

Thesis History

Colin Powell: Between the Military and Politics

-The Powell Doctrine: When military interventions should (not) be engaged in -

How did The Powell Doctrine influence the American Foreign Intervention Policy?

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Contents

Introduction.....	3
Chapter 1: Colin Powell.....	6
1.1. Introduction.....	6
1.2. Education and Military/Political Career.....	6
1.3. Political- and Personal Ideology.....	13
1.4. Conclusion.....	18
Chapter 2: The Powell Doctrine.....	19
2.1. The Powell Doctrine an Introduction.....	19
2.2. Positive and Negative Feedback on the Powell Doctrine.....	23
2.3. Lessons Learned from the Powell Doctrine.....	25
2.4. Conclusion.....	32
Chapter 3: The Powell Doctrine and the decision to intervene.....	34
3.1. Introduction.....	34
3.2. The Powell Doctrine: the Vietnam War and Intervention until 2001.....	34
3.3. The Powell Doctrine and the Decision to Intervene in Afghanistan and Iraq....	44
3.4. The Faith of the Powell Doctrine after the Afghanistan and Iraq Invasions.....	53
3.5. Conclusion.....	56
Conclusion.....	57
Bibliography.....	61

Introduction

“If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude”

-Colin Powell-

Colin Powell is the topic of this thesis. Colin Powell comes from a simple background of immigrant parents and has become one of the most influential black Americans over the last half century. Not because of his skin color, but because of what he has accomplished as a military person, a political person and as an American. He is an impersonation of the American dream. Coming from a humble background, by working hard, he has achieved the top. He is a man who crossed invisible borders of his time period and worked out important lessons for future generations. He is a man who shows that hard work and insight will lead to higher things in life and with the lessons of his Powell Doctrine a lot of strategic policies were revised. He is a man who gets a lot of respect of his peers and of the American people. He is a man who is not perfect, but he is not afraid to admit that. He is a man that will not be held back by a political vision, but is convinced that the right person should lead the country. The Republican or Democratic ideology is not important to him. The countries wellbeing is much more important than the wellbeing of one person or one ideological group. Powell is convinced that the support of the people is important for the success of a policy and makes this clear in his policies. This is a short introduction of a very interesting person, who has been very important for American policy and for military campaigns. A great military man, a great statesman and overall a great person.

This thesis will focus on Colin Powell and how he combined his military background from the Vietnam War to explain his political decisions later on in his career and how this influenced his American foreign policy decisions. The Vietnam War had ended badly for the Americans and influenced America's confidence in a negative way, but Powell knew to give it a positive spin. A wise lesson learned from a terrible war which ended badly for the Americans. It is interesting to see how an important military figure, who has experienced the failure of the Vietnam War, handled American interventions after this debacle. How did the Vietnam War influence him? It is an evaluation of the American foreign policy through the eyes of great statesmen.

Because of his military experience Powell knew which strategies would work and not work. He knew which strategies would benefit the success of a military mission. The outcome of the Vietnam War left a big hole in the confidence of the invincibility of the U.S. Colin Powell kept himself busy with the question how it was possible that the U.S lost the Vietnam War. What were the reasons for military defeat, for loss of confidence by the American people and what strategies could have worked to make the war end in a success, or, whether or not the war should have happened in the first place? Powell thought about this throughout his military career, from the end of the Vietnam War until the beginning of the 1990's. Powell came up with different questions which should be thought over and answered before the U.S could go into another international mission or war. These questions together are better known as the Powell Doctrine. From the end of the Vietnam War until the first part of the 1990s there was the establishment and the rising of the Powell Doctrine as military and political Doctrine. From the second part of the 1990s onwards the Powell Doctrine has come into conflict with a new way of intervening: humanitarian intervention and the fight against terrorism. The position of the Powell Doctrine has come under scrutiny. The Afghanistan and Iraq Wars had America question whether or not there was still a future for the Powell Doctrine. The ups and downs of the Powell Doctrine will be the red thread throughout this thesis. But more interesting has been the fact how Powell himself followed his own doctrine throughout his political career.

In literature a lot has been written about Colin Powell and about the Powell Doctrine, but what I think is lacking is the combination of the influence of Powell's own military and political career on the development of the Powell Doctrine and how Powell himself applied the Powell Doctrine to missions or wars from the 1990's onwards. In other words , how did the Powell Doctrine influence American foreign intervention policy were Powell was involved. This leads up to my research question: *"How did Powell's military and political background influence his American foreign intervention policy and what is the Powell Doctrine really worth?"*

To answer the research question the thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is about the person Colin Powell. Who is he and what is his educational-career path until now? What are his believes, not only religious or ideological, but what does he believe in as a person? Further, what was the influence of his Vietnam deployment to his believes on American intervention in general? The second chapter focuses on the Powell Doctrine. What is the Powell Doctrine and what does it entail specifically? What kind of consequences does it

have and what are the general lessons which can be drawn from it for American policy and American future foreign interventions? In the last chapter, I will focus on Powell's influence on the Afghanistan and Iraq interventions and look how the Powell Doctrine fits in in this American foreign policy. In my conclusion I answer my thesis question.

Chapter 1: Colin Powell

“I was born in Harlem, raised in the South Bronx, went to public school, got out of public college, went into the Army, and then I just stuck with it.”¹

1.1. Introduction

In this first chapter the person of Colin Powell is investigated. I generally discuss his childhood; where he was born, where he grew up and what kind of background he has. What kind of education and practical experiences did he have which developed his military and political career? In short, what led him to become the great statesman he is today? What kind of ideology, political and personal views define him? Moreover, how do other people see Powell throughout his career? These questions will be answered in this first chapter in order to get a better understanding of the person Colin Powell. This is of importance because in order to understand the Powell Doctrine and the political decisions he made we need to understand the person behind it.

1.2. Education and military/political career

“Challenge young people by having high expectations of them; engage them with the opportunity to realize those expectations through constructive, character-building activities.”²

Colin Luther Powell was born in Harlem, New York in 1937. He was raised in the South Bronx. His childhood neighborhood was not one of drugs- and gang violence, but that of a multicultural community with lots of close family ties. Powell’s family also can be characterized as ethnic mixed, because his ancestries can be traced back to African, English,

¹ www.brainyquote.com/

² Ibidem.

Irish, Scottish, Arawak Indian, and Jewish roots.³ His parents are both immigrants from Jamaica who came to the United States of America in the beginning of the twentieth century. He was an only child to Luther Theophilis Powell and Maud Arial Powell (McKoy). His father had to work hard all his life to reach his goals and he stimulated his son to do the same. This does not mean that the family lived in poverty, because that was not the issue, but they had to work hard to achieve what they got. Colin Powell was motivated by his parents to “have a high education, work hard and achieve personal achievements, but in the beginning of his education Powell was not yet that motivated because he did not find his goal in life until he was older”.⁴

Powell was educated in the New York City public schools. When Powell graduated from Morris High School in 1954 he did not have a clear idea what he wanted to do with his life. Powell went to the City College of New York to study engineering, despite his ability to do math and science and for the reason that his parents thought it to be the best chance for a prosperous future. But engineering was not what he was looking to do for the rest of his life. He changed his study to geology, but this was also not what he wanted to do with the rest of his life. Instead, Powell discovered the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) and graduated, in 1958, at the top of his ROTC class. He said that he was always inspired by the army stories of World War II.⁵ When he graduated from ROTC he had the rank of cadet colonel, the highest rank in the ROTC training class. This experience set him on the path of a military career. The military motivated him, gave him a sense of structure and a certain direction and goal in life.⁶ A military career was actually the goal Powell set for himself in life.

Powell started his ROTC training in 1957 in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He found it hard to deal with the negative phenomenon of racism. Colored men had to use different facilities and he did not receive the title of best cadet because of, as he suspected, racist motives. But Powell was convinced that the racism was not as bad in the army as in other parts of society and the financial and other benefits were much better taken care of in the army than elsewhere.⁷

³ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "*Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p. 8.

⁴ www.biography.com.

⁵ Harari, O. (2002), 'The leadership secrets of Colin Powell'. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional, p.18-19.

⁶ Ibidem, p.21-23.

⁷ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "*Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers,,p.9.

After graduating from City College of New York he went to Ranger School for two months at Fort Benning, Georgia. Again it was a post in the South of the US which inevitably meant he had to deal with the ongoing racism issues in the sense of separate facilities and rules for black and white. For him it was a welcome relieve to receive an assignment in West-Germany as an infantry officer in 1958. In 1960 Powell returned to the US. In the beginning of his military career he was assigned in several locations in the US. During this period Powell earned the title of second lieutenant in the US Army and he decided that his future career was definitely in the army.⁸ His first station was at Fort Devens, Massachusetts. When Powell got his first station at Fort Devens he shortly after met Alma Vivian Johnson, whom he later married in 1962. Colin and Alma Powell have three children: son Michael, and daughters Linda and Annemarie.⁹

In 1962, Powell was one of the 16.000 military advisors who were sent to South Vietnam to fight for an independent Vietnam and against the Communist threat. His task was to advise the Army of the Republic of Vietnam in their struggle against North Vietnam and the North-Vietnam- supported insurgency in South Vietnam itself. Powell was enthusiastic about his deployment in Vietnam, because he felt like a soldier who would finally taste some action. Powell's mission was very important to the Kennedy Administration, because they had lost confidence in the South Vietnamese government of Ngo Dinh Diem.¹⁰ Powell was first sent to the outpost A Chau where he advised and commanded a battalion of the army of South Vietnam, but the strategic reasoning behind protecting this place was not very clear to him. Powell in this time described himself as a true believer in the American mission in Vietnam because of the fight against Communism and the need for war to protect a free Vietnam. Later Powell acknowledged that he had been blind to the realities of American involvement and believed that America's fight in Vietnam was marked by ill-considered and illogical information, decisions and actions.¹¹

During his first tour to Vietnam, in 1963, Powell was wounded during a patrol along the Vietnamese border with Laos. For nearly six months, Powell and his ARVN unit patrolled through the jungles, searching for Viet Cong and destroying villages. Then while on one patrol, Powell fell victim to a Viet Cong booby trap. He stepped on a punji stake, a dung-poisoned bamboo spear that had been buried in the ground. The stake pierced Powell's

⁸ www.achievement.org.

⁹ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *"Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq"*. New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p. 9.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 10.

¹¹ Ibidem, p.11.

boot and quickly infected his right foot. The foot swelled, turned purple and forced his evacuation by helicopter to Hue for treatment. Although Powell's recovery from the foot infection was swift, his combat days were over. He stayed in Hue, reassigned to the operations staff of ARVN division headquarters. As part of his work, he handled intelligence data and oversaw a local airfield. His actions in the field and intelligence work for the army delivered him a Purple Heart award. Because of his heroic actions on securing the airstrip across the Vietnamese border with Laos, a year later he received the Bronze Star award.¹² In November 1963 Powell returned home after his first Vietnam deployment had ended. In that period the South Vietnamese president Diem was murdered in a bloody coup which led the country in even more instability. Powell described his feelings after his first deployment as: "I had experienced disappointment, not disillusionment".¹³ He returned to the United States still a true believer of the American cause in the Vietnam War. He stated: "The ends were justified, even if the means were flawed".¹⁴ When Powell returned home between his tours he came home to a country in turmoil. President Kennedy had just been assassinated and Lyndon Johnson could not adequately deal with the growing opposition against the Vietnam War and the American blacks struggle for civil and political rights. He had difficulties fighting for a country which did not accept him as being equal to white Americans, in another country, on the other side of the world, because of the protection of a democracy which democratic rights he himself did not possessed.¹⁵

From 1963 on his return until 1967 he served at Fort Benning. In 1967 he was selected for the army's command and General Staff College in Leavenworth, Kansas. He ended up second of his class of 1244 students. In the same period he build up his personal family life with a wife and three children. The last thing on his mind was enthusiasm for a second deployment to Vietnam were the situation had worsened immensely after the last time he was there.¹⁶ In 1968-1969 Powell was sent to Vietnam for a second tour. Powell arrived in Saigon on July 27, 1968. He did not see the city as an exotic Oriental place, but rather as an American garrison, because of the 500.000 troops stationed in the country and the decreasing morality of the people. Powell was very aware of good media coverage for the American goal and for

¹² www.achievement.org.

¹³ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "*Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p.11.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p.12.

¹⁵ Harari, O. (2002), 'The leadership secrets of Colin Powell'. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional, p. 25.

¹⁶ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "*Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p.12.

his own career. He was assigned to the staff of the commanding general of the American division. This division was not free of negative reputations on human rights abuses, for instance the presumed massacre at My Lai. Powell however was convinced these were only rumors and denied these allegations even when a decent inquiry did not find place. Powell was convinced that the American relation with the civilians was excellent which by others was conceived as propaganda and false.¹⁷ During his second deployment Powell got injured because of a helicopter crash. Again he served as a hero, because he rescued his comrades from the burning helicopter even being hurt himself and received the Soldier's Medal. In total, Powell received eleven military awards for his Vietnam time, including the rare Legion of Merit award for his loyalty and intensive input during the war.¹⁸

After his return from Vietnam in 1969, Powell went to George Washington University in Washington, DC, where he earned an MBA in 1971.¹⁹ Still, Powell felt the army was his first love and was promoted to major. In this time he worked with General William E. DePuy, the new army leader, on a total reform of the American army in which it was downsized immensely to 500.000 troops in total.²⁰ In the meantime Powell won a White House fellowship in 1972 where he worked at the Office of Management and Budget during the Administration of President Nixon. Here is where he learned how the government worked and how he could use the government to further his own career. At the Office of Management and Budget he got acquainted with the two people who had the greatest impact on Powell's career: Casper Weinberger and Frank Carlucci.²¹ Under President Ronald Reagan these men respectively served as Secretary of Defense and National Security Advisor.²² After he concluded his White House Fellowship he went back to serve the army as Colonel Battalion commander in Korea in 1973, after which he came back to the US and got a staff job at the Pentagon. During this time he got permission to study at the Army War College in 1975 where he got promoted to Brigadier General in 1976. This function entailed that he got to command a Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky where he led 2500 troops.²³

¹⁷ Ibidem. p.13.

¹⁸ www.achievement.org.

¹⁹ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "*Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p.16.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 17.

²¹ www.achievement.org.

²² www.achievement.org.

²³ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "*Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p.19.

Powell combined his military career with a political career, because he became an assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense and to the Secretary of Energy during the Presidency of Jimmy Carter and was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General in 1978. Powell played an important part in assisting Frank Carlucci as Assistant-Secretary of Defense during the transition from the Administration of President Carter to that of President Ronald Reagan in 1981.²⁴ In the meantime Powell also served as assistant commander and deputy commander of infantry divisions in Colorado and Kansas. Powell assisted the Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger during the overthrow of the Nicaraguan government (1981-1988), the bombing of the U.S Marines barracks in Lebanon (1983), the invasion of Grenada (1983) and the Libya airstrikes (1986).²⁵ For instance, Powell held conferences to end the pro-Communist Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Powell also investigated and discovered that the US government had arranged for covert and illegal shipments of U.S. weapons to Iran in exchange for the release of hostages. He exposed this and testified before Congress.²⁶

In 1986 Powell put his political career on a hold because he was afraid that the political assignment would hurt his military career and instead of a political function he served as commander of the Fifth Corps in Frankfurt, Germany.²⁷ Powell described it as: "I was determined to prove that I was an able commanding general and not a Pentagon-bred political general".²⁸ He was stationed in Germany until Washington called him back to the political realm to serve as deputy to Frank Carlucci, the new National Security Advisor. In 1987 Carlucci was appointed Secretary of Defense and Powell got promoted to be Carlucci's successor as the new National Security advisor. Powell was the first African-American and the youngest man to serve as a National Security Advisor. As National Security Advisor, Powell played an important role in coordinating the US- Soviet Union relationship, controlling arms control and empowering the Great Power status of the US.²⁹ Powell did not serve long as National Security advisor because in 1989 he got promoted as the new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 19-20.

²⁵ Harari, O. (2002), 'The leadership secrets of Colin Powell'. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional, p. 23.

²⁶ www.biography.com.

²⁷ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "*Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p.36.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 32.

²⁹ Harari, O. (2002), 'The leadership secrets of Colin Powell'. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional, p. 30-32.

In 1991, Powell served as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under President George H.W. Bush. Powell played a crucial role during the first Iraq War with the successful Desert Shield and Desert Storm operations in Kuwait. General Powell continued as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs during the first months of the Clinton administration.³⁰ Because of his important role in the first Iraq War he accepted his political status and embraced it more than before. Also, he enhanced his public image and appealed to millions of Americans through his public appearances on television and by helping to write books.³¹

Powell retired from the military in 1993 and intended to return to a private life. But, in 1994, Powell joined former President Carter and Senator Sam Nunn on a last-minute peace-making expedition to Haiti. His first encounter with a real peace-making mission was successful and resulted in the end of military rule in Haiti and the return to power of a democratic elected government.³² Until 2001, Powell kept on the down low and kept himself busy with humanitarian relieve and business plans. Between 1997 and 2001, Powell served as founding chairman of America's Promise, which is an organization which gives priority to develop the changes of the youth.³³

In 2001, Powell returned to a political life as the first African-American Secretary of State under the newly elected President George W. Bush. This was the highest rank ever held by an African-American in the United States government until the Obama election. This last part of his career he would be remembered for.³⁴ In the beginning of his career as Secretary of State, Powell established an efficient Administration of the State Department, and restored strong relations with other governments. A negative impact on his political career were the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Powell took a leading role in gathering support from America's allies for military action in Afghanistan and Iraq.³⁵ Later on, it became known that Powell had serious doubts about President Bush's plan to invade Iraq to stop the Saddam Hussein regime. It was a strange step for Powell to appear before the UN Security Council to present evidence of a supposed weapon of mass destruction development program of Iraq. This testimony was crucial to convince many states to support American military actions

³⁰ www.achievement.org.

³¹ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *"Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq"*. New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p.71.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 112.

³³ www.lucidcafe.com.

³⁴ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *"Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq"*. New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p. 126-127.

³⁵ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *"Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq"*. New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p.160-162.

against Iraq. Later on, Powell was criticized because no weapons of mass destruction were found which made his claim hollow. This led Powell to resign after the President Bush re-election in 2004.³⁶

1.3. Political- and Personal ideology

*“Never let your ego gets so close to your position that when your position goes, your ego goes with it”.*³⁷

In the beginning of his military career Colin Powell never thought about having a political career or disclosed any political sympathies to the outside world. Powell was registered to vote as an independent not being tied to either the Republicans or the Democrats.³⁸ He actually voted for the presidential candidate he thought was the best man for the job and for whom he had the most sympathy. In 1964, Powell supported the campaign of the Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon Johnson. But, since the beginning of his political career, Powell had served in both Democratic and Republican Administrations.³⁹

In the 1990s, Powell was popular with both the Democratic and the Republican Party supporters. His popularity from both sides led many people to urge Powell to run for President himself, because he represented both factions and could combine them into a workable and united U.S administration.⁴⁰ Powell briefly considered leaving the Republican Party to run as an independent to unite both parties. But Powell decided not to run in 1996 because he believed it was “a calling that I do not yet hear”.⁴¹ Colin Powell eventually accepted a political career for himself, but he did not see himself to be the right person for the presidency. Also, his wife Alma was afraid that it would make her husband a target and cause much unneeded drama in their secure family life.⁴² So, Colin Powell declined to seek election for presidency. Richard Armitage, Powell's closest friend in government stated about Powell

³⁶ www.achievement.org.

³⁷ www.brainyquote.com.

³⁸ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *‘Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq’*. New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p. 113-114.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 113.

⁴⁰ Clines, F.X. (1995), ‘The Powell Decision: The Announcement’. New York: New York Times.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

and his choice not to run for president: "He's slept soundly from the time he made the decision on it. He said at the time: On mornings when I woke up and thought, I'm going to run, I felt terrible, and it was a terrible day. On mornings I got up and said, I'm not going to, I had a wonderful day. And I finally came to realize, with all these people telling me, you have to run, they were looking for a shortcut, and they wanted someone on a white horse. That's not the way our system works".⁴³ Powell's son, Michael, stated: "very, very doubtful that his father would revisit the question, having resolved it in a pretty fundamental way. But, and I guess this is important, he does have a sort of consummate commitment and love of service and serving the country. In the extreme, if the country was at war, if there were the kind of challenges with which he could come to grips, if there was some reason he was the right person for the right time -- I do think it would have to be some element that rose to that level in his mind to entice him to do it".⁴⁴ This shows that Powell thought about running for president, but that his heart was not into it. He did not shy away from politics, but in his heart he was a military man and not a politician.

It was only until 1995 that Powell spoke out about his political ideology. In 1995 he got registered as a Republican, and spoke at the Republican convention the following year.⁴⁵ About his choice to support the Republican Party he stated: "*It's nice to say let's be bipartisan. But we're a partisan nation. We were raised as a partisan nation*".⁴⁶ After 1995, Powell got more involved with politics, but not only in the traditional way. In 1997, he returned to the City College of New York where he studied himself, to open the Colin Powell Center for Policy Studies. The Colin Powell Center for Policy Studies offered highly motivated students the opportunity to get experience with American politics and prepare them for careers in policy and public service. Powell was highly motivated to create capable and motivated young politicians who could make well-thought decisions and lead the country better than their predecessors.⁴⁷ Powell was dedicated to the wellbeing of children and youth of all socioeconomic levels and the commitment to make sure that young people receive the resources necessary to succeed. Just like many children Colin Powell began his career from ordinary circumstances. "Powell says about this that even that he did not have much

⁴³ www.topics.nytimes.com.

⁴⁴ Ibidem.

⁴⁵ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "*Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p.113.

⁴⁶ www.brainyquote.com.

⁴⁷ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "*Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p. 116-118.

economically, that it was because of his close bond with his family which provided support and a caring environment during his childhood. He found his calling in the military, which formed him to the man he became politically. His entire adult life has been in the service of his country. As a soldier, he was committed to protecting the nation and advancing democratic values. As a politician, his organizational talent and pragmatic outlook were recognized by those who placed him in key government advisory roles”.⁴⁸

About the way Powell conducted his political tasks for the Republican Party he stated: “*You can't just have slogans, you can't just have catchy phrases. You have to have an agenda. And I think what the Republican Party has to do, if it's going to incorporate the tea party efforts in it, is to come up with an agenda that the American people can see, touch, and actually believe in, and something they believe in*”.⁴⁹

Colin Powell described himself as being a moderate Republican. Powell as a moderate Republican can be best described as being in favor of a positive world image, of treaties and alliances which constrained the power of individual states. He stands for moral obligations and was devoted to democracy. The opposite of this view was shared by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, his deputy Paul Wolfowitz and Vice-President Cheney who belonged to the neoconservative Republican group. They saw the world as a dark place of power struggle where treaties and alliances were not really possible. These differences in view had a great impact on the way the Iraq intervention after 2003 was conducted and Powell disagreed a lot with the other three Republicans who shared opposite views from him.⁵⁰ Rice, who was National Security Advisor at the time, described Powell as being too focused on making-nice diplomacy than on action.⁵¹

Powell had two problems in doing his job as Secretary of State. He was not as close to the new president Bush Jr as other members of the Administration, and he was viewed with mistrust by part of the other members of the Administration because of his moderate views.⁵² Rumsfeld stated about the role of Powell in the Bush Administration: “His most conspicuous role in the Bush campaign had been a speech at the Republican convention in Philadelphia, in which he scolded the party for being insensitive to the condition of minorities”.⁵³ Some

⁴⁸ www.biography.com.

⁴⁹ www.brainyquote.com.

⁵⁰ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*. New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p. 163-166.

⁵¹ www.nytimes.com.

⁵² O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*. New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p. 118-120.

⁵³ www.nytimes.com.

Republican members doubted about his loyalty and fit in the Republican Party. Even Powell's son, Michael, was quoted to have said: "My liberal friends find it hard to believe that my father, an African-American centrist who supports affirmative action and abortion rights, could feel at home in the Republican Party. They say he's not really one of you, right? And a fair number of Republicans undoubtedly feel the same way, that he's not really one of us".⁵⁴ For Powell, being part of the Republican Party was not really a matter of ideology, but a kind of loyalty to political mentors that supported him and whom he respected, because he was convinced that both the Republican and the Democratic Party had some good and bad ideological ideas. Powell looked at discipline, respect for authority and tradition, and the kind of impact the policy of both parties had for the military.⁵⁵

After his resignation, Powell kept involved with American politics, although, he did not fulfill any political functions anymore. Powell became publically very critical on the conduct of war in Iraq, on how the Bush Administration made decisions and on other issues related to the Bush Administration. In 2006, Powell joined the moderate Senate Republicans who were critical on their own Republican Administration and demanded more rights and better treatment for prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.⁵⁶ However, improvements on the issues these moderate Republicans wanted to achieve stayed out. The consequence for Powell was, that he was not sure about the Republican ideological believes anymore. During the elections of 2008 Powell did not support the Republican Party, but voted on the Democratic candidate, the current American President Barack Obama.⁵⁷ During the 2008 presidential race Powell openly supported the Democratic candidate Obama. He said Obama had "met the standard to lead because of his ability to inspire and because of the inclusive nature of his campaign. Because he is reaching out all across America".⁵⁸

More clear than his political party related ideology is his ideology as a political statesman. Powell was quoted on a February 20, 2004 address at Princeton University: "We must build a better future even as we deal with the security challenges before us. That is how we'll overcome those challenges, because it's not enough to fight against a negative, like terrorism. We must focus on what inspires us, on what brings the good people of the world together.

⁵⁴ www.nytimes.com.

⁵⁵ www.nytimes.com.

⁵⁶ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *"Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq"*. New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p. 173-177.

⁵⁷ www.achievement.org.

⁵⁸ www.nytimes.com.

We've got to fight for the positive — for liberty, for freedom, for democracy”.⁵⁹ This quote shows what kind of politician he was. Powell was seen by the world as a great statesman and one of America’s most popular political figures who carried out the American dream. He was judged by the public as having a clear vision and being highly motivated to structure American politics in the right way. He is further seen as a very charismatic and well experienced military man and politician who was the right person to deal with the terrorist attacks and create a strong American Foreign Policy. Powell was once interviewed and the interviewer described him as: “he is a problem solver, not a visionary. Washington players can be divided into those who know how to work the institution and those who don't. Madeleine Albright didn't. Rumsfeld, in his first months, didn't. Powell plays the institution like a damn orchestra”.⁶⁰ A Democratic supporter of Powell stated: "In the land of the blind, he's the one-eyed king".⁶¹

Other politicians and close circle of Powell describe him as not only being a great person politically and military, but also personally. Powell was reported to have said: “Never let your ego get so close to your position that when your position goes, your ego goes with it”.⁶² This statement shows that Powell stayed a down to earth kind of man. He did not let his position influence what he was as a person and thought the kind of work he did was much more important than increasing his ego and personal position. Also, Colin Powell was known for his motivation, hard work en determination of making America a strong and save nation. He stated: “*A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work*”.⁶³

On a last note, Powell did not have problems with his skin color and did not experience it as a handicap, but saw it as a strong asset. Powell believed that he was given chances just because of his black skin color. He believed the government conducted a plan of affirmative action in which they tried to move more colored people in high political and military functions. The fact that Powell was black, in his case, contributed to his believes of competence and charm. The Republican Party stated: “There is the crude fact that a popular black war hero is politically invincible in a Republican administration that won without a majority. And there is a more subtle sense that his achievements make white Americans feel a

⁵⁹ www.lucidcafe.com.

⁶⁰ www.nytimes.com.

⁶¹ Ibidem.

⁶² www.brainyquote.com.

⁶³ www.brainyquote.com.

little better about themselves, and a bit more open to Powell”.⁶⁴ Powell did not shy away from talking about the subject of race. Powell told the New Yorker in an interview: "One, I don't shove it in their face, you know? I don't bring any stereotypes or threatening visage to their presence. Some black people do. Two, I can overcome any stereotypes or reservations they have, because I perform well. Third thing is, I am not that black”.⁶⁵

1.4. Conclusion

Powell was a gifted military leader and politician who came from a humble background for which hard work and honor were the key words. His great passion throughout his life was the military and his family. Especially the Vietnam War did shape him as a person in his ideological and political views. For the majority of his life he chose the army over a political career even without having a clear party affiliation. He fulfilled the highest political and military ranks in times of Republican and Democratic Administrations. In the end of his political career he affiliated himself with the Republican Party, but stayed moderate. He was convinced that America’s needs were more important than parties, person’s egos and power politics. People who knew Powell described him as a gifted and caring statesman who had a vision for the nation.

Chapter 2: The Powell Doctrine

“Don't be afraid to challenge the pros, even in their own backyard”⁶⁶

2.1. The Powell Doctrine an introduction

The Powell doctrine came into existence when Powell took the command of the Army Forces in 1991 and was made Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by President George H.W.

⁶⁴ www.nytimes.com.

⁶⁵ www.nytimes.com.

⁶⁶ www.biography.com.

Bush. Powell fulfilled the position of the highest military officer during the Desert Storm and Desert Shield operations of the first Iraq invasion in 1991. Powell achieved the position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs as the first African-American to fulfill this position. He was a gifted military and political strategic. Also, Powell became a very popular national figure because of his strong and reliable presence and experienced military and political strategies. Powell was an experienced military soldier because of his lessons learned fighting in the Vietnam War and during his political career. What he learned from other previous wars turned out to be very inside full for his military strategies and proved to be very successful for the situation in Iraq in the beginning of the 1990s. His military strategy became known as the Powell Doctrine. In short, the Powell Doctrine was an approach to military conflicts around the world in which overwhelming force would be used in order to maximize success and minimize casualties.⁶⁷

Interesting enough it was not Colin Powell who came up with the term the Powell Doctrine. The Powell Doctrine is a journalist-created term, because of the military strategy Colin Powell handled during the Gulf War of 1990-1991. Another interesting fact was, that the Powell Doctrine was largely based on the Weinberger Doctrine. Caspar Weinberger was the former Secretary of Defense and interesting enough Powell's former boss and his great inspiration. On November 28, 1984 U.S Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger held a speech entitled "The Uses of Military Power" before the National Press Club in Washington D.C.⁶⁸ There were two events prior to the speech which led Weinberger to held the speech. First, he wanted to respond to the suicide bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks at Beirut airport on October 23, 1983 in which 241 U.S. marines and soldiers died. The U.S. forces were in Lebanon as part of a failed U.S. peace enforcement mission. From the beginning there was a vigorous opposition of the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff against this mission, because they were convinced that the purpose of the mission was never clearly defined and that the violent situation in Lebanon could not be brought under control by any foreign side. Secondly, the invasion of Grenada on October 25, 1983. U.S and allied forces invaded Grenada after a pro-Soviet military coup run of the existing government. There was a lot of national and international opposition against this mission. The Weinberger Doctrine was inspired by the Vietnam War. Since the Vietnam War U.S. foreign policy had avoided the use of military force and did not have a clearly defined policy for engaging into

⁶⁷ Clines, F.X. (1995), 'The Powell Decision: The Announcement'. New York: New York Times.

⁶⁸ Clines, F.X. (1995), 'The Powell Decision: The Announcement'. New York: New York Times.

military interventions. The Weinberger Doctrine entails a list of points stating when the U.S should or should not engage into military interventions. These points are⁶⁹:

- The United States should not commit forces to combat unless the vital national interests of the United States or its allies are involved.
- U.S. troops should only be committed wholeheartedly and with the clear intention of winning. Otherwise, troops should not be committed.
- U.S. combat troops should be committed only with clearly defined political and military objectives and with the capacity to accomplish those objectives.
- The relationship between the objectives and the size and composition of the forces committed should be continually reassessed and adjusted if necessary.
- U.S. troops should not be committed to battle without a "reasonable assurance" of the support of U.S. public opinion and Congress.
- The commitment of U.S. troops should be considered only as a last resort.

The Powell Doctrine was based on the previous mentioned Weinberger Doctrine, but the Powell Doctrine was more elaborated then the Weinberger Doctrine. They both agreed that military intervention should be used as a final resort, with vital American interests in mind and with the support of their people. The Powell Doctrine was also not a clear cut military plan on how to attack in a specific military intervention case, but the doctrine was focused on whether or not to military engage in a certain crisis. The decision to engage in a specific case was very important to decide on the fact whether or not the military engagement would be successful within a specific time frame, with a specific amount of military capacity and with the change on a minimum of casualties. The Powell Doctrine stated that a list of questions all have to be answered affirmatively before military action could be undertaken by the United States. The questions stated by the Powell Doctrine were⁷⁰:

1. Is a vital national security interest threatened?

⁶⁹ Clines, F.X. (1995), 'The Powell Decision: The Announcement'. New York: New York Times.

⁷⁰ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "*Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq*". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers.

2. Do we have a clear attainable objective?
3. Have the risks and costs been fully and frankly analyzed?
4. Have all other non-violent policy means been fully exhausted?
5. Is there a plausible exit strategy to avoid endless entanglement?
6. Have the consequences of our action been fully considered?
7. Is the action supported by the American people?
8. Do we have genuine broad international support?

The difference between the Powell Doctrine and the Weinberger Doctrine was that the Powell Doctrine specifically mentions U.S vital national security interest, while the Weinberger Doctrine spoke about vital interest in general. The Weinberger Doctrine accepted a much broader perspective on vital interests. The Powell Doctrine also mentioned that other measure, before using military ones, must be exhausted. Military intervention must be a last resort. The Weinberger Doctrine does not mention the option for other measures explicitly, but also agreed on the fact that military intervention must be a last resort. Both agree on looking at clear cut goals and being convinced that you have enough capacity to fulfill the goal set prior to an intervention. The Powell Doctrine also contained the rule that an exit strategy must present or otherwise a state should not engage in a conflict. The Weinberger Doctrine does not contain such a measure. Both the Weinberger Doctrine and the Powell Doctrine agreed on the fact that there must be broad support for the military actions. Only the Weinberger Doctrine focused solely on national support and the Powell Doctrine focused on national and international support. As Powell said in an April 1, 2009 interview on The Rachel Maddow Show: “The Powell Doctrine denotes the exhausting of all political, economic, and diplomatic means, which, only if those means prove to be futile, a nation should resort to military force. Powell has expanded upon the Doctrine, asserting that when a nation is engaging in war, every resource and tool should be used to achieve decisive force against the enemy, minimizing US casualties and ending the conflict quickly by forcing the weaker force to capitulate”⁷¹

⁷¹ www.biography.com.

During the Balkan conflict Powell used these series of questions in order to decide on whether or not to intervene. This was when Powell was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Powell used the questions as being guidelines for military and political policy. In short Powell stated that the doctrine should aim for quick, low-casualty and popular actions. He did not see these rules as absolute dogma of the American Policy, but a guideline that every good military or political strategic should use in order to weigh the pros and cons of an intervention. Powell was convinced that the guidelines, when followed during the Vietnam War, would have resulted in a very different outcome of the war. Powell was convinced that would the Powell Doctrine be used prior to the Vietnam War America would never have engaged in that war, because it was unavoidable that the nation would be demoralized and that it would damage American prestige⁷². Colin Powell was convinced that war should be the politics of last resort. And when we go to war, we should have a purpose that the people support and know of. The Vietnam War showed that when the people do not get the objective and why certain measures were taken than support was lost and the war would be over before it started. Powell stated: "When action is needed than a government must not be afraid to undertake this action, because the chief condition on which, life, health and vigor depend on, is action. It is by action that an organism develops its faculties, increases its energy, and attains the fulfillment of its destiny. Success is the result of perfection, hard work, learning from failure, loyalty, and persistence"⁷³. But Colin Powell was also a man who was realistic in seeing the success of a plan or mission and knew that sometimes you've got to compromise. You've got to start making the compromises that move the country forward and not leave disillusioned. The nations interests were more important than anything else, according to Powell. The most important lesson of the Vietnam war according to Powell was the lesson in the politics of war. The biggest mistake of the American government, according to Powell was going into a war with what he called "halfhearted warfare for half-baked reasons".⁷⁴

2.2. Positive and negative feedback on the Powell Doctrine

The Powell Doctrine has received critic from different angles. Critic came from more interventionist critics, liberals and conservatives. The critics described the Powell Doctrine as

⁷² www.nytimes.com.

⁷³ Clines, F.X. (1995), 'The Powell Decision: The Announcement'. New York: New York Times.

⁷⁴ Ibidem.

an excuse for inaction. The critics stated: "He is exceedingly cautious. Cautious to the point where he will reject audacious options, even well-considered ones".⁷⁵ When asked about this, Powell replied: "Caution is not a vice. I think it's a virtue. I know when to act. And if caution is such a terrible vice, then I'm sure the various people I've worked for over the years probably would not have hired Me".⁷⁶ After the 1991 First Iraq War, those critics described the Powell Doctrine also as a Vietnam-era relic that raised barriers to military intervention too high to suit the realities of today's world. "What's the point of having this superb military that you've always been talking about if we can't use it?"⁷⁷ said Madeleine K. Albright, Secretary of State. Madeleine Albright established a 'Do ability Doctrine' which was followed by the Clinton Administration. The 'Do ability Doctrine' entailed the prescription that the U.S should use their military power in more flexible ways to achieve the goals set in practice. There were a couple of successes of this doctrine like providing relief to Rwanda, the air strikes in Bosnia and the restoration of some form of democracy in Haiti. Powell did not agree with this 'Do ability Doctrine' and thought it to be naïve and leading up to ill-considered interventions. This was part of the reason why Powell decided to quit politics during the Clinton Administration and go his own way⁷⁸.

Yet Madeleine Albright was not the only one with the vision of using military force as a more flexible instrument of foreign policy. In late 1993, Powell's hand-picked successor, General John M. Shalikashvili, almost immediately began to distance himself from the Powell doctrine. He wanted to broaden the Powell doctrine in order to let it include other important interests that affected the nation's well-being, like humanitarian missions. General George A. Joulwan, a retired commander who supervised the Rwanda relief operation stated "*Powell was good for a period of time, but we must be able to adapt to the new challenges we face*".⁷⁹ But General Joulwan did not criticize the Powell doctrine in total, because he cautioned that there were still Powell principles worth remembering, like maintaining a clear political and military objective.

Others who were more in favor of the Powell Doctrine stated that the doctrine was the perfect tool to decide for a government or the military on where, when and how American military force should be used. It held that the United States should intervene militarily only

⁷⁵ www.nytimes.com.

⁷⁶ Ibidem.

⁷⁷ Ibidem.

⁷⁸ Clines, F.X. (1995), 'The Powell Decision: The Announcement'. New York: New York Times.

⁷⁹ Ibidem.

when the nation's vital security interests were at stake, only with decisive force and only when there was a clear goal and a defined strategy for getting out. They agreed on the fact that the US needed a strict and cautious set of standards in order to get its prestige back⁸⁰. Brent Scowcroft, President Bush's national security adviser, stated: "Sometimes the State Department likes to have fuzziness in all this, but when you commit forces, you have to have objectives. You have to tailor the use of force to the objectives you're trying to achieve. But you've got to know what you're trying to do. You've got to look at all the alternatives, and not just say, We'll do this and hope it works. What if it doesn't?"⁸¹ He used the Kosovo case as an example. He stated that "while the objectives may have been clear -- to stop Serb brutality, expel Yugoslav forces from Kosovo and force Mr. Milosevic to the peace table -- the execution was flawed".⁸²

During the Clinton Administration a more liberal intervention policy was followed by the government, with opposition of Powell. America intervened in several cases under which intervention in Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo. In Kosovo, the US was involved in NATO form. After two weeks of NATO bombing the NATO and American approach had failed to stop the Yugoslav Army's brutal actions against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. The Clinton Administration realized that the Powell Doctrine in the case of Kosovo would have been more useful than any other theory. Following the Powell Doctrine might had avoided a lot of military and civilian casualties and a numerous amount of refugees. Senator John McCain stated: "This only affirms the Powell Doctrine. This is more reminiscent of the gradual escalation and bombing pauses that characterized the Vietnam War".⁸³ There was a growing opposition against the too liberal intervention policy of the Clinton Administration. Powell stated: "The challenge of just using air power is that you leave it in the hands of your adversary to decide when he's been punished enough, so the initiative will remain with President Milosevic".⁸⁴

2.3. Lessons learned from the Powell Doctrine

⁸⁰ www.nytimes.com.

⁸¹ Clines, F.X. (1995), 'The Powell Decision: The Announcement'. New York: New York Times.

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⁸³ www.nytimes.com.

⁸⁴ Ibidem.

