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Principles and Policies: Comparing the Counterterrorist Strategies of United States Think Tanks in the Wake of September 11th

Malcolm Kelly
Union College - Schenectady, NY

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By

Malcolm Kelly

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ABSTRACT

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United States think tanks work in a "marketplace of ideas" where they compete to spread their views and influence policy-makers. Although think tanks often claim to be independent organizations free of politicization, they are political bodies. Analysts in think tanks share common assumptions about international relations and think tanks have clear political orientations, which guide their members while researching and promoting policies to decision makers. To what extent can global events alter or transform these underlying assumptions? Are global events interpreted anew or are they absorbed into the particular core values and basic principles mirrored in think tank mission statements?

This thesis examines three United States think tanks across a wide political spectrum. It seeks to determine if think tanks are capable of amending their worldviews when major global events contradict their underlying principles, or if they simply justify preferred ideas in the policy realm. Specifically, the issue of terrorism will be the focus using 9/11 and the emergence of transnational terrorism as the case study. 9/11 was an unpredictable and unprecedented attack. The United States had rarely faced an enemy like transnational terrorism. This thesis ultimately argues that United States think tanks do not generate the abundance of new thinking they advocate. By examining how each think tank reacted to September 11th and by comparing dozens of policy briefs before and

after the attacks in regards to terrorism, it becomes clear that principles will always

formulate policy preferences.

Table of Contents

Chapter I. Introduction

About twenty-five years after the end of the Cold War and fourteen years after the attacks of September 11th 2001, President Barack Obama is still expressing American ideas that stemmed from both events. These ideas were echoed in his commencement speech last spring given to graduating West Point cadets. The first echoed President George H.W. Bush's "new world order" and reinforced the notion that the United States has emerged as and still is the protector of the free world. President Obama declared, "it will be your generations responsibility to respond to this new world…but my bottom line is this: America must always lead on the world stage" (Cohen 2014). The second mirrored George W. Bush's declaration of the "War on Terror," as President Obama announced, "the most direct threat to America at home and abroad remains to be terrorism" (Cohen 2014). If one can take something away from this speech it is those two points, that we as the United States are still the world's only super power and that transnational terrorism is our biggest threat.

Although terrorism still remains our largest threat today, we have over these past fourteen years learned a lot about it. We have developed better strategies to counter terrorism and determined which policies work and which do not. Obama addressed September 11th and transnational terrorism again this winter in his 2015 State of the Union. He stated, "we are fifteen years into this century. Fifteen years that dawned with terror touching our shores; that unfolded with a new generation fighting two costly wars" (Obama 2015). Obama demonstrated our better understanding and preferred policies of

today by juxtaposing that previous statement with a later one where he declared, "instead

of sending large ground forces overseas, we're partnering with nations from South Asia

to North Africa to deny safe haven to terrorists who threaten America" (Obama 2015).

He then continued by stating, "instead of getting dragged into another ground war in the

Middle East, we are leading a broad coalition to degrade and ultimately destroy terrorist

groups there" (Obama 2015). The President clearly has expressed our firmer

understanding of transnational terrorism and the fine-tuning of our policies toward it,

even if it is still not perfected.

When did we transition from the long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to this newer

rhetoric explicitly declaring not to repeat mistakes we have made there? It is in part due

to our fourteen years of trial and error in our dealings with transnational terrorism.

However, it is also a result of new thinking on the subject that stems from within our

country. Aside from within our government, there are seemingly endless influences on

United States foreign policy. However, unlike the severe politicization that most policy

outlets fall victim to, the United States think tank aims to influence policy makers while

generally trying to shield itself from outside political pressures. Although it cannot be

physically measured how much influence United States think tanks have had on our

policies, they are no doubt a major player in the "market of ideas." Richard Haass makes

it clear that:

> "Since September 11th studies by various United States think tanks have all contributed to the
> discussions within the government over the proper strategies needed to confront the terrorist threat
> at home and abroad" ((Haass 2002: 6).

Besides the fact that they are much older, United States "think tanks" can be

differentiated from their more recently formed and global equivalents by the level of their

involvement in public policy-making. According to Donald E. Abelson, Professor of

Political Science at the University of Western Ontario and the author of two books on think tanks, "U.S. think tanks are distinguished from their counterparts in other countries by their ability to participate directly and indirectly in policy-making and by the willingness of policy-makers to turn to them for policy advice" (Abelson 2002: 9). Due to this fact, Abelson expresses it was no surprise that in the frantic wake of September 11, 2001, policy makers and media outlets alike turned to the guidance of United States think tanks, who in turn jumped at the "opportunity to comment on one of the most tragic days in contemporary American history" (Abelson 2002: 9). The *American Political Science Review* conveyed the exact same notion stating, "in times of uncertainty strong incentives are created for government officials charged with making foreign policy decisions to respond to experts from think tanks" (Jacobs & Benjamin 2008: 105). This "response" from policy-makers is ultimately why American think tanks exist and it is what motivates them to continue their work.

Richard Haass appropriately labels United States think tanks as "idea factories" (Haass 2002: 6). In their simplest form, the modern U.S. think tank's mission is "generating and advocating 'new thinking' that changes the way that U.S. decision makers perceive and respond to the world" (Haass 2002: 6). Haass praises think tanks labeling them as "the link between academia and government desiring to bridge the gap between theory and the implementation of actual policy" (Haass 2002: 5). Abelson takes Haass' idea a step further announcing think tanks are in the "business of developing, repackaging, and marketing ideas to policy-makers and the public" (Abelson 2002: 9). But if think tanks are in the business of ideas with the end goal of influencing policy-

making, they must establish themselves as independent of any other interest group, lobbyist, or advocacy group that exists in the wider market of ideas.

There are seemingly an infinite number of ways in which think tanks approach getting the attention of policy-makers. Among these being:

> "Publishing articles, books, papers…appearing on television, op-ed pages, newspaper, and radio interviews…producing briefs, web pages, and fact sheets… testifying before congress and attending congressional hearings" (Haass: 6).

Although all think tanks utilize these mechanisms, they differ vastly in a number of ways. For starters, think tanks differ immensely across the ideological and political spectrum. Although most claim to favor no one ideology or political party, every think tank expresses a certain set of core ideologies and tends to lean more towards one side of the political spectrum than the other. Other differences include such characteristics as where they get their funding from, their size, and their focus. However, think tanks may also openly express that they are indeed connected with a political party, corporation, university, or branch of government. All of these attributes mentioned as differences among United States think tanks ultimately end up shaping the ideas that they are coming up with and marketing to policy-makers and the public. It is due to this fact that there is a significant amount of debate amongst think tanks as they differ immensely. Not only do think tanks separate themselves by their size and research focuses but also by their preferred policies. This is not surprising because after all, think tanks are ultimately competing to influence policy-makers in an open and ever changing market where the globalizing world constantly calls for new information and strategy.

Just as any single individual lives their life with a base set of core values and basic principles, any single think tanker also conducts their research and presents their findings with their particular think tank's core principles in mind. How they organize

their research and the conclusions they come to are chosen purposely in order to influence policy makers, even if this happens subconsciously. Even if there is internal conflict within an individual think tank, members will generally agree on those core values and basic principles reflected in their respected think tank's mission statements and agreement within think tanks will generally converge onto the specific policy brief that their institution puts forth. Therefore, whatever research is done or whatever final ideas a think tank pitches to policy-makers will most often be extensions of their base set of core values and basic principles outlined in their general mission statements.

As briefly mentioned above, it is often more apparent than others to decipher what policies any particular think tank desires to promote. These think tanks tend to openly admit being affiliated with a certain political party, academic institution, progressive movement, etc., and they often mesh with whatever body they partner with. As an example, RAND Corporation focuses primarily on research and analysis dealing with all forms of United States security issues from energy and health to international and military affairs. RAND also produces studies for the Armed Forces and receives funding from certain levels in the U.S. government. Think tankers who become members of RAND must genuinely believe in RAND's mission statements and relate its core values and basic principles to their own. Therefore, members of think tanks can be viewed as extensions of that think tank. What the individual think tank stands to promote is generally similar to what its individual members stand for in their political, economic, and social lives. It is think tanks such as RAND where one could arguably predict what policy RAND would pitch on any certain issue without one necessarily being familiar with a lot of RAND research. In other words it is as if a person declared they where a

Democrat. Without knowing that person at all, one could arguably make a case that they could provide a basis for that person's political, economic, and social preferences based off the knowledge of the political party they affiliate with.

For other think tanks such as Brookings Institute, which is examined in this thesis, understanding their core values and basic principles is far more complex. Because Brookings does not openly affiliate with any particular branch of government or interest group, one could debatably not predict what policies Brookings may promote on a certain issue without first familiarizing themselves with the literature put forth by the institute. Moreover, Brookings is one of the largest and most centrist think tanks, which covers a wide variety of issues over a great number of topics and it has broad mission statements that can be open to much interpretation. Therefore, getting to the core values and basic principles of such a wide-open think tank and unfolding the individual identity of the institution is far more complex in comparison to the more easily understood RAND Corporation. When think tanks such as Brookings have internal conflict amongst themselves, it may be a lengthier process for its fellows to reach a policy agreement they want to pitch decision makers. Nevertheless, Brookings still aims to promote the core values and basic principles stressed in their mission statements just as organizations such as RAND do, which these policies put forth will always do so.

Stephan Krasner, Senior Fellow at Hoover Institution, exemplifies this idea of "core beliefs" when he described the formation of Hoover's Foreign Policy and Grand Strategy Team, which he chairs. Krasner stated that United States foreign policy since 9/11 has been "ad hoc." He declared that the United States policies have been especially ad hoc in their dealing with failed states and transnational terrorism. He believes that the

United States has struggled to establish what it should be doing in terms of "general principles." Krasner's plan with creating the Foreign Policy and Grand Strategy Team is simple. Hoover wants to come up with the pitch, based off of its general and foreign policy mission statements, that "emerges with some kind of overall assessment, set of guidelines, policies, or even a new grand strategy that we can describe in a single word like 'containment' that would provide guidance for American foreign policy" (Hoover Institute 2014). It is no surprise Hoover desires to do this for two reasons. First, influencing policy is the purpose of Hoover. Second, it is reflected in Hoover's foreign policy mission statements that, "reactive and ad hoc measures are inadequate." Therefore, changing the current strategy is something Hoover members are obligated to do in order to fix U.S. foreign policy to meet their core values. In other words, Hoover Institute desires to use its own core values and basic principles, expressed in their mission statements, to influence the policy-makers who are deciding the current U.S. foreign policy.

Even if policy makers adopted Hoover's ideas, only Hoover would be completely content. Think tanks all over the United States would go back to the drawing board in order to oust Hoover's policies for their own. Moreover, opposing think tanks would reinforce to policy-makers that their preferred policies are better than those provided by Hoover. Constant debate across and within think tanks would ensue with the end goal of seeing the United States adopt policy paralleling their own core values and basic principles. It interesting is that 14 years after the attacks on September 11, policy-makers and most importantly for this thesis, think tanks, still do not have a concrete formula for dealing with transnational terrorism and non-state actors. That being said, even if some

form of counterterrorist strategy was implemented there would still be even further think tank disputes over it.

For the very reasons mentioned above, which outlines the fact that think tanks act with their own core belief systems in mind, Jonathon Rowe was quoted as saying, "the term 'think' in think tanks is a misnomer, they don't think; they justify" (Rampton & Stauber 2002). What Rowe meant was simple, think tanks do not perform much of the new thinking they advertise because once they start analyzing an issue, they already know what they desire to say about it and ultimately what they want to pitch policy-makers and the public. In Rowe's view, think tanks are no different than any other political party, lobbyist, or special interest group who desires to frame policy and debates in their favor.

So who does one trust? Do think tanks behave as Richard Haass suggests, constantly generating and advocating "new thinking" into the idea market? Or are think tanks more as Rowe suggests, simply applying their core values, basic principles, and underlying belief systems on any issue that presents itself as they continuously compete to win over policy-makers? Could an event occur large enough to force think tanks to generate new thinking contrary to their core values like Haass believes? Or will think tanks constantly justify issues and world events to align with their basic principles as Rowe insinuates? Is it possible for think tanks to perhaps demonstrate cases of both, generating new thinking while holding on to underlying beliefs?

