include tackling al Qaeda in Pakistan.<sup>825</sup> As Obama told a press conference in the same month, Pakistan represented a safe haven for al Qaeda.<sup>826</sup> In the following March, Obama continued this discourse by connecting terrorists operating out of Pakistan with those responsible for planning and supporting the 9/11 attacks.<sup>827</sup> To follow on from this, in August 2009, Obama explained how a drawdown of troops and commitments in Iraq would free up resources to assist the new US strategy of tackling Afghanistan and Pakistan as one threat.<sup>828</sup> This position was presented as a new strategy in Afghanistan carried out with the new energy of the Obama administration. These arguments also appeared to be displaying similarities with Brown's 'crucible' comments.

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<sup>821</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (16<sup>th</sup> June 2008).

<sup>822</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan and Pakistan', (12<sup>th</sup> January 2009).

<sup>823</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan and Pakistan', (29<sup>th</sup> April 2009).

<sup>824</sup> Wikileaks, 'PM Foreign Policy Speech Stresses Afghanisation and Leading in Global Cooperation', (17<sup>th</sup> November 2009).

<sup>825</sup> The White House, 'Address to Joint Session of Congress', 24<sup>th</sup> February 2009).

<sup>826</sup> The White House, 'Presidential Press Conference', (09<sup>th</sup> February 2009).

<sup>827</sup> The White House, 'A New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan'.

<sup>828</sup> The White House, 'President Obama Speaks to the Veterans of Foreign Wars'.

One example of UK and US convergence in this strategic area was seen with the collaboration of the British and American foreign secretaries. In one of his first speeches as Foreign Secretary to the Labour Party conference in 2007, Miliband explained the need to extend British strategy to address the threat emerging from Pakistan:

But when I went to Pakistan, I met young, educated, articulate people in their 20s and 30s who told me millions of Muslims around the world think we're seeking not to empower them but to dominate them. So we have to stop and we have to think.

We're right to be supporting the Government and people of Afghanistan in driving back terrorism. But we also need them to work with Pakistan to build strong, stable, democratic countries able to tackle terrorism on both sides of the border.<sup>829</sup>

In this case, Miliband warned of the dangers of a purely military strategy and emphasised the British position of productive engagements with local communities. This strategy of addressing Pakistan was something that Miliband found in common with the US as he explained in February 2008 with Condoleezza Rice and again in July 2009 with Hillary Clinton that Pakistan was at the top of both the UK and US agenda. Miliband explained in Washington in May 2008, the US plays a critical role in the Pakistan and Afghanistan issue.<sup>830</sup> As Miliband also said in July 2009, the UK was in lockstep with the US in this area.<sup>831</sup> In April 2009 a document setting out UK policy in Afghanistan and Pakistan was produced in attempt to have a better engagement with the public. The report states that the UK aimed to increase coordinated support for tackling the challenges emerging from the Afghan-Pakistan border by calling on greater NATO unity.<sup>832</sup> To this end, the UK government stated it was working with the US to bring together officials from both sides of the border. This initiative was yet another area where British policy makers were aiming to display a convergence of views with the US on how the war should progress upholding the public persona that was important for the alliance.

For the Obama administration, the focus on Pakistan was presented as part of a new approach to the war. As Clinton recounted in one of her earliest comments as Secretary of State in February 2009, she tried to make progress on this issue while she was a Senator:

I called the White House and I spoke to Steve Hadley, the National Security Advisor, and strongly recommended that the President consider assigning someone to be focused on the area and to interact with the leaders in the two countries.

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<sup>829</sup> BBC News, Conference Speech.

<sup>830</sup> David Miliband, 'Dilemmas of Democracy: Afghanistan and Pakistan', (21<sup>st</sup> May 2008), p4.

<sup>831</sup> US State Department, 'Remarks With UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband', (06<sup>th</sup> February 2008); Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan and Pakistan', (16<sup>th</sup> July 2009).

<sup>832</sup> Her Majesty's Government, *UK policy in Afghanistan and Pakistan: A Way Forward*, (London: Cabinet Office, 2009).

And that was just not an idea that the Bush Administration thought was worth pursuing.<sup>833</sup>

However, as has been seen, there was some dialogue between Brown and Bush as well as comments from Secretary Rice on addressing the impact of Pakistan on the war in Afghanistan. Many of Clinton's comments were also similar to the argument Brown was making. She explained in March 2009 that the footholds that extremists found in Pakistan led to the attacks in New York, London and Mumbai.<sup>834</sup> Due to this, Clinton went on to explain, Afghanistan and Pakistan must be dealt with together through a combination of military and civilian efforts. To achieve this, Clinton elaborated further, the US needed to readdress its tactics and strategy. When Clinton presented these views in October 2009, Defence Secretary Robert Gates contributed that the decisions made by the Obama administration were based on opinions and assessments made by those on the ground. He also highlighted the period between 2003 and 2004 as a crucial point when the Taliban was able to regroup in Pakistan.<sup>835</sup> This was during the same period where the invasion and occupation of Iraq drew the White House's attention from Afghanistan. With Obama's reengagement with the war in Afghanistan, it became clear how the Taliban had taken the opportunity to gather its forces in Pakistan.

The Obama administration's comments also found support in the hearings of Congressional committees. General Keane informed the HRCAS that Pakistan was the main national interest to the US in the region. To General Keane, due to their geographical connection, Afghanistan and Pakistan had to be taken together.<sup>836</sup> Similarly, General David Barno and General Petraeus explained that Afghanistan and Pakistan had to be managed as one with more engagement with Pakistani forces.<sup>837</sup> HRCFA member Ted Poe (R) agreed with these sentiments and explained that when he visited the Afghan/Pakistan border he was surprised at how supportive local Afghans were of US, UK, German and Canadian forces.<sup>838</sup> This was in contrast however, to former US Ambassador to the UN, Karl Inderfurth who argued in regard to Pakistan that moving into the area would be hard as those in the Afghan-Pakistan border region would be seriously unfavourable to US led forces.<sup>839</sup> The comments of academic Martin Strmecki challenged Inderfurth's argument by calling for a strategy that not only engaged with Pakistani forces but

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<sup>833</sup> US State Department, 'Special Representative Holbrooke's Role in Afghanistan and Pakistan', (06<sup>th</sup> February 2009).

<sup>834</sup> US State Department, 'Remarks at The International Conference on Afghanistan'.

<sup>835</sup> US State Department, 'Town Hall with Secretary of Defence Gates on American Power and Persuasion'.

<sup>836</sup> HRCAS, 'Addressing US Strategy in Iraq and Afghanistan: Balancing Interest and Resources', p19.

<sup>837</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, 'Hearing to receive testimony on strategic options for the way ahead in Afghanistan and Pakistan', (26<sup>th</sup> February 2009).

<sup>838</sup> HRCFA, 'US Strategy in Afghanistan', p106.

<sup>839</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, 'Hearing to receive testimony on the strategy in Afghanistan and recent reports by the Afghanistan Study Group and the Atlantic Council of the United States', p15.

also one that saw NATO allies and the US utilise a strategy based on classic COIN principles including a consistent presence of security forces.<sup>840</sup> Given the highlighted criticism of US forces' COIN and relations with locals, this may have been difficult to achieve. The case of Pakistan and the strategic concerns of the UK and the US, reinforce the compatibility of UK-US policy making while demonstrating the difference in the conduct of the war on the ground.

One of the key features of the Obama government's Afghan strategy was the increased use of drone attacks in Pakistan. Speaking to a member of the intelligence community, Chris Mullin was told in November 2009 how US drones have been used more frequently in Pakistan.<sup>841</sup> The HCFAC also noted the success of using drones to attack al Qaeda targets, particularly in Pakistan. However, they warned that continuous use could alienate Pakistanis who see their use in Pakistani territory as a breach of sovereignty.<sup>842</sup> With this point Miliband's concerns about alienating younger Pakistanis carries significant weight. At times Brown's emphasis on cooperation with the US proved to be challenging. In an interview with Sky News in September 2008, Brown had to comment on US action in Pakistan and the issue of breaching Pakistani sovereignty:

Interviewer: We are going to have to take a break Prime Minister, but just to clarify that point, are you supporting American action so far or not?

“Prime Minister: No, we have made it absolutely clear that that is not what we would do. What I am saying to you is that I believe that America and Pakistan will reach an agreement about the best way forward on this.”<sup>843</sup>

Brown was coming under increasing pressure in regards to the controversial techniques that the Americans were using in 2008. With the arrival of Obama, these methods increased. Although Brown did not publicly condemn the use of such attacks, the use of drones demonstrated another difference in tactics and capabilities between the UK and the US. Although Brown did explain to the House of Commons that he would be making similar unmanned aerial technology available for the British armed forces, he did not state that it would be used in a similar fashion to the US. *The Observer* expanded on this further on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2009 by explaining that the UK would be prepared to move forces into the Pakistan region as the US increased their unmanned aerial assaults.<sup>844</sup> To some, the use of drones provided an effective way to attack al Qaeda who were difficult to attack through conventional means while they were in the border region. To others, the use of drones was more dubious. What this discussion highlighted was the US style for engaging

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<sup>840</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, 'Hearing to receive testimony on strategic options for the way ahead in Afghanistan and Pakistan'.

<sup>841</sup> Mullin, *Decline and Fall*, p399.

<sup>842</sup> HCFAC, 'Global Security: Afghanistan and Pakistan', p8.

<sup>843</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Interview with Sky News'.

<sup>844</sup> The Observer, 'UK backs Pakistan offensive', (29<sup>th</sup> March 2009).

with al Qaeda in Pakistan and how the UK was unable or unwilling to contribute in a similar way. Looking back at Strmecki and Inderfurth's comments, it appears that there was a risk of alienating the Pakistani population with this form of attack. This position can be related to similar discussions about US attitudes to civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq to highlight the differing approaches to the conflict.

The concerns with overwatch and engagement with locals highlight stark differences in the approach to the UK and US. Similarly, the strategic decision of the troop surge demonstrates the differences in capabilities between these two partners. Finally, although there was more agreement on the expansion of strategy to include Pakistan, concerns on sovereignty and the use of drones indicates the approach of the US was not fully endorsed by the UK. This was supported by the Brown government's calls for a political dialogue. These considerations will now be used to establish the success of alliance relations as well as taking into account the broader concerns on the NATO alliance that were prevalent during the Brown era.

### 13.5. Alliance Relations

The final consideration in this chapter is the nature of alliance relations in the war in Afghanistan. In a similar fashion to the previous chapter, this discussion will analyse the collaboration between Britain and America to ascertain how strong the alliance was. However, another important element in this area is the debate over burden-sharing and alliance politics between NATO members in Afghanistan. This burden-sharing element was a central concern to many during the period and highlighted how the US viewed her allies and is important for establishing any special consideration that the British efforts received and the degree of closeness between the UK and the US.

#### 13.5.1. Burden-Sharing

One of the recurring themes of the US approach to the war in Afghanistan after 2007 was to call for NATO allies to carry more of the burden of the conflict. Although this was most clearly vocalised by the Obama administration, these arguments were also made during the Bush period. As Secretary Rice explained, the US was never worried about European partners doing too much in the war.<sup>845</sup> She also used the example of declining defence budgets in Europe as proof of the limited capabilities of NATO partners.<sup>846</sup> Similarly, Secretary Gates explained that due to the lesser efforts of NATO allies, there was a greater burden on the US military.<sup>847</sup> With the arrival of

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<sup>845</sup> US State Department, 'Press Briefing by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley'.

<sup>846</sup> Ibid.

<sup>847</sup> Gates, *Duty*, p201.

the Obama administration however, there was more of a concerted effort from NATO allies. Upon entering office, Obama explained that he would ask NATO members to not only contribute more troops, but to be clearer in defining their capabilities and what role they would play in Afghanistan.<sup>848</sup> In April 2009 Obama argued this point further that after 9/11, NATO members declared an attack on one is an attack on all.<sup>849</sup> He wanted this support to translate into more resources and efforts in Afghanistan. Obama saw the commitment of more troops, trainers and civilian initiatives as a down payment by NATO allies in ensuring success in Afghanistan.