The Powell Doctrine has been studied by politicians, economist, military, philosophers and historians because of its importance to the American approach for different problems going on in the world. The Powell Doctrine, was mainly intended for military problems, but also dealt with other problem situations going on in the world; like economic, political and climate related issues. Different lessons could be drawn looking at the applicability of the Powell Doctrine on different world problems. The lessons are specifically intended to improve American policy and leadership. Taking the lessons seriously makes the Powell Doctrine successful and a successful Powell Doctrine will lead to successful interventions. The lessons are as following.⁸⁵

The first lesson from the Powell Doctrine was that having power means having great responsibilities. In order to decide on military intervention the people in charge of taking the decisions have to realize that they have a great responsibility to their own citizens and to the international community. Being responsible also means that you cannot be friends with everybody and that having a successful doctrine means taking decisions which does not make you very popular with certain groups in society. The decision works in favor of one side, but has an opposite effect for the other side. Good government means that in the light of the greater good of the welfare of the group you have to make unpopular decisions. In order to get the best results you have to be ready to make unpopular decisions which anger some groups who do not agree with you. Tough decisions cannot be avoided and making tough decisions and rewarding the people who deserve it creates a stronger world and a more stable one. Getting rid of bad elements makes a nation stronger and those are often the groups or people who get angry at certain decisions. Making decisions are never said to be easy and the most important decisions are always hard to make. A good leader according to Powell is not afraid to make unpopular decisions, because he has the general welfare in mind.

The second lesson from the Powell Doctrine is that when problems are brought to you because the rest of the world sees the US as a powerful nation that means the world has confidence in you that you are strong, resilient and can be trusted to deal with a certain problem. The moment that other nations stop confiding you with their problems the confidence is gone and loss of status and power is the consequence of it. Be open to the problems of the world and try to resolve the problems you know you can end with a satisfying result, but do not get involved in problems of which you are sure you cannot end with a

⁸⁵ Harari, O. (2002), 'The Powell principles: 24 lessons from Colin Powell a legendary leader'. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional, p. viii.

positive result. Leading other nations when there is trouble than you can show good leadership. In all cases failure of leadership must be avoided according to Colin Powell. The most dangerous thing to do is being afraid of looking weak because of asking for help. Covering up own weaknesses creates even more distrust. A good and strong nation is a wise one which can separate the problems possible for resolve from those failed from the beginning. A wise nation can realistically see its own abilities to resolve a certain issue with a positive result and knows its weakness to solve others.

The third lesson from the Powell Doctrine is that a good leader is not scared of experts and elites. A good leader makes its own decisions and does not follow the wishes of experts and elites, because they are experts and elites, but does so after carefully waging all the options after gathering all the necessary information. A good leader is not afraid to go against the wishes of the experts and elites when this is not the best thing for the country. In the case of experts they often possess more data than judgment. In the case of elites they only follow their own interests and are often a long way a straight from the real world. Don't forget the influence of normal citizens who have their own contribution and can have inside full thoughts. Important elements like full involvement, informality, daring, risk and speed can be forgotten when only listened to experts and elites. Policies that are developed in ivory towers often have an adverse impact on the people out in the field who are fighting the wars or bringing in the revenues. Real leaders do not ignore things happening in the field. Good government is waging the opinions of the experts and elites in relation to what happens in practice and comes up with a good compromise between the two.

Lesson four is that you have to show courage and that you must not be afraid to challenge the leaders, even in their own function when they are comfortable. It is better to learn and observe them as examples for learning new and other skills than to be afraid and ignore them. Learn your leaders weak spots. Do not blindly obedience your leaders because you have so much respect for them that you never challenge them, but dare to challenge them and ask if it really is like they say it is or that there are other visions which are better. Challenge each other by not agreeing with everything automatically out of respect or anxiety for hurting some feelings or that you are afraid it undermines your own position. Good leadership and decisions encourages everyone's evolution and prohibits your leaders from failing themselves by taking good and carefully weighted decision instead of unchallenged decisions.

Lesson five entails that you never neglect details. Details are even more important than all the information and knowledge that is right in front of you. The leader always must be ready to look for things beneath the surface and not let himself be distracted from what really matters. The details will lead up to a well thought of and often successful strategy and that is as important as that the action is. Not only having an eye for details is important, but also implementing these details efficiently and rapidly in a well-structured plan. Never think as a leader that your above details. Powell states: “Good leaders understand something else: An obsessive routine in carrying out the details begets conformity and complacency, which in turn dulls everyone's mind. That is why even as they pay attention to details, they continually encourage people to challenge the process”.⁸⁶ Details can make or break an intervention and decide on its success to succeed or not.

The sixth lesson is a bit experimental. The lesson is that you don't know what you can get away with until you try. Powell often used the phrase: "it's easier to get forgiveness than permission".⁸⁷ Good leaders don't wait for official approval of other nations or international organizations to try things out. Sometimes it is necessary to get into action even without approval before action, because the cause will justify this. Getting into action without prior approval does not mean leaders will act reckless, because prudent action is always first priority. But the goal of a good leader is not to act without approval, but sometimes when it cannot be avoided there must be acted even without prior approval, this does not mean ignoring other states. The general objective is more important in these cases, but always get support afterwards.

Lesson seven entails that leaders should keep looking below surface appearances. Always keep looking for more than meets the eye, because relevant things can come up and decisions might change by it. Don't accept situations as they are when you are convinced there is more to be done or a better outcome can be reached. Always take the initiative yourself because you cannot count on others to do more or look further than they need to while crucial information could be lost by it or perfect opportunities could be passed by because of lack of initiative.

⁸⁶ Harari, O. (2002), 'The Powell principles: 24 lessons from Colin Powell a legendary leader'. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional, p. 13-14.

⁸⁷ Ibidem, p. 27-28.

Lesson eight entails that organization of a certain plan in length doesn't really accomplish anything. You can plan and come up with all kinds of theories but this does not get you very far in achieving your goals. Plans are depending on a lot of other factors involved, like the people involved who have to carry out the plans. People involved can make the plans fail or succeed. This is why gathering the right people involved for the job is very important for the success of plans. People who are smart and goal oriented are the right persons for the job, because they are the ones who normally have the big picture in mind and not only short term goals. Having the big picture in mind and not only short term goals is necessary because otherwise negative long term effects can be overlooked. Leaders must create an environment in which people can be stimulated and be educated in the best way. So, leaders must select the best, the brightest, the most creative and most motivated people for certain positions in order to achieve the goals planned out. It is all about surrounding yourself with the best people available for the job.

Lesson nine is that the reward on itself is not important. Fancy titles and big publicity mentioning does not count for anything when people are suffering or the sacrifices are too big. Selfish goals must never be the primary objective. Titles are pretty meaningless when there is not a real goal and success story behind it. Titles mean little in terms of having real power, which is the capacity to influence and inspire. Influencing people in real life is much more effective than throwing around your title but not show anything in return for it, because people will get doubts about you and your policy, goals and means.

The tenth lesson is as Powell phrases it: “never to let your ego gets so close to your position that when your position goes, your ego goes with it”.⁸⁸ This is a motivation speech of Colin Powell which he handles himself during his career. Colin Powell meant two things with the phrase. The first thing is that you must never get the wellbeing of your own person get before the wellbeing of the mass. When you think you are more important than others no good can come from it. The second thing is related to the first point mentioned. A problem is that leaders won't challenge old, comfortable ways of doing things, because they think this undermines them and their positions or careers. But real leaders understand that our jobs are becoming of minor importance. The proper response is to review our activities before

⁸⁸ Harari, O. (2002), 'The Powell principles: 24 lessons from Colin Powell a legendary leader'. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional, p. 17-18.

someone else does. Effective leaders create a climate where people's worth is determined by their willingness to learn new skills and undertake new responsibilities. It is important to keep up with changes to overcome the difficult situations before us.

Lesson eleven is that stereotypes must be avoided, so make sure to avoid fitting any stereotypes. The situation shows which approach best accomplishes the political goal. Blindly following a stereotypical way of doing reduces success of missions and creates rigidity in thoughts and actions. To quote Powell: "some situations require the leader to hover closely; others require long, loose leashes. Leaders honor their core values, but they are flexible in how they execute them. They understand that management techniques are not magic mantras but simply tools to be reached for at the right times".⁸⁹

Lesson twelve entails that optimism is the strongest weapon there is. Optimism is said to be a force multiplier. The motivating effect of a leader's enthusiasm and optimism is unimaginable. So is the impact of cynicism and pessimism which would have a total opposite negative impact and could undermine goals, plans and missions. Colin Powell states: "always say we can change things here, we can achieve awesome goals, and we can be the best".⁹⁰

Lesson thirteen is Powell's rule for picking people who could be useful for achieving a certain goal. Powell states: "Look for intelligence and judgment and, most critically, a capacity to anticipate, to see around corners. Also look for loyalty, integrity, a high energy drive, a balanced ego and the drive to get things done".⁹¹ Powell is convinced that these characteristics are more important than length of resume, degrees and prior titles. It must be more about personal qualities than written qualities, because in the end these qualities bring up the best results. Powell states: "A string of job descriptions a recruit held yesterday seem to be more important than who one is today, what she can contribute tomorrow or how well his values mesh with those of the organization. You can train a bright, willing novice in the fundamentals of your business fairly readily, but it's a lot harder to train someone to have integrity, judgment, energy, balance and the drive to get things done. Good leaders stack the deck in their favor right in the recruitment phase".⁹² Powell always made sure he gathered the right people around himself. This is also what made him such a successful military and

⁸⁹ Harari, O. (2002), 'The Powell principles: 24 lessons from Colin Powell a legendary leader'. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional, p. 23-24.

⁹⁰ Ibidem, p. 41-42.

⁹¹ Ibidem, p. 9-10.

⁹² Ibidem, p.9-10.

political leader. He especially used people with the right practical experience, who knew what they were talking about.

Lesson fourteen is a phrase borrowed by Powell from Michael Korda: “Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate and doubt, to offer a solution everybody can understand”.⁹³ Powell got this from the notion that effective leaders understand the KISS principle which means Keep It Simple, Stupid. Their visions and priorities are clear and compelling and not chaotic, ambiguous and overachieving. They keep in mind the bigger picture instead of short term successes which in the end does not bring real success. The result is known of its clarity of purpose, credibility of leadership, and integrity in organization.

Lesson fifteen is to make use of a formula that counts whether or not you have enough information to complete successfully a mission. The first part entails the use of the formula $P=40$ to 70 , in which P stands for the probability of success and the numbers indicate the percentage of information acquired. The second part of the formula entails that once the information is in the 40 to 70 range, you go with your gut. Powell's advice is “don't take action if you have only enough information to give you less than a 40 percent chance of being right, but don't wait until you have enough facts to be 100 percent sure, because by then it is almost always too late”.⁹⁴ Reacting to late because the information gathering took too long is called "analysis paralysis" and instead of reducing risk actually risk is increased.

Lesson sixteen is that the commander in the field is always right unless proved otherwise. It is important that during a mission the leader is respected and that orders are followed immediately without too much discussion going on prior to that, because this paralyzes the mission. There is a leader to make decisions in hard circumstances and the leader can only do this when backed up by his subordinates.

Lesson seventeen is underestimated but a very important rule, namely to have fun in your command and don't have a negative attitude while leading, because this will have a negative impact on your subordinates. More important is the notion that a good leader recognizes when it is necessary to take a break from all of it. Also, “surround yourself with

⁹³ Harari, O. (2002), ‘The Powell principles: 24 lessons from Colin Powell a legendary leader’. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional, p. 25-26.

⁹⁴ Ibidem, p. 45-46.

people who take their work seriously, but not themselves, those who work hard and play hard”⁹⁵ Powell says. He goes even further by saying: “Surround yourself with people who have some balance in their lives, who are fun to hang out with, who like to laugh and who have some non-job priorities which they approach with the same passion that they do their work”.⁹⁶

Lesson eighteen is the realization that command is lonely. Powell agrees with former president Harry Truman in saying: “You can encourage participative management and bottom-up employee involvement but ultimately, the essence of leadership is the willingness to make the tough, unambiguous choices that will have an impact on the fate of the organization. I’ve seen too many non-leaders flinch from this responsibility. Even as you create an informal, open, collaborative corporate culture, prepare to be lonely. Leadership is the art of accomplishing more than the science of management says is possible”.⁹⁷

Lesson nineteen is that good leadership means that you foster good communication. Good communication is the basis for the success of a mission. More important related to this is that a leader listens. By listening you learn new things and you improve the communication. Invite different people to give their opinion and listen to them. Draw your conclusions from different information angles. But also, find people that you trust and respect to give you feedback. In the sense of good communication it is also important to seek consensus, but a leader must not be ruled by it.

2.4. Conclusion

The Powell Doctrine was not a term explicitly developed by Colin Powell. The term was created by journalists who summarized the points into a doctrine. However, it was Powell who came up with the eight points for deciding when the U.S should (not) intervene by military measures. Powell was influenced by the Weinberger Doctrine who had similar points, but which was not as elaborated as the points Powell drew up. Powell was importantly influenced by his own Vietnam experience on how an when not to go into military combat. He

⁹⁵ Ibidem, p. 43-44.

⁹⁶ Harari, O. (2002), ‘The Powell principles: 24 lessons from Colin Powell a legendary leader’. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional, p. 43-44.

⁹⁷ Ibidem, p. 37-38.

was convinced that the U.S should avoid doomed missions and a failure like the Vietnam War. The Powell Doctrine, according to Powell, should be used as a guideline for making policy, for good leadership and when or when not to intervene. For applying the Powell Doctrine he mentions nineteen lessons which are of importance for making well-structured policy decisions and eventually can make or break the Powell Doctrine. It is all about good leadership, surrounding yourself with the right people for the job, be critical and listen. Taking the lessons seriously makes the Powell Doctrine successful and a successful Powell Doctrine will lead to successful interventions.

Chapter 3: The Powell Doctrine and the decisions to intervene

3.1. Introduction

Colin Powell described himself as being a moderate Republican. What he meant was that America should strive for establishing a positive world image. The US should strive for signing treaties and making alliances which constrain the power of individual states instead of dominating military wise. Powell did not have any problems with helping states who needed help, but he was convinced that the U.S should first ask itself the questions stated by the Powell Doctrine before military intervention would be an option. During his life he built up an incredible military and political career for which he gained a lot of respect. But, the Iraq chapter has hurt his status a bit.

The purposes of this chapter will be to outline the lessons learned from the Powell Doctrine in practice. How was the Powell Doctrine formed in practice from the Vietnam War until the First Iraq War? Further, how was the Powell Doctrine maintained after the second half of the 1990s when new kind of missions came up? Did Colin Powell abide by his own Doctrine and did he support his Doctrine against politicians who handled different approaches? The main question was what the true effect of the Powell Doctrine was in decision making whether or not to intervene? Which principles of the Doctrine were maintained and which were abolished? Is there still a future for the Powell Doctrine? A lot of questions that I need to find answers to, because these questions make or break the Powell Doctrine.

3.2. The Powell Doctrine: the Vietnam War and intervention until 2001

The generation of officers who went through the horrifying Vietnam War were deeply influenced by it. Powell was one of these officers who was deeply influenced by the Vietnam War. He was not only influenced by the loss of so many soldiers and innocent civilians, but also by the flawed institutional framework of the military and the political strategy behind the war. The saying after the Vietnam War was: "Never again. We're never going to repeat this

kind of fiasco".⁹⁸ The military and U.S government wanted to avoid these kinds of messy, low-level interventions in the future. This is basically the essence of the Powell Doctrine: "We're not going to fight these low-level wars ever again. If we ever use force, it's going to be massive, overwhelming. We're going to win instantly and then go home via an exit strategy".⁹⁹ That's the essence of the Powell Doctrine and the overall feeling of the US policy after Vietnam.

The failure of the Vietnam War strategy was that there was a most serious problem of breakdown of basic unit cohesion, discipline and a clear strategy. Also, the Army suffered from a severe shortfall of modern equipment, because the U.S army had not purchased modern equipment like tanks and infantry fighting vehicles since the early 1960s and the U.S government did not want to invest more money into the War. The largest portion of the army budget had been spent on simply maintaining the Army in Vietnam and replacing equipment rather than modernizing it.¹⁰⁰ The experience of the failure of the Vietnam War produced several lessons in order to prohibit another disasters as the Vietnam debacle. The lessons from the Vietnam War were absorbed by the US Military immediately after the War when the U.S military was revised. The idea of a graduated use of force as a suggested policy before the 1960s was discredited and the idea of using decisive and overwhelming force came instead. Also, the Military hoped to force civilian policy makers to make clear decisions on whether to go to war or not, and avoid the kind of hesitant fighting as the U.S involvement in Vietnam. The political strategy had led the U.S into a war for the only reason of stopping Communism from spreading across the Asian continent, which was only partially true for Vietnam itself. The U.S ignored the other reasons for the Vietnam War for which the Vietnamese were fighting. The Vietnam War had its own historical roots in nationalism, anti-colonialism, and civil strife beyond the east-west conflict of the Cold War.¹⁰¹ Lesson here was that the U.S should only intervene when it had a real and clearly defined objective. Powell, however, claimed that military, intelligence and administration officials were in fact absolute aware about the unlikely prospect of victory in Vietnam. But given Cold War imperatives and constraints, the vital goal was to avoid losing the Vietnam War, not to win it. A costly and indefinite failure was the inevitable result of what was actually a carefully considered and clear-eyed policy. The U.S did intervene for all the wrong reasons and national vital interest

⁹⁸ Blumenthal, S. (2005), 'The good soldier's revenge'. Published: The Guardian on April 28, 2005

⁹⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁰ Keller, B. (2001), 'The World According To Powell', Published: November 25, 2001.

¹⁰¹ Ibidem

were not at stake. The U.S miscalculated the duration and effort needed for the War and there was no exit strategy. Flaws that Powell adopted as principles for his own Doctrine later on.¹⁰²

One of the consequences of the Powell Doctrine and its perception of a right intervention is the notion that if you go in, not only do you go in and get out quickly, but you have to have total American and international support. The Powell Doctrine implied that it was a loss if you lost even one American life. This led down a high threshold to engage into a military intervention, because with every intervention the risk of losing lives is there. This made the American intervention policy until the second half of the 1990s very hesitant to engage into an intervention. Critics state: “If you set up ground rules under which no casualties will occur, it's very hard to achieve the mission that you're sent over there to do. The best way to protect your troops is to keep them at home. If you're going to be sending them to places that are inherently dangerous, like the Balkans or Haiti or Afghanistan, there's going to be a certain amount of risk involved. Soldiers talked to certainly don't like those incredibly restrictive guidelines that are, in part, a product of this Vietnam mind-set, which is that we have to avoid casualties at all costs, because if we suffer a single loss, political support will crumble and we won't be able to sustain this deployment”.¹⁰³

When talking about his role as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the First Iraq War Powell had this to say about how Vietnam influenced his decision to intervene in the First Iraq War: “Vietnam is running through my mind very much. Many of the arguments of the Powell Doctrine on how war was to be waged ultimately came back to the Vietnam War were the principal foreign policy decision makers of the Johnson Administration had competing views over what the basic goals of the war were for the U.S. When the survival of an independent South Vietnam was the most important reason for the U.S, then it would be logical to use every resource available to win the war, even potentially at the cost of provoking a war with China. However, if it was taken as a starting point that the objective of the war was to maintain U.S credibility and contain Communism, it made a great deal of sense to limit the amount of effort expended in South Vietnam. Preserving forces would allow commitments to be met in other, possibly more vital parts of the world”.¹⁰⁴ Effectively the message that would be sent out to other nations was that the U.S would contain Communism

¹⁰² Keller, B. (2001), ‘The World According To Powell’, Published: November 25, 2001.

¹⁰³ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq". New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p.155-158.

¹⁰⁴ Harari, O. (2002), ‘The leadership secrets of Colin Powell’. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional. P.122-125.

at the cost of destroying them. The Vietnam War became also a moral issue since American blood had been spilt, because the U.S did not allow itself to be beaten now that men had died for the cause. As Johnson put it, “we will not permit those who fire upon us in Vietnam to win a victory over the desires and the intentions of all the American people”.¹⁰⁵ This logic had a strange reasoning and consequence behind it. More people were effectively being asked to give up their lives in order to make the sacrifices of those who had already given theirs worthwhile. Powell stated: “Increasingly the rationale for U.S involvement in the war boiled down to the absurd notion that the U.S was in Vietnam because it was in Vietnam, and would remain in Vietnam because it was in Vietnam”.¹⁰⁶ Looking back on his experience in Vietnam Colin Powell stated: “I would spend nearly twenty years, one way or another, grappling with our experience in this country [Vietnam]. And over all that time Vietnam rarely made much more sense than... We’re here because we’re here, because we’re...”¹⁰⁷ Brigadier General Douglas Kinnard concluded that, “almost 70 percent of the Army generals who managed the war were uncertain of its objectives ... [this] mirrors a deep-seated strategic failure: the inability of policy-makers to frame tangible, obtainable goals”.¹⁰⁸ The Powell Doctrine insists therefore that policymakers make clear what the reasons for intervening are for the U.S in any military intervention, and the need to have a clear, coherent and consistent reason why U.S military intervention is absolutely necessary. By making sure that policy makers from the beginning on are clear about what is at stake for the U.S in any potential military intervention, what its objectives are and what resources the nation is willing to commit in order to achieve them improves the chance of a successful mission.

The invasion of Panama in 1989 was the first military intervention after the Vietnam War and the first application of the American Policy inspired by Colin Powell. Although the Powell Doctrine was officially established in the beginning of the 1990s Powell already used these principles as guidelines as did the American government. The Powell Doctrine turned out to be successful in Panama. The Panama intervention proved that military solutions, so long as guided by clear political objectives and an exit strategy, were a good alternative to diplomatic and economic sanctions. As a first response to the growing crisis in Panama, the administration attempted diplomatic and economic sanctions.¹⁰⁹ Attempting the use of non-military means fitted the Powell doctrine perfectly. Unfortunately these non-military

¹⁰⁵ www.nytimes.com.

¹⁰⁶ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁹ Harari, O. (2002), ‘The leadership secrets of Colin Powell’. NY: McGraw-Hill Professional. P.122-125.

measures failed to achieve the desired effect of ending the crisis. A military intervention was necessary to stop the crisis in Panama, but it was used as a last resort which is a clear example of the Powell Doctrine. The military intervention was in line with the Powell Doctrine. Powell stated: “It was a rapid, decisive application of overwhelming force that removed a tyrant from power and brought democracy to an oppressed nation with few casualties”.¹¹⁰ Panama re-established America’s military pride and confidence after the Vietnam War. The Vietnam-syndrome was slowly fading away. The Panama mission opened the way for intervention during the First Iraq War. As been proven in Panama, Powell understood that war involved risks, and that some risks were worth taking. As Powell commented in 1992: “Would it have been worth the inevitable follow-up: major occupation forces for years to come and a very expensive and complex American intervention? Fortunately for America, reasonable people at the time thought not”.¹¹¹

It took approximately until the 1990s before the US openly got involved in a larger military mission abroad again. The First Iraq War was fought for much more limited objectives and with more limited means than the Panama intervention. Powell still stated: “but we did use overwhelming force quickly and decisively. Our strategy for going after this army is very, very simple. First we are going to cut it off, then we are going to kill it”.¹¹² During the First Iraq War there was a UN mandate to pursue a limited goal and Iraq’s sovereignty was not breached. The US carried out a decisive and overwhelming military campaign against Saddam’s forces, and was able to exit before submitting U.S. troops to a prolonged and costly military intervention. It was a clear example of carrying out the Powell Doctrine in action. Powell believed it was best not to invade Iraq and to pursue sanctions instead. But most important there was a clear exit strategy which made the mission end decisively. Intervention in Iraq itself turned out not be needed anymore.

The Powell Doctrine was successful until the first half of the 1990s. With the new tendencies going on in the second half of the 1990s the Powell Doctrine needed adjustment. Elements of the Powell Doctrine remain central for the future success of the U.S. military. While military intervention may not be suitable as a last resort from the mid-1990s onwards, it is still important to make use of diplomatic, economic, and other political means to address conflicts. Even against stateless actors such as terrorists, the ability to control finances, limit

¹¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹¹ <http://www.aidemocracy.org/>

¹¹² Ibidem.

safe-havens through non-military means, and prevent the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction remain important interests.¹¹³ The Powell Doctrine was tested a great deal by the kind of missions needed in the 1990s in places like Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti or Kosovo. In places like that, you can't just win a massive overwhelming victory and go home, because if you do, the situation will worsen and the intervention would have been pointless. The military interventions needed from the second half of the 1990s were longer-term interventions. This in order to create a stable political order. The longer-term intervention is the traditional kind of military intervention, but completely the opposite of what the Powell Doctrine stands for. This means that it is not a quick and decisive intervention with one clear goal in mind related to vital national security interests.¹¹⁴

After the successful First Iraq War President Clinton decided to send more than 25,000 troops into Somalia in the Fall of 1993 for a humanitarian intervention mission. To many in the U.S the intervention came as a complete surprise. The option of U.S. military intervention in Somalia was not even on the agenda of the November 21 1992 National Security Council's meeting.¹¹⁵ Also, the communications of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the President prior to November 1992 was that any engagement in Somalia would be a recipe for disaster. An intervention in Somalia would be a second Vietnam and a deviation from the Powell Doctrine. Somalia was a clear danger and risk for U.S. troops with no clear political vision behind it. Strangely enough both President Clinton as Powell eventually were behind the decision to intervene in Somalia. It was thought by Western governments that the reason for American intervention in Somalia was because of competing foreign policy elites, and national pressure on the Administration to act in Somalia and later in Bosnia. Although neither Bosnia nor Somalia constituted vital national interests by themselves, the public began to support a limited policy to contain the conflict from spreading to areas of geo-strategic interest to the U.S. There was a growing public pressure to take action in Somalia. Clinton has also long fumed that Powell did not share the blame for the fiasco of Somalia, where 18 American commandos were killed in a misguided mission in 1993. Powell had reluctantly advised Clinton to order in commandos to help hunt down a warlord under reasoning of an American-led humanitarian effort. Their deaths and desecration became a paralyzing symbol of the folly of well-intentioned foreign interventions.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Means, H.B. (1992), 'Colin Powell: soldier/statesman--statesman/soldier'. University of Michigan, p.96-99.

¹¹⁴ Ibidem, p.103-105.

¹¹⁵ www.nytimes.com.

¹¹⁶ www.nytimes.com.