This thesis seeks to examine these preconceived notions of think tanks and answer the questions addressed in the above paragraphs. Specifically it examines whether or not think tanks are the independent organizations free of politicization that they so often

claim to be. Think tanks exist to influence policy-makers and no two think tanks are the same. Therefore, there is constant competition and dispute among think tanks as well as within them. It would appear that avoiding politicization in the dissemination process of policies and research to policy-makers is impossible. There would be no debate or competition amongst think tanks if they were not always operating under their own individual core values and basic principles outlined in their mission statements. Moreover, this thesis sides with Rowe and attempts to prove that even if think tanks are generating new thinking, it is never contrary to their basic principles. Think tanks will always frame issues and events to align with their policy preferences and use new issues and events to only take harder stances on their preferred policies reinforcing the importance of their own values to policy-makers.

Richard Haass wrote, "certain historical junctures present exceptional opportunities to inject new thinking into the foreign policy area" (Haass 2002: 6). In other words, since the emergence of think tanks there have always been a number of events that have allowed them to have a boom in new thinking, research, and influence on United States public policy. More specifically, there have been a number of events that have allowed for the same thinking, research, and influence on United States foreign policy. Most notably these historical events on the global timeline were WWI, WWII, the Cold War, and September 11th. However, only the unique case of September 11th will be examined in this thesis.

The attacks on the World Trade Center changed the game forever. No longer were we as the U.S. facing another nation-state like Germany or the Soviet Union or different ideologies like Fascism and Communism. Now we were facing transnational

terrorists who behaved as non-state actors with highly complex end goals in a world with endless and readily available technological, intelligence, and defense capabilities. Most importantly, unlike the World Wars or the Cold War, we were unable to predict the attacks of September 11th and the rise of transnational terrorism. Therefore, using September 11th and the emergence of transnational terrorism is a perfect case study for this thesis. Because 9/11 was such an unprecedented and unpredictable attack and Al-Qaeda was an enemy never before seen by the United States, think tanks could not have formulated any pre-standing strategies and policies to combat and prevent such an adversary. The concept of the non-state actor was new and waging conventional war against such an untraditional enemy with such advanced capabilities was not widely discussed prior to 9/11. In the wake of September 11th, think tanks would either do as Haass suggested and could have begun generating vast sums of new thinking towards a brand new unknown threat or they could have reshaped and adapted their core values, basic principles, and underlying beliefs to correspond to this new enemy. Even still, think tanks may have done a combination of both.

Research for this thesis was conducted by examining three different types of United States think tanks across the political spectrum. The Brookings Institute, Cato Institute, and the Hoover Institution were the think tanks in focus. Brookings represents one of the oldest and most influential think tanks in the United States and was chosen partly due to its left leaning centrist ideology so it could represent the left side of the political spectrum. It was also chosen for its covering of a wide range of issues from domestic to foreign and most importantly due to its specific foreign policy goal of a peaceful and cooperative international system. Cato Institute was chosen because it

openly admits to being an independent think tank founded on Libertarian principles. Like the example above describing RAND, Cato was chosen due to the fact it openly admitted being affiliated with a political ideology. Determining if Cato strayed from its libertarian values while creating counterterrorist policies was closely followed during research and in this work. The Hoover Institution was picked as it represented the opposite end of the spectrum of Brookings, as represents the right. However, where Brookings tends to lean between left and centrist in most cases, Hoover is most often explicitly on the right. Hoover was also chosen due to the fact that it affiliates with a college, as it is located at Stanford University. Most importantly it was picked for its hawkish stance on global affairs and its very short and simple mission statements, which leave room for multiple interpretations.

Once the think tanks were selected, research was carried out by examining the policy briefs, articles, testimonies, studies, etc. put forth by each think tank on counterterrorism. Because the purpose of this thesis is to detect whether or not each think tank generated new thinking or reinforced old thinking, works both immediately before 9/11 and immediately after 9/11 were compared and contrasted. Literature by each think tank from the mid 1990s up until 2004 were examined to determine if they indeed generated new thinking or simply justified old thinking in regards to counterterrorism. The policy briefs were accessed by logging on to each think tank's website and clicking their "research issues" tabs. From there, each think tanks equivalent of "foreign policy" or "defense" tabs were clicked. At that point a filtered search was conducted with "terrorism" as the key word, with the search still being carried out within each think tanks defense and foreign policy research tabs. The dates of the search were also filtered. First

the dates chosen were from 1990-2000 in order to understand each think tank's polices toward terrorism prior to 9/11. Then the dates were fixed to 2001-2003 in order to determine how 9/11 and the rise of transnational terrorism effected their pre-standing notions as well as their policies moving forward with terrorism.

Briefly, the findings of this thesis were in line with Jonathan Rowe's definition of think tanks. Although 9/11 and transnational terrorism was a very new issue, it mattered very little for each think tank. Policies put forth after the attacks were simply harsher stances and toned policies of strategies presented before 9/11. Only one instance of a think tank straying from its core values was present and it stands as an exception in this thesis. Cato did demonstrate an instance in which it went against its basic principles during the midst of the War on Terror. Cato ended up straying from its ultimate goals of the War on Terror. They first declared the United States must as in a unilateral way being wary of allying with certain countries. They also initially declared the enemy in the War on Terror was only Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. However, as time went on Cato was calling for allies they otherwise would not in order to fight Al-Qaeda worldwide. However, this situation is overwhelmed by the surrounding evidence that proves United States think tanks are not the "idea factories" they are often made out to be but simply organizations working with their own missions in mind.

Chapter II. Redefining Terrorism

Before addressing the specific effects September 11th had on the think tanks in focus, it is important to examine the initial learning period each particular institution went through in the immediate wake of the attacks. Prior to the attacks, each think tank had its own view of what terrorism was and how to approach handling it. Although their reactions deal more with a shift in understanding about terrorism amongst the think tanks rather than a potential shift in their basic principles, core values, and underlying ideologies, they give further insight into the individual identities of each think tank. With their preconceived notions of terrorism and counterterrorism in question, each think tank was initially forced to frame the event in a way that would ultimately align with their basic principles, core values, and underlying ideologies.

In the initial shock period, each think tank realized the demand for their primary raison d'etre—ideas—was going to skyrocket and that they had better be prepared. The attacks were Richard Haass' "modern historical juncture" that provided think tanks with the opportunity to "inject large amounts of their thinking into the foreign policy arena" (Haass 2002: 6). Think tanks certainly recognized this and did just as Abelson suggested, "jumped at the opportunity to comment on one of the most tragic days in contemporary United States history" (Abelson 2002: 9). Think tanks were faced with the same confusing questions as the entire nation. Who was responsible? How could the United States not have foreseen this? How do we prevent this in the future? What were our next steps? One must bear in mind however, that nobody had the answers to these questions

right away. Due to this fact, the initial comments made by think tanks after the attacks were broad, overarching, and vague statements reflecting their basics principles, core beliefs, and underlying ideologies almost identically. Nevertheless, one theme remained constant across all three think tanks. Each think tank presented literature demonstrating that their pre-9/11 understanding of the capabilities of terrorism had changed.

There are ultimately three shared views of terrorism in the pre-9/11 world across the three think tanks. Though the views are shared, there was a disagreement over how to handle them. The first, and perhaps most obvious, was the assumption that a major terrorist attack was coming but would never occur on United States soil. The capabilities of terrorist organizations were seriously underestimated and not yet taken seriously. Because of this, the second shared view framed terrorism as a kind of international crime that could only have the potential to pose a serious threat in the event that a particular organization obtained Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The third factor labeled terrorism as one of the many contributions that helped define a failing or third world country as a "rogue state" or "state of concern." According to this view, terrorism was not the direct threat to the United States but rather the instability of the states where terrorism operated posed security issues.

The obliviousness to the attacks is seen in works published by all three think tanks. In 2000 Richard Haass produced an article in which he projected a number of threats the United States would face in the first ten years of the new century. He declared, "sooner or later we will awaken to the news of some terrorist attack…we will have to decide whether to act even though our vital national security interests will not be involved" (Haass 2000). Cato's Ivan Eland wrote, "as serious and catastrophic an attack

on the homeland might prove, it is highly unlikely…it could never undermine the national security or survival of the United States" (Eland 1999). And Hoover's Abraham Sofaer suggested strengthening defense of the only places he believed terrorists could target, "international airports, the internet, and our embassies abroad" (Sofaer 1999).

The Hoover Institute had the strongest rhetoric labeling terrorism as a form of international crime. For example, Abraham Sofaer published a work titled *Five Ways to Beat Thugs*. In the article he stressed the importance of the CIA and FBI's need to increase their capabilities in order to arrest and try terrorists (Sofaer 1999). Many Brookings articles represented the same idea suggesting terrorism was not a defense or military issue. Brookings works addressing Osama bin Laden prior to 9/11 suggested US lead "man hunts" and "commando raids" to arrest him, that is if they even wanted to remove the man from Afghanistan at all (O'Hanlon 1998). And perhaps most undermining were the Cato works that labeled terrorism as the "weakest actor in the international system" (Eland 1998) and a "nuisance" (Eland 1998). Although pre-9/11 terrorist were seen more as international criminals than national security threats, they were taken much more seriously when the topic of WMD arose.

Hoover and Cato saw WMD and terrorism as linked, whereas Brookings separated the two while still sharing the same concerns. Pre-9/11, WMD were the issue for both Hoover and Cato. If the weakest threat in the world, the terrorist, could seize WMD, they could become a very serious threat. Hoover tried to express that, "threats of the post Cold war world are falsely believed to be remote and abroad but the new era allows for them to gain WMD" (Perry & Carter 1999) and be far more close. Cato similarly stated WMD "increasingly makes the world's Goliath vulnerable to the weakest

possible actors" (Eland 1998). Brookings expressed the same idea that indeed terrorists would become considerably more dangerous with WMD in their arsenal however, they did not want to disregard the threat of terrorism without WMD. Here stands one of the main differences among the think tanks in how to handle terrorism pre-9/11. Where preventing WMD would debatably prevent terrorism in Hoover and Cato's beliefs, it would not for Brookings. Mike O'Hanlon of Brookings expressed this in his criticisms of George Bush's 2001 defense reforms. In his brief he complemented President Bush for labeling current reforms as "inappropriate for modern times" however, O'Hanlon criticized Bush for placing too much emphasis on WMD (O'Hanlon 2001).

Terrorism as a contributing actor to failing states was prevalent in all three think tanks and is closely linked to the WMD issue. In 2000, a Cato researcher declared "terrorism as the chief weapon of weak states" (Bandow 2000), insinuating that terrorism is in fact a tool utilized by weak states. Hoover took this a step further declaring, "WMD will only expand rogue states ambitions even further, giving them deadly bargaining chips" and that "their links to free-wheeling terrorist cells blur the lines between state and non-state actors" (Henrikson 1999). This distinction between state and non-state actors will be addressed in greater depth in later chapters. The same article even goes as far as to label certain failing states as "terrorist rogues." It was clear that for Hoover and Cato, WMD, along with the presence of terrorism, would only help bring failing states to the negotiation table and perhaps make the U.S. more inclined to meet their demands. Brookings did in fact label both WMD and terrorism as factors contributing to failed states but did not show signs of rogue states potential usage of terrorism to their benefits. Nevertheless, Brookings did emphasize the danger of terrorist organizations being close

to gaining WMD and its dangers. This is expressed in an article from 2000 titled *Replacing the Rogue Rhetoric* by Meaghan O'Sullivan. In the article she praised the Clinton administrations change in the wording of "rogue states" to "states of concern." However, she criticizes current policies taken by the U.S. against these states declaring they were "impervious to our punitive measures" in regards to WMD and harboring of terrorists.

Although their understanding of terrorism prior to 9/11 was relatively similar, their way of countering it was very different. It is here that one can begin to understand the identity of the three individual think tanks. Before the attacks, how each think tank dealt with terrorism offers a serious insight into their basic principles, core values, and underlying ideologies. Knowing how they handled terrorism pre-2001 is very important in order to understand their counter intelligence efforts later. These policies were the foundation for their initial reactions in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 and were the blueprints for the policies that came later as the earlier stages of the War on Terror unfolded. Both these policies and their initial responses to the attacks by these think tanks probably best exemplify their basic principles, core values, and underlying beliefs.