To an extent, the problem of NATO burden-sharing arose from the rules under which troops would work. As explained above, America's allies would operate under different instructions in the theatre of war. This led to Congressman McKeon (R) and General Paxton both telling the HRCAS in 2010 that NATO partners need to alter the nature of their presence in Afghanistan.<sup>850</sup> In addition academic Anthony Cordesman told the Committee that aid and support from NATO countries is often ineffective because of the caveats imposed on their commitments.<sup>851</sup> The result of this was, as General David McKiernan claimed, that NATO countries were working against US efforts.<sup>852</sup> General McChrystal's response to these claims was that he asked allies to reduce caveats to allow for greater flexibility in the serving forces.<sup>853</sup> With the calls for more burden-sharing and the removal of caveats, the US was trying spread the responsibility of the war but also highlight a reengagement with America's allies after the poor relations seen with the Bush administration due to the war in Iraq.

In December 2009, Clinton appeared to be making some progress in this area as she announced that 7,000 additional troops were going to be sent to Afghanistan by America's allies.<sup>854</sup> Clinton would go on to praise these efforts further by commending the contributions from America's allies in NATO as well as other ISAF forces who offered a further increase, creating a combined pledge of nearly an extra 10,000 troops.<sup>855</sup> Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Jacob Lew informed the HRCAS that some partners were providing other types of support beyond troop deployment, such as development assistance.<sup>856</sup> As Ackerman stated to the HRCFA, other allies could also provide strategic assets such as airlift, trainers and mentors.<sup>857</sup>

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<sup>848</sup> The White House, 'A New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan'.

<sup>849</sup> The White House, 'Press Conference with President Obama', (04<sup>th</sup> April 2009).

<sup>850</sup> HRCAS, 'Developments in Security and Stability in Afghanistan', (05<sup>th</sup> May 2010).

<sup>851</sup> HRCAS, 'Addressing US Strategy in Iraq and Afghanistan: Balancing Interest and Resources', p4.

<sup>852</sup> Ibid, p32.

<sup>853</sup> HRCFA, 'US Strategy in Afghanistan', (02<sup>nd</sup> December 2009), p100.

<sup>854</sup> US State Department, 'Remarks at Press Conference at NATO Headquarters'.

<sup>855</sup> US State Department, 'Remarks at the NATO Strategic Concept Seminar', (22<sup>nd</sup> February 2010).

<sup>856</sup> HRCAS, 'Afghanistan: The result of the strategic review, Part I'.

<sup>857</sup> HRCFA, 'U.S. strategy for Afghanistan: Achieving Peace and Stability of the Graveyard of Empires', p2.

Committee-member Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R) went further to directly name Danish, Canadian, French and British troops shouldering much of the burden.<sup>858</sup> Yet, concerns remained for Clinton as well as Gates, on the potential withdrawal strategies of NATO allies such as the Canadians and the Dutch.<sup>859</sup> Senator Levin also explained that it was the US who had to fill the gap left by NATO allies.<sup>860</sup> The British were supportive of these efforts as one Wikileaks cable, from December 2009, explained that the UK had both publicly and privately called for more commitments from other NATO allies.<sup>861</sup> As the UK had taken on a disproportionately high commitment in Afghanistan as well as undertaking operations in Iraq, there was a clear benefit to her in dividing the war efforts in Afghanistan in order to take the strain off of British and American forces.

Throughout this period, a recurring theme in Brown's comments was the relationship with the US and the issue of burden-sharing with other NATO allies in Afghanistan. In his speech to the Royal College of Defence in November 2009, Brown stated:

It is clear that (Obama) sees that the response must come from the international coalition as a whole. For, as we consider the nature of the threat we face, it is not just the US that is being tested in Afghanistan; nor is it just Britain – it is the whole international community. We entered together, more than forty nations, eight years ago. We must persist together; in our different ways we must all contribute.<sup>862</sup>

In some of his other comments on Afghanistan in October 2009, Brown explained that some countries were putting in more effort.<sup>863</sup> However, he followed this up in November 2009 in the House of Commons by urging European members of NATO to share in the burden of supplying troops and equipment for the war.<sup>864</sup> As Miliband also told the Commons in July 2009, the British government discussed these issues with allies regularly and tried to make progress to increase burden-sharing.<sup>865</sup> This position may be because Brown was trying to pass responsibilities for the failings of the war from his record on defence funding towards NATO and burden-sharing. As the article from *The Independent* mentioned earlier suggests, Brown was seeking to deflect

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<sup>858</sup> HRCFA, 'US Strategy in Afghanistan', p64.

<sup>859</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, 'Hearing to Receive Testimony on Afghanistan', (02<sup>nd</sup> December 2009), p50-51.

<sup>860</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, 'Hearing to receive testimony on the strategy in Afghanistan and recent reports by the Afghanistan Study Group and the Atlantic Council of the United States'.

<sup>861</sup> Wikileaks, 'British MP's Feedback on President Obama's Afghanistan and Pakistan strategy', (03<sup>rd</sup> December 2009).

<sup>862</sup> Gordon Brown, *The Change we Choose*, p97.

<sup>863</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (14<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

<sup>864</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (30<sup>th</sup> November 2009).

<sup>865</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan and Pakistan', (16<sup>th</sup> July 2009).

responsibility.<sup>866</sup> This is a claim that many have associated with Brown's broader political approach as he would remove himself from unpopular decisions and policies.

After these requests, there was an increase in commitments from allies with some of the larger powers quick to take on more of the burden of the war. Des Browne announced in June 2008 that NATO members were in fact doing more as requested by the UK and the US in order to remove the hindering caveats on troops in Afghanistan.<sup>867</sup> By the July of the same year, Des Browne explained further that allies such as the Canadians have provided additional helicopters.<sup>868</sup> This continued as in January 2010, Bob Ainsworth explained that different countries were contributing in different ways to Afghanistan.<sup>869</sup> These developments emerged while many in the US were describing the different ways NATO allies could contribute to the war.

