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Lloyd C. Gardner. *The Long Road to Baghdad: A History of U.S. Foreign Policy from the 1970s to the Present*. New York: The New Press, Fall 2008. 320 pp. ISBN: 978-1-59558-075-7 (\$27.95; hardcover).

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Reviewers: James Goldgeier, Joan Hoff, Nancy Mitchell

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Introduction by Thomas Maddux, California State University, Northridge

Since the 1960s Lloyd Gardner has contributed a steady stream of influential studies that have focused on 20th century U.S. diplomacy and leaders from Woodrow Wilson to George W. Bush. As a member of the University of Wisconsin school of revisionists with Walter LaFeber and Thomas J. McCormick, trained in Fred Harrington's seminar in American diplomatic history, and a teaching assistant and discussant with William Appleman Williams, Gardner developed not only life-long friendships but a shared commitment to "search for underlying assumptions ... that underlay the categories and constructs that scholars used."¹ Starting with *Economic Aspects of New Deal Diplomacy* (1964), Gardner has written and edited books that range from an influential text with LaFeber and McCormick, *Creation of American Empire: U.S. Diplomatic History* (1973) to several studies of Woodrow Wilson such as *Woodrow Wilson and A Revolutionary World, 1913-1921* (1982) that examine the powerful interplay of ideology, economics, and personality in Wilson's diplomacy. Thematic assessments of U.S. efforts to shape the 20th international environment followed in works such as *A Covenant with Power: American and World Order from Wilson to Reagan* (1984) as well as several significant assessments of the Vietnam conflict including *Approaching Vietnam: From World War II through Dienbienphu, 1941-1954* (1988); *The Search for Peace in Vietnam, 1964-1968* (2004); and *Pay Any Price: Lyndon Johnson and the Wars for Vietnam* (1995).

In moving on to Iraq, Gardner applies his perspective of looking for the deeper assumptions that shape U.S. policy as well as his earlier studies, ranging from the topics of Wilson's failed efforts to lead Mexico's revolution to Washington's doomed campaign to rescue Vietnam from communism and nationalism, of examples of U.S. efforts to control and shape the overall contours in a political and economic sense of another country. As have many scholars such as Joan Hoff, Walter Hixson and Andrew Bacevich, Gardner points to the deeply ingrained American sense of exceptionalism that is based on the idea that the United States has unique values, institutions, and obligations to extend its example to others and promote progress.² Gardner starts the "Long Road" to Iraq with Vietnam and its aftermath, emphasizing the contributions of Walter Rostow and his optimistic theories on a U.S. led modernization campaign for Vietnam and other third world countries, and the legacy of Vietnam in Zbigniew Brzezinski's campaign as President Jimmy Carter's national security adviser, to respond aggressively to the Soviet Union's increased involvement in the Horn of Africa and other countries in the "arc of crisis" culminating in Afghanistan. Gardner connects the attitudes of these officials as well as others to the post-Cold War perspectives of neoconservatives and neoliberals and their enthusiasm for reshaping areas such as the Middle East in the context of the American sense of mission. Within the post-

¹ For Gardner's Wisconsin experiences, see Lloyd C. Gardner and Thomas J. McCormick, "Walter LaFeber: The Making of a Wisconsin School Revisionist," *Diplomatic History* 28:5(November 2004): 613-624.

² See the H-Diplo roundtables on Joan Hoff's *A Faustian Foreign Policy: From Woodrow Wilson to George W. Bush* (2008), Walter Hixson's *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (2008), and Andrew Bacevich's *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism* (2008) at <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/>

Vietnam Cold War flow of events, Gardner points to the Iranian revolution of 1979 as the starting point for U.S. preoccupation with the Middle East. With the loss of the Shah of Iran and his regime as an important ally in the area, Gardner suggests that American officials launched a search for a new strategic base in the Middle East, starting with Saudi Arabia, but then shifting to Iraq as a more stable prospect in light of Saudi concerns about a growing U.S. military presence after the first Gulf War over Kuwait in 1990. "Iraq was not about Saddam Hussein," Gardner concludes, "it was about the American objective of establishing a new Middle East." (pp. 223-234, 255, 264)

The reviewers welcome Gardner's interpretive essay and his many comparative insights on past and current U.S. policy and policymakers, but they do have some reservations on his study, most notably

- 1) The reviewers question Gardner's decision to start the "Long Road" with Vietnam. James Goldgeier suggests that problems related to Vietnam and Afghanistan in the early 1980s are "more backdrop to the confrontation that began in August 1990 rather than sources of more recent policy." (1) Nancy Mitchell is also "not convinced that it is useful to situate the roots of current U.S. foreign policy in the early debates about Vietnam." On the other hand, Gardner does make a number of comparisons of U.S. policy on Vietnam with Iraq with respect to the characteristics of the conflicts — bad colonial wars, American rationales on the nature of the threat, the selling of the wars that didn't go as planned, and the impact of the Vietnam experience on U.S. policymakers' desires to reassure Americans about their ability to achieve success and progress. (See pp.264-265, 271) In his response, Gardner also emphasizes that the "impact of Vietnam was something that had to be expunged over and over again, so that it could not rise like a vampire to suck the life out of American foreign policy; but, second, there is a tie between the ideology of thinking that Vietnam was the last obstacle to creating a liberal world order, and that the terrible destruction there and then in Iraq was justified as the birth of a new order in the Middle East." (2)
- 2) Gardner's thesis on the U.S. desire to control the Middle East is extensively developed and not challenged by the reviewers. With the Cold War attracting the most attention, Gardner "hoped to pull the history of America's quest for influence and, indeed, dominance in the Middle East out of the Cold War framework, and to examine thereby different continuities at work in policy formulation and decision." (1) Gardner refers frequently to Washington's desire for a "strategic landing zone" in the Middle East. (See pp. 2-6, 63-64, 257-258) Mitchell agrees that the road to Baghdad "might have begun at Plymouth Rock" in reference to American messianic exceptionalism, "... but it was paved 350 years later." Mitchell would move the "critical moment" from the events leading up to the Carter Doctrine the Arab oil embargo in 1973 "which in turn led to the vast transfer of wealth to the oil-producing states." (1-2) Joan Hoff questions Gardner's assessment of the objectives behind the quest for influence and dominance, particularly on the relative importance of oil in Washington's calculations. Hoff, for example, notes several examples of U.S. officials in Iraq maneuvering to privilege American companies in

the Iraqi oil fields and other aspects of the Iraqi economy. (3-4) Gardner does note the importance of access to the oil resources of the region to U.S. officials, but argues that oil was part of a broader desire to shape and dominate the region and retain access to oil reserves. (1) and see pp. 8, 198, 241)

- 3) The reviewers question Gardner's selection of advisers and leaders to focus on before arriving at George W. Bush in 2001. Joan Hoff, for example, sees parallels between Gardner's comparison of Rostow's views with Bush's advisers such as Donald Rumsfeld and Richard Cheney. However, Hoff would have welcomed discussion of other advisers such as Fritz A. G. Kraemer and Andrew W. Marshall who influenced many of the neo-conservatives. (3) Goldgeiger suggests that Gardner moves to quickly from Bush 41 to Bush 43 with insufficient analysis of Bill Clinton's policies on Iraq. Noting Clinton's belief that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and Clinton's willingness to bomb Iraq, Goldgeiger suggests that Clinton and Democrats contributed to the momentum to go after Hussein that Bush seized after September 11th. (1-2)³ Mitchell also believes that Gardner overemphasizes the importance of Brzezinski at the expense of Carter, reflecting as Gardner notes in his response, the accessibility of Brzezinski's papers versus Carter's. (2)
- 4) George Bush's "War on Terror" and the continuing conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq attract less reaction from the reviewers perhaps because they tend to agree with Gardner's critical assessment of Bush, his major advisers, and their management of the conflicts. Hoff, for example, supports Gardner's critical evaluation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his use of the Special Operations Command for missions within foreign nations as well as his efforts to undercut CIA intelligence assessments. (4) Goldgeiger concludes that "Iraq had had a hugely distorting impact on American foreign policy for nearly twenty years [and] it is certainly time to shift attention and resources away from Iraq toward the many other challenges facing the nation." (2) Gardner does depict Bush as representative of his thesis on what brought Americans down the "long road" to Baghdad, including a belief in American exceptionalism, a commitment to avoid a Vietnam-like failure of mission (see pp. 30-31 for Bush's comments in Hanoi in November 2006), a true believer perspective on spreading freedom in the Middle East and the likelihood of favorable results. (p. 175) Gardner agrees with the consensus that Bush and his advisers abandoned the realism of Bush I during the first Iraq conflict, failed to focus on al-Qaeda and achieve stability in Afghanistan—if that is possible—and launched and mishandled a misleading preemptive war against Saddam Hussein. Since Gardner completed his book in April 2008, he does comment on Bush's shift in January 2007 to the new "surge strategy" of expanding the American troops under General David Petraeus and stepping up counterinsurgency to deal with the continuing insurrection and

³ See Derek Chollet and James Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars: From 11/9 to 9/11* (New York, 2008) for a fuller development of Goldgeier's assessment on Clinton and Iraq and the H-Diplo roundtable on this book at <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-X-1.pdf>

sectarian violence in Iraq. (see pp. 238, 252, 265) Gardner is cautious in his assessment, noting a decline in violence as the U.S. put Sunni insurgents on the payroll, and Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki exerted more decisive leadership than anticipated by American officials. At the same time Gardner emphasizes the continuing American quest for a secure base in the Middle East with pressure on Iraq leaders to approve long-term American bases in Iraq, and, symbolically, a new embassy in “central Baghdad that would be about two-thirds the size of Washington’s National Mall, a twenty-one building complex with desk space for one thousand people behind high, blast-resistant walls.” (p. 258)

Participants:

Lloyd Gardner is Research Professor of History at Rutgers University, where he has taught since 1963. He received his Ph.D. at Wisconsin in 1960. He is a former president of SHAFR, and the author or editor of a dozen or so books including *Pay Any Price: Lyndon Johnson and the Wars for Vietnam* (1995); and co-editor with Marilyn Young, of *Iraq and the Lessons of Vietnam and the New Empire* (2007). His new project is a book on the period that proceeds “Long Road to Baghdad,” which should be out this winter with the New Press.

James Goldgeier is a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and a professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University, where he has taught since 1994. After receiving his Ph.D. from UC Berkeley, he was a visiting fellow at Stanford University’s Center for International Security and Cooperation and an assistant professor of government at Cornell University. Goldgeier is the author of *Leadership Style and Soviet Foreign Policy* (John Hopkins, 1994), which received the Edgar Furniss book award in national and international security, and *Not Whether But When: The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Brookings, 1999). He co-authored (with Michael McFaul) *Power and Purpose: U.S. Policy toward Russia after the Cold War* (Brookings, 2003), which received the 2004 Lepgold Prize for the best book on international relations. His most recent book (co-authored with Derek Chollet) is [*America Between the Wars: From 11/9 to 9/11*](#) (PublicAffairs 2008), named a best book of 2008 by Slate.

Joan Hoff is Research Professor of History at Montana State University, Bozeman. She is the former Director of the Contemporary History Institute at Ohio University, former Director of the Center for the Study of the Presidency in New York City, and former Executive Director of the Organization of American Historians. Her latest publication is: *A Faustian Foreign Policy from Woodrow Wilson to George W. Bush* (2008). Other books include: *Nixon Reconsidered* (1994); *Herbert Hoover: Forgotten Progressive* (1975); *Law, Gender and Injustice: A Legal History of U.S. Women* (1991); and *The Cooper’s Wife Is Missing: The Trials of Bridget Cleary* (2000); and *Ideology and Economics: U.S. Relations with the Soviet Union, 1918-1933* (1974); *American Business and Foreign Policy* (1971).

Nancy Mitchell is an associate professor of history at North Carolina State University. She is the author of *The Danger of Dreams: German and American Imperialism in Latin America, 1895-1914* (1999) and is currently writing a book about Jimmy Carter’s foreign policy.

Review by James Goldgeier, George Washington University and Council on Foreign Relations

It is impossible to understand the U.S. in Iraq if we insist on examining the current war as a post-2003 phenomenon. Other recent books have tied the Iraq war back to the first Gulf War and the policies the United States pursued from 1990 onward.¹ Lloyd Gardner is even more ambitious, connecting our current predicament to policies first enunciated by the United States in the 1960s in Vietnam.

Gardner highlights the oft-stated view by U.S. officials that America is exceptional and that it is capable of using its power to transform other societies and other regions as a source of various foreign policy debacles. Those of us who believe in the value of American leadership and engagement in the world should constantly be mindful of the hubris that got us into so much trouble in Vietnam in the 1960s and in Iraq more recently. Gardner forces us to think hard about American foreign policy by connecting policies developed during the Cold War rivalry to those articulated in response to the attacks of September 11. American elites have consistently worried that the country would be perceived as weak and that there were huge reputational costs to bear if the United States failed to stand up to the Soviet Union or Iraq. The need to avoid another Munich has often been taken as a given without being subject to rigorous questioning about the appropriateness of that analogy to current problems.

Gardner knows his period well, and he utilizes a wide range of sources. His writing style is extremely fluid, and thus the narrative is a pleasure to read. What's disappointing is his decision not to conduct interviews with the leading participants, many of whom, on the American side, are available. And while the coverage of secondary sources is commendable, the glaring omission is Christian Alfonsi's *Circle in the Sand*, whose argument overlaps that of this book.

While it is thought-provoking for us to revisit Vietnam and the early policy toward Afghanistan to understand Iraq, it does seem that those problems are more backdrop to the confrontation that began in August 1990 rather than sources of more recent policy. The importance of Vietnam to George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush appears to lie in the need to kick the "syndrome" that resulted from the American failure in Southeast Asia. As for Afghanistan, its relevance is largely the unintended consequences of the American role in the development of al-Qaeda and the inability to appreciate the threat posed by jihadis to the West in the midst of the struggle against the Soviet Union.