It is to no surprise that Brookings, who seeks to "secure a more open, safe, prosperous, and cooperative international system" (Brookings Institute Mission Statement) dealt with terrorism in a state-state manner. As mentioned, each think tank saw terrorism as just a contributing factor to the greater list of problems amongst failing states. Brookings, therefore, sought to counter terrorism multilaterally dealing with the states where terrorism operated. Moving unilaterally was counter to their general and foreign policy mission statement goals and would only make matters worse.

There were a few ways Brookings suggested taking action against terrorism in the pre-9/11 world. One was through punitive measures (O'Hanlon). They suggested that this could in fact be done unilaterally in order to demonstrate to terrorists that the United States was willing to "abandon political and legal constraints" to destroy them. However, this method took a serious back seat to cooperating with state governments in "engagement theories" (O'Sullivan & Haass 2000). Brookings favored two types of engagement, conditional and unconditional. Conditional engagement dealt with state-state relationships where the U.S. would incentivize and help a country to take care of terrorism by making certain concessions to it. For instance bribing a nation such as Libya by offering it its removal from the "national terrorist list" (O'Sullivan & Haass 2000) may incentivize it to address the situation. Unconditional engagement worked the same way however, the U.S. did not necessarily agree to any form of a reciprocal relationship. The latter policy was preferred as rogue states were considered dangerous and could not be given too many concessions. This policy also allowed for O'Hanlon's punitive strikes to be more appropriate if needed, as they were a form of incentivizing. If a nation wanted terrorism out of its land, allowing the U.S. to strike would take care of that. On the other hand if a country did not necessarily desire U.S. strikes, it could motivate them to handle the situation themselves.

Special operations and certain military actions were entertained but Brookings made it clear that prior to 9/11 terrorism was not a military issue. The notion of "rooting out, not bombing out" (Deng 1998) terrorism held strong in favor of diplomatic approaches with punitive strikes only when necessary. The preferred method was impeding on terrorism before it could expand as if it were organized crime or a disease.

Therefore, aiming to "promote stability abroad among weak and failing states before they became a platform for terrorism" was essential, but doing so "in partnership with others in order to advance our interests" (Brookings Foreign Policy Mission Statement) was the favored policy.

As mentioned, Cato was founded on "libertarian principles" (Cato Institute Mission Statement) and promoted policies one might expect an institution with such underlying libertarian ideologies to express. In their view, terrorism was by no means a strategic threat to the United States. Their general mission statement focuses far more on domestic affairs such as "individual liberty, limited government, and a free market." The only foreign aspect of their general mission statement includes "peace," and how to preserve it in their eyes is relatively easy. "The United States is relatively secure and therefore should engage in the world freely to work on common concerns but should avoid trying to dominate it militarily" (Cato Institute Foreign Policy Mission Statement). In other words, because the United States had no real direct threat other than WMD, Cato became most concerned with homeland defense technologies and limiting United States presence abroad.

In order to combat terrorism, Cato put forth isolationist policies. Although they declare the term "isolationist" to be too harsh a word, it bests describes their terrorist policies prior to 9/11. Most work done by Cato before 9/11 sought less to counter terrorism than to answer the question of "why is the United States vulnerable to terrorist attacks?" Their answer was simply, "terrorists attack U.S. targets because they perceive that the United States is a hegemonic superpower that often intervenes in the affairs of other nations and groups" (Eland 1999). They believed America's "swaggering around

the world like a giant" (Eland 1998) was what was making it vulnerable. For them, terrorism was not a big enough threat to warrant any United States action. Cato demonstrated this with a number of statistical research reports that declared the number of U.S. deaths due to terrorism were minuscule while terrorist related deaths tended to rise with our endless presence abroad (Kopel 1996). In other words, don't provoke terrorism in order to combat it. Terrorism will never cease to exist so United States counter efforts will only make things worse. The reason Cato placed so much emphasis on WMD now becomes clear. They believed terrorists had no lethal maneuver on United States security other than obtaining WMD. If American WMD technologies were up to speed, diplomats were promoting the end of proliferation, and the armed forces limited their presence abroad, the United States would not be subject to terrorism.

Hoover represented a cross between Brookings and Cato favoring the more aggressive side of Brookings with the conservative precaution of Cato. Hoover does not have as extensive mission statements as Brookings or Cato. Hoover also does not have specific mission statements for each of its specific research areas while Brookings and Cato do. This makes Hoover both simpler as well as more complex. On the one hand, their general mission is simple. On the other hand it leaves room for a broad interpretation as to which policies actually fall under their basic principles and which do not. For example, a common complaint towards Hoover during the early stages of the War on Terror was that they were labeling too many issues as combating terrorism. This will be covered in a later chapter, but Hoover was the only one of the three think tanks that supported President Bush's decision to invade Iraq and topple Saddam Hussein in 2003. Hoover labeled invading Iraq as part of the greater mission of fighting terrorism in

failing and hostile states. Then Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, is a Senior Fellow at Hoover Institution.

Hoover's general mission statement can be summed up as follows, "seeking to secure and safeguard peace, improve the human condition, and limit government intrusion into the lives of individuals" (Hoover Institution Mission Statement). Like Cato, Hoover's mission statement generally focuses on limiting domestic government interference however; the following excerpt outlines their foreign policy principles:

> The overall mission of this Institution is, from its records, to recall the voice of experience against the making of war, and by the study of these records and their publication, to recall man's endeavors to make and preserve peace, and to sustain for America the safeguards of the American way of life. This Institution is not, and must not be, a mere library. But with these purposes as its goal, the Institution itself must constantly and dynamically point the road to peace, to personal freedom, and to the safeguards of the American system." (Hoover Institution Mission Statement)

It becomes clear that the above mission statement leaves a lot of room for how the United States can "preserve peace," "point to freedom," and "sustain the safeguards of the American way of life."

The Hoover Institution's handling of terrorism prior to 9/11 can be defined as preemptive action. However, this action against terrorism was much different than Brookings Institute. Where Brookings sought to work diplomatically with states that have terrorists operating within them, Hoover outright expressed that we had the right to move unilaterally if we determined a potential threat to the United States and we should do so if necessary. This again brings up the controversial subject of what kind of terrorism warrants the United States to violate state sovereignty in order to combat it, however that will be addressed later. A Hoover article titled *Triple Threat* expressed, "defending against WMD and terrorism depends on our ability and willingness to take preemptive action if we see a threat that's likely to come at us…it's something we should be worrying about much more than we are" (Perry, Schultz, Robinson 1997).

Hoover, like Brookings, also saw terrorists as criminals who must be captured and tried. However, Hoover researchers noted that terrorists were willing to die for their causes making them more than criminals. Therefore, trials and jail time would perhaps not be enough to intimidate or combat these terrorist criminals. This only enforced Hoover's policies of preemptive action and radicalized it enough for many Hoover writers to be calling for termination of terrorists (Sofaer 1999). For example, Hoover was the only of the think tanks prior to 9/11 to call for the assassination of Osama bin Laden (Sofaer 1999). For Hoover there were no "A-list threats" to the United States in the present post-Cold War world. Therefore, taking every step necessary to prevent new A-list threats caused the United States to lean towards combating B and C-list threats, ensuring they could not become A-level (Perry & Carter 1999). Whether those threats were WMD or terrorists, Hoover was ready to take action prior to 9/11.

What these think tanks produced in terms of policies after September 11th will constitute the remainder of this thesis however, examining their initial reactions must be touched upon. What happened immediately following the attacks was a panic. As mentioned earlier, the attacks were the juncture that allowed think tanks to come into the national spotlight. But initially, think tanks had no more answers than any other institution in or outside of the government that dealt with policy-making decisions and foreign policy. What resulted was an initial adaptation of each think tanks basic principles, core values, and underlying ideologies. As will be seen later, these initial reactions continued to be sharpened in order to compose each think tank's grand strategy in the War on Terror. These policies did not completely change rather they were

readjusted to face transnational terrorism while holding true to each think tanks core values and basic principles.

Each think tank made subtle changes in their work that still fit their mission statements but was reshaped in a new light, framed for a new world where terrorists could hijack planes and attack American economic and defense epicenters. For each think tank, terrorists were now accepted to be their own non-state transnational entities. No longer were they a form of international crime or just a characteristic of a rogue state. For Brookings, punitive strikes were no longer enough. What was not a military matter before, was certainly going to become one. However, they enforced the need to move multilaterally even more, and still stressed the importance of diplomacy in order to solve the problem of terrorism. What changed was a subtle increase in forceful tactics covered by an even higher demand to impede on terrorism before it could act. For Cato, the use of United States military action was justified under their mission statement, as the only thing that could warrant it had happened, an attack on the homeland. However, isolationist tendencies from before were reinforced in how to choose allies and which countries to become involved with in the fight against Al-Qaeda. For Hoover, terrorists quickly jumped to the A-list threat level. They defined terrorism as the new "ism" that the United States must face off against just as it had Fascism and Communism. It became totally clear that the think tanks had redefined their prior beliefs systems on terrorism.

No real change in basic principles, core values, and underlying ideologies are present in each think tanks policy preferences towards terrorism during this redefining period. However, a lot can be learned which will further help with the understanding of

these think tanks. Their works before 9/11 mirrored their mission statements and they stood as examples of each think tanks individual identity. Brookings' work represented their desire for a cooperative global system that faces issues multilaterally. Cato's libertarian tendencies had them representing isolationist policies and defense of the homeland over all else. Hoovers preemptive action demonstrated the ends they were willing to go to in order to sustain American life. Once 9/11 occurred, these think tanks realized their preconceived beliefs of terrorist capabilities were far more advanced than they thought, however, their initial responses to handling terrorists were not all that different. These think tanks rather made subtle changes in their work that framed the attacks to fit their mission statements. Brookings still preached global cooperation but with more force. Cato supported military action but only because it was warranted under their beliefs while they still favored isolation. Hoover moved terrorists from C-list threats to A-list threats. By framing terrorism as the new "ism," it became the newest enemy of what Hoover stands for, United States democracy.

If anything, the initial adaptation and reframing of their policies stand to represent that these think tanks could simply justified this attack in their own light. They were adapted and reframed the attacks to fit their basic principles, as they had to redefine their understanding of terrorism. The truest form of these think tanks identities is represented both prior to 9/11 and then in their initial responses. As the rest of the paper will demonstrate, as time progressed, more and more conflict arose as to how to counter terrorism and fight the War on Terror both across the think tanks as well as within them. However, as the war raged on, each think tank became more and more inclined to put forth policies parallel to their mission statements. One would think that with such a new

enemy, new ideas and adaptations of old ideas would arise. However, this was not the

case and each think tank ended up taking harder stances on their own policies, which

represented the same core values, basic principles, and underlying beliefs as their initial

9/11 reactions.

Chapter III. Who Were We Fighting? – Defining the Enemy

The previous chapter clearly demonstrated that after September 11th, each think tank saw transnational terrorism as its own entity. No longer was it just a characteristic of a rogue state or some form of international crime. Terrorist organizations proved that they were capable of operating as their own non-state actors and planned on working with their own interests and agendas. For Brookings, terrorists moved from a non-military issue to one that needed to be heavily handled by the military in an attempt to maintain global order. For Cato, what was not a strategic threat to the United States had become one over night. And for Hoover, they unsuspectingly found their new A-list threat to United States democracy. Something as complex and abstract as terrorism was now something the United States would wage war against.

But who was responsible for the attacks? Fortunately, this question was answered quickly and the terrorist organization known as Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility. One would think with such a clear understanding of the enemy's identity, taking counter measures against them would come just as naturally. However, this is not the case with transnational terrorism. There are too many irregularities that come with fighting terrorists that are not particularly present while fighting a traditional enemy nation-state. This is of course one of the most important reasons 9/11 is a perfect case study while examining the basic principles, core values, and underlying belief systems of these think

tanks. Transnational terrorism was an enemy never before seen that succeeded in attacking the United States homeland and because of that fact it absolutely had to be confronted. This forced these think tanks to continuously show signs of their true identities over time and ultimately present policies in line with their basic principles.