These developments may have resulted from a change in the way help was requested by the US from her allies. In an attempt to improve the efforts coming from NATO allies, Senator John McCain (R) suggested developing more of a constructive dialogue with Europe rather than demanding more from them.<sup>870</sup> Ambassador Dobbins followed this up by calling for a clearer command structure in NATO.<sup>871</sup> The December 2009 CRS report on Afghanistan explained what NATO members stood to gain from being involved in the conflict:

For individual members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the war may be about defeating terrorist networks, ensuring regional stability, proving themselves as contributing NATO members, and/or demonstrating NATO's relevance in the 21st century.<sup>872</sup>

The report suggested that the US might have different interests in the conflict, particularly due to its size and leadership in NATO. One option for gaining greater assistance from NATO allies, suggested the report, is to call for support that is unlikely to create domestic problems for allied governments or soliciting non-military contributions.<sup>873</sup>

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<sup>866</sup> The Independent, 'A modest contribution to keep the top brass at bay'.

<sup>867</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan', (16<sup>th</sup> June 2008),

<sup>868</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Helicopters', (21<sup>st</sup> June 2008),

<sup>869</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Force Levels', (11<sup>th</sup> January 2010).

<sup>870</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, 'Hearing to receive testimony on strategic options for the way ahead in Afghanistan and Pakistan'.

<sup>871</sup> Ibid.

<sup>872</sup> CRS, 'War in Afghanistan: Strategy, Military Operations, and Issues for Congress', (03<sup>rd</sup> December 2009), p2.

<sup>873</sup> Ibid, p10.

In contrast to these positions, US General Barno felt in early 2009 that certain allies in Afghanistan, including the UK, were unlikely to drop caveats placed on troops.<sup>874</sup> However, Cowper-Coles speculated that if Britain in particular displayed a softer approach with more allowances being made for her efforts in Afghanistan, there would be a rush from other allies to pull out of the war.<sup>875</sup> Given the close attention certain foreign media outlets, such as in France and Germany, paid to British military developments in Afghanistan there may be some truth in this. Another explanation can be put forward from the comments of John Hutton. *The Observer* quoted Defence Secretary Hutton who stated that as the US became more committed to the war other NATO members' obligations would appear dwarfed by comparison.<sup>876</sup> These comments can be connected to the work of Dumbrell and Schafer who explain that due to the US's size and power her allies would inevitably appear weaker.<sup>877</sup>

### 13.5.2. UK-US Alliance Relations

Throughout Brown's comments on the war in Afghanistan, the closeness between the UK and the US was an important theme. This was even true for his relationship with the Bush administration despite speculation that he would cool relations. John Hutton also defended the position of Britain as partner to the US. In one of his first debates on the conflict in Afghanistan as Defence Secretary, Hutton had to defend the relationship:

Mr. Bernard Jenkin (North Essex) (Con): As the British Government reassess their strategy with regard to Afghanistan and Pakistan, alongside our American allies, will the Secretary of State comment on reports of an apparent fraying of relations between the British and American militaries?

Mr. Hutton: Again, I am very grateful—I am spending all my time today saying how grateful I am to hon. Members—to the hon. Gentleman, and I can give him an assurance. The reports are complete rubbish, and they do not reflect the current state of relations—military, political or diplomatic—between the UK and the United States.<sup>878</sup>

Likewise, in January 2010 Defence Undersecretary Quentin Davies objected to the notion that there was a lack of cooperation between the British and the Americans.<sup>879</sup> The views of Brown and his ministers aimed to establish the UK as having a workable relationship with the US. To an extent, this was successful and was reflected in the British media.

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<sup>874</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, 'Hearing to receive testimony on strategic options for the way ahead in Afghanistan and Pakistan'.

<sup>875</sup> Cowper-Coles, *Cables from Kabul*, p115.

<sup>876</sup> The Observer, 'UK backs Pakistan offensive'.

<sup>877</sup> Dumbrell & Schafer, 'Introduction', p1

<sup>878</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Afghanistan and Pakistan', (12<sup>th</sup> January 2009).

<sup>879</sup> Hansard, 'House of Commons Debate: Body Armour', (11<sup>th</sup> January 2010).

British newspapers tended to be the main critical voice on the relationship between the UK and the US as well as on Brown's government. However, these views did develop into more positive opinions. *The Daily Telegraph* on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008 quoted British commanders who claimed there was more synergy between US and UK forces.<sup>880</sup> While in late December 2008 and early January 2009, newspapers were seemingly more positive on Brown and the relationship between Britain and America. *The Guardian* also published a story on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2008 quoting a military officer who stated that Brown was starting to come into his own on foreign policy.<sup>881</sup> Similarly, *The Sunday Telegraph* published a story on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2009 discussing how US Admiral Mike Mullen talked with UK Air Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup, praising British efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>882</sup> A Pentagon consultant was also quoted as saying:

It's no secret that there have been differences over tactics and air cover but at the end of the day Britain provides the boots on the ground.

There will always be tensions, but friends can speak frankly to each other.

There is no question that British troops have provided a considerable contribution.<sup>883</sup>

These stories emphasise a more collaborative relationship as Brown became more comfortable with foreign policy. It is important to note that these stories emerged as Brown was undertaking more of a leadership role on the international stage through the economic crisis as well as the popular arrival of the Obama administration. As a result, it appears Brown was able to articulate a more coherent approach to international security and UK-US relations at this time.

From the American perspective, presenting the UK as a reliable partner had benefits. Senator Levin used the example of the British approach to place less emphasis on troop numbers and more on obtaining a winnable strategy as well as putting in more effort than other NATO allies.<sup>884</sup> Similarly, General Craddock highlighted the UK as an example of putting in more support into Afghanistan.<sup>885</sup> Craddock's views were also seen in Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Fried who highlighted Britain as being politically staunch, militarily strong and enormously active in its contributions to Afghanistan.<sup>886</sup> As the Senate Committee on Armed Services also heard in early

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<sup>880</sup> The Daily Telegraph, 'Taliban face knock-out punch', (02<sup>nd</sup> December 2009).

<sup>881</sup> The Guardian, 'Six countries in six days: Brown seeks to establish his own kind of foreign policy: PM moves out of Blair shadow and recalls troops London G20 summit will set out co-operative theme', (20<sup>th</sup> December 2008).

<sup>882</sup> The Sunday Telegraph, 'Defence chief tries to heal rift over Britain's front line troops', (11<sup>th</sup> January 2009).