And when it comes to Iraq, we cannot, as Gardner does, merely draw a line from Bush 41 to Bush 43. The Clinton years are critical to understanding how we got where we are today. Gardner covers the 1998 Ohio State debacle, when Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and National Security Adviser Sandy Berger convened a town hall meeting to convince the American public and the world that the United States

¹ See, e.g., Christian Alfonsi, *Circle in the Sand: Why We Went Back to Iraq* (New York: Doubleday, 2006); Derek Chollet and James Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars: From 11/9 to 9/11* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2008).

was ready to face down Saddam Hussein. But there was more than that one event. Clinton and his advisers believed just as strongly as their successors that Saddam was building weapons of mass destruction. When Clinton spoke to the public on the eve of the December 1998 Desert Fox bombings, he stated, "Heavy as they are, the costs of action must be weighted against the price of inaction. If Saddam defies the world and we fail to respond, we will face a far greater threat in the future. Saddam will strike again at his neighbors. He will make war on his own people. And mark my words, he will develop weapons of mass destruction. He will deploy them, and he will use them."²

In 1999, the Clinton administration went to war without United Nations authorization, setting an important precedent. And in the 2000 campaign, Al Gore and Joe Lieberman argued much more forcefully than George W. Bush and Dick Cheney about the need to confront Iraq.

There were huge differences, to be sure, between the Clinton administration and the Bush administrations that preceded and followed it. But even so, there are important connections to understand from one group to another. Yes, one can and should draw a line as Gardner does from the Cheney 1992 Defense Planning Guidance to the George W. Bush 2003 national security strategy. But one can also draw a line from the transition document left by Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger for Warren Christopher in 1993 that emphasized the new types of threats arising in a globalized world all the way through the Clinton years to the State Department led by Colin Powell and Richard Armitage after January 2001. The differences that emerged in the Republican party after the end of the Cold War should not be minimized; nor should the emergence of the "liberal hawks" on the Democratic side.

President Barack Obama has outlined his draw-down of American troops in Iraq, and administration officials have stated that Americans will not be based in Iraq for decades as they have in South Korea. Given that Iraq has had a hugely distorting effect on American foreign policy for nearly twenty years, it is certainly time to shift attention and resources away from Iraq toward the many other challenges facing the nation. As the United States does so, it will be useful to keep in mind the many mistakes that Gardner reminds us have haunted foreign policymakers over the recent decades.

² Quoted in Chollet and Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars*, p. 179.

Review by Joan Hoff, Montana State University, Bozeman

Loyd Gardner's book is not the first to point out that the neo-conservative-inspired Bush Doctrine of preemptive unilateral action to bring about regime change was not unique or a new approach in American foreign policy.¹ In fact, its history predates the 1970s and the Carter Doctrine where Gardner primarily places it. While he claims, in the introduction that "the road to Iraq began . . . in the aftermath of the Vietnam War," (2) only two chapters of nine or 61 pages out of 272 deal in detail with the 1970s or the 1960s when U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia began in earnest.

Most of the narrative concentrates on the 1990s to the present but is not linear or chronological in the conventional sense. Instead, Gardner has chosen a comparative style that is both interesting and very readable. This means his text jumps back and forth comparing earlier events, statements, and wars to those from 1990s to 2008 without necessarily providing a coherent, detailed history of the Bush administration's overall foreign policy or past U.S. Middle Eastern diplomacy. Gardner also offers a disjointed running commentary about how presidents and their advisers have rationalized their foreign policies during the Cold War through the last Bush administration.

In the process he does demonstrate the inadequacy of the American media when covering U.S. foreign policy. Gardner cites example after example of media pundits either acting as cheerleaders for war or not asking hard questions of presidents or their advisers or being bamboozled by their answers. Only Maureen Dowd and Bob Schieffer are shown not to be gullible or complicit. Dowd saw the Senate's October 2002 resolution for what it was: an authorization for war. Schieffer is credited for trying, but nonetheless failing, to get a straight answer out of Paul Wolfowitz about evidence that Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda had prewar connections.

One major theme of the book is the "idea of progress—the agent theory of international relations." (10) This metaphor of progress with its moral, technological, and ethnocentric belief in American exceptionalism had to be protected and propagated, especially when military setbacks in Vietnam and Iraq seemed to contradict the notion that progress was being made. Gardner's use of multiple comparisons does not systematically document how far back in U.S. history his definition of progress goes. They also do not always specifically substantiate the other long-term motif that he thinks characterizes U.S. diplomacy; namely, how an obdurate belief in progress has prompted successive presidents to come up with

¹. Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* (New York: Times Books, 2006), 129-47, 194-259, *passim*; Melvyn P. Leffler, "9/11 and American Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 29, 3 (June 2005), 395-413; William Blum, *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower* (Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 2000), 125-78; Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003); Dana Priest, *The Mission: Waging War and Keeping the Peace with America's Military* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003); Michael Mann, *Incoherent Empire* (New York: Verso, 2003); H. W. Brands, *The Use of Force after the Cold War* (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 2000), 41-42; and Gore Vidal, *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace: How We Got To Be So Hated* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2002), 22-41 (for listing of U.S. military interventions from 1948-1999).

varying ideas about establishing a new world order along American economic and political values.

Another theme that Gardner stresses is the role that a “realist worldview” has played in the conduct of U.S. diplomacy. Because he views it primarily as a product of the Cold War and thus “specific to that era,” he implies throughout the book that because it was so strongly associated with containment and deterrence it fell into disrepute by foreign policy decision-makers who believed in the “cause of progress” from Vietnam forward. “In truth,” Gardner somewhat startlingly proclaims, “there is no substantive ‘realist’ tradition in American history.” (26) After reviewing how 9/11 made a realist foreign even more passé, he cites Rice asking a Princeton audience whether “Why would anyone who shares the values of freedom seek to put a check on those values?” Answering her own question, Rice continued: “No one should seek to do so, even if that meant using force. Power in the service of freedom is to be welcomed” With these words she dismissed those Gardner calls “realist-minded nostalgists.” (30) His book is a powerful critique of why and how realists fell out of favor so that a much-quoted Bush aide could arrogantly proclaim to a reporter in 2002 that “We’re an empire now, and when we act we create our own reality. And while you’re studying that reality . . . we’ll act again, creating new realities. . . . We’re history actors . . . and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do.” (105)

On occasion Gardner compares George W. Bush’s foreign policy to those of Woodrow Wilson and even nineteenth century European colonial powers. Some of the specific comparisons are repetitive and effective, such as the references to deception perpetrated by LBJ to obtain the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and Bush’s misleading statements for going to war against Iraq. So is the continuum he paints “from the Carter doctrine to ‘shock and awe’ in 2003.” (63-64) Other comparisons, however, are not as relevant and so cloud rather than clarify the major themes of the book.

Gardner demonstrates continuity rather than change in U.S. diplomacy by singling out theorists such as Walt Rostow, George Kennan, Zbignew Bzezinski, Francis Fukuyama, Zalmay Khalilzad, and Paul Wolfowitz. He then compares or contrasts their ideas to one another. While some of these are strained (especially between Kennan and Fukuyama), most are reasonable and often show a continuum of thought and sometimes even language, except for Kennan and Fukuyama. What is curious is that Gardner completely ignores the impact Jeane Kirkpatrick’s spurious theory about the impact of the distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian governments (and the right of the United States to declare which elections were legitimately democratic and which were not—a favorite past-time of the Bush administration had on the thinking of Ronald Reagan and other conservatives down to the present).

Gardner focuses in particular on Rostow because he views him as the source for the belief of Donald Rumsfeld and other “new-age muscular Wilsonians influencing foreign policy” under Bush in the idea of “creative destruction.” For Rostow this term meant that the massive use of force ultimately produced “free-market capitalist nations” such as Germany and Japan after World War II. (12, 259) The term “creative destruction” seems to be Gardner’s creation and not one that was used by Rostow or Bush’s advisers. The only

source he cites when first using the term is the book that Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice wrote in 1995.²

Nonetheless, Gardner says this notion accounted for Rostow's refusal to admit that the war in Vietnam was a lost cause as many other of John Kennedy's advisers did under LBJ. For Rostow "the consequences of failure were incalculable" just as they became for top neo-conservative officials in the Bush administration defending the war in Iraq. Likewise, Donald Rumsfeld and Richard Cheney imitated Rostow when they conducted a "running battle with the CIA when the intelligence agency's conclusion did not fit well with the idea of progress." (21)

There were, however, other significant but lesser known behind-the-scenes theorists who influenced neoconservatives going back to Nixon when they first began to emerge. The more important one whom Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz actually quote was Fritz A. G. Kraemer, Kissinger's first foreign policy mentor beginning in the 1940s. He served as senior civilian counselor to defense secretaries and top military commanders from 1951 until 1978. There was also Andrew W. Marshall, appointed first by Nixon in 1973 to the Pentagon's Office of Net Assessment and reappointed by all successive presidents. Marshall like Rumsfeld played down the use of conventional ground forces and played up the idea of first-strike preemptive military action. Kraemer came up the phrase "provocative weakness" to describe the Munich deal between Neville Chamberlain and Adolf Hitler and every time he perceived that dictators took advantage of the United States during the Cold War. He believed that September 11 attacks came about because the terrorists did not think they had to fear massive retaliation by the United States. Kraemer mentored not only Kissinger, but also Alexander Haig, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz, in addition to Cheney, Paul Nitze, Richard Perle and numerous military commanders. Both Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz publicly praised Kraemer for his concept of "provocative weakness." In particular, when Kraemer died in 2003, Wolfowitz stated he hoped that President Bush would see things as Kraemer did.³

It is conceivable that the terms "creative destruction" and "provocative weakness" are the two sides of the same coin since they both advocate the use of force or what Bush called "complete victory" and the belief that American democracy and capitalism could be spread through military might. Kraemer's term, however, has been the much more commonly referred to by foreign policy advisers to presidents since the 1950s, especially the ones around George W. Bush, than the one Gardner attributes to Rostow.

Gardner is curiously reluctant to stress the role that economics in general has played in U.S. foreign policy. In particular, he plays down the part that oil played in both Gulf Wars saying that while "specific economic motives . . . are there for all to see . . . the quest has

². Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

³. Joan Hoff, *A Faustian Foreign Policy From Woodrow Wilson to George W. Bush*, 127-129, 169, 198-199; and Len Colodny and Tom Shachtman, *The 40 Years War: The Neocon Ascendancy from Nixon's Fall to the Invasion of Iraq* (New York: HarperCollins, December 2009).

been to find a safe landing zone for American influence throughout the Middle East. . . ." (8). Later he quotes both Rumsfeld and Bush denying that oil had anything to do with the invasion of Iraq except to "restore Iraq's oil to world markets, and thus help the Iraqi people" after Saddam Hussein was removed. (240) Thus, Gardner seems to agree that the war was "not about oil, but about what America's enemies could do with oil. . . . from the time of the Iranian Revolution the United States sought a way and a place to change Middle Eastern politics." (223-224). While he mentions drafts of legislation about production sharing arrangements that were unduly favorable to foreign oil companies, Gardner neglects to make it clear that when neocon L. Paul Bremer III came in as head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, he immediately tried to privatize Iraq's oil fields and turn them over to American companies. Failing in that endeavor, Bremer issued on hundred orders, especially Order No. 39, designed to privatize all other aspect of the Iraqi economy giving economic advantage to U.S. and elite foreign interests over those of the Iraqi people.⁴ Gardner does note the negative impact that the Iraq war ultimately had on the American economy.

Gardner correctly emphasizes Order 17, also proclaimed by Bremer, that exempted CPA foreign personnel from being subject to trial under Iraqi law. This remained in effect until Nouri al-Maliki revoked it in 2007. This order greatly facilitated the operations of the new type of "secret army" that Rumsfeld created by utilizing the Special Operations Command (SOCOM) created back in 1987 to coordinate the military services for undertaking often covert missions within foreign nations to protect American interests. Rumsfeld used these commando units and his intelligence Strategic Support Branch to bypass C.I.A. information to reinforce Pentagon power at the expense of the State Department. Gardner concludes that under Rumsfeld SOCOM became more of a threat to the Constitution than Watergate and Iran-Contra combined. He also notes how constitutionally dangerous Cheney's concept of the presidency "as more equal than the other branches of the federal government" was and recommends that the "next president . . . resist the temptation" to accept the enhanced powers that Bush exercised with Cheney's help. (266)

While the idea that the Bush Doctrine and the occupation of Iraq fits well into seamless continuous web of U.S. diplomacy is not original, Gardner offers assorted examples of how and why America's forays into the Middle East (and Southeast Asia) have always been problematic and not necessarily positive learning experiences.

⁴. Antonia Juhasz and Raed Jarrar, "Oil Grab in Iraq," February 22, 2007, Foreign Policy in Focus (FPIF), <http://www.fpi.org/fpiftxt/4020>; Juhasz, "Commentary: The Hand-Over that Wasn't; Illegal Orders Give the U.S. a Lock on Iraq's Economy," August 5, 2004; Juhasz, "Bush's Economic Invasion of Iraq; U.S. Corporations March into Bagdad, at the Expense of Self-determination," August 14, 2005; and Juhasz "Commentary: A Nice Little War to Fill the Coffers," October 14, 2004—all in the *Los Angeles Times*.

Review by Nancy Mitchell, North Carolina State University

Reading *The Long Road to Baghdad* is fun. Lloyd Gardner's touch is sure, and his insights provocative. While I disagreed with several aspects of his thesis, it was always with pleasure rather than irritation: *The Long Road to Baghdad* tickled my brain.

The book's subtitle is "a history of U.S. foreign policy from 1970 to the present." In fact, it is more an essay, a reinterpretation, than a staid history, and it begins in the 1960s, rather than 1970. It sheds light on how we got to the current state of affairs – two wars, pseudo-security, fear, and confusion.

Gardner shuffles the dots and reconnects them in stimulating ways. He traces the line of muscular modernization from Walt Rostow through Zbigniew Brzezinski to the neoconservatives. He pushes the cold war into the background and pulls U.S. imperialism in the Middle East (broadly defined) to the foreground. He stresses connections between the late 1970s—with its twin perils of the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan—and the current era. Thus, unlike studies of the cold war, the dramatic events of the 1980s are in the shadows; instead, the Carter Doctrine and the First Gulf War take center stage.

Gardner begins with Vietnam, and particularly with the White House whiz kids who were so sure that the whole world wanted to modernize along U.S. lines that they failed to notice all the contradictory evidence. This chapter is a distillation of Gardner's decades of research on Vietnam, and it is a wonderfully concise and fresh analysis of U.S. missteps in that war. Nevertheless, I am not convinced that it is useful to situate the roots of current U.S. foreign policy in the early debates about Vietnam. Certainly Rostow proclaimed a particularly vigorous belief in modernization, but he was only accentuating a tendency as old as Manifest Destiny. Why begin with Rostow? Why not trace the road to Baghdad back to Jefferson's "empire for liberty"?

Gardner might very legitimately reply, "Time, space, and publishers," but his decision to begin with Rostow skews our understanding of our current plight, placing the explanation in the recent past rather than in the deep roots of U.S. foreign policy. Gardner implies that the United States took a disastrously wrong turn in the early 1960s; I would argue that the mistakes of U.S. policy toward both Vietnam and toward Iraq emerge from the taproot of messianic exceptionalism.

Gardner's stress on the 1970s, however, seems very appropriate. It was during that bizarre decade, the era of disco and polyester, that the United States began to focus—*really focus*—on the need to control the Middle Eastern region. The road to Baghdad might have begun at Plymouth Rock, but—to extend the metaphor—it was paved 350 years later: it was in the 1970s that the United States cast its mantle, decisively, over the region.

Gardner locates this shift in the Carter years, occurring under Brzezinski's hawkish gaze. Surely the sequence of events—war in the Horn, revolution in Iran, siege of the Great Mosque, and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan—culminating in the announcement of the Carter Doctrine is key to understanding US policy in the region today. However, I would push the critical moment back to 1973, when U.S. support of Israel in the October War precipitated the Arab oil embargo, which in turn led to the vast transfer of wealth to the oil-producing states. It may be a cliché, but it bears repeating in an age that is dazzled by weaponry: Money is power. This flood of petro-dollars changed the balance of power in the world: money (power) flowed from the United States to the oil-producers. This power shift was reflected not only in the oil-rich Arabs' and Iranians' military budgets but also in their foreign aid budgets. By 1975, Saudi foreign aid—spent entirely in the Muslim world—outstripped the totality of U.S. foreign aid, which was spread much more thinly.

This was the situation Carter inherited, a situation that was obscured by the overlay of the cold war. The Carter administration's dilemma in the Horn, its flip flops about Indian Ocean disarmament, and its CIA operation, with Saudi aid, in Afghanistan were seen at the time, and for many years after, within the framework of the cold war. They signaled what was widely declared "the return of the cold war." The alarms about the Soviet threat, however, drowned out another fact about these Carter policies: all were attempts to adapt to—and tame—rising Saudi power.

This casts Brzezinski's role in a somewhat softer light. The dilemmas and the inconsistencies of the Carter years were not so much the result of a knock-down drag-out brawl between the genteel secretary of state, Cyrus Vance, and the brusque and manipulative national security adviser, as the reflection of an administration trying to cope with a complex and contradictory era, an era during which—as has become clearer after 9/11—the ground was shifting. An overemphasis on Brzezinski as the Rasputin—or at least the Donald Rumsfeld—of the administration writes Carter out of the picture, which is a mistake. Where in the world is Jimmy Carter?

While it is true that on several occasions Carter did waver between the advice of Vance and Brzezinski—dealing with the Shah is the most important example—he was in fact a decisive president, as seen in the resolute and often unpopular stances he took toward Panama, Rhodesia, the Arab-Israeli dispute, and China. The real problem was not that Carter was torn between Vance and Brzezinski but the opposite: he held both their viewpoints simultaneously.

Thus I take issue with Gardner's emphasis on Brzezinski, which is, I believe, more a reflection of the state of the archives (where Brzezinski's papers are most widely declassified) than of the real locus of power in the Carter administration. The telling point is not that Brzezinski advocated sending an aircraft carrier to pose an (empty) threat to Ethiopia—to take one of Gardner's examples of the national security adviser's predilections—but that Carter overruled him. The key player is Jimmy Carter—an obstinate, arrogant, and brave Baptist Puritan—not Zbigniew Brzezinski.

Looking back, Carter was often dancing in the dark. Or he was dancing under the klieg lights of the cold war. What Lloyd Gardner has illuminated is that in the 1970s, while all eyes were focused on the vicissitudes of détente, a new narrative was emerging, a narrative that would take us on the long road to Baghdad.

Author's Response by Lloyd Gardner, Rutgers University

First, let me thank the reviewers who took the time to read "Long Road" and to offer their comments in such a concise and effective manner. And I will follow that up with a general statement that I agree with practically everything they say. If I were handed the assignment of reviewing my book, I would have pointed to the same issues and shortcomings. So, with that statement I will try to suggest why they are right, and to deny that I have been seriously misunderstood, or anything like that as an excuse.

Nancy Mitchell correctly states my purpose in writing the book: I hoped to pull the history of America's quest for influence and, indeed, dominance in the Middle East out of the Cold War framework, and to examine thereby different continuities at work in policy formulation and decision. Of course, the Cold War framework was there, but it was as rationale for decisions that would have been made anyway. Joan Hoff is right in saying that in this book I do not argue an economic determinist position, preferring to talk about the need for a safe landing place for American interests. I do offer a quotation near the end of the book from Alan Greenspan in his memoirs, "I am saddened that it is politically inconvenient to acknowledge what everyone knows: the Iraq war is largely about oil." I follow that with a comment that it is impossible to know if Bush would have gone to war absent the oil question, and a conclusion that it was about much more than oil. Included, I think, would have to be not only a sense that the U.S. has a self-designed fiduciary relationship to the world it created, but also a strong sense that this responsibility must go beyond maintaining a static system – or it would fail. I am intrigued by Mitchell's comment about the need to contain rising Saudi power, and will probably call upon her for advice in dealing with that question should the publishers desire to produce a paperback edition.

Mitchell also feels I hit out too hard at Zbig Brzezinski. Where is Carter, she asks? Fair points, also fair that declassification at the point I was doing research did channel the National Security Adviser's views into the book. I was very impressed with Brzezinski's concentration on China as a future partner for the U.S. in opposition to the Soviet "threat," and also as a way to incorporate China into the American world order. (I am also impressed by his trenchant criticism today of the results of some of the policies he pursued so vigorously in the earlier years.)

Joan Hoff points to an important aspect of the book: the use of public interviews by a great variety of television and radio "hosts," who are ubiquitous on the American scene today in our Age of CNN. The availability of these "interviews" does not make up for the shortcoming that James Goldgeier points out. I did not conduct interviews with the policymakers myself. This is partly explained because of my feeling that the public interviews are available to all as public texts, and my excerpts and comments can be checked against an agreed-upon document. That is my difference with the Bob Woodward school of history, and Goldgeier has a fair argument to make that I should not allow that difference to shape research as much as I did here – and probably elsewhere as well.

Hoff also points to some missing persons in the book, especially Jeane Kirkpatrick and Fritz A. G. Kraemer. She is right, and so is Goldgeier about the Clinton absentees. I did talk a bit about Sandy Berger and his contention that inspections were not enough almost in the same terms as Dick Cheney would later use in late 2002, but clearly he feels that Clinton's actions in 1999 constituted the "important precedent" that Bush followed—and perhaps that Gore would have followed even more quickly. That is an interesting argument that needs more attention.

Hoff, finally, provides us with a concise discussion of the debate over whether "realism" in foreign policy thinking is anything other than a convenient myth. While the reviewers have their doubts about the way I connect up Vietnam and Iraq, they all emphasize, in one way or another, the continuities in American policy. Perhaps, Goldgeier suggests, Vietnam syndrome thinking is more applicable to Bush I than Bush II. I think that raises two issues. First, the impact of Vietnam was something that had to be expunged over and over again, so that it could not rise like a vampire to suck the life out of American foreign policy; but, second, there is a tie between the ideology of thinking that Vietnam was the last obstacle to creating a liberal world order, and that the terrible destruction there and then in Iraq was justified as the birth of a new order in the Middle East. Those views were expressed, again in almost the same words, by Rostow and Rice to encourage their presidents and the public to "stay the course." And then there were Bush's words in Hanoi to the effect that Americans would win in Iraq unless they quit – an intended reference to the war fought in Vietnam.

Again, thanks for these very good comments.

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