The most controversial application of the Powell Doctrine was in Yugoslavia, where Powell was absolutely against military intervention and his opinion about committing American forces to the conflict was outspoken. Powell worried at each step that limited American involvement would lead inevitably to a deep and bloody American involvement. A lot of innocent deaths and refugees would be the consequence just like in Vietnam. There was a clear and imminent danger for American troops involved. There are two distinct types of U.S interests involved in the conflict in Yugoslavia. The first type is a security interest. These were issues that related to the physical security of the U.S. The second type of issue the U.S found itself taking an active interest in is what was called humanitarian issues. These were issues that could not be said to affect directly the physical security of the US, but were rather problems of a moral or ethical nature.¹¹⁷ The U.S valued democracy and human rights and humanitarian mission were intrinsically connected to this. The humanitarian problems of Yugoslavia, were considered to be tragic and certainly potentially dangerous for the peoples of the region, so the Clinton Administration accepted this to be of vital national interest to the U.S from a moral point of view. But according to the Bush jr. Administration intervention was simply not necessary. Humanitarian wise it was not of a vital interest to the U.S. The Yugoslav conflict had the potential to worsen and threaten the parties involved, but it was nonetheless a regional dispute. Therefore, the U.S was convinced that the Former Soviet Union should continue to exist in some form. Ideally, this union would be democratic with a strong degree of federalism, but it would also hopefully be strong enough, with the support of Russia, to maintain both a monopoly on armed force and the ability to arbitrate between different ethnic groups. The strong desire to keep the Former Soviet Union together inevitably had a major impact on U.S policy towards Yugoslavia. The collapse of the Former Soviet Union would inevitably mean a security threat to the U.S and this would mean the U.S had vital national interests involved in the conflict of Yugoslavia according to the Bush Administration.¹¹⁸ What the Yugoslav case shows is that national interest is an subjective evaluation by governments. How U.S policymakers tend to view what is and is not in the U.S vital national interest is dependent on the interest of the Administration at that moment. The way the Bush Administration seems to have viewed the former Yugoslavia is that although it was an important issue, it never quite passed the threshold of importance for military action to be seriously considered: “There was never any thought at that time of using U.S. ground

¹¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹¹⁸ Means, H.B. (1992), ‘Colin Powell: soldier/statesman--statesman/soldier’. University of Michigan, p.112-115.

troops in Yugoslavia -the American people would never have supported it”.¹¹⁹ The Clinton Administration, although it did not commit to military action for purely humanitarian reasons, did weight the importance of humanitarian interests slightly differently to the Bush Administration. The wars in the former Yugoslavia seem to offer one potential example for future foreign policy trying to create a more stable and a more just world order: “Today, our policies must also focus on relations within nations, on a nation's form of governance, on its economic structure, on its ethnic tolerance. In particular, democracies are far less likely to wage war on other nations than dictatorships are”.¹²⁰ This Idealism does not really fit the rest of the Powell Doctrine. If your aim is spread of democracy and the American ideal of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, there is no exit strategy, there will always be new challenges for the U.S to overcome by force. Also, the Powell Doctrine’s demand for continued public and Congressional support could be difficult to satisfy in the context of commitments which are difficult to justify in the absence of a direct threat to the security of the nation. As Colin Powell put it, “even though the Military occasionally has to operate in unclear circumstances. Decisive means and results are always to be preferred, even if they are not always possible”.¹²¹ Powell was skeptical that any U.S president would ever decide that what was happening in Bosnia would constitute vital national interest: “The west has wrung its hands over Bosnia, but has not been able to find its vital interests or matching commitment. No American President could defend to the American people the heavy sacrifice of lives it would cost to resolve this baffling conflict. Nor could a President likely sustain the long-term involvement necessary to keep the protagonists from going at each other’s throats all over again at the first opportunity”.¹²² The Powell Doctrine seemed to be more fitting for the Bush jr Administration than for the Clinton Administration. The whole rationale behind intervention on humanitarian grounds is to eliminate or at least drastically reduce human suffering, the logical consequence to that is that you cannot use more force in an intervention or else you make the situation worse and undermine the whole purpose of intervention in the first place by creating more casualties. So humanitarian intervention was not really compatible with the Powell Doctrine. Humanitarian intervention also requires force being delivered with a high degree of accuracy, so that those causing humanitarian suffering are the ones that feel the consequences of any use of force. Time and again in the debates on whether to use force in The Former Yugoslavia it was argued that the use of force would exacerbate an

¹¹⁹ Ibidem.

¹²⁰ Ibidem, p.122-124.

¹²¹ Ibidem.

¹²² Ibidem, p. 133-134.

already intolerable situation for the civilian population. Interestingly enough Powell also stood for democracy and protecting human rights. Only the way these values were achieved differed from the approach of the Clinton Administration and better fitted the Bush jr. Administration.¹²³

The Powell Doctrine will also be more compatible to the notion of national interests based on the security paradigm on the grounds that it clearly delineates clear objectives and a vital national interest. Humanitarian objectives are by their very nature difficult to limit both temporally and specially. The time limit to a humanitarian operation depends on how long it takes to stop the suffering of the population of the intervened state. First, this is dependent on a number of factors beyond military control, such as weather, infrastructure and the cooperation of the local population. Second, the extent to which a situation can said to have been improved enough to allow the withdrawal of forces is a deeply subjective decision.¹²⁴ In the case of the Former Yugoslavia, military policy makers strongly did not want to repeat the experience of Somalia, where US forces had originally been deployed to facilitate the delivery of food aid and the mission had gradually expanded until it included restoring a legitimate Somali government. Powell stated: “It is difficult to spatially limit humanitarian operations because once you concede the point that humanitarian motives are justification enough for a military intervention, then as a matter of moral principle that justification holds true wherever and whenever there is judged to be a humanitarian crisis. Also, intervention on humanitarian grounds makes the task of defining a clear well-defined exit strategy difficult. First, because it is difficult to draw a line as to exactly how much humanitarian suffering it is the responsibility of the U.S to prevent”.¹²⁵ For example, in the case of Somalia, the initial U.S intervention did prevent widespread famine, by ensuring that food reached those in greatest need. However this did nothing to solve the underlying problems of Somalia which was the lack of strong governing authority. Once the initial task of preventing famine had been achieved, there was a great temptation to try and expand the U.S mission to try and overcome the long-term problems facing Somalia, rather than just stopping the short-term goal. Also, with a successful re-establishment of order and ensuring a humane standard of living in states like Bosnia or Somalia, there is no way of knowing what will happen once U.S troops leave. Part of Powell’s reluctance to get involved in the Balkans was based on the fear that any commitment

¹²³ www.aidemocracy.org

¹²⁴ *Ibidem.*

¹²⁵ www.aidemocracy.org

would turn into a completely open-ended mission that would last for decades. This would make national interest fade away and be a breach of the Powell principle for swift action.¹²⁶

During the 2000 campaign, Bush's foreign policy advisor, Condoleezza Rice, criticized Clinton's actions in Kosovo. Rice stated: "The Kosovo war was conducted incompetently in part because the administration's political goals kept shifting and in part because it was not, at the start, committed to the decisive use of military force".¹²⁷ By this statement Rice reverted to the fundamental principles of the Powell Doctrine. Kosovo was one of many incidents of American intervention where the means and mission were not matched. The humanitarian intervention policy of the U.S did not see eye to eye with the notion of national and vital interests. Bush jr. intended to go back to his conservative roots of staying out of military intervention as much as possible which looked like to be a return to the Powell Doctrine. However, in reality Bush took into office many of the same principles, ideals, and policies set before him by President Clinton according to Democrats and Republicans in government. For instance, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice's hinted at a removal of U.S. forces from the Balkans, but Bush let the troops remain in accordance with NATO obligations.

Humanitarian intervention as a key foreign policy issue transformed U.S. military policy. While Powell's goal of halting crises before it erupted into larger-scale conflict still played an important role, the lines of vital interest and national security blurred. Powell believed that the Clinton administration was heading in the wrong direction and started to distance himself from the Administration's foreign policy. Powell wrote: "My constant, unwelcome message at all the meetings on Bosnia was simply that we should not commit military forces until we had a clear political objective".¹²⁸ This is the main reason why Powell only acted as Joint Chief of Staff for the first eight months of Clinton's administration. Unluckily for Powell, Clinton and his advisors began to steer foreign policy further away from the Powell Doctrine. It was only until Bush jr was elected that Powell regained hope of reinstalling the Powell Doctrine as the main guideline for military interventions.

¹²⁶ Ibidem.

¹²⁷ Lusane C. (2006), 'Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice: Foreign Policy, Race and the New American Century'. Greenwood: Publishing Group.

¹²⁸ Means, H.B. (1992), 'Colin Powell: soldier/statesman--statesman/soldier'. University of Michigan, p.112-115.

3.3. Powell Doctrine and the decision to intervene in Afghanistan and Iraq

In 2000, President George W. Bush appointed Colin Powell Secretary of State, and Powell was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate. At that time, this was the highest rank in civilian government ever held by an African-American. Colin Powell described himself as being a moderate Republican. Powell was in favor of a positive world image, of treaties and alliances which constrain the power of individual states. The opposite of this view was shared by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, his deputy Paul Wolfowitz and Vice-President Cheney who belonged to the neo-conservative Republican camp. They saw the world as a dark place of power struggle where treaties and alliances were not really possible. These differences in view had a great impact on the way the Afghanistan and Iraq intervention after 2003 was conducted and Powell disagreed a lot with the other three Republicans who shared opposite views from him.¹²⁹ Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz wanted swift actions in Iraq while Powell cautioned for this and wanted to have a stable and carefully thoughtful plan. Rice, who was National Security Advisor at the time, described Powell as being too focused on making-nice diplomacy than taking swift action and Cheney described Powell's policy as foot-dragging.¹³⁰ Colin Powell was also described as the perfect example of conducting traditional Republican foreign policy with a focus on alliances, treaties and international institutions. Powell had two problems in doing his job as Secretary of State. He was not as close to the new president Bush Jr. as other members of the Administration, and he was viewed with mistrust by part of the other members of the Administration because of his views. For Powell, being part of the Republican Party was not really a matter of ideology, but a kind of loyalty to political mentors that supported him and whom he respected. Powell was convinced that both the Republican and the Democratic Party had some good and bad ideological points. Powell looked at discipline, respect for authority and tradition, and the kind of impact the policy of both parties had on the military. Powell's old mentor Weinberger described this as: "Colin is quintessentially a good soldier. He does his duty and carries out orders".¹³¹

Bush's appointment of Powell as Secretary of State seemed to confirm, at least to the international community, that the U.S would pursue a return to the Powell Doctrine. But it were the attacks of September 11, 2001 that shifted Bush's vision permanently. The former

¹²⁹ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *"Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq"*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, p. 163-166.

¹³⁰ Ibidem.

¹³¹ www.biography.com.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright stated: “The revelations of September 11 led the President to the conclusion that new forces in the world were acting against the security of the United States”.¹³² The Bush policy after 2001 was directed on going into battle and redefine the new threats and a new agenda for U.S foreign policy. The foreign policy of the Bush Administration turned away from the Powell Doctrine. In Bush’s first term Colin Powell was regarded as a moderate voice on several issues regarding Iraq. However the views of neo-conservatives such as Vice-president Dick Cheney and Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz often won the day. Colin Powell urged caution in 2002 about Iraq’s weapon arsenal and often seemed at odds with his fellow Republican colleagues. Cheney and Rumsfeld argued for early military intervention, but Powell called for UN weapons inspections as first step to assess Iraq’s weapons industry. He was in favor of involving the UN and giving Iraq one last chance to disarm. Powell preference for investigation prevailed, but this did not mean he was afraid of using force, which was made clear throughout his career.¹³³ Powell was a professional soldier for 35 years and throughout his career he argued for a strong national defense. Powell’s military experiences shaped the so-called Powell Doctrine of exercising caution when sending U.S troops to fight abroad. Powell: “When we go to war, we should have a purpose that our people understand and support. We should mobilize the country’s resources to fulfill that mission and we should go on to win”.¹³⁴

Remarkable was also that Powell saw positive sides to the terrorist attacks. He claimed that the attacks made that the lone-superpower ideology within the Republican Party was halted and created as he states: “A sense of global common purpose in which trust among competitive nations seems a little more plausible”.¹³⁵ Powell believed that the fight against terrorism made that all past tensed foreign relations with China and Russia for instance were paused, because they shared a common enemy. Shared policies between completely different nations are finally possible, which Powell saw as very important for a military cooperative intervention. Cooperation became more important than power politics.

The intervention in Afghanistan was not that big of a discussion within U.S government. Powell: “We all hoped in 2001 that we could put in place an Afghan government under President Karzai that would be able to control the country, make sure al-Qaeda didn't

¹³² Ibidem.

¹³³ Ibidem.

¹³⁴ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *"Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq"*. New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers, p. 120-125.

¹³⁵ Keller, B. (2001), 'The World According To Powell', Published: November 25, 2001.

come back, and make sure the Taliban wasn't resurging. It didn't work out".¹³⁶ However, critics of the Powell Doctrine, like Michael O'Hanlon, have gone so far as to call Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan "a masterpiece of military creativity and finesse".¹³⁷ Although acknowledging some strategic flaws, namely the failure to capture Osama bin Laden, O'Hanlon sees Afghanistan as a clear demonstration of the benefits of the U.S new foreign policy thinking: away from the Powell Doctrine. The fast and lethal military forces deployed in Afghanistan made sure that there was a stunningly fast defeat of the Taliban, one of the U.S. 's primary interests. This is, according to me, still in line with the Powell Doctrine because the Doctrine states that military intervention should occur with overwhelming force and in a rapid manner. Afghanistan established a foreign policy and kind of military operation from which Rumsfeld and General Franks created their master plan for the invasion of Iraq. In Iraq too the military saw success, measured by the overthrow of Saddam with minimal casualties and with overwhelming force. This military transformation of Rumsfeld and Franks, however, is ill suited to deal with the consequences of the new way of military intervention which is state building. The current strategy, however, leans heavily in favor of state destruction, rather than state formation. The state building policy undermines the Powell Doctrine because it does not agree with a swift intervention and serving a vital national interest. State building is in line with humanitarian missions and tends to ask too much of intervening states for which national support will fade away as happened in the Afghanistan and Iraq cases.¹³⁸

After September 11, 2001 the U.S looked to its President for direction and strong leadership. This national pressure influenced Bush's foreign policy immensely. Still, throughout the first year after the attacks Bush kept off the subject of a possible intervention in Iraq. It was only in 2002 Bush labeled Iraq, North Korea, and Iran as axis of evil.¹³⁹ Two new directions were followed by Bush's new foreign intervention policy. First, a return to a proactive foreign intervention policy favoring state building and a preemptive military strategies. The concept of preemption was determined for Bush's policy which meant not only well-thought military intervention, but also actions on the basis of intelligence assumptions that were more estimates than facts. The whole American policy was directed on preventing

¹³⁶ Kessler, G. (2004), 'Powell Flies in the Face of Tradition; The Secretary of State Is Least Traveled in 30 Years'. Published: Washington Post on July 14, 2004.