<sup>883</sup> Ibid.

<sup>884</sup> The Detroit News, 'Levin: Use U.K. as model'.

<sup>885</sup> HRCFA, 'The Future of NATO: How Valuable an Asset?', p47

<sup>886</sup> Ibid, p46.

2010, British and American troops were continuing to fight and die next to each other in operations such as Operation Moshtarak.<sup>887</sup> These views suggested that the UK was a reliable ally in the war in Afghanistan and also demonstrate American appreciation of the British. This collection of views from US officials in Washington also pointed towards the idea that the US was able to work with partners. However, there were some who did not see the alliance as harmonious.

For some, working with the Americans was not always easy. Cowper-Coles explained how at times he had to be careful in criticising the Bush administration's erratic handling of Afghanistan. He also placed particular emphasis on the difficulties of the Americans being co-ordinated by parties other than themselves, including her allies.<sup>888</sup> Getting on with the Americans was important for British forces as Colonel Christopher Langton suggested that although there was a high level of respect for British troops in the American forces, the Obama administration was less forthcoming with its support for the UK government's record in Afghanistan.<sup>889</sup> These examples highlight some of the differences on the way Afghan policies were developed and implemented by the British and Americans. In these cases, it was UK officials in Afghanistan who were highlighting the weaknesses of working with the Americans which highlight the differences in the political and the practical relationship between Britain and America on Afghanistan.

Although, some in the media were more forthcoming with praise for the situation, many newspapers published stories highlighting the differences between the allies. By January 2008 *The Daily Mail* was reporting splits between the US and her allies. In the article, US Defence Secretary Robert Gates was quoted as criticising allied efforts in Afghanistan. In response, *The Daily Mail* cited Conservative MP, and former Army Commander Patrick Mercer, who described Gates' comments as 'bloody outrageous'.<sup>890</sup> *The Daily Telegraph* was also reporting more criticism, this time coming from the UK. Defence Secretary Bob Ainsworth was quoted as warning that a period of hiatus in US leadership could lead to drift in Afghan strategy with the article claiming that senior British government sources were becoming frustrated with the Obama administration's dithering on how to move forward in Afghanistan.<sup>891</sup> Ainsworth appeared to be highlighting the difficulties of being too closely tied and reliant on US leadership, a norm of the alliance. *The Guardian* went further by stating that UK policy was held hostage by American political calculations. The article also stated that despite attempts to influence the Obama

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<sup>887</sup> US Senate Committee on Armed Services, 'Hearing to receive a briefing on Operation Moshtarak In Helmand Province, Afghanistan', (22<sup>nd</sup> February 2010).

<sup>888</sup> Cowper-Coles, *Cables from Kabul*, p140.

<sup>889</sup> HCFAC, 'Global Security: Afghanistan and Pakistan', pEv7.

<sup>890</sup> The Daily Mail, 'U.S. defence chief in blast at our Afghan troops', (17<sup>th</sup> January 2008).

<sup>891</sup> The Daily Telegraph, 'Britain in attack on Obama's war delay; Defence Secretary says dithering has led to fall in public support for Afghan mission', (25<sup>th</sup> November 2009).

administration, the US was not listening to London.<sup>892</sup> A consequence of these differences could be an explanation for an article from *The Independent*. This article cited Brown's statement of an increase in troops made the day before the Americans announcement of a troop increase as evidence of how Brown wanted to avoid being seen secondary to the US.<sup>893</sup> It has been explained above that the media could often be a difficult critic of the relationship between Britain and America, regularly over emphasising the problems in the relationship. Nevertheless, many of these stories relied on evidence from key figures in both governments and therefore do carry some weight.

These arguments present a mixed view of the alliance relations between Britain and America during the Brown era. Although there were signs of a more collaborative relationship than was seen in Iraq, criticisms remained, largely in the media. By placing the evidence discussed in this chapter in the context of the norms, roles and goals of SRA III it can become clear how the war in Afghanistan impacted on the alliance in the War on Terror.

### 13.6. Afghanistan and SRA III

The war in Afghanistan became a defining feature in the War on Terror during this period. Although both the British and American governments had moved away from the term War on Terror, both continued to display commitments to the values surrounding the concept. Due to this commitment, Afghanistan became an important indicator for measuring the success of the alliance. The significance of Afghanistan became even more apparent with the arrival of the Obama administration as the focus that the administration brought. This was demonstrated in the fierce combat that emerged at this time between NATO and ISAF forces and al Qaeda as well as other insurgent movements. In a sense, this represented the focal point of the fight against terrorism.

In summary, there does appear to have been a broad level of convergence of British and American opinions on how operations should have developed. Both countries supported strategic initiatives to increase NATO contributions and engage with the Pakistani border area. However, in a similar fashion to the war in Iraq, British capabilities to carry out the war were insufficient to keep up with the pace of their American counterparts. Complications of helicopters and troop levels while topics such as engagement with local communities and the use of drone strikes all highlight the different approaches to the war in Afghanistan.

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<sup>892</sup> The Guardian, 'Afghanistan: Analysis: Whatever president decides, Brown must set withdrawal date', (17<sup>th</sup> November 2009).

<sup>893</sup> The Independent, 'A modest contribution to keep the top brass at bay'.

With these understandings, attention will now be turned to the level in which the war in Afghanistan reflected the norms, roles and goals of SRA III. As part of Britain's commitment to the War on Terror, it was established that the UK would continue to stand 'shoulder to shoulder' with the US. In the war in Afghanistan, Brown appeared to do this as many of his and his ministers' comments are based on displaying a similarity with the US and sharing the war effort. Brown also attempted to carry out another role of the alliance which was to build international support. Brown's calls for increased NATO contributions as well as maintaining British efforts to act as an example for NATO partners demonstrate this norm. To this end, Brown was also living up to the role of junior partner to the US. Due to the strategic convergence in the war, it is difficult to highlight the level of influence Brown had with the US. However, the convergence of ideas between Brown and the US on Pakistan and Brown's consistent approach for calling for action does provide some insight. The UK's disapproval of drone attacks in Pakistan does represent an important difference. However, the extent to which Brown and his government voiced these concerns in an attempt to influence the Americans to change tack is unclear. These elements of the alliance appear to demonstrate the UK's unstated goal of appearing close to the US. However, the difficulties in equipping British forces undermined the capabilities to remain a reliable partner to the US, an important role in the alliance. Similarly, the US also felt the strain of overstretched forces from fighting the war in Iraq. The appearance of overstretch and the need to refocus on Afghanistan demonstrate the way the war in Iraq jeopardised the success of the war in Afghanistan. The war in Afghanistan may not have been the failure for the alliance that Iraq was, but it highlighted the weaknesses of the alliance that became more apparent during the Brown period. In relation to the stated aims, the comments of those who suggested that the Taliban would never be defeated and Brown's efforts to open dialogues with the insurgents suggests that the goal of defeating terrorism was unlikely to be achieved through the war. With this evidence, an assessment of the successful management of SRA III by the Brown government can be explored.