Although the think tanks knew Al-Qaeda was directly responsible, what steps to take against them were a lot less clear. The only fact the three think tanks could agree on was that in the initial phases of the War on Terror, Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda were the targets. Issues arose among, and across, the three think tanks when the nation-state of Afghanistan, the Taliban regime, and the broader meaning of the "War on Terror" were addressed. Was the United States at war with Al-Qaeda, Afghanistan, the Taliban, all terrorist organizations, or perhaps all or just some of these bodies? In order to approach conventional fighting against such an unconventional enemy, these questions had to be answered. In other words, before going to war and providing policy on how to fight terrorism, which each think tank firmly agreed was necessary, defining the enemy had to be better established. Ultimately, who each think tank saw as the adversary over time directly related to the policies they would suggest in countering them.

Cato produced the least complex adversary the United States should fight. As mentioned, the only thing that warranted war in Cato's eyes had taken place, an attack on the United States homeland. Senior Fellow Ivan Eland noted in 2002 "terrorists were never a strategic threat until now" (Eland 2002). Therefore, whoever committed this attack and was producing the strategic threat was Cato's target. That being said, Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden were the only foe in Cato's understanding of the War on

Terror. Every step taken in the effort of the war should be toward destroying Al-Qaeda and ensuring that it was no longer a vital hazard to United States security.

Recalling from their mission statement, Cato believes that "the United States is already relatively secure" and that a "principled and refrained foreign policy keeps the nation out of most conflicts" (Cato Institute Foreign Policy Mission Statement). It is to no surprise that Cato picked such a simplified way of defining the enemy with its isolationist tendencies. Ted Carpenter wrote in 2001 that waging war with any other terrorist organizations, or perhaps the nation-states harboring them, would be "violating the one very crucial aspect when committing to waging war…that the objectives are clear and obtainable" (Carpenter 2001). A clear enemy in Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden is all Cato needed. In 2001, destroying Al-Qaeda and capturing bin Laden could not of been projected to be the quagmire is has become today, therefore it seemed like a reasonable mission. Complicating the enemy by dealing with Afghanistan or any other terrorist organizations in the War on Terror would only make the United States more prone to attack, placing it in "uncharted waters susceptible to more jihadist terrorist groups and perhaps unfriendly nations" (Pena 2001).

Cato established not only the clearest foreign enemy of the three think tanks but they also found a domestic enemy as well, being the only think tank to do this. In the initial phases of the War on Terror, Cato produced a fair amount of literature blaming the United States government for not only making America more susceptible to the attacks but also for not being able to predict the attacks. To Cato homeland security is the primary goal of the government. This enforces their libertarian core values as expressed in their mission statements. It is not a surprise that Cato blamed the attacks on the United

States. After all, Cato believes in a "restrained foreign policy" (Cato Foreign Policy Mission Statement) and terrorists only attack because "they perceive the United States as a hegemonic superpower that intervenes in the affairs of other nations and groups" (Eland 1998). It is also to no surprise that they blamed the government because Cato promotes "individual liberty and limited government" at home and abroad (Cato Institute Mission Statement). The United States did not have Cato's desired isolationist and limited foreign policy; therefore they wanted to change that. And as mentioned before, it is also not a surprise that Cato finally turned to the government in one of the only times it would ever do so, during war. All of this is expressed in a 2001 article titled *Turning to the Government* (Boaz 2001).

Little changed over time in regards Cato's characterization of the enemy. The initial backlash towards the government over not predicting the attacks did cease and was one change. However, one significant shift did occur. Initially Cato began adamantly enforcing the importance of only fighting Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. When the United States was being presented with such policy options as nation building in Afghanistan, invading Iraq, and conducting the broader War on Terror against Al-Qaeda and other organizations, Cato did not waver on their definition that our enemy was only Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. This was heavily expressed in numerous works echoing Ivan Eland and Charles Pena's words that "the United States should not be leaving Afghanistan until Al-Qaeda is terminated there" (Eland & Pena 2002).

By late 2002 however, Cato became the only think tank to divert drastically from their underlying beliefs. This was the only instance that one of the three think tanks presented policy contrary to their core values, basic principles, and underlying belief

systems and stands as an exception in this papers findings. Cato declared the enemy was

not only Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan but also Al-Qaeda worldwide. This was expressed in a

highly critical article titled *Where in the World is Osama bin Laden?* (Pena 2002). When

the fight against Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan was proving difficult and Osama bin Laden's

whereabouts became less certain, Cato expressed fighting Al-Qaeda worldwide would be

necessary. This would be needed perhaps even before Al-Qaeda was removed from

Afghanistan. As an example, Charles Pena, who was originally an advocate for staying

with fighting Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, diverted to taking it on worldwide. This will be

covered in greater debt in the next two chapters, which deals with exactly how these think

tanks suggested fighting terrorism. A dramatic shift in the core values, the basic

principles, and the underlying beliefs of Cato will be highlighted there. Because they

changed the definition of their enemy, their policy was directly affected and as it will be

seen was contrary to their mission statements.

The only internal debate that took place amongst Cato members dealt with the

wording of the "War on Terror." For many it could not be called a war against terrorism

because they only saw Al-Qaeda as their enemy. For others the name was inappropriate

because they feared what America really meant was a war against "Islamic terrorism"

(Carpenter 2001). This was a very important fear shared by all three think tanks

believing it would create enemies out of other jihadist groups and friendly Islamic

nations. Still others felt the name insinuated that the United States was attempting to rid

the planet of terrorism and continue its hegemonic ways. This would only make enemies

out of other organizations who otherwise had no direct conflict with the United States

such as the Irish Republican Army (Carpenter 2001). However, this debate was

somewhat settled when Cato praised George W. Bush's clarification that the United States would stand to fight terrorism that had "global reach" (Eland 2001). Al-Qaeda clearly had global reach. However, Cato was firmly against the global War on Terror believing unless another organization outright attacked the United States there would be no reason to wage war with it.

In between Cato and Hoover's definitions was Brookings. Where Cato had a clear single focused definition of the enemy with very little internal debate, Brookings had a wide variety of definitions over time with far more internal debate. This clearly stems from their wider mission statements that advocate substantial United States involvement abroad in cooperation with many foreign countries and groups. Recall their mission to "secure a more open, safe, and cooperative international system," Brookings seeks to "influence institutions at home and abroad that promote sustainable peace, security and prosperity around the world." They stress that in order to do this "both civilian and military entities of the United States must act in partnership with others around the world to promote our interests in unstable regions" (Brooking Foreign Policy & General Mission Statements). These broader goals paired with their centrist political and ideological position left a lot more room for debate overtime within Brookings definition of and dealings with the enemy.

There was a camp within Brookings, who behaved contrary to their core values in that they paralleled Cato. This camp saw only Al-Qaeda as the sole enemy, at least initially. For these members of Brookings, the United States' "objectives in facing Al-Qaeda were both clear and strong" (Daalder & Lindsay 2001) just as Cato believed. The same fears were shared as Cato that fighting so close to, as well as within, Islamic nations

could create unwanted enemies and develop more terrorists (Indyk 2001). Similarly

these members did not propose involving the Taliban government because "toppling the

Taliban and angering Pakistan was not the goal of the War on Terror" (O'Hanlon 2001)

and that "other countries harboring terrorists must not be invaded, Al-Qaeda was the

number one mission" (O'Hanlon 2001). This would only further create hostilities against

the United States. Furthermore, toppling the Taliban would bring up the subject of state

building, which is covered in chapter VI. However, it soon became clear to these

Brookings Fellows that they ought to join one of the other larger camps within their

institution who declared the enemy was not just Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and abroad but

all transnational terrorism.

The major difference between the two think tanks was that whereas Cato

promoted stopping the war with defeating Al-Qaeda, the smaller Brookings camp

acknowledged over time the need to continue to fight the broader war on all terror. This

sentiment of fighting global terrorism is more in line with Brookings core values and

basic principles. For these researchers keeping the global power of the United States and

its role in the world was important, as it is insinuated in their mission statements. Where

Cato saw the terrorist attacks as a result of "U.S. global hegemony," Brookings saw it as

an attempt to "disrupt the current world order…and all of the world knew targeting

America is the place where this could happen" (Vaisse 2001). Adopting isolationist

policies would be giving victory to Al-Qaeda and transnational terrorism. Therefore,

"first those who were responsible for 9/11 needed to be punished and then the fight

against global terrorism must occur in order to create new international standards"

(Wippmann & Telhami 2001) where terrorism would not be tolerated. In other words, if

Al-Qaeda and global terrorists desired the U.S. to leave the Middle East as well as reduce its global presence, Brookings was going to counter with "reinvigorated policies of global engagement with all transnational terrorism" (Gordon 2002). It was a shared view in this Brookings camp that "the fight against terrorism is likely to be complex, drawn out, and without clear vision as to how it will be won…victory in Afghanistan over Al-Qaeda may not ensure or determine anything" (Daalder & Lindsay 2001).

The third and final division amongst Brookings members recognized that all global terrorism was an adversary but it also labeled the Taliban regime of Afghanistan an enemy. This is understandable because Brookings seeks to work with countries and governments in order to fix problems, so their targeting the Taliban was not surprising. Brookings entertained "creating an ultimatum for the Taliban" (Gordon 2001) to cooperate in the fight against Al-Qaeda or fall subject to becoming an enemy of the United States. Brookings, who utilized far more realist approaches towards foreign policy in the past, was now returning to this characteristic in naming a new enemy in the War on Terror. These enemies were governments and states who harbored terrorist organizations without aiding in the fight against them.

Overtime, Brookings continued to adapt their definition of the enemy due to its various internal debate. Because of their mission to ensure that the United States holds significant power in the world and continues to maintain a presence abroad as a significant player in world peace, the stakes were higher for Brookings Fellows. Where Cato only thought of homeland security and national interests, Brookings had to think of not only United States security but it also had to think of its allies, Afghanistan, and the entire Middle East region's stability. In accordance to their basic principles, core values,

and underlying belief systems, the Unites States had too big of a role in the world to stop at fighting solely Al-Qaeda strictly because it had attacked the homeland. The world also needed protection and the enemy had to be categorized as all transnational terrorism. Because certain nations willingly harbored these terrorist organizations, which affect so many other countries and regions, they too had to become an enemy in Brooking Institute's fight.

The Hoover Institution characterized the enemies in the War on Terror the same as Brookings did. For them Al-Qaeda was an enemy, global transnational terrorism was the enemy, and any state or regime who aided or harbored terrorist organizations was the enemy. The difference between Brookings and Hoover was the fact that where Brookings slowly came to define the enemies over time and through internal think tank conflict, Hoover established their opponents from the beginning. This is perhaps the opposite end of the spectrum from Cato who singled out Al-Qaeda from the beginning never wavering in regards to global terror and harboring states. Just as the other think tanks, Hoover's rationale behind defining the adversary was derived from its mission statement.

As seen, Hoover's mission statement is a unique case among these three think tanks. Cato's mission statements are very clear and concise with libertarian undertones. This leaves far less room for interpretation and far more chance that Cato will stick to its basic principles, core values, and underlying belief systems. Brookings mission statements are grand but due to their centrist ideologies and wide array of research topics, Brookings is more likely to engage in internal debate that ultimately can leave their policies having many complex layers. In other words, because their missions are so

broad and they are themselves a left-centrist think tank, how they arrive at their polices is

open to debate among many different conflicting views within the think tank itself.

Hoover has a very clear mission statement that like Brookings' mission is very vague.

However, Hoover is like Cato in the sense that it is a conservative leaning think tank

leaving its vague mission statement to be interpreted by a less open-minded staff than

Brookings. Therefore, when Hoover approached characterizing America's enemy in the

War on Terror, its ambiguous mission of "securing and safeguarding peace" (Hoover

Institution Mission Statement), which otherwise in another think tank such as Brookings

may be open to many interpretations, it did so in a relatively hawkish way reflecting its

susceptibility to groupthink and conformity.

It is no surprise then that Hoover took a hawkish approach at naming our enemy

and saw any organization, person, regime, or nation involved with terrorism as an

adversary from the start. They expressed that the United States "must not battle just

terrorism, but the people, ideologies, and causes that deploy this weapon" (McFaul 2002).

For Hoover, "it may never be clear what bin Laden and his associates hoped to achieve"

(Gaddis 2002) but that is beside the point. Bin Laden and transitional terrorism had

declared war on the United States and its "way of American life" (Mission Statement).

Hoover saw the only way to fix this global problem was to fight the War on Terror

wherever it may be and against whomever.

The only noteworthy evidence of internal think tank conflict was mentioned

earlier. Many Hoover members began declaring that their institution began using

terrorism as an excuse to approach other conflicts that could pose threat to the

"safeguards of the American way of life" (Hoover Institution Mission Statement). For

example, Hoover ended up supporting the invasion of Iraq. We invaded Iraq due to the belief that Saddam had WMD and was potentially harboring terrorists. The United States had no clear evidence on either yet invaded. Hoover framed this as appropriate believing it fell under the category of the grander War on Terror (Gedmin 2001).

Deciphering the separate definitions each think tank gave the enemy in the early stages of the War on Terror is very important. This not only highlighted and gave further insights as to the individual identities of each think tank but it also provides the first real example as to how each think tank would begin to operate towards terrorism. As seen, Cato actually did show an example of diverting from its core belief systems over time. Cato moved from confronting Al-Qaeda only in Afghanistan to wanting to confront it in Pakistan and later worldwide. This is an exception however, as the remaining parts of Cato policies paralleled its libertarian mission statements. Brookings showed it could be capable of adapting however, its internal debate amongst itself called for definitions in line with its basic principles. And Hoover demonstrated a similar justification of their belief systems by taking a firm stance the characterization of the enemy in the War on Terror. Who each think tank saw as the enemy becomes very important in the next two chapters as it directly correlates to the policies they chose in handling the terrorist threat.

Chapter IV. Waging the War on Terror

As important as it is to establish a clear understanding of an adversary, it is just as crucial to determine who the adversary is not. This has to a great extent been outlined in the previous chapters. However, once the United States decided to engage Al-Qaeda in the early stages of the War on Terror, the definition of the enemy became more complex. Cato still believed the targets to be Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda. Brookings and Hoover still saw the enemy as global terrorism, in which invading Afghanistan was the initial phase in a grander strategy. However, with the United States fully committed to sending members of the Armed Forces overseas, each think tank strongly came into agreement over who the enemy was not. This is an essential point to the understanding of this chapter because no longer was each think tank coming up with pre-war strategies where mistakes could be made. With the United States seeing the attacks as an act of war and being fully committed to sending forces to Afghanistan, policies implemented could determine the success of the mission and more importantly life or death. It is perhaps for this reason that when it came to combatting actual terrorism, each think tank presented policies that could have been predicted, as they did not stray from their core values, basic principles, and underlying belief systems. With human lives on the line, each think tank was less open to adapting or straying from policy that may not have reflected their mission statements.

With actual combat operations in the future, each think wanted to reiterate who the enemy was not. Literature from all three think tanks continuously repeated that the

enemy was not the Islamic people or faith. More specifically the enemy was not Middle

Eastern Islam. Both Cato and Brookings were strongly against invading Iraq believing it

would make the U.S. seem as if it wanted to fight Islam. As Ted Carpenter of Cato stated

in his piece titled, *A War, Not a Crusade*, "the War on Terror should not be interpreted as

'war on Islamic terrorism'" (Carpenter 2001). As mentioned earlier, Cato believed the

fight in Afghanistan could easily be framed as the United States waging war against an

entire faith. This would not only make the fight in Afghanistan more dangerous, but it

would decrease the safety of Americans at home and abroad. Muslims all over

Afghanistan, as well as the world, would potentially join terrorist organizations or start

their own confrontations with the United States. This of course aligns with the Cato

notion that the United States is "relatively safe." A war framed against Islam would only

strengthen the United States image as a global hegemon and decrease homeland security.

Therefore, when combatting terrorism, in order to ensure success and American safety, it

must not be framed as "Islamic terrorism."

Brookings and Hoover expressed similar concerns. However, they differed from

Cato in the fact that they accepted the wording of "Islamic terrorism," also referring to it

as "radicalized Islam" or "Islamic-extremism." For example, Brookings researcher

Martin Indyk wrote a peace titled *Finding Allies in the World of Shadows*. In his work he

criticized President Bush's statement, "either you are with us or you are with the

terrorists" (Indyk 2001). Indyk outlined the delicacy of combatting Islamic terrorism in

the most Islamic dominated region in the world. A region where the nations and people

may "generally not like the United States" (Indyk 2001) but may also not support

terrorists or radicalized Islam. This will be covered later in the chapter when dealing

with Brookings strategies however, one can see Brookings clarification that the War on Terror was not a war against Islam. For Brookings, who stresses global cooperation, coalitions and allies were going to be necessary in combatting and eliminating terrorist threats. How could the United States form coalitions or work with allies in the Middle East if it was waging war against Islam? Perhaps Brookings fellow Peter Singer said it best when he stated, "the War on Terror is not the United States versus Islam but the civilized world against those who commit crimes against humanity" (Singer 2001).

Hoover put forth almost identical literature to Brookings. The War on Terror could not be won if it were framed as the war on Middle Eastern or global Islam. Instead, "promoting modern Muslims and modernizing the Islamic world would be the long term goal in curing Islamic-extremism" (Ash 2003). Hoover believed due to the Middle East regions number of failed or failing states, "radical Islam had been permitted to grow and spread extensively" (Gedmin 2001). In other words, the United States was going to need average Muslims in order to end Islamic terrorism. By examining Hoover this will become clearer however, they believed Middle Eastern terrorism spread due to the failure of Islamic states to modernize and create the capabilities necessary to prevent it. With help from the United States and non-radicalized Muslims, the Middle East region could defeat terrorism there. This is also why Hoover was the only think tank to support invading Iraq, believing a "modernization of the Islamic world" (Gedmin 2001) was necessary.

It is obvious from the above paragraphs that although all the initial enemies from the previous chapter would remain, it was necessary to reinforce who the enemy wasn't in order for each think tank to move forward with counterterrorism strategies against Al-

Qaeda. A war that was framed as a religious crusade or one that could make the United States out to be exercising global hegemony would only hinder any counterterrorist policies each think tank would desire to see adopted.

This clarification also stands for something of extreme importance. It showed that each think tank realized the complexities that came with fighting this new enemy. Although they ended up justifying and reinforcing policies that fell in line with their core values, each think tank recognized that this was not going to be a traditional or conventional war. All three think tanks made it clear that there was not only going to be a military component but serious political, diplomatic, and economic factors were also going to be essential in the fight against terrorism. For example, all three think tanks stressed the need for a severe increase in the United States intelligence capabilities. And although they approached combatting terrorism in different ways, each think tank expressed at least one other way of fighting Al-Qaeda other than by military means. Ivan Eland of Cato exemplified this best when he stated, "To fight this nontraditional threat we must think outside the box and be as nimble as our opponents" (Eland 2002).

Overall, Cato had again the most straightforward policies for countering Al-Qaeda. First, as mentioned numerous times above, the only thing that had warranted war had happened, an attack on the United States. Therefore, Cato believed that allowing the government to do one of its only jobs "protecting the homeland" (Boaz 2001) was justified. In other words, Cato actually did not spend much time on setting overall strategies and goals for the United States at first. Instead, whatever the government, defense services, and intelligence communities deemed appropriate strategies to fight Al-Qaeda could have potentially been backed by Cato. This is outlined in an already

mentioned work titled *Turning to the Government* (Boaz 2001). This may seem like an irrational response seeing how Cato is a think tank and think tanks desire to influence policy, and in this particular scenario Cato was not making any serious efforts to influence any policy. But it is nevertheless true. Another piece from 2001 by David Boaz suggested that the Taliban regime was also one of the number one enemies of the United States (Boaz 2001). Works by Cato prior to president Bush's launching of Operation Enduring Freedom, which outlined the Taliban government had to be overthrown, only mentioned Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda as the objective. It is clear here that once Washington decided the Taliban was also an objective, Cato saw the government as doing its job and as a result added the Taliban as an objective in their policies as well. However, as will be seen later, Cato was firmly against state building and with an overthrown government, some level of state building was going to be needed.

Although they backed the government in its decisions, Cato did not fail to criticize it as well as offer new strategies overtime. For example, although they supported ground operations, Cato recognized Al-Qaeda was a "nontraditional enemy" (Eland 2002). This was reiterated in a piece titled *A Bigger Military is Not the Solution to Terrorism* by Charles Pena. Pena declared the United States was already spending the most money and had the most powerful military in the world. He also highlighted a very important fact stressed by each think tank, "terrorists are not armies" (Pena 2001). For Cato, military operations would be necessary in eliminating Al-Qaeda and capturing Osama bin Laden but a military build up was a waste of money and weakened the American economy, which they felt needed to be get stronger in order to counter

terrorism. For Cato it was not about fighting a conventional "cold or hot war" (Eland 2002) where massive military buildup was necessary.

Instead of putting all of the United States money into the military, Cato believed it could be reallocated to a number of places that would make defeating Al-Qaeda easier while staying in line with their basic principles. First, the money could be placed in the intelligence community. This would not only decrease United States presence abroad as Cato calls for but it would also be essential in locating top Al-Qaeda officials and Osama bin Laden. In fact by late 2002 after the Taliban had been overthrown but Osama bin Laden had not been found, Cato moved away from supporting military operations in favor of "intelligence and police operations" (Pena 2002). Intelligence would also play a large role in the second area Cato suggested reallocating funds to—homeland defense. Due to the fact that terrorists could now bring war to United States soil, Cato called for removal of any Al-Qaeda cell found in the United States as well as enhancing civil and homeland defense. This would reestablish America as "relatively safe" and help to prevent future attacks. This mirrors typical Cato isolationist tendencies for it insinuates that as long as the United States homeland is protected, anything else is not necessarily America's business. Cato also did briefly entertain the idea of enhancing certain weapons systems such as new bombers in order to limit ground forces abroad and to still be effective in removing Al-Qaeda.

Spending defense dollars wisely and reallocating money was also part of Cato's strategies to defeat terrorism economically. This is a view that is heavily shared with fellow conservative think tank from this work, Hoover Institution. Cato believed the reason terrorism was able to spread through the Middle East and become so prominent

was due to the fact that "many countries in the Muslim world are economic disasters" (Lindsey 2001). They placed part of the blame on Islamic countries for not opening up to the globalized world. They highlight this by naming a number of Middle Eastern countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq, who did not belong to the World Trade Organization (Lindsey 2001). The fact that the governments of these states were either oppressive or resisting a globalized market was only forcing the state to fail and for terrorism to grow. This also further created a deeper hatred for the Western world and the United States, as it is one of the world's most prosperous areas. So Cato suggested the United States, "who can out produce any adversary" (Lindsey 2001), should strengthen its own economy as well as financially advise Islamic nations who were subject to terrorism. This would not only create growth but also create incentives for Islamic nations to combat terrorism themselves. It is to no surprise that Cato suggested combatting terrorism economically as it is a think tank "based on the principles of free markets" (Cato Institute Mission Statement).

The final method of counterterrorism, which this thesis highlights as the most controversial amongst the think tanks, is in regards to state building. A closer look will be provided in the next chapter but Cato was firmly against this as a form of combatting terrorism from the beginning. Cato was in favor of a "multiple center of powers" method, which ultimately had the United States disengaging from the world. According to this method, emerging powers around the world would work together in ensuring peace and regional stability in their respective hemispheres. This would keep U.S. military presence abroad limited while still allowing for economic and cultural ties. It also was believed to prevent the rise of massive adversaries like the Soviet Union, as the

countries making up the various regions of the globe would keep one another in check. This was reiterated in 2002 when Cato suggested solely moving to intelligence and assistance operations while withdrawing military forces from Afghanistan and the Middle East.

It is important here to stress other concerns and inner conflicts Cato members expressed. First was the issue of intelligence. Although they supported the use of intelligence and giving the government the power to do what was necessary to fight Al-Qaeda, impeding on American civil liberties in order to do so was contrary to Cato's basic principles and it was something they would not stand for. Ivan Eland expressed this when he stated, "increasing intelligence so much that it disrupts American liberty is just another victory for Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda" (Eland 2001). Another issue had to do with being wary of allies as well as working with other nations in combatting terrorism. If the government wanted to move multilaterally that was permissible, however, Cato suggested being skeptical of the motives driving foreign countries. Charles Pena expressed this in a piece titled *America's Strange Bedfellows in the War on Terror* (Pena 2001).