¹³⁷ Ibidem.

¹³⁸ www.aidemocracy.org.

¹³⁹ Baxter, S. (2007), 'Powell tried to talk Bush out of war', Published: The Sunday Times July 8, 2007.

another disaster. As Rumsfeld said in 2001: “You can’t defend at every place at every time against every technique, and you have to take it to them, and that means you have to preempt them”.¹⁴⁰ This was completely against the Powell Doctrine and many Powell supporter were disappointed when Powell supported the new American strategy. Powell wrote in 2004: “U.S. strategy is widely accused of being unilateralist by design, It isn’t. It is often accused of being imbalanced in favor of military methods, It isn’t. It is frequently described as being obsessed with terrorism and hence biased toward preemptive war on a global scale. It most certainly is not”.¹⁴¹ However Powell had his concerns about invading Iraq. But, Powell’s concerns never dissuaded the President from war. Powell chose to be loyal to president Bush instead of disregarding the Administration. Powell was more concerned with the nations wellbeing than anything else.

Bush revealed America’s foreign intervention policy after 2001 in the National Security Strategy (NSS) of 2002. Instead of being hesitant to meddle in foreign affairs, he outlined a plan to bring democracy and human freedom to the world by conquering terrorist networks and rogue states. America’s foreign policy after September 11, 2001 was mostly incompatible with the conservative policy of the Powell Doctrine. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz’s stated: “The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the growth of vast terrorist networks required important changes for U.S. strategy. Declaring a war against terrorism had deep implications of its own. For such stateless wars, the Powell Doctrine provides little guidance beyond the use of fast and decisive force”.¹⁴²

Initially, Powell had serious doubts about President Bush's plan to invade Iraq and overthrow Saddam Hussein. Powell believed the policy of containment was sufficient to control the Iraqi regime. Powell had revealed that he spent 2½ hours vainly trying to persuade President Bush Jr. not to invade Iraq and believed that the conflict could not be resolved by U.S forces. Powell said: “I tried to avoid this war. I took him through the consequences of going into an Arab country and becoming the occupiers”.¹⁴³ Powell had become increasingly outspoken about the level of violence in Iraq, which he believes is at the level of a civil war. Powell: “The civil war will ultimately be resolved by a test of arms. It’s not going to be pretty to watch, but I don’t know any way to avoid it. It is happening now. It is not a civil war that

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem.

¹⁴¹ Ibidem.

¹⁴² Baxter, S. (2007), ‘Powell tried to talk Bush out of war’, Published: The Sunday Times July 8, 2007.

¹⁴³ Ibidem.

can be put down or solved by the armed forces of the United States".¹⁴⁴ According to Powell, the U.S cannot intervene one morning and have all American forces just leave the other morning. Powell pointed out that there was no evidence connecting Iraq to the September 11, 2001 attacks. Others said that that was irrelevant, that the administration came to power promising to do more to bring about an end to Saddam Hussein. Powell said "the coalition would not hold if the United States targeted Iraq, and without the coalition there could be no shutting off of terrorist finances, no intelligence sharing, and no international arrests".¹⁴⁵ But Powell was also clear that when President Bush decided that he would attack Iraq, he would be loyal to the Administration. But, until Bush decided to intervene or not Powell would do everything to dissuade him from intervention. Powell is careful not to undercut a presidential decision, but he is willing to put forward his critique on an intervention in Iraq. Powell cited: "By Powell Doctrine standards, you keep your eye on the political objective, which is Osama bin Laden and the Al Qaeda network and not Iraq".¹⁴⁶ Eventually Bush decided to go to war and, in a crucial moment, Powell agreed to support the president.

Although Powell had major misgivings about going into war and what he considered the inadequate number of troops intended to be sent to Iraq. He warned Bush that a military invasion would consume the president's first term and that if an intervention should occur, the U.S should use overwhelming force and have broad international support. This support would be key to the rebuilding of Iraq afterwards and legitimization of the intervention. Powell's arguments that an U.S. intervention would lead to further anti-American sentiment, and that the army would face a fierce insurgency by guerilla war groups was dismissed by the rest of the government.¹⁴⁷ Bush prepared the nation for a campaign of Shock and Awe in Iraq, promising a swift victory with minimal U.S. casualties. Although different from Powell's belief in building support before action, the military planners worked to create strategies that sustained support at home during the intervention itself. The Bush Administration felt the people were behind the fight against terrorism, so intervention in Iraq had the peoples approval. The shock and Awe policy of Bush for Iraq left out one of the most critical components of the Powell Doctrine: making military means meet political ends. Also, both Afghanistan and Iraq lacked the critical exit strategy the Powell Doctrine had supported. The

¹⁴⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁴⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁴⁶ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), "Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq". New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, p. 163-166.

¹⁴⁷ Baxter, S. (2007), 'Powell tried to talk Bush out of war', Published: The Sunday Times July 8, 2007.

first phase of the war was a success. With less than half the troops deployed in the Afghanistan mission, the U.S. and its allies intervened into Iraq with overwhelming force with few casualties. Building on the experience of Afghanistan, the invasion force relied on precision weapons and air support to pinpoint targets before they were able to strike back. This was an example of preemptive measures of the Bush Administration. Vice President Cheney claimed that the war provided a positive proof of the success of the new American foreign intervention policy.¹⁴⁸ But, Cheney forgot that if the U.S. continues to engage in nation building, it must accept the risks and responsibilities of occupation. Afghanistan, despite all the efforts put in to establish a successful nation building, was not a complete success. Outside of Kabul, it remains a battlefield for clans and warlords fighting. Instead of building trust with the locals, the U.S. allowed many al Qaeda leaders to escape. Powell: “The Administration’s obsession with casualty rates and military transformations ignored the political realities and necessities of nation building and occupation”.¹⁴⁹

Powell represented an older generation of military thought, still very much influenced by the Vietnam tragedy and more concerned with protection of vital national interests than the fighting against terrorism and expanding liberty. Fortunately for Bush, he was also one of the most successful diplomats in the President’s Administration, able to gather national and international support for America’s foreign intervention policy. For instance, he brought Pakistani leader Musharraf to the U.S.’s side for intervention in Afghanistan and operations on Pakistani territory. Bush understood that America’s new intervention policy would need the support of the international community. Support and sympathy for the U.S. began to fade when the U.S. turned its sights on Iraq.¹⁵⁰ Powell saw the Johnson Administration just as many other officers from Vietnam as being undemocratic in its decision-making. Powell saw the same problems rising again with the Bush Administration related to the Iraq case. Much of the internal strife within the Bush Administration centered around Powell’s insistence on going to the UN Security Council to get international approval for the intervention in Iraq. Powell won this internal debate. He was also successful in getting the President to reach out for support from the American population. Bush wanted the full support of the American people, their representatives, and the international community.¹⁵¹ This supports that the Powell Doctrine still had some influence on U.S. foreign policy. To advance the case for war with the

¹⁴⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁴⁹ Baxter, S. (2007), ‘Powell tried to talk Bush out of war’, Published: The Sunday Times July 8, 2007.

¹⁵⁰ ABC News (2005), ‘Colin Powell on Iraq, Race, and Hurricane Relief’. Published: September 8, 2005.

¹⁵¹ Ibidem.

international community, Powell appeared before the U.N. Security Council in February 2003 to present evidence that Iraq had developed an ongoing weapons development program. Powell's reputation for integrity helped convince many in Congress and the country that Iraq posed an imminent threat for the U.S. Colin Powell tried to establish an international coalition to assist in the rebuilding of Iraq. When Powell went to present the U.S. case on Iraq to the UN Security Council, he had two goals. First, he was giving the international community one last chance to join the US in a fight the administration had already concluded it must undertake. Second, he could gather greater support for the U.S.¹⁵²

In September 2004, Powell testified before Congress that the intelligence sources he used in his February presentation to the United Nations were wrong and it was unlikely that Saddam had any weapons of mass destruction. Powell advised the committee of the necessity to reform the intelligence community in order to improve its gathering and analysis. Powell said that he now believes that the C.I.A. was deliberately misled about evidence that Saddam Hussein was developing unconventional weapons. Powell argued that the C.I.A. itself was misled, and that in turn he was, too. "Unfortunately, that multiple sourcing over time has turned out not to be accurate"¹⁵³, Powell said. He admitted this publicly because he did not want a legacy as being the man who made up stories to provide the president with a cover story for going to war. In 2004, after acknowledging it was unlikely that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, Powell announced his resignation as Secretary of State. Powell stepped down from the position after President Bush's reelection to a second term. His four year tenure as Secretary of State was marked by disagreements with other Administration officials over America's foreign intervention policy. Regardless of these disagreements, Powell remained loyal to the Bush Administration and a spokesman for the Bush Administration in international affairs. Powell left his position as Secretary of State with the admiration and respect of the national and international community.¹⁵⁴ Despite his antiwar stance, Obama supports a phased withdrawal that could leave a significantly reduced force in Iraq for an extended period. Looking back on his period as Secretary of State Powell stated: "We got rid of a terrible dictator. We gave the Iraqi people an opportunity for a new life under a representative form of government".¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Ibidem.

¹⁵³ Brancaccio, D. (2006), 'Iraq Pre-War Intelligence'. Published: February 3, 2006.

¹⁵⁴ De Young, K. (2006), 'Falling on His Sword: Colin Powell's most significant moment turned out to be his lowest'.

¹⁵⁵ www.brainyquote.com.

The differences between the Powell Doctrine and the National Security Strategy 2002 of the Bush Administration (NSS 2002) are to be attributed to their differing strategic environments. The Powell Doctrine came to be in a time without terrorist attacks and without the horrible atrocities taking place in Africa. From the second half of the 1990s the Powell Doctrine came under pressure because the atrocities in Africa led to the necessity of humanitarian interventions and terrorist attacks needed a quick and harsh response. The main differences between the Powell Doctrine and the NSS 2002 is that in the NSS 2002 no mention is made to Powell's vital interest demand as principle before intervening. In the NSS 2002 there was no mention of using force as a last resort or alongside with any other form of non-military measures. The Powell Doctrine presumed that public support before an intervention is necessary, but the NSS 2002 presumes the war on terrorism to be necessary, leading to expected support from the public and international community along the way. In essence, the NSS 2002 is a reflection of Bush's stronger unilateral and internationalist tendencies. The new intervention strategy of the NSS 2002 still prefers interventions that are swift, decisive, and geared toward accomplishing specific political objectives. The operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have shown that these elements alone are not enough for the important task of state building.¹⁵⁶

The Iraq War made the haunting images and memories of Vietnam War come back into the American policy considerations. Once again, the use of American military power has come under scrutiny. You can say that the September 11, 2001 trauma replaced the Vietnam War trauma as the cornerstone for foreign policy decisions. Colin Powell, was one of the few senior officials to have experienced the Vietnam War at firsthand. Afterwards Powell tried to change the failures which the U.S government made during the Vietnam War. The Powell Doctrine rose with the successes of Panama and the First Iraq War, but from the second half of the 1990s the Doctrine lost its power with the post-Cold War security needs such as humanitarian intervention and the fight against terrorism. Powell recognized that the end of the Cold War required a new way of thinking and a new strategy. Still, Powell pleaded for diplomatic and economic measures before resorting to military intervention. Only when war is unavoidable it is allowed and when military means are used than the use of decisive and overwhelming force to carry out specific political objectives tied to a definitive exit strategy must be used. Debate was often over not whether the U.S. should go to war, but how many of the cautionary notions of the Powell Doctrine were marginalized. Powell had already won two

¹⁵⁶ ABC News (2005), 'Colin Powell on Iraq, Race, and Hurricane Relief'. Published: September 8, 2005.

major diplomatic victories, for both legitimacy and assistance, but much of his doctrine had little value to the Bush Administration.¹⁵⁷

Just as Vietnam was a learning experience for Powell, September 11 2001 was an important learning experience for the Bush Administration. All wanted to avoid the mistakes of the past, but all had different approaches for the future. Vietnam taught Powell to be wary of political leaders making military decisions, and 9/11 taught the Administration not to take quick decisions on intervention.¹⁵⁸ The planning for regime change in Iraq centered around three key concerns: the use of weapons of mass destruction, winning quickly and decisively, and transitioning power to the Iraqis quickly and legitimately. A brief look at these objectives leaves open the possibility for the Powell-style Doctrine. That, however, was not what the Bush Administration had in mind. Advocates of the Powell Doctrine state that the Bush Administration did not totally ignore the Powell Doctrine but oversimplified it. In turn, the U.S. developed a method of warfare that produces stunning military victories but does not necessarily accomplish the political goals for which the war was fought. Bush's military intervention was not suited for the task of nation building. Powell was sure they would succeed militarily, but worried about the day-after implications. The compromise between Powell's exit strategy and Bush's swift actions lay in an international coalition, able to bear the enormous costs and responsibilities of nation building in Iraq and allow a shorter deployment for U.S. troops. Powell grew increasingly frustrated with Rumsfeld and Cheney during the planning of the Iraq war. "We don't just want to replace one bad guy with another bad guy,"¹⁵⁹ cautioned Powell during an early National Security Council (NSC) session on Iraq. Powell was not explicitly opposed to the war, but the war planning, seemingly led by Rumsfeld and Cheney, worried him.