## 14. Conclusion

The work presented in this thesis has aimed to present original contributions to the study of Anglo-American relations by offering a theoretical model of the relationship and exploring some of the most recent episodes in the long history of the partnership. The Special Relationship Alliance model argues that for Britain and America to form an alliance certain norms, roles and goals need to be established. This took place in SRA III. The norms of the alliance saw the UK providing public and staunch support for the US in return for America keeping Britain at the top table in international security. This was reflected in the roles of the alliance with the UK acting as the junior partner to America's leadership role. It was also the role of Britain to try and connect the rest of the world to the US in this area of international security. The nature of the alliance was to use these norms and roles to achieve stated and unstated goals of SRA III. The stated goals of the alliance were to remove the danger of terrorist groups threatening the US and Western way of life. The unstated goals were an attempt to project US power and British importance in international security. The success of SRA III as seen during the Brown period will need to be analysed to conclude how successful the Brown government was at managing the alliance.

Ultimately, it can be argued that SRA III was a failure for the British and Americans. In relation to the stated goals of the alliance, it became apparent by 2010 that using military conflicts to break up terrorist organisations was not productive. After nine years of war in Afghanistan, al Qaeda was still able to pose a significant threat. From 2011, the US was also beginning to seriously considering talking to the Taliban. Similarly, the invasion of Iraq did not result in terrorist organisations losing a provider of WMDs. Instead, British and American forces were pinned down in a difficult conflict which drew attention away from the war in Afghanistan and allowed terrorist organisations to regroup there after the 2003. The consequence of this was that the British and American militaries struggled to present the levels of power related to the unstated goals of the alliance. For the Americans, the goal of projecting US power after 9/11 did not result in the re-establishment of her superpower credibility. Despite America's hard power, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan highlighted the US inability to present coherent strategies for success. It was the UK however, that was more damaged by these failures. The UK's inability to conduct war in two different countries from 2001 highlighted her weakness as a military power and damaged her credibility in using hard power, resulting in the opposite intended outcome of Britain's unstated goal in the alliance. What the Brown period witnessed was the beginning of the deconstruction of the alliance due to an inability to meet the stated and unstated goals of the alliance.

A brief review of the central arguments presented in Part I and II of this thesis will be undertaken to recap relevant evidence to this study. From this point, the research questions set out at the

beginning of this thesis will be answered to draw final conclusions on the important elements of the research presented here. Finally, areas of further investigation that have emerged from this research will be discussed to indicate important themes that can help contribute to the academic study of this subject area.

#### 14.1. Summary of Part I

The aim of the discussion in Part I was to display a more critical way of using the term the ‘Special Relationship’. By emphasising a more focused usage of the term, this thesis aimed to provide more meaning to the expression to demonstrate that while some aspects of UK-US collaborations were special based on specific criteria, not every element of the relationship can be seen in this way. To assist in determining what could be classified as special, the theories, tools and concepts of the English School and Alliance Theory were used to provide the necessary material to build the framework of the Special Relationship Alliances.

With an analysis of the academic literature on Anglo-American relations as well as the works on contemporary foreign policy matters for the US and the UK, this thesis has highlighted several important elements within these discourses. In regard to UK-US affairs, the literature has demonstrated the extent to which Britain and America have been tied up together and offer varying reasons to explain this trend. Sentiment versus the national interest appears as the most common explanations in these discussions. Similarly, the works on contemporary foreign policies in both countries suggest that many aspects of each country’s international affairs have a considerable impact on each other. All of this emphasises the strong connection between the two countries. Finally, these literature reviews have demonstrated both the gap and the important role that IR theories can have in these studies.

This thesis has sought to engage the discourse on the Special Relationship with the works of certain IR theories. Although there are caveats to the works of the English School and Alliance Theory, such as the underdeveloped conceptual accounts within each body of literature, the overlapping aspects of each theory and the works on the Special Relationship complement each other and allow important conclusions to be made. In regard to the English School, the concept of International Society has provided important explanations on how states are brought together. These notions associated to International Society have been used to understand the relationship as concepts of sovereignty, commonality and volition all play an important part of the Special Relationship. In conjuncture with these notions, the conceptual tools offered by Alliance Theory help put the works of the English School into a security studies context. The views on alliance formation and disintegration offer a flexible way to explain alliances which assists in managing the broad reach of the literature on the Special Relationship. An important element that these

theories have in common with the work on the Special Relationship has been the emphasis placed on political leaders. This has been an important concept which has bridged the various academic literature corpuses to assist in establishing the notion of the SRA.

With these various notions and concepts, it has been possible to create an adaptable model for analysing the interaction between Britain and America via the theory of the SRA. With this understanding, three alliances have been identified. SRA I which took place during the Second World War, SRA II, seen as the nuclear missile alliance of the Cold War and SRA III which emerged during the War on Terror. These alliances have been separate entities with independent norms, roles and goals. In each case, a separate alliance was established through a negotiation process to determine the norms, roles and goals appropriate for the actors involved and the nature of the threat facing the UK and the US. These norms, roles and goals characterised each alliance as separate entities and are the restrictions on how long the alliance would last. Once any of these features breaks down or disintegrates the alliance would lose its rationale for existing. These alliances are in contrast to the existence of ongoing bilateral relations between the two countries. Indeed, throughout the lifespan of these alliances other Anglo-American interactions took place which could be collaborative and even infringe on the close relationship seen in the alliance. These instances however, lacked the significant factors of the SRA, namely the designated norms, roles and goals. With these understandings, an analysis of SRA III and the Brown period was undertaken in Part II of this thesis.

#### 14.2. Summary of Part II

The research presented in Part II of this thesis intended to use primary evidence to explore the development of SRA III after 2001. Through the analysis of the negotiations phase of SRA III the norms, roles and goals of the alliance were presented. These elements of the alliance were established through an informal period of negotiations by Tony Blair and George W. Bush in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks. Although these agreements and subsequent actions by the British and Americans courted controversy and generated criticisms, they were policies ultimately and broadly adopted by their successors. Between 2007 and 2010, both countries witnessed a change in political leadership with the incumbents having a considerable amount of political leverage to gain from moving away from the Blair-Bush period. However, in relation to the War on Terror both Brown and Obama demonstrated a level of continuity in the methods and approaches to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Accordingly, the norms, roles and goals of SRA III were intended to be upheld during the Brown period.

Up until 2009, the war in Iraq had been the central focus in the War on Terror and often epitomised British and American collaborations. The Brown period was important for examining

this conflict as it saw the reduction and withdrawal of British troops from their combat role. To some, this was evidence of a successful strategy and created a model for US forces to follow. To others however, this withdrawal created a strain on the alliance as many saw this withdrawal as a defeat for British forces. Brown's own statement on this issue supported this notion as he explained that it would be US forces that would take on any problems in Basra once British forces left. In many ways, Iraq demonstrated the failure of the alliance as the prolonged conflict led to the overstretch of forces, particularly in the British case and resulted in their withdrawal. In terms of SRA III, the war in Iraq demonstrated Britain's inability to fulfil the norms and roles of the alliance and ultimately jeopardised the goals of the alliance as well as drawing focus away from the war in Afghanistan.

During the Brown period, attention returned to the war in Afghanistan, a war that had been largely overlooked since the invasion of Iraq. With this focus, the problems of the war became more apparent. Deficiencies in equipment, troop deployment, strategy and alliance relations were all highlighted during the Brown period and were related to the difficulties of fighting two long wars at the same time. Despite the high level of criticism that was levied at the Brown government on the war in Afghanistan, his period did see an attempt to address problems concerning troop levels, equipment shortages as well as making public calls for more contributions from other allies. These efforts from Brown demonstrated an attempt to meet the norms and roles of the alliance. However, meeting the goals of SRA III through the war in Afghanistan proved to be less achievable. The difficulties in engaging with the Taliban, both through dialogue or fighting those in Afghanistan and the Pakistan border region restricted the accomplishment of the goals of SRA III. These failures highlighted the unrealistic attempts to completely stop the terrorist networks emanating from the area.

### 14.3. Concluding analysis

As set out in the introduction to this thesis, this research project aimed to answer four research questions in order to contribute to the academic discourse of British and American affairs. This section of the conclusion will now return to each of these questions to fulfil the objectives of this thesis.

#### 1. How can International Relations theories help in understanding the Special Relationship?

It has been said that there is no firm agreement on what is IR theory. At times, it can appear that for every member of a theoretical school, there is a slightly different understanding of what that school stands for. Nevertheless, IR theory plays an important part in developing our understanding of academic discourses and furthering academic discussion. The case of the Special Relationship however, has been an instance where an important and regularly discussed

aspect of IR has not been theorised. This thesis has attempted to use IR theories to contribute to our understanding of the relationship.

Throughout the body of work on the Special Relationship, there have been few attempts to create a theoretical model to understand this bilateral partnership. The result of this absence of any theory has been a less dynamic understanding of the relationship which often takes certain events and themes in order to create a polarised view on how the relationship has developed. The historiographical approach to the relationship provides very little guidance on how to interpret and analyse the relationship other than providing case studies and precedents in the relationship. Through using IR theories, this thesis has suggested that a more flexible approach can be taken to understanding the relationship. Through using the overlapping elements of the English School's views of International Society, the conceptual tools of Alliance Theory and the characteristic elements of the relationship, a theory has been presented to reach these aims of establishing a more flexible approach.

The notion of International Society has been central to creating the model of the SRA as it has provided the conceptual explanations as to why states work together. This explanation relies on emphasising the level of socialisation that takes place between states due to a set of binding institutions and practices while emphasising the sovereignty of states. As also described above, the English School has not engaged much with security studies. By using the tools of Alliance Theory this thesis has attempted to take a step in this direction. Alliance Theory has allowed the notions of International Society which brings together the UK and the US to be placed in the context of global security. The collaboration of these theories has been used in this thesis to offer an explanation for the relationship that differentiates between regular bilateral relations and the unique partnering that has occasionally taken place between the UK and the US.

## 2. How did Gordon Brown's government approach the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan?

A significant part of the SRA model is the notion that the British act as the driving force behind the alliance through their dedication to US leadership and by volunteering to support the American government in its endeavours. This support is usually sourced through the direction of the British prime minister and makes the study of Brown's government crucial to continuing the understandings on the subject. It has been explained that Brown's approach did not substantially alter from the Blair period in regards to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Nevertheless, there are some significant aspects of Brown's government's management of the War on Terror that are important for understanding the broader impact on Anglo-American relations.

On the one hand, there was a considerable amount of criticism levied at Brown and the policy direction he pursued on the War on Terror. Some of this analysis however, can be challenged due to the situation he inherited from the Blair period. Although many believed Brown was distancing himself from the war in Iraq and the Bush administration, Brown remained a staunch supporter of Bush and the war. Similarly, despite significant equipment difficulties in the war in Afghanistan, which did not begin to emerge until after 2007, Brown did work to find a solution on these matters. The problem was that it took a considerable amount of time for the results of these efforts to be perceived. On the other hand, many of the criticisms of Brown not being engaged with the UK armed forces or the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were rooted in his period as Chancellor. During the Blair era, Brown appeared to rarely engage with the decisions being made on the wars. As Brown was the second most powerful person in the Blair government, and as Brown knew that one day he would likely be Blair's successor as prime minister, his attitudes were undermining the wars he would have to take responsibility for once he moved into Number 10. As a result, the close relationship with the US that Brown appeared to have valued would come under strain due to the weaknesses in the British military commitments.

This evidence suggests that Brown's approach to the wars was not as clear cut as many of the polarised views on Brown have suggested. Although it is not the concern of this thesis directly to explore the security agenda of the Brown period, these issues had strong resonance on the nature of Anglo-American military collaborations between 2007 and 2010. What Brown's management of the wars represented for the alliance between Britain and America was a resolve to uphold the partnership despite a lack of engagement with both wars before he entered Number 10. This position suggests that a close relationship with the US was a fundamental factor in his decision making process on military issues in both the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Brown was often determined to appear in lock-step with American military decision making to the extent that it was one of his leading priorities in the war. The extent to which this approach was successful has not been entirely clear.

3. To what extent were British and American policies in Iraq and Afghanistan harmonious during the Brown period?

Between 2007 and 2010, British and American policies in Iraq were centred on moving power over to the Iraqi people. Although both states agreed on the aims of this policy area, the speed in which the UK operated seemed to be out of touch with the progress of the Americans. It has been shown that US officials publicly supported the British timeline of handing over power to the Iraqis. However, due to the retreat from Basra Palace before the Brown period and the fact that responsibility for securing Basra remained with the Americans after the UK withdrawal, there appeared to be a discrepancy in the British ability to responsibly hand over power. This position

was further emphasised by evidence that the US had asked the UK to slow her withdrawal process. From this evidence it does appear that Brown wanted to end the British involvement in Iraq speedily, but equally wanted to remain close to the US. A reason for this retreat may have been less to do with Brown's attempts to move on from the Blair era and more due to the stain on the British armed forces. The practical elements of both the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan highlighted the strain UK forces were under.

In comparison with the central concern of the Iraq war, the war in Afghanistan had broader policy issues that at times stood in the way of Anglo-American cooperation. These troubling matters in the Afghanistan war were largely associated with the practical elements of the conflict. The level of troops and equipment matters highlighted the difference in British and American abilities to conduct warfare. As with Iraq, the prolonged nature of the Afghanistan war strained the British military and resulted in approaches that were not as connected with the US as had been hoped for by UK officials. Similarly, differences in COIN and engagements with locals further demonstrated the differences in policies between the UK and the US. This was clearest in the approaches to Pakistan. Though both countries recognised the need to tackle the threat that emerged from the boarder region, in terms of engaging with the enemy the British and Americans had different strategies and technologies for managing this military policy area. Yet, as with Iraq, there was a British desire to support the US which was evidenced with the calls for greater burden-sharing amongst NATO allies. However, these desires for unity were difficult to meet due to the practical aspects of both countries' militaries.

A common element in both wars was that there was a difference between what the political classes wanted to achieve in the alliance and the practical nature of the military efforts on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan. For the UK in particular, the strain on the armed forces from fighting two wars for several years meant by 2007 the military were struggling to carry out their role effectively. As a result of this gap between political will and military power, it became difficult for the British to sustain harmonious policies with the Americans, and contributed to the failure SRA III.

#### 4. How did Brown's relations with the US reflect the theoretical understanding of the Special Relationship?

Despite the problems that existed between the UK and the US during the Brown period, the understandings of the SRA model appear to have been sustained, even if they were not lived up to. Where there were areas of collaboration and success between the American and British militaries as well as the convergence of views in the political leadership, within the focus of this research, the inability to conduct two wars simultaneously and to match the pace of the US armed

forces made the British military weaknesses more clearly identifiable. As discussed, SRA III by the end of the Brown period can be seen as a failure due to the inability to meet the norms and roles and a failure to accomplish the stated and unstated goals of the alliance. However, the norms, roles and goals do provide a useful way to measure the alliance as reflected in the Brown period. As the political leaders in both the UK and the US attempted continue the alliance established after 2001, they upheld the aspects of the theoretical understandings of the relationship.

#### 14.4. Future Research

The results of this research project have demonstrated several areas where further investigation may prove beneficial for the study of contemporary international security. One of the largest areas for development is analysing the experiences of the British in these wars. As explained, the stated and unstated goals of SRA III were not met. From the British perspective further investigation may reveal why these difficulties appeared. From the research undertaken for this thesis, there are several different explanations for these difficulties. The first is that the origins of the alliance were founded on unsustainable means with goals which were essentially unachievable due to the poorly defined remit of the War on Terror. This explanation places emphasis on the Blair period and his direction of policy. Another account may be that these ends were achievable; yet, the British armed forces were not given the appropriate support to meet them. This understanding would emphasise the role of Brown in the Treasury not providing the economic support for the war. A third answer may be the role of the armed forces that were not straight forward in their assessments of what could be achieved through fighting both wars. This thesis has suggested evidence for each of these explanations and further investigation may provide more guidance on the failure of UK forces in the War on Terror.

A second area for development relates to the Brown government. The research on some of Brown's security and foreign policies has been one of the original contributions of this thesis. An important element to further explore in this discourse would be to examine Brown's approach to Iran. Iran was an important consideration during the Brown period for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the wider region. This subject is also an overlooked element of the period with a rich amount of primary material that may also contribute to understanding the British approach to these wars and Brown's foreign policies.

Finally, the use of the SRA model can be applied to future alliances. A central argument of this thesis has been that each of the alliances presented were independent entities. As a result they should be examined in relation to the unique norms, roles and goals designed to address the specific threat that faces the alliance. With the end of operations in Afghanistan forecast for 2014,

the British and American military collaborations on the War on Terror through SRA III will come to an end. As both countries move on from this experience there may be future periods when Britain and America would form a new alliance, possibly based on intelligence sharing. Recent revelations emerging from the leaking of information by US intelligence analyst Edward Snowden have led to the initial understanding of the depth of UK-US intelligence sharing. It is possible that if another unifying threat emerges, an intelligence alliance could form the basis of another SRA which would establish its own alliance norms, roles and goals. Increasingly, and largely for economic reasons, both the UK and US have been looking to East Asia where the rise of China as an international player marks an important consideration for both countries' security agendas and a potential area for collaborative work.

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