

## The Dynamic of the United States Political Elites Construction on Taliban in Afghanistan (Case Study of the US Presidents' Thoughts on Terrorism Policies, from President Josh W. Bush to President Joe Biden in 2001-2021)

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out and analyze how the thought construction of the president of the United States can influence policies on eradicating terrorism and the war between the US and the Taliban that has been going on for 20 years. The US government began to focus more on terrorism after September 11, 2001, or the so-called 9/11 tragedy, which caused the two symbols of the United States, the World Trade Center (WTC) and the Pentagon, to become targets for attacks by Al-Qaeda. The leader of Al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, is known to be hiding in Afghanistan, the territory of the Taliban. The US considered the Taliban to be protecting Osama, so it immediately sent military troops to Afghanistan, and war broke out between the US and the Taliban. During these two decades, the United States has been led by four presidents with different constructions of thought in providing policies, particularly on the issues of terrorism and the war in Afghanistan. Based on this, the authors analyze the thought construction of each president to see the impact of the US Presidential Policy in fighting terrorism and the war between US and Taliban in Afghanistan

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## INTRODUCTION

The September 11, 2001 attacks, often known as the 9/11 attacks, was a series of hijackings and killings carried out by 19 militants affiliated with the ex-terrorist organization Al-Qaeda that targeted the United States. This attack has been designated as the largest terrorist attack in US history. Terrorists have taken thousands of lives and caused significant damage to New York City and Washington D.C. Al-Qaeda terrorists' strategy is to hijack four commercial airplanes in order to attack their target cities. Two planes collided with the World Trade Center's Twin Towers in New York City. This attack knocked down both towers in less than two hours, killing all passengers and personnel. The three planes were reportedly directed to demolish the United States Department of Defense, also known as the Pentagon Building, which is headquartered in Arlington, