

## **SUSTAINABILITY OF PAX-AMERICANA IN THE LIGHT OF IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN EXPERIENCES**

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As distinct from other peoples on this earth, most Americans do not recognize, or do not choose to recognize, that the United States dominates the world through its military power. Due to government secrecy, they are often ignorant of the fact that their government garrisons the globe. They do not realize that a vast network of American military bases on every continent but Antarctica actually constitutes a new form of empire.

Chalmers Johnson '*Sorrows of Empire*'

The post World War II era witnessed a gradual but substantive rise in the US political influence characterized by modern military inventions and the follow up military strategies and doctrines to maintain its “atomic monopoly” and to deter the conventional might of the Soviet Union with its nuclear capability. The role of being sole Super Power obsessed the US policy makers in devising strategies not only to contain the Soviets to minimum but to expand their area of influence to the maximum. The same US intentions were apprehended by the Soviets in their so-called Soviet text; “The political aims of American imperialists were and still are to enslave economically and politically the European and other capitalist countries and, after the latter are transformed into obedient tools, to unify them in various military-political blocs and groups directed against the socialist countries. The main aim of all this is to achieve world domination.”<sup>1</sup>

President John F. Kennedy in response to this text categorically declined this policy version and declared in his address at the American University; Washington DC on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1963 “the peace that the United States sought was not a Pax Americana enforced on the world by American weapons of war. But the fact

that dominated Americans' mindset and became evident in the years afterwards that the US was conducting the policies to execute the strategy of "preventive wars" in an effort to secure their empire."

However, the American dream of global hegemony was built on the ashes of Kuwait crisis (1990-91) and the demise of the Soviet Union. The UNSCR 678 by invoking Article 51 of the UN Charter authorized the 28 State Coalition from six continents led by the US to invade Iraq. Subsequently, the US President announced the New World Order to mark the beginning of American global supremacy. The announcement was supplemented by the academic impulse in the shape of François Fukuyama's 'End of History', which predicted the 'triumph of western civilization' and Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' theory. The US presence in many parts of the world at the expense of Russian inward moves, the expansion of NATO, the US missile shield of MND and TMD, and building of regional hegemony; Israel and India made it the 'unrivaled global power.' The global hegemonic ambition was further boosted in the wake of 9/11 terrorist attacks, which once again authorized the US through UNSCR 1368 to enunciate the policy of 'we and us.' It gave license to kill, invade and attack any country in the name of terrorism and thus 'unilateralism' was born. A Global War on Terror (GWOT) was waged on Afghanistan against the non-state actors; Al-Qaeda and Taliban.

The US second Iraq invasion of 2003 was opposed by many important global players including the US European allies such as France and Germany besides China and Russia. The US moves for UN authorization was blocked and the 'coalition of the willing' was formed. However, the stiff resistance, human and material costs and international public opinion converted the coalition into 'coalition of the unwilling' and then 'coalition of the leaving.' The US suffered heavy casualties, the war costs became too much to bear; 'three trillion dollars,' which gave birth to global economic recession. The US withdrawal from Iraq and the humiliation in Afghanistan, where even after eight years the 'global war on terror' could not be won beyond Kabul, put severe limits on the American supremacy. Moreover, new regional alignments in the shape of South American alliance of Bolivia, Cuba and Venezuela, the rise of 'Shia crescent'

led by Iran in the Middle East and the Russian-Chinese strategic alliance through SCO, besides the Russian nostalgia of being the past empire, opposing the NATO expansion, asserting its influence in its immediate periphery and testing new military hardware, made the US policy-makers unnerved about its unchallenged global role. Therefore, the paper aims at analyzing these trends and indicates whether it is an end to the US global hegemony or the beginning of a 'new cold war' or the initiation of global multilateralism?

### **Conceptual Framework**

The term Pax Americana is abstracted from the term Pax Romana of the Roman Empire. Pax Romana hinted at the period of peace in Rome. Whether the subjugated policies of US can be taken into the context of negative peace is debatable. The term is subjected to greater criticism since it is in vogue. The supporters think it to have a direct link with US foreign policy. The supporters of the concept were mostly neo conservatives, who took it in the realist paradigm of strengthening defense policies to protect state sovereignty and supreme national interests. This version gained importance in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks. On the contrary, critics characterized this version as the American Imperialism and over powering tendencies of the state policies. The later group of academics achieved more fame in lieu of current US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. These endless wars have questioned US war planners since it is not the first and does not seem to be last episode of committing atrocities on other nations. The Vietnam defeat gave a jolt to this concept but the war in Afghanistan with the collapse of Soviet bloc revitalized its energies and motivated US spirits to again make use of the preventive wars.<sup>2</sup>

The term 'unilateralism' was coined by Frederick H. Hartman in 1951 and later developed as a conceptual tool to depict the *Patterns of Power*. Hartman defines it as a state, gradually; assume military ascendancy over all other states to promote its national security objectives, without the cooperation and participation of any other country or bloc of countries.<sup>3</sup> Hartman's notion of unilateralism sounds paradoxical on ground realities of US pursuance of power politics in the international relations. Since the

Cold War era, there have been strong allies that acted as US policy tools not only to deter its security threats from and across the region but to enhance its maneuverability to get the valuable resources by establishing its military bases across the world. However, advocates of US unilateralism argue that other countries should not have "veto power" over matters of US national security.<sup>4</sup> Whether the world remained under the bipolar system in the past or it is experiencing the multipolar system today, the true essence of unilateralism was and still prevails distinguishing US on military and strategic fronts.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Cold War Alliance**

The Cold War era was of strategic realignment that destined the countries to take refuge in either of the two blocs. The alliance building was not the only visible characteristic of Cold War era vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, since it has been witnessed that after the collapse of bipolar system with the disintegration of USSR, alliance building remained at its place and strengthened itself on functional basis. Whether this coalition or alliance building was on consensus on political issues or based on Pax American influence loaming over the hearts and minds of other capitalist states is debatable. But the successive default US policies in the pursuance of Vietnam War, Iraq-Kuwait war, Afghan war 2001 and Iraq invasion 2003 and now the GWOT is entering into South Asian countries, clearly supports American hegemony in global politics. Upon the ending of the Cold War, the US had the option to strengthen the global institutions of governance and moving towards an "integrative world policy framework, especially in the global commons of security, economics, and human rights and democracy."<sup>6</sup> But the preemptive measures in the face of imminent potential threats aggravated the international public opinion about the US policies.

The demise of the Soviet Union and the victory in the Kuwait Crisis provided the much awaited role to the US supremacy when on the ashes of the Kuwait Crisis President George Bush enunciated the New World Order;

Out of these troubled times, our objective a new world order can emerge? Today, that new world is



struggling to be born, a world quite different from the one we have known. What is at stake is more than one small country, it is a big idea, a new world order... to achieve the universal aspirations of mankind... based on shared principles and the rule of law... The illumination of a thousand points of light... The winds of change are with us now?<sup>7</sup>

And almost exactly ten years later the dream came true when in the wake of 9/11 terrorists attacks the UNSC authorized the use of force against the terrorists and their harborers. The UNSCR 1368 of September 2001 ‘unequivocally condemned in the strongest terms the horrifying terrorist attacks which took place on 11 September 2001 in New York, Washington (DC) and Pennsylvania and regards such acts, like any act of international terrorism, as a threat to international peace and security; And called on all states to work together urgently to bring to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these terrorist attacks and stresses that those responsible for aiding, supporting or harboring the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these acts will be held accountable.’

Taking advantage of global sentiments against terrorism President Bush announced his policy of ‘we and they’;

‘The search is under way for those who are behind these evil acts, have directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.’<sup>8</sup>

### **American Primacy**

The new-found US global role prompted the American writers such as Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth to state that ‘if America’s current global predominance does not constitute unipolarity, then nothing ever will. And despite what many have argued, no serious attempts by others to balance the US

power are likely for the foreseeable future. The sources of American strength are so varied and so durable that the country now enjoys more freedom in its foreign policy choices than has any other power in modern history. But just because the US can bully others does not mean it should. If it wants to be loved as well as feared, the policy answers are not difficult to find.<sup>9</sup> The following table shows that the military strength of other great powers is lagging behind the US. In today's era its strong defense posture of the states that guides their foreign policy stature.

### **Military Strength of Major Players**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>GDP</b>	<b>Def Bud</b>	<b>Total A/F</b>	<b>Reserves</b>
China	1,322m	\$3.35tr	\$46.7b	2.105m	0.8 m
USA	301m	\$13.7tr	\$622 b	1.498m	1.082 m
India	1,129m	\$1.209b	\$28.5b	1.288m	1.155m
DPRK	23m	NA	NA	1.106m	4.7m
Russia	141m	\$2tr	\$32.99b	1.027m	20m

Source: Military Balance 2008, IISS

### **US Pre-emptive Strategy**

With an unprecedented global support against the terrorism President Bush announced his National Security Strategy 2002;

It has taken almost a decade for us to comprehend the true nature of this new threat. Given the goals of rogue states and terrorists, the United States can no longer rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past. The inability to deter a potential attacker, the immediacy of today's threats, and the magnitude of potential harm that could be caused by our adversaries' choice of weapons, do not permit that option. We cannot let our enemies strike first....to forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act pre-emptively.<sup>10</sup>

Henry Kissinger usually says that the "American strategic doctrine does not really talk about what is commonly defined as preemptive action", but deals with what is usually considered "preventive use of force: measures to forestall the emergence of a threat capable, at some point in the future, of being overwhelming."<sup>11</sup> It sounds like taking the matter other way round. According to this version the credibility of US sources of information have to be precise but history reveals that chances of error cannot be avoided on practical grounds. The US policy of executing war plan against Iraq is a classical example in this regard.

### **Bush's Pax-Americana**

George Bush's unilateralist approach gave him smooth rise from the governorship of Texas to get twice elected as a President of the United States. The "black and white" approach to take decisions in international conflicts affected the US foreign policy.<sup>12</sup> The Bush administration's first National Security Strategy asserted American dominance as the lone superpower, a status no rival power will be allowed to challenge. And it provided a reason the world should accept this state of affairs: the expansion of peace and more freedom. A Pax Americana will be "in the service of a balance of power that favors freedom." It makes a case for preemptive response when there is evidence of an "imminent threat."<sup>13</sup>

President Bush devised new strategy in the aftermath of 9/11 stating that United States is willing to act alone and to act preemptively against any adversary who challenges America's military superiority. "The United States must and will maintain the capability to defeat any attempt by an enemy--whether a state or non-state actor--to impose its will on the United States, our allies, or our friends."<sup>14</sup> Reading between the lines show that there is vague wording in this context that signifies that US has the ultimate power to throw the states to the stone ages if they tend to threaten US sovereignty and interests. But there is fear for the allies and friends of US since it will be protected for its massive military might but the bitter fruit of rivalry is likely to be eaten by relatively weaker states allying with US.<sup>15</sup> This is precisely what is being witnessed in the 'Global war on Terror.'

## **Global War on Terror**

Prof. Jules Dufour, asserts that ‘the 2000 Global Report published in 1980 had outlined "the State of the World" by focusing on so-called “level of threats" which might negatively influence or undermine the US interests. Twenty years later, the US strategists, in an attempt to justify their military interventions in different parts of the world, have conceptualized the greatest ‘fraud’ in US history, namely "the Global War on Terrorism" (GWOT). Major elements of the conquest and world domination strategy by the US refer to 1) Control of the world economy and its financial markets, 2) Taking over of all natural resources, and 3) Geopolitical Outreach: Network of Military Bases.’<sup>16</sup> The 9/11 incident followed the New World Order characterized by securing American interests in the form of Pax Americana.<sup>17</sup>

## **World-wide US Presence**

The world-wide US presence is manifested by their regional commands; EUROCOM (European Continent), CENTCOM (Middle East, South Asia and Central Asia) PACIFICOM (Australia and Pacific Ocean), NORTHCOM (Homeland and Canada), SOUTHCOM (Latin America) and AFRICOM. These commands not only control the respective regions and show the physical American presence but also take care of the US global/regional interests. The newly established AFRICOM was first announced in 2006 and became fully independent command in October 2008, with its headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany. Gen. William Kip Ward is the Commander and Admiral Robert Moeller his deputy. The operational headquarters of this command would be established in Djibouti. The rationale for AFRICOM is ‘the threat of global terrorism and the risk posed by the weak states, ‘empty spaces’ and countries with large Muslim population as vulnerable territories where terrorists may find safe heavens and political support.’<sup>18</sup> They have over 200 military/naval bases/facilities globally which can take care of any eventuality in the regional and global sphere.<sup>19</sup>



## **The NATO Expansion**

After the Soviet achieving nuclear parity with the US, NATO as a security alliance emerged in April 1949, to deter the Soviets from approaching the Western Europe. Founding members of this alliance were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, UK, US. With the passage of time, there was increase in the membership of this alliance along with inclusion of other issues into its security agenda. The first membership enlargement turned out in 1952 with the addition of two countries Greece and Turkey; second enlargement added only Germany in 1955; third Enlargement took place in 1982 by involving Spain into the NATO alliance; fourth enlargement took place in 1999 with Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia; fifth enlargement in 2004 after the Afghanistan and Iraq invasions added Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia into it and in the recent sixth enlargement of NATO in 2009 added Albania, Croatia.<sup>20</sup> Some of the NATO expansions, especially the last few, were at the expense of the Russian interests as some of the former Soviet Republics joined the alliance. It is therefore, all but natural that the Russian Federation has objected to the inclusion of Ukraine and Georgia into the NATO alliance.<sup>21</sup>

## **Challenges to the US Dominance**

However, the present US global dominance and unilateralism has been facing multiple challenges; Domestic economic recession, the Russian resurgence, Shanghai Coop Organization, Emergence of Anti-US South American Alliance and the Rise of Shia Crescent. These challenges may not altogether erode the US military might but would definitely limit its power to act alone.

## **The US Economic Recession**

The US has suffered an economic loss of over \$7 trillion since 1970s and the current inflation has gone into double digits. First time since the World War II the unemployment is rising steadily. The dollar has lost 60% of its value against Euro and it is

losing its reserve currency role. Prices of oil and gold have risen to 400% and many of the banks and financial institutions have been bailed out by the Bush administration.<sup>22</sup> In these circumstances the US is severely curtailed by the Congress and the US public opinion to commit further military proactivism in the world. The Afghan and Iraq wars may consume \$3 trillion in the longer run putting severe economic constraints on the dwindling domestic economy.

### **The Russian Resurgence**

The global system is making a major shift now. The US war in Iraq and Afghanistan has absorbed American military resources dramatically. It is overstated to say that the United States lacks the capacity to intervene anywhere else in the world as a hegemon. Russia, as an emerging power in the existing unipolar world has the history of re-emergence for couple of times, for example the Czarist Russia and then the USSR. After the shift in the balance of power from bipolar to unipolar, the US as a unipolar power tried to increase its influence while letting its enemies not to get back in the world's politics as a power. So US, the European Union and NATO moved closer to Russia. After the event of 9/11, US legitimized its force and presence in the surrounding areas of Russia. But Russia's history compelled it to realize its importance as a new imperial power in the world and in Europe as well. Europe relies on much of its energy resources from Russia, which has used the energy supply as a foreign policy tool. After a deal for an anti-missile defense radar station was signed by Washington and Prague, a Russian company sharply reduced the flow of oil to the Czech Republic.<sup>23</sup>

Russia's military modernization and its increasing military cooperation with China and the Central Asian states through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) shows the world that Russia today is a greater challenger to the US in the former Eastern Europe. Moreover, Russia and Venezuela have been strengthening their close relationship as emerging multipolar alliance against American global power. The two are scheduled to hold joint naval operations in the Caribbean. Venezuela has used much of its oil revenues to purchase Russian weapons in an effort to modernize the armed forces and strengthen its own ability to deter any possible

attack. Hugo Chávez has welcomed Russia's growing geopolitical presence as a counter-balance to US power. Russian invasion of a European republic, Georgia, its navy to Latin America for military exercises in America's backyard, and its threats to cut off energy supplies to Europe as a real threat to the US in Europe. The possible Russian military exercises with Venezuela suggest that Russia thinks it no longer needs the West and can act against neighbouring countries with minimal consequences.<sup>24</sup>

The hopes that Bush administration had from its policies of pursuing the 9/11 consequences could not exercise the Pax Americana concept at the large scale. This was surely the triggering point for Russia to assert its influence on the world and this was done by invading resource rich part of Georgia. A *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman argued that the Russian move on Georgia, in particular, signaled "the end of the Pax Americana, the era in which the United States more or less maintained a monopoly on the use of military force."<sup>25</sup>

### **The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)**

The increased prominence of the SCO has led policymakers and scholars to question if the organization might complicate the United States' ability to secure its interests in the region. Some experts believe that Russia and China want to use the SCO to curb US access to the region's vast energy supplies. Similarly, the SCO's call for the United States to withdraw its military forces from the region was seen as an explicit challenge to the US military presence in Central Asia. Lastly, SCO members are uneasy about certain US policies, particularly its support for democratic reforms.<sup>26</sup>

The "color revolutions" in Ukraine, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan, which unseated leaders loyal to the Kremlin, have also led Russia to view the US presence in post-Soviet states with suspicion, while Beijing sees US forces along its western border as part of Washington's strategy to contain China.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, both these states are moving closer against the possible encirclement by the US and to safeguard their respective sphere of influence in the region.

### **South American Anti-US Bloc (A Triangle of Cuba, Bolivia and Venezuela)**

An immediate and much more potential challenge to the US is emerging in its backyard. With decades old anti-Cuban stance the US Latin American policy has earned many foes than friends. The joining together of Bolivia and Cuba with Venezuela and active outside backing by China and Russia could pose a severe challenge to the US hegemony in the region. Highlighting the island's economic integration with other Latin American nations, on April 29, 2006, Bolivia joined Cuba and Venezuela in signing Chavez's Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America (ALBA) trade agreement. ALBA, a proposed alternative to the controversial US sponsored Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), presents a socialist vision for regional commercial cooperation. The socialist-based agreements are increasingly popular in the region, and on July 18, ALBA's future initiatives were discussed among 100 representatives of Latin American groups during Argentina's Peoples Summit, which hoped to configure possible solutions to neoliberalism-induced distortions in regional societies.<sup>28</sup>

### **The Rise of Shia Crescent**

By toppling Saddam Hussein, the Bush administration has liberated and empowered Iraq's Shiite majority and has helped launch a broad Shiite revival that will upset the sectarian balance in Iraq and the Middle East for years to come.<sup>29</sup> That notion is of hegemonic Iran that is attempting to dominate the region through an array of Shiite proxies. It is believed to stretch from Beirut via Hezbollah, Gaza to Baghdad and finally from Iran to Saudi Arabia to Yemen.<sup>30</sup> Israeli President Shimon Peres anxiously stated that 'it would be catastrophic for the region if Iran succeeds in using Syria, Hamas and Hezbollah to expand its influence and establish 'Shia hegemony.'<sup>31</sup> The same was echoed by Shaul Mofaz, the Israeli Defence Minister in 2008 when he stated that 'Any return of the Golan Heights to Syria would result in an 'Iranian foothold' on Israel's border and would thus not only be politically naïve but irrational.'<sup>32</sup>

The US despite of its serious threats to Iran to roll back from its Uranium Enrichment could not harm it. The deterrence posed by Iran as the hub of Shia domination is great in the face of the US regional presence. General Yahya Rahim Safavi, the head of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards said that “the Americans know better than anyone that their troops in the region and in Iraq are vulnerable. I would advise them not to commit such a strategic error,”<sup>33</sup> also the series of default strategies pursued in the wake of 9/11 could not motivate the US Congress to approve another strategic blunder in Iran.

### **Limits of Power: Afghanistan and Iraq Case Studies**

During the last 8 years the GWOT is far from over, ISAF/NATO has no control out of Kabul. The GWOT is breeding more terrorism, human and material casualties are soaring and the ‘Do More’ policy for Pakistan has made it a scapegoat. President Obama has decided to continue with the Bush policy of more forces to be stationed, and the Af-Pak is coined to put Pakistan under pressure. The success rate of war in Afghanistan and Iraq can be judged from the casualty rate and the objectives achieved during these wars.

As of July 13, 2009, the US Department of Defense has reported 729 US soldiers killed and 3162 wounded in the Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.<sup>34</sup> The CNN reports total coalition deaths at 1227. On the other hand 4576 Afghan National Army Personnel have been killed and about 10,960 civilians have been wounded.<sup>35</sup>

### **Iraqi Invasion of 2003**

The UNSCR of November 8, 2002 to invade Iraq was not approved. The US was compelled to create a ‘Coalition of the Willing’, which later became the ‘Coalition of the un-willing’ and then the ‘Coalition of Leaving.’ As of July 2009 the US has suffered 4326 casualties and another 31,430 have been wounded.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand about 1.2 million Iraqi civilians have been killed and about 4 million displaced.<sup>37</sup>

According to a Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report published in October 2007, the financial costs of the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan could cost taxpayers a total of \$2.4 trillion by 2017 when counting the huge interest costs because combat is being financed with borrowed money. The CBO estimated that of the \$2.4 trillion long-term price tag for the war, about \$1.9 trillion of that would be spent on Iraq. Joseph Stiglitz, former chief economist of the World Bank and winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, has stated the total costs of the Iraq War on the US economy will be three trillion dollars in a moderate scenario, and possibly more in the most recent published study, in March 2008.<sup>38</sup>

### **Iraq War and US Public Opinion**

President Bush admitted that he was misled by the intelligence agencies on Iraq. On the other hand the US soldiers have refused to serve in an 'illegal' Iraq war, the US public opinion is bitterly opposed to the Iraq war; 'we cannot give our children's blood for securing Iraqi oil.' Some 300,000 of the 1.6 million US soldiers who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan suffer from the psychological traumas of post traumatic stress disorder, depression or both.<sup>39</sup>

The US rationale behind waging such bloodshed against Iraqi civilians and US soldiers themselves was not convincing to change the world opinion, based on US covert intentions to get the access to oil. The torture and atrocities inflicted by US in Abu Gharib and Guantanamo bay is still an untold tale. The world wide protests for abusing humanitarian rights have aggravated anti-US sentiments around the globe. The new US administration pledged to close these torture centers but still these policies remain declaratory. Under these circumstances it seems difficult for US to maintain the illusion of the "benevolent imperialism of Pax Americana."

### **Lessons from Iraq War**

John Keegan, a well known military historian has summed up the Iraqi experience; 'Iraq gives an awful warning about the dangers of Western interference in the affairs of a Third World

country. The Iraqis had rebelled against foreign rule before, and it should have come as no surprise that they rebelled again. Do not be too quick to use military force. You may regret the consequences.<sup>40</sup> Whereas Paul Craig, assistant secretary of treasury in the Reagan administration states that 'Republicans have us at war in two countries as a result of lies and deceptions... We have alienated the entire Muslim World and most of the rest.'<sup>41</sup>

In this context the US decided to withdraw its forces from Iraq. President Bush and Premier Maliki signed the US-Iraq Status of Forces Agreement. The agreement between the United States of America and the Republic of Iraq on the withdrawal of United States forces from Iraq and the organization of their activities during their temporary presence in Iraq is a status of force agreement (SOFA) approved by the Iraqi government in late 2008 between Iraq and the United States. By this agreement the US combat forces will withdraw from Iraqi cities by June 30, 2009, and all US forces will be completely out of Iraq by December 31, 2011. Later, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced in Baghdad that UK forces will be leaving Iraq by July 2009. Brown was in Iraq on December 17, 2008 to meet with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a day after the Iraqi government drafted a law paving the way for the troop withdrawal next year and six years after Britain joined in the US-led invasion. Brown and al-Maliki said in a joint statement that "The role played by the UK combat forces is drawing to a close. These forces will have completed their tasks in the first half of 2009 and will then leave Iraq."<sup>42</sup>

### **Future of Global Power Balance**

Analyzing the US global role and the challenges it faced what lies ahead in the global balance of power. Robert Jervis, a well known American sociologist believes that 'the common sense and most academic thinking would argue that a hegemon's prime objective should seek to maintain the prevailing international system but that is not the world in which we live today. Measured in any conceivable way, the United States has a greater share of world power than any other country in history. Whether it is referred to as the world leader by those who approve of its policies or an empire

by those who oppose them, it is a hegemon in today's unipolar world.<sup>43</sup> Whereas for some like Subhash Kapila states that 'Russia under the leadership of Vladimir Putin has set the country on a course of strategic and military resurgence. This was facilitated by rising Russian oil revenues. The Global Power Balance 2020 would be bipolar in nature, multipolar in a political and strategic myth, but the United States would have strategic edge over Russia in a bipolar world and a New Cold War is inevitable due to competitive strategic rivalry between USA and Russia.'<sup>44</sup> However, for Niall Ferguson 'Each of the potential hegemons of the 21st century, the United States, Europe and China, contains within them the seeds of decline, and Islam lacks the resources of a superpower. Critics of US global dominance should pause and consider the alternative. If the United States retreats from its hegemonic role, who would supplant it? Not Europe, not China, not the Muslim World, and certainly not the United Nations. Unfortunately, the alternative to a single superpower is not multilateral utopia, but the anarchic nightmare of a new Dark Age.'<sup>45</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Believing in the dictum that "in politics change is constant" the US has to revise its foreign policy keeping in view the broader agenda in order to restore its Pax Americana influence over the entire world, which now seems dwindling. As Harry Magdoff and Paul Sweezy state that "the United States, it seems, has locked itself into a course with the gravest implications for the whole world. Change is the only certain law of the universe. It cannot be stopped. If societies are prevented from trying to solve their problems in their own ways, they will certainly not solve them in ways dictated by others. And if they cannot move forward, they will inevitably move backward."<sup>46</sup>

The US policy of dealing with Iraq and Afghanistan wars showed radical approach to solve supposed problems. These conflictual situations were not the first that confronted US and it pursued similar war plan and with almost similar defeated results. Though apparently US pursued the strategies of rescuing US citizens from its enemies by using preemptive strikes against other nations.



This has made US security more vulnerable as the chances for preemptive reaction (now from the non state actors) are greater. This will surely hamper America's political, economic and moral slump, leading to the decline of Pax Americana.

Moreover, if the US wants to maintain its global leadership role it has to build global and regional partnerships to strengthen its position. These partnerships would not only be built with its traditional and new allies but also with potential foes and adversaries. President Obama's slogan of 'Change' has to be both at the domestic and foreign spheres for a peaceful and prosperous global order. The choice lies with the US leadership; would they like to move for a multipolar world or initiate a new Cold War. But only a leadership with responsibility and vision would lead the world affairs.

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### **Notes**

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<sup>1</sup>John Bellamy Foster and Robert W. McChesney, "The American Empire: Pax Americana or Pox Americana?" *Monthly Review*, Vol. 56, No.4, September 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Anthony Aman, 'Pax Americana?' *Bangor Daily News*, October 18, 2002 available at [www.bangornews.com](http://www.bangornews.com), also see David M. Malone and Yuen Foong

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Khong, ed., *Unilateralism and US Foreign Policy: International Perspectives*, Boulder, Co: Lynne Rienner, 2003, and Charles Krauthammer, American Unilateralism, *IMPRIMIS*, Volume 32, Number 1, January 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Frederick H. Hartman, *The Relations of Nations*, New York: MacMillan, 1978.

<sup>4</sup> Recent works that have made this argument include Walter A. McDougall's *Promised Land, Crusader State* (1997) David M. Malone and Yuen Foong Khong, ed., *Unilateralism and US Foreign Policy: International Perspectives*, (2003) and John Lewis Gaddis *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience* (2004).

<sup>5</sup> *David M. Malone and Yuen Foong Khong, ed., Unilateralism and US Foreign Policy: International Perspectives, Boulder, Co: Lynne Rienner, 2003.*

<sup>6</sup> Manfred Bertele and Holger H. Mey, "America at Crossroads, Mutations and Unraveling of Pax Americana", *Comparative Strategy*, Vol.17, Issue 2, April 1998.

<sup>7</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush, September 11, 1990.

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