On the topic of allies, it is here that Cato demonstrated the only example of a think tank diverting from its core values, basic principles, and underlying belief systems. As mentioned last chapter, when it became clear that Osama bin Laden had potentially escaped Afghanistan, Cato began redefining its enemy from Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan to Al-Qaeda worldwide believing he may have escaped to Pakistan. However, what was not mentioned last chapter was Cato's shift in policies. By the time it was believed bin Laden had escaped, the Taliban had been overthrown and Cato was already calling for

ending military operations. However, they drastically diverted from their usual suspicion

of potential allies when they suggested working with Pakistan in order to locate bin

Laden. This of course was covered in Pena's work *Where in the World is Osama bin*

Laden? But this idea was elevated in pieces such as *The Real War on Terrorism is in*

Pakistan, Not Iraq (Hadar 2003) and *The Real Threat of New Terrorism is From Pakistan*

(Hadar 2003). Cato promoted policy completely opposite of what it had been calling for

prior to fighting as well as in the early stages of conflict. Perhaps catching Osama bin

Laden warranted skipping precautionary vetting processes in allying with Pakistan and

breaking from their core values.

Being wary of allies was something Hoover also expressed. Where Cato would

cautiously allow moving multilaterally against combatting terrorism, Hoover saw that as

a hindrance. Instead the United States needed to move against Al-Qaeda exercising

"intelligent unilateralism" (Applebaum 2002) believing the United States was free to

move "unilaterally in self defense" (Sofaer 2002). Members of the UN or EU would only

disrupt American goals. Recall Hoover framed the fight against terrorism as America's

new A-list threat and it's fight against the new "ism" (McFaul 2002), referring of course

to previous wars against Fascism and Communism. With terrorism as the country's new

"ism," Hoover saw two major fights against Al-Qaeda. The two battles were militarily

and politically. First there was to be a "destructive phase and then a constructive phase"

(McFaul 2002). In other words, Hoover saw the need to combat terrorism as eliminating

it physically my means of military force while simultaneously changing political views

and ideologies where terrorism thrived.

Hoover suggested combatting terrorism in a very realist sense. For them it had everything to do with the state. The War on Terror was a war and "in war states must be held accountable" (Schultz 2002). This did not only mean states like Afghanistan or Iraq but it also referred to the United States. Up until September 11th, "states in every part of the world had avoided accountability when it came to terrorism, and now we are paying a heavy price" (Schultz 2002). The importance of the state and the threat posed by terrorism was expressed heavily in Hoover Fellow, former Secretary of State, George Schultz's work. He declared:

> "Terrorism is the enemy of the state, out to destroy it…but the state is all we have to order our international existence…its most important function is achieving representative government and protecting individual rights" (Schultz 2002).

This echoes Hoover's mission statements and basic principles as Hoover found in enemy in terrorism due to its desire to not only "impede on the safeguards of American life" but also on "peace and personal freedoms" (Hoover Institution Mission Statement) of all states around the globe in the international system. So how did Hoover suggest countering Al-Qaeda and transnational terrorism in the Middle East and across the globe?

The answer was the "Liberty Doctrine." Much how containment and rollback strategies dominated Cold War thinking against the Soviets and communism, the Liberty Doctrine drove Hoover's strategy against Al-Qaeda and terrorism. Recall that in the previous chapter, Hoover found enemies in anyone aiding Al-Qaeda or any other terrorist network. Under the Liberty Doctrine, Hoover sought to combat terrorism by "first the containment and then the elimination of those forces opposed to liberty, be they individuals, movements, or regimes" (McFaul 2002). As mentioned in the above paragraphs, there were two sides to this for Hoover.

The first was militarily. According to Hoover, the U.S. must "maintain overwhelming military advantage over the rest of the world" (McFaul 2002) in order to stop and "prevent terrorism" (Schultz 2002). George Shultz categorized Hoover's military strategy as "hot preemption" as he wrote a piece by the same name in 2002. In it Schultz declared "active prevention, preemption, and retaliation with the use of military force" is a crucial ingredient in the War on Terror. According to him and Hoover Fellows:

> "You can only stop terrorism by taking the battle to the terrorists, where they are and going after them… We have no choice but to find those people and root them out, as the president said, and stop them from doing what they're doing and stop countries from harboring them" (Schultz 2002).

It is clear from that excerpt that both terrorists as well as states that harbor them must be dealt with militarily in order to defeat terrorism. Like Cato, Hoover stressed the need for intelligence to not only carry out these military operations, but also to learn and gain as much education as possible on Middle Eastern culture and terrorist networks. Hoover realized that "military force could not win the war alone…long term political and economic strategy was necessary" (Diamond 2002).

First ideology needed to be expanded at home. Hoover suggested that the United States needed to better understand who it was fighting as well as the innocent people it would be dealing with and potentially allying with. According to Hoover, the world, and specifically the Middle East, needed less "anti-Americanism" (Conquest 2002). Our intelligence communities, who "were having a field day" during the War on Terror (Ash 2003), needed to find out everything they could on the Middle East and the terrorist threat. Similarly the United States needed to do a better job educating its people on worldly and Middle Eastern cultures and affairs. All of this was done in the hopes that "Saudi kids did not grow up believing the United States was the root of all their

problems" (Applebaum 2002). If ideologies could change at home, it would help in Hoover's long-term goal of "modernizing and democratizing Muslim nations" (Gedmin 2002) abroad in order to prevent terrorism.

The second ideological, political, and economic battle for Hoover was within Afghanistan and eventually Iraq. As mentioned, Hoover and Cato believed it was the "failure of Islamic nations to modernize and democratize" that not only explains the roots of terrorism but also why "Islamic relations with America had remained so poor" (Gedmin 2001). Therefore it was up to the United States to "help Middle East societies build political institutions that foster human progress… only then could we achieve lasting victory in the war on terrorism" (Diamond 2002). This could be done through a number of ways including foreign aid, governance programs, occupation, and state building, which Hoover was strongly in favor of. Ultimately the political and economic battle tied back to the proper framing of the war as one on Islamic terrorism and not on Islam. Hoover researcher Michael McFaul wrote, "after all foreign aid and democracy are enemies of bin Laden but not Islam" (McFaul 2002). Hoover needed to reach those people who were not radicals or extremists believing that if:

> "The United States resists equating terror with Islam, Muslims must do the same by unequivocally condemning, isolating, and depriving the terrorists of all moral legitimacy and every piece of financial and logistical aid" (Gedmin 2001).

Ultimately, Hoover was paralleling the fight on terrorism with the fight against communism. They believed the military build up and operations were just as important as the ideological, political, and economic fights. All aspects needed to come together much like Cold War containment or rollback in order to defeat terrorism. Hoover believed that like the battle against communism, "which took a century…the battle against terrorism could take longer… but we beat communism, something few

predicted… and we must and will beat terrorism" (McFaul 2002). They also supported President Bush's words of "if you are not with us you are with the terrorists" aiming to create perhaps a Cold War like stand off. Although Hoover preferred for the United States to move unilaterally, multilateral movements could be entertained as long as a nation and its people condemned terrorism.

Similar to Cato, the only thing that caused inner think tank controversy amongst Hoover was the issue of how much liberty to give the government and the intelligence communities in the fight against Al-Qaeda and terrorism. To outline how strongly some felt, Timothy Ash wrote in his work titled *What Price Security* that "He would rather the 1 in 10,000 chance of being blown up by a terrorist than the 1 in 10 chance of having his emails read by some spook in the government" (Ash 2003). Also as one could imagine, Hoover was strongly in favor of state building, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

In Brookings Institute's case, their policies presented were simple yet their internal debates as well as their foreign policy concerns were much greater and more complex than Cato or Hoover. This is to be as expected as Brookings is far larger and more diverse and has a dedication to the peaceful operation and functioning of the globalized world. Like Cato and Hoover, Brookings had multiple sides to their fight against terrorism. There was of course the military and intelligence side as well as a massive diplomatic and political push in Brookings policies presented for counterterrorism. The two were to simultaneously work together at isolating terrorists groups across the world making them vulnerable and easy targets in order to be eliminated.

Terrorism was now a military matter for Brookings and policies of the past were no longer effective enough. Mike O'Hanlon wrote that "symbolic missile strikes of the past will not work, we need sterner measures" (O'Hanlon 2001). Recall Brookings suggestion for a policy of "reinvigorated global engagement with all transnational terrorists" (Gordon 2002). It was time for this policy, and as Brookings fellows weighed the options, it was concluded that ground forces would be needed to eliminate Al-Qaeda and capture Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan. A collaborative piece titled *Ground War will be Risky, but Necessary* echoed many Brookings policy preferences. It argued that "objectives for ground war were clear and strong…yet combat against terrorists will be nasty, brutish, and long" (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). Although they supported United States Armed Forces carrying out missions, Brookings was the only think tank that also suggested other forms of combat to be performed by groups other than intelligence communities. Brookings desired the United States and its allies to train and fight alongside weak Afghan forces (O'Hanlon 2001). This would not only create multinational cooperation but would also help stabilize the region and prevent terrorism from resurging once United States forces were to leave. All of this was expressed in a 2002 piece titled *Let the Locals Combat Terrorism* (Dalpino and Steinberg 2002).

Working off of this point was Brookings call for the United States to constantly be moving multilaterally in its military as well as diplomatic strategies. The more nations moving against terrorists, the easier cells can be located and destroyed. Meanwhile, as nations collaborated over counterterrorism they were building stronger diplomatic relationships to help ensure global peace and prosperity. Also the more nations working together with the United States, the less likely the United States may be inclined to

violate foreign sovereignty or move without help from other countries. This can lessen the likelihood of the United States being labeled as a global hegemon. Brookings Fellow Peter Singer outlined that in the past the United States moved on global security issues as Hoover would see fit, unilaterally. However, Singer suggests not utilizing the United Nations or the EU and seeing them as limiting American capabilities to deal with terrorists is a mistake (Singer 2003).

Much like Hoover, however, Brookings recognized the importance of the political, ideological, and economic fight against terrorists and the states that harbor them as well. This again goes back to ensuring that the War on Terror is not framed as a war against Islam. All efforts must be made to "avoid allowing for Afghan nationalism to turn against the United States, and efforts must be made to turn them against Al-Qaeda or keep them safe and neutral" (Singer 2001). To Brookings it was just as much a war about "information, words, and images" (Singer 2001) as it was about physical fighting. The United States and its allies had to be properly educated in Islamic culture, they had to make allies, and they had to make sure the fight could not flip from fighting Al-Qaeda to fighting all Islamic peoples. Like Hoover, foreign aid, governance programs, and state building were all ways of winning the political and economic battle against terrorism, all of which Brookings was in favor of (Daalder and Lindsay 2002).

In theory using the military in combination with political and diplomatic pushes in order to isolate, eliminate, and prevent terrorism sounds less complicated than it is. However, because Brookings places such a heavy emphasis on United States responsibility abroad, the War on Terror is far more complex for them. Inner think tank conflict arose over whether or not to try state building. In the case of going to Iraq, state

building would not be part of the War on terror, would frame the fight against Islam instead of terrorism, and would destabilize the Middle East region. Brookings aims at stabilizing regions in order to maintain global peace, state building for some members created enemies as well as destabilization. There were also allies such Israel to keep in mind. If the United States showed policies that perhaps were considered not forceful enough by Israel, the United States risked complicating already established friendships. Working off of that, Brookings Fellows were constantly warning policy makers to not let the War on Terror blind them from grander U.S. foreign policy. Issues such as China, Korea, etc. should not be undermined by the War on Terror in the Middle East or the world. The War on Terror was just a part of a bigger picture that was U.S. foreign policy. There were also those who worried about the American public at home. In 2002 Fellows Daalder and Lindsay mentioned the "United States public had returned to their daily lives" (Daalder and Lindsay 2002). This was perhaps a good thing, as Americans were feeling safe again, however, it set the United States back to the status quo prior to 9/11. The public needed to drastically change its own ideologies if it wanted to eliminate terrorism.