3.4. The Faith of the Powell Doctrine after the Afghanistan and Iraq invasion?

During the Afghanistan and Iraq War there has been a lot of critique on the Powell Doctrine. During his political career, Powell stated the principles he thought the U.S. government should follow when considering the use of military intervention. There must be a vital national security interest at stake before considering intervening into a conflict abroad.

¹⁵⁷ www.nytimes.com.

¹⁵⁸ www.nytimes.com.

¹⁵⁹ Ibidem.

There should be a clear and obtainable objective. A clear exit strategy should be planned before the intervention. The military intervention should have broad national and international political and civilian support. The military action should be carried out by decisive and overwhelming force in order to achieve a rapid result. And the U.S should use force only as a last resort. These principles were established through Powell's negative experience as an officer during the Vietnam War. The First Iraq War or better known as Operation Desert Storm seemed at the time to be a clear example of Powell's ideas and was a success for the Powell Doctrine into practice. The U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq have followed remarkable few principles of the Powell Doctrine. Powell wrote his doctrine in an attempt to keep the U.S from thoughtlessly involving itself in "ill-defined and open-ended military interventions".¹⁶⁰ Critics on the Powell Doctrine have argued that the modern guerilla warfare with irregular adversaries have exploited gaps the doctrine left uncovered. According to them, strict adherence to the Powell Doctrine would prevent the U.S from having any effective response to irregular warfare challenges. Neither the Bush nor the Obama Administrations have followed the Powell Doctrine to the letter. According to critics we must not look upon the use of military forces only as a last resort, but as potentially the best option when combined with other instruments of national and international power. We must not try to use force only in an overwhelming capacity, but in the proportionate capacity, and in a precise and principled manner required by the specific situation. Critics assume that the public now accepts military intervention as an enduring fact of life. But, after the results of the Afghanistan and Iraq missions of the last years the people at home start to lose faith in the government and army. A cry back for the Powell Doctrine is near.¹⁶¹

The Vietnam War was a debacle for military strategists and planners. Powell stated: "The Pentagon entered that war thinking along the lines of most World War II era strategists: the guy with the biggest guns and the most men at the point of contact will win most fights. But in Vietnam, we out-manned and out-gunned our opponent consistently, and we won virtually every battle that we fought... and yet we lost".¹⁶² So after the war, Pentagon strategists insisted they had learned from their defeat in Vietnam. They wanted to make sure that they would not end up in a Vietnam-like situation ever again. And so arose the Powell Doctrine. The Powell Doctrine was an attempt to understand both World War II success and

¹⁶⁰ www.nytimes.com.

¹⁶¹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶² Means, H.B. (1992), 'Colin Powell: soldier/statesman--statesman/soldier'. University of Michigan, p.88-91.

Vietnam failure, and apply those lessons to future conflicts. The strategy the U.S used during World War II was good; the strategy that the U.S used in the Vietnam War was bad.

The highlight of the Powell Doctrine was the 1991 Gulf War. Powell: “We knew what we wanted, had a good plan, got everyone on board, kicked some serious butt, and went home”.¹⁶³ The First Iraq War was a great success, and all the Powell Doctrine supporters felt that they had finally gotten rid of the Vietnam War syndrome. They now knew how to approach warfare. However, the Gulf War also caused a number of conservatives to question the assumptions of the Powell Doctrine. They felt that the U.S was the largest, most powerful country that the world had ever seen, and that the U.S military ought to be the single most useful tool in our arsenal. The critics on the Powell Doctrine stated: “We shouldn’t need anyone else’s permission for war. Wars shouldn’t even need the explicit permission of the American people; the President was Commander-in-Chief, and he ought to decide when to go to use the military. The Powell Doctrine treats the military like a prized race-horse that you only take out of its stall on the day of the Big Race”.¹⁶⁴ The neo-cons wanted the military to be an everyday workhorse. The critics are convinced that the Powell Doctrine has its flaws. For instance, it fails to recognize that the military is not there to fight wars. It is. The military exists as a political tool of the nation. Clausewitz said that: “Warfare is a tool that political leaders use to get the things that they want. As such, the military’s job isn’t to preserve itself, like some unsure maiden, waiting for the Big Day. The military’s job is to make itself into the kind of fighting force that can be useful to the President, and the Nation”.¹⁶⁵ The neo-conservatives understood that the military needs the flexibility to be ready when the president needed it, wherever he might send it. But the neo-conservatives failed to understand that the Powell Doctrine fundamentally understands that military power is a fairly limited tool. Military power has to always be used with political considerations, and political consequences, in mind. That’s true of every single decision that a country makes in war-time. Every single military decision is first and foremost a political decision, and if a country forgets that for one single moment, they will lose. The Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld followers and critics of the Powell Doctrine never understood the simple fact of political restraint and carefully weighing all the options. They simply assumed that the stronger country wins the wars.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Means, H.B. (1992), ‘Colin Powell: soldier/statesman--statesman/soldier’. University of Michigan, p.88-91.

¹⁶⁴ Ibidem, p.22-25.

¹⁶⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶⁶ www.nytimes.com.

3.5. Conclusion

The Powell Doctrine has been used to compare the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and the Afghanistan/Iraq War. But, also the Powell Doctrine has lost its absolute value because of the change of the sort of missions the U.S undertook from the second half of the 1990s onwards. The kind of missions the U.S undertook from the second half of the 1990s onwards were humanitarian missions and missions against terrorist groups. The Powell Doctrine had trouble with adopting to that kind of missions because of the nature of those kind of missions. Examples in practice are those of Somalia, Yugoslavia and Afghanistan/Iraq. The principles that did not comply with the new kind of missions of the U.S were specifically having a clearly defined national interest, making sure it was a quick and decisive mission with a clear exit strategy determined before engaging into the mission and having the support of the national and international community. The problems with the missions in Somalia and Yugoslavia were that there was not a clear national vital interest and the duration of the mission could not be determined on forehand, because solving one problem would lead to the need of solving another problem in order to protect the results achieved. After the Somalia and Yugoslavia interventions support for these kind of missions dropped and there was a call for a return to the Powell Doctrine both by the nation as by the Bush jr. Administration. Unfortunately this call did not had a long duration because of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the U.S. There was a cry for a strong leader and a strong policy against terrorism. America's vital interests were at stake and the principle of using military intervention as a last resort was overthrown for swift, pre-emptive action. The military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq were swift and with overwhelming force, but the U.S forgot to calculate in an exit strategy. The U.S forgot that military intervention alone would not do. In order to create stable states long-term engagement was necessarily. This were deviations from the Powell Doctrine, but now the U.S came to realize that abiding by the Powell Doctrine would have prevented much hardship. There is again a cry for the Powell Doctrine even when Powell is not politically involved anymore his principles in one way or another stay alive.

Conclusion

Colin Powell was the topic of this thesis. Coming from a humble background, by working hard, he has achieved the top. He is a man who crossed invisible borders of his time period and worked out important lessons for future generations. He is a man who shows that hard work and insight will lead to higher things in life and with the lessons of his Powell Doctrine a lot of strategic policies were revised. He is a man who gets a lot of respect of his peers and of the American people. Powell has been very important for American foreign policy and for military campaigns. A great military man, a great statesman and overall a great person. This thesis focused on how Colin Powell used his Vietnam experience to explain his political decisions later on in his career and how this influenced his American foreign policy decisions. The Vietnam War had ended badly for the Americans and influenced America's confidence in a negative way, but Powell knew to give it a positive spin. A wise lesson learned from a terrible war which ended badly for the Americans. It is interesting to see how an important military figure, who has experienced the failure of the Vietnam War, handled American interventions after this debacle. How did the Vietnam War influence him? It is an evaluation of the American foreign policy through the eyes of a great politician.

Powell came up with different questions which should be thought over and answered before the U.S could go into another international mission or war. These questions together are better known as the Powell Doctrine. From the end of the Vietnam War until the first part of the 1990s there was the establishment and the rising of the Powell Doctrine as military and political Doctrine. From the second part of the 1990s onwards the Powell Doctrine had come into conflict with a new way of intervening: humanitarian intervention and the fight against terrorism. The position of the Powell Doctrine had come under scrutiny. The Afghanistan and Iraq Wars had America question whether or not there was still a future for the Powell Doctrine. The ups and downs of the Powell Doctrine were the red threat throughout this thesis. But more interesting has been the fact how Powell himself followed his own doctrine throughout his political career. My research question was: "*How did Powell's military and*

political background influence his American foreign intervention policy and what is the Powell Doctrine really worth?" This question can be answered as followed.

Powell was a gifted military leader and politician who came from a humble background for which hard work and honor were the key words. His great passion throughout his life was the military and his family. Especially the Vietnam War did shape him as a person in his ideological and political views. For the majority of his life he chose the army over a political career even without having a clear party affiliation. He fulfilled the highest political and military ranks in times of Republican and Democratic Administrations. In the end of his political career he affiliated himself with the Republican Party, but stayed moderate. He was convinced that America's needs were more important than parties, person's egos and power politics. People who knew Powell described him as a gifted and caring statesman who had a vision for the nation.

The Powell Doctrine was not a term explicitly developed by Colin Powell. The term was created by journalists who summarized the points into a doctrine. However, it was Powell who came up with the eight points for deciding when the U.S should (not) intervene by military measures. Powell was influenced by the Weinberger Doctrine who had similar points, but which was not as elaborated as the points Powell drew up. Powell was importantly influenced by his own Vietnam experience on how and when not to go into military combat. He was convinced that the U.S should avoid doomed missions and a failure like the Vietnam War. The Powell Doctrine, according to Powell, should be used as a guideline for making policy, for good leadership and when or when not to intervene. The questions stated by the Powell Doctrine were¹⁶⁷:

1. Is a vital national security interest threatened?
2. Do we have a clear attainable objective?
3. Have the risks and costs been fully and frankly analyzed?
4. Have all other non-violent policy means been fully exhausted?
5. Is there a plausible exit strategy to avoid endless entanglement?

¹⁶⁷ O'Sullivan, C.D (2009), *"Collin Powell- American Power and intervention from Vietnam to Iraq"*. New York: Rowman & littlefield Publishers.

6. Have the consequences of our action been fully considered?
7. Is the action supported by the American people?
8. Do we have genuine broad international support?

For applying the Powell Doctrine he mentioned nineteen lessons which were of importance for making well-structured policy decisions and eventually could make or break the Powell Doctrine. It was all about good leadership, surrounding yourself with the right people for the job, be critical and listen. Taking the lessons seriously made the Powell Doctrine successful and a successful Powell Doctrine should lead to successful interventions.

The Powell Doctrine has been used to compare the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and the Afghanistan/Iraq War. But, also the Powell Doctrine has lost its absolute value because of the change of the sort of missions the U.S undertook from the second half of the 1990s onwards. The kind of missions the U.S undertook from the second half of the 1990s onwards were humanitarian missions and missions against terrorist groups. The Powell Doctrine had trouble with adopting to that kind of missions because of the nature of those kind of missions. Examples in practice are those of Somalia, Yugoslavia and Afghanistan/Iraq. The principles that did not comply with the new kind of missions of the U.S were specifically having a clearly defined national interest, making sure it was a quick and decisive mission with a clear exit strategy determined before engaging into the mission and having the support of the national and international community. The problems with the missions in Somalia and Yugoslavia were that there was not a clear national vital interest and the duration of the mission could not be determined on forehand, because solving one problem would lead to the need of solving another problem in order to protect the results achieved. After the Somalia and Yugoslavia interventions support for these kind of missions dropped and there was a call for a return to the Powell Doctrine both by the nation as by the Bush jr. Administration. Unfortunately this call did not had a long duration because of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the U.S. There was a cry for a strong leader and a strong policy against terrorism. America's vital interests were at stake and the principle of using military intervention as a last resort was overthrown for swift, pre-emptive action. The military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq were swift and with overwhelming force, but the U.S forgot to calculate in an exit strategy. The U.S forgot that military intervention alone would not do. In order to create stable states, long-term engagement was necessarily. This were deviations from the Powell Doctrine,

but now the U.S came to realize that abiding by the Powell Doctrine would have prevented much hardship. There is again a cry for the Powell Doctrine even when Powell is not politically involved anymore his principles in one way or another stay alive.

Powell learned from his Vietnam experience that going into a war for all the wrong reasons, without a clearly defined strategy and with only half-backed measures will lead to a disaster. It will lead to loss of lives and loss of American prestige. Powell saw how a war should not be waged and applied his principles to Panama and Desert Storm which turned out to be a success. His Doctrine had trouble adopting to new kind of missions, but was never completely left by the different American Administrations. After the Afghanistan and Iraq interventions a cry back to the Powell Doctrine is very much alive. Powell himself stands behind his Doctrine. He promoted his principles during the Clinton and Bush Administrations with mixed results. He knew how to convince them to get international support and take actions by overwhelming force, but the principles of vital interest and having a clear exit strategy went out the door. Powell was in favor of humanitarian help, but his principles had trouble adopting to this kind of missions. His loyalty to the Administrations and army turned out to be more important than absolute obedience of his principles. He knew as a great statesman and military strategic that, sometimes, you have to compromise.

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