Simplified, Brookings counterterrorist policies were broken down from the state level all the way up to the geopolitical level. Peter Singer outlined all of the ways Brookings desired to attack terrorism along with the dilemmas faced at each level, a few of which were outlined in the paragraph above. For Brookings, the United States must first approach terrorism on the state level. That is they must locate the states terrorists are operating in, in this case Afghanistan. Second, there is the intra-state level. This deals with separating those who are Al-Qaeda or terrorists from civilians. Third, deals with

balancing global friendships such as Israel of Saudi Arabia. Fourth, the United States had a duty to deal with terrorism on a regional scale. Once it was removed from Afghanistan the next step would be the entire Middle East region. Finally, once regional stability is secured, the United States would be obligated to approach other regions and ultimately handling the issue on a geopolitical level. This was the Brooking Institutes' guide to combatting terrorism and defeating Al-Qaeda. It clearly mirrors and does not sway from their basics principles and mission statements expressing their obligations to maintaining global order.

Ultimately, when it came to actually combatting terrorism, each think tank behaved in a way that adapted and framed the fight to fit their core values, basic principles, and underlying belief systems. It would appear that in actually fighting their enemy, these think tanks provided ideas for policy makers in the "idea market" that could have potentially been predicted or foreseen. It is clear from this chapter that the think tanks were more likely to justify and reinforce their policies when faced with this new enemy of transnational terrorism than completely change1 their views. When comparing their initial reactions in September 2001 with their policies for countering terrorism in the War on Terror, very little change occurs and an even stronger push to promote core values, basic principles, and underlying beliefs occurred.

Chapter V. State Building as a Method of Combatting Terrorism

This chapter will examine each think tank's policy preferences on using state building as a method to combat terrorism. This chapter further elevates how different the identities of these think tanks are while it clarifies the complexities of fighting transnational terrorism. Finally, this chapter brings this work full circle. Each think tank had a completely different perspective on the issue of state building. Like in the previous chapter discussing the various mechanisms for fighting terrorism, each think tank's policy preferences towards state building was conservative. The policies were conservative in the sense that they did not stray from the particular set of core values and basic principles they were beholden to in their respected mission statements. Just as Chapter V, each of the three think tanks put forth works on state and nation building that embodied their core values, basic principles, and underlying belief systems and as a result they differed greatly among each other. Moreover, where in the previous chapters a fair amount of inner think tank conflict took place over counterterrorist strategies, the topic of nation building brought no such internal debate. Even Brookings, who had had by far the most obvious inner think tank disputes, put forth consensual policy preferences with only a very small debate when state building was addressed. This chapter stands as proof that not only did the think tanks fail to amend their basic principles in the face of a new enemy but also they demonstrated how political they actually were, quick to justify their

policies in the wake of any event. On state building these think tanks only presented

policy makers with suggestions that were completely aligned with their basic principles

insinuating a high level of debate over counterterrorist policies in the idea market.

It became very clear that state building was going to be a deeply controversial and

political topic between the think tanks with an article put out by Brookings in December

2001. By this time, the Taliban regime had been toppled and the future of the State of

Afghanistan and the War on Terror there were being heavily debated. It was at this time

that Brookings Fellows Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay put forth their piece suggesting

the United States must be involved in peacekeeping and state building operations in

Afghanistan. However, what this piece also included was a response by Charles Pena of

Cato, which declared that the United States should not be involved in any such missions.

The article is even formatted as if the two think tanks were in direct debate with one

another behaving as some archenemies in the fight to influence policy makers. For

instance, the article is titled *At Issue: Should U.S. Troops Participate in an International*

Peacekeeping Force in Afghanistan? Now this does not necessarily suggest Brookings

and Cato are in any form of heated argument. However, the first half of the article begins

with a bold header reading "YES" while the second half of the article begins with the

same bold header reading "NO." Daalder and Lindsay wrote the top of the piece and

Charles Pena wrote the bottom (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). It is unclear if this was a

collaborative work to show both sides of the argument or if Daalder and Lindsay

provided Pena's work in order to highlight that they were putting forth the better policy

whereas Cato was not. This thesis suggests the latter however, both ways demonstrate

that the issue of state building as a means to combat terrorism was "at issue" and differed among the think tanks as early as 2001.

In the second half of that article, Charles Pena reiterates Cato principles going back to before September 11th. He suggested, "U.S. military presence in Muslim countries is a motivating factor to launch attacks against the United States" (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). Pena continued to state:

> "Bin Laden's main reason for attacking America is the presence of the U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia…America needs to learn from this…the United States could be seen as an occupying force and would inadvertently recruit more terrorists painting a bull's eye on itself for further attacks" (Daalder and Lindsay).

This echoes completely pre-9/11 Cato works. Prior to 9/11, Cato researchers were declaring things such as "foolish attempts at nation building risk turning all of America into a war zone" (Bandow 200) and that terrorists attack us because of "who we are" (Eland 1999). Our "swaggering around the world like a giant, our unique leadership position, and our involvement abroad " (Eland 1998) were the reasons for "historical data showing correlation between American involvement in international affairs and terrorist attacks on the United States" (Eland 1998). Of course, Cato backed this up with a long list of extensive research comparing United States involvement abroad with attacks against the United States, which dated back to the 1980s (Bandow 200).

Pena's writing also represented unwavering post 9/11 Cato principles when it came to state building. Pena suggested, the only reason the United States military was having success was because it was not seen as an "invading military conqueror" (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). Until the Taliban was toppled, Cato supported military operations because the United States was sticking to a firm mission with the set enemies of Osama bin Laden, Al-Qaeda, and the Taliban. This of course mirrors Cato's initial defined

targets for the United States, Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda. It also demonstrates the willingness of Cato to "turn to the government" (Boaz 2001). Recall the United States labeled overthrowing the Taliban government as an objective for the United States so Cato supported this believing it was the government's duty to outline strategies in a time of war. Pena outlined all of this stating U.S. success was due to "U.S. objectives to eliminate Osama bin Laden, Al-Qaeda, and the Taliban" (Daalder and Lindsay 2001).

Pena goes further to say if state building was to occur, "the United States would be seen as an outside force imposing its will on a Muslim nation" (Daalder and Lindsay). This returns also to the important clarification, not only made by Cato but also by the other two think tanks, that the enemy was not Islam. By sticking to the original missions and only fighting Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and not state building, the United States could avoid future terrorists attacks as well as a hegemonic crusade. As Pena closes, "Afghanistan and its various ethnic factions have a rich history against defending themselves against foreign invaders and they have not all agreed to peacekeeping operations" (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). Not only could all of these factions oppose the United States presence as fighting their entire faith but they could also put the United States in the "crosshairs of their own civil war" (Daalder and Lindsay 2001).

As seen in the previous chapter, Cato had a number of other ways to combat terrorism from military operations to economic strategies. However, what did they ultimately favor over state building? The answer was a method of "encouraging multiple centers of power" (Carpenter 2002). In short, the United States should accept the fact that the globalizing world has a fair number of emerging economic and military powers. Instead of taking the more traditional road and reverting to a state of "multipolarity" like

the Cold War, "the United States should use this to their advantage" (Carpenter 2002).

Ultimately the multiple centers of power would act in their own spheres of influence and

abide by strict rules of the balance of power while combatting global threats in their

region such as terrorism. Carpenter suggests this would do more than just protect the

United States from terrorism but it would reduce American presence abroad while

preventing the threat of another global super power. He wrote:

> "The presence of other political and military powers in the world can provide us with important security buffers…ideally such states would forge effective regional security organizations—a more robust European Union, for example… even if some of them are not especially friendly to the United States…it is less likely that a hegemonic threat comparable to the Soviet Union could arise again… Regional powers would be the principal firebreaks against disorder and aggression in their respective spheres of influence, a development that would provide significant indirect security benefits to the United States" (Carpenter 2002).

Again, this emphasizes Cato's basic principles. Carpenter looks out for the

protection of the United States homeland while reducing and removing its presence

outside of its global region. It also mirrors Cato's desire for "free markets" and

combatting terrorism with economics (Cato Institute Mission Statement) as Carpenter

states, "maintaining economic, diplomatic and cultural ties are increasingly important"

with this method.

It is clear that Cato Institute was firmly against state building when it came to

fighting terrorism in Afghanistan. Instead they preferred policies that this work has

already touched on. These policies for the most part were conservative and rarely strayed

from their basic principles found in their mission statements. When faced with the

question of whether or not to invade Iraq in 2003 then, it is obvious how Cato responded.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are always paired together when speaking about the

War on Terror. Cato did not believe invading Iraq had anything to do with the War on

Terror and the United States had no business there, as their enemies were Al-Qaeda in

Afghanistan and later in Pakistan. To them the "real war on terrorism" by 2003 was in "Pakistan not Iraq" (Hadar 2003) because it was believed Osama bin Laden may have escaped there. Moreover, Cato justified staying out of Iraq believing that toppling Saddam Hussein would surely lead to state building. Cato restated all of the same reasons for not state building in Afghanistan when it came to Iraq. The same ideas of "nation building securing neither the homeland nor the world" (Atal 2003) were expressed in numerous works. Such works included pieces like *Why Attack Iraq* (Eland 2002), *Iraq: The Wrong War* (Pena 2003), *U.S. Should Refrain from Attacking Iraq* (Niskanen 2002), and *Overthrow Saddam? Be Careful What You Wish For* (Carpenter 2002). For them trying to "defend everything would always protect nothing" (Eland 1998).

Just as Pena's words represented both pre and post-9/11 Cato principles so did Daalder and Lindsay's as representatives of Brookings. In their half of the article, Daalder and Lindsay criticized Condoleezza Rice's words of "there is nothing wrong with nation building but not when it is done by the United States military" (Daalder and Lindsay). For Brookings, state building was not only necessary, but it was an urgent priority in the next step to defeating Al-Qaeda and terrorism in the Middle East. Daalder and Lindsay wrote, "the need is greatest now when competition for political advantage is most intense and the humanitarian situation is most urgent" (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). Only then "once stability had been assured," could "the responsibility of maintaining essential security be transferred to the Afghans or an international force drawn from Middle Eastern states" (Daalder and Lindsay).

In October 2001, during the immediate aftermath of the attacks, Brookings Fellow Mike O'Hanlon put forth a strategy that promoted state building. Just like Daalder and Lindsay's piece, O'Hanlon criticized Washington's reluctance to do so. O'Hanlon centered his piece around President Bush's words of "we do not nation build" (O'Hanlon 2001). He argued that angering Afghanistan and Pakistan was a concern, which Brookings members did debate to an extent. But if overthrowing the Taliban was to be an objective in Afghanistan, state building was going to have to take place. Recall Brookings polices that stated the War on Terror was just as much about the "war of words and images" (Singer 2001) as it was about military action. For this reason many Brookings members disliked the term "War on Terror" as it suggested military victory alone would be enough (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). The United States had an obligation as the forerunner in maintaining global security to ensure the stabilization of Afghanistan after military operations were complete. Again, the issue of fighting Islam versus fighting Islamic radicalism arises here. Brookings not only needed to state build for regional security but also for the framing of the War on Terror and the image of the United States. If America were to leave Afghanistan in turmoil once its job was done, the United States would become the global hegemon more concerned with "destruction" against Islam than "reconstruction" of states we were ridding of terrorism (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). This was already stated earlier in 2001 by Brookings in a piece titled *The Future of Afghanistan* calling for "strong military, political, and humanitarian presence" once Al-Qaeda and the Taliban had been removed.

Moreover, remember Brookings mission statements. They seek to "influence institutions abroad that promote sustainable peace, security, and prosperity around the

world" aiming to "work in partner with others to advance unstable regions of the world" (Brookings Foreign Policy Mission Statement). If the United States were to pull out of Afghanistan once the Taliban had been overthrown, two things would likely have happened. First, they would be betraying the grand coalition they had built and which they so adamantly called for in fighting terrorism. The chapters above emphasize how important creating allies and building coalitions were in Brookings' fight to isolate and combat terrorism. If the United States pulled out of Afghanistan American allies would be left to deal with the situation as Daalder and Lindsay suggest, "Britain is prepared to lead the force." Second, Brookings would be leaving before the mission was accomplished. Recall Brookings' multi-step process in fighting terrorism worldwide provided by Peter Singer moving from states, to inside those states, to regions, and finally the globe (Singer 2001). If the United States returned home and did not nation build, what would become of the remainder of the War on Terror? Leaving Afghanistan in such a delicate form would not even ensure the stability of that state let alone the entire Middle East region. What would stop terrorism from reemerging? Moreover, public support amongst current allies would surely drop if the United States did not state build, not to mention support from home would fall as well. As Daalder and Lindsay state, "peacekeeping operations would also help ensure allied support for and participation in the administration's next steps in the ongoing war against global terrorism" (Daalder and Lindsay 2001).

Although state building was an accepted form of combatting terrorism for Brookings, it was by no means the solution in the War on Terror. Recall Brookings' desire to prioritize its foreign policy objectives. Transnational terror was a current threat

and one that certainly had to be dealt with, however, it was but a small piece in United States grand foreign policy strategy. Brookings members constantly warned not to let the War on Terror blind America from its many obligations to the rest of the globe as well as to its allies (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). The same idea applied to their mechanisms for fighting terrorism. Susan Rice put out a policy brief in 2003 that suggested state building would be necessary in failing states in order to fight the War on Terror. However, the brief focuses only on Afghanistan. Rice demonstrates that state building would be needed in Afghanistan due to the steps we had already taken. We had invaded and overthrown the government therefore nation building in this failed state was necessary to combat terrorism there and reestablish Afghanistan. The same could not be said in the case of Iraq.

Just as the War on Terror was not to blind United States grand strategy, Iraq was not to blind the War on Terror (Telhami 2002). Daalder and Lindsay wrote another piece titled *Next Stop Iraq?* in which they argued that the case for entering Iraq was not only not convincing enough but it was also not a part of the War on Terror. Yes, Iraq was a failing state with potential ties to terrorist groups and WMD, making it a place Rice would see fit for state building. But, entering Iraq would combine two separate aspects of United States grand strategy, terrorism and WMD (Telhami 2002). If the United States were to connect WMD as a sub-issue in the War on Terror, what else could be included? Moreover, because the issue with Iraq was mainly about WMD, why would the United States implement a strategy used for combatting and preventing terrorism. Using the War on Terror as an excuse to invade and state build in Iraq would only

destroy the global image of the United State making it the "high tech bully" (Daalder and Lindsay) and hegemonic superpower it is believed to be.

As seen with the cases of Iraq versus Afghanistan, Brookings did see state building as a mechanism to defeat terrorism, however, it was not the only option. Also, Brookings joined Cato in being opposed to the invasion of Iraq on the grounds that Iraq proposed a different national security threat to the United States and invading the nation followed by state building there would most likely not be the right strategy to diffuse WMD.

For Hoover, there was "no better candidate than Saddam in Iraq to state build and to put an end to states that support terrorism" (Gedmin 2001) in order to wage the War on Terror. Remember, for Hoover, combatting terrorism was a state issue. States had to be held accountable for letting terrorism emerge on the one hand and for harboring terrorists on the other. Therefore, military invasion followed state building and occupation was the strategy. Hoover wanted to create a world of "anti terrorists versus terrorists" (Gedmin 2001) and the only way to do this was by state building. This was of course presented in Hoover's grand strategy for the War on Terror, the "Liberty Doctrine" (McFaul 2002). The United States needed to "overthrow those regimes" supporting terrorism "destroy them and then reconstruct and modernize them" (McFaul 2002). Just as Brookings, Hoover recognized military operations were not the only component to state building as political, diplomatic, and economic efforts were also crucial. However, state building was the absolute mechanism in waging the War on Terror.

The state is "all we have to order our international existence" (Schultz 2002). If anything such as terrorism, WMD, or the extreme case of terrorists using WMD threatens

the United States or any region of the world, states have a duty to protecting the "individual rights" (Schultz 2002) of all nations. Therefore, Hoover fully supported invading Iraq and meshing strategies to counter terrorism with those to counter and prevent WMD. As mentioned, this was a concern of Hoover members. Many feared that Hoover was justifying many of its preferences for United States foreign policy as linked to the War on Terror. However, this was trumped in the case of Iraq due to the fact that Saddam's harboring of terrorists and WMD capabilities were inconclusive enough to warrant action by the United States. Hoover, unlike Brookings, had no problem combining the two security issues as part of the greater global War on Terror.

It is clear that when it came to state building as a mechanism to combat terrorism and as an instrument in the greater War on Terror, serious levels of debate across the think tanks became prevalent. Parallel to their overall strategies to countering terrorism from the last chapter, each think tank put forth policies that were in line with their core values, basic principles, and underlying belief systems. The unyielding policies put forth on the issues of state building and Iraq mirror each think tank's respective mission statements. It appears that each think tank knew what it desired to say on the matter and due to the lack of inner think tank conflict within each group, it is a fair assessment to make that these think tanks preferred to justify and reframe the War on Terror to fit their policy preferences and basic principles. Even the attacks of September 11th and the emergence of a never before seen enemy could not stray each think tank from its basic principles.

Chapter VI. Conclusion

In respect to this work, the term "think tank" can indeed be qualified as a misnomer. Even in the face of September 11th and the rise of a new, dangerous and unconventional enemy consisting of transnational terrorists, the think tanks in focus put forth little new thinking. Prior to 9/11, each think tank had their definition of terrorism and their respective strategies towards combatting it. Instead of generating serious levels of new foreign policy outlooks after the attacks, as one would expect, the think tanks defaulted back to their core values, basic principles, and underlying belief systems defined in their mission statements. What September 11th actually presented then was the opportunity for each think tank to advertise their preferred policies in the United States foreign policy realm. After a short reeducation period, which was outlined in chapter II, where each think tank reevaluated the capabilities of terrorism, only harder stances on previously existing strategies were advocated. The only thing that changed was the definition of the modern terrorist. Each think tank understood that after 9/11, terrorism could not be labeled as some form of international crime or a contributing characteristic to a failing state. Instead they realized that terrorists organizations were a serious threat that could be considered its own entity and had the capabilities to attack the United States homeland. But again, the major unprecedented event that was 9/11 did not at all affect the policies the think tanks were presenting decision makers. The new role of terrorism in the world only called for the revamping and reinforcing of older preexisting methods

of counterterrorism. In sum, September 11th could not separate the three think tanks from their basic principles in order to create new policies.

In Cato's case they refused to waver from their idea that the United States should have a limited presence abroad and should not seek to "dominate the world militarily" (Cato 2014). They believed war was necessary and the government should set the objectives in it because the only thing that warranted this under their basic principles had happened, an attack on American soil. However, Cato insisted on limiting the war to finding Osama bin Laden, fighting Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, and overthrowing the Taliban. A big military was not necessary and expanding the War on Terror against other terrorist organizations or to state building missions in Iraq was contrary to their mission. This would only create more Unites States presence abroad and create more incentive for attacks on the homeland. The sooner the military defeated Al-Qaeda, overthrew the Taliban, and captured Osama bin Laden and returned to America the better. Working with other nations was to be done cautiously and economic mechanisms were seen as better options as Cato advocates the expansion of "free markets" in their mission statements. However, Cato did represent the exception in this work as over time they changed their definition of the enemy, reforming it from Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan to Al-Qaeda worldwide. Furthermore, they suggested allying with Pakistan, a country they would otherwise be suspicious of, in order to capture Osama bin Laden.

Brookings time and time again provided unyielding polices that paralleled their mission of "a cooperative global system" (Brookings 2014) with heavy United States leadership. All terrorism was considered a threat to this cooperative global system and the United States had to lead massive coalitions and work with states around the globe

moving multilaterally in order to isolate and destroy terrorist organizations. Not only would military action be necessary but also massive political, economic, and humanitarian efforts had to be made collectively in order to make sure terrorism could be permanently removed from all states, regions, and continents of the globe. State building was considered a way to combat terrorism however, invading Iraq was not part of the War on Terror. Iraq would only complicate the United States image in the world where Brookings believed it must maintain the positive appearance as a global leader. Moreover, Iraq was not a priority, the War on Terror was just part of Brookings' overall mission that was United States foreign policy. Iraq represented a different security issue, WMD. Priorities had to be set in order to maintain global peace while at the same time keeping a positive United States image.

Hoover also failed to present policies that countered their basic belief that all terrorism was an enemy to the only thing that "maintained global order, the state" (Schultz 2002). The United States had to maintain its military dominance and move unilaterally to destroy the terrorist threat not only to protect American democracy but to also maintain global peace. State building was the only way to defeat terrorism and the United States had an obligation as the world's superpower to remove terrorism from failing countries and rebuild those nations in order to ensure that the idea of the state could never be in question. Iraq was a perfect case for Hoover to exercise state building as a mechanism of combating terrorism as well as preventing WMD production.

If the findings of this study are indeed accurate reflections of these three United States think tanks, what are the implications? First, think tanks could potentially be seen as falsely advertising themselves. Just as many other think tanks, the three examined

here advocate that they operate independently and individually providing policies influenced by no outside bodies. Even Cato, who acknowledges its libertarian undertones, declares that it is not part of any "lobbyist effort or political party" (Cato Institute 2014). However, just because they are advocating this does not actually mean it is true. How can Cato declare it expresses "libertarian principles" (Cato 2014) and expect the public to believe it does not associate with libertarian Republicans or organizations? For another example, Hoover does not specifically label itself as a Republican think tank however, it has had various Republican figures act as members of the institute in the past, Condoleezza Rice for one. Further, just because they are claiming not to associate with these political bodies, does not mean that they themselves cannot be categorized as one. This is exactly why Rowe declared "think tank" to be a misnomer. As clearly presented in each chapter of this work, each think tank refused to waver on its preferred methods towards combatting terrorism. Are they not the same then as any other lobbyist or special interest group? If all think tanks care about is policy-makers adopting their methods of counterterrorism, this paper sees no difference between think tanks and any other interest group.

Secondly, and more important, how do think tanks believe the United States can win the War on Terror if they continuously fail to readapt their basic principles. Similarly, how extreme does an event or an issue have to be in order for think tanks to adapt? If 9/11 could not generate new thinking than imagining the severity of a situation that could is disturbing. It is the same as the idea of partisanship blocking Congress from passing controversial legislation. If think tanks constantly reiterate their own policies, will a strategy ever be found? Moreover, will policy-makers even want to turn to think

tanks in the future if think tanks are continuously pitching the same policies in agreement with their core values? These are very serious and relevant questions for the current state of global affairs. In 2015, Al-Qaeda is still operating across the world and has serious levels of control over certain territories, such as in Yemen. Further more, powerful terrorist groups such as ISIL in Iraq and Syria and Boko Haram in Nigeria continue to spawn and ally with each other as they grow stronger every day. Fourteen years after the attacks of September 11th and the emergence of the modern terrorist, the world still faces the terrorist threat. It is projected that the world will continue to face the terrorist threat for a long time to come. One can only hope that the three think tanks in this work have adapted their policies and at times strayed from their basic principles in order to present new strategies to face the ever growing danger of transnational terrorism. Being flexible with their basic principles could potentially make policy makers more inclined to interact with the think tanks and help the United States formulate a better brand new counterterrorist strategy. Moreover, instead of incrementally making steps to slowly defeat terrorism as old policies may do, new thinking could perhaps make for a brand new and far more efficient counterterrorist strategy.

It should be mentioned that this thesis does not speak for all United States think tanks. Jonathan Rowe's statement of think tanks as a misnomer was actually specifically directed at one particular think tank, the conservative Heritage Foundation (Rampton &Stauber 2002). Nevertheless, his clarification can apply to all think tanks and rightfully so as demonstrated in this work. However, other think tanks may have been advocating policies in the wake of 9/11 that were indeed examples of new thinking. They perhaps may have understood the weight of 9/11 and this new enemy. Moreover, this thesis only

covers the War on Terror up until 2003. The three think tanks in focus could have perhaps adapted as the years went on. Seen as how we still are waging the War on Terror, one would hope that the think tanks realized at some point that current counterterrorist methods have proven to fail. This hopefully over more time forced them to provide policies that perhaps were not in line with their core values, basic principles, and underlying belief systems but nonetheless effective means of counterterrorism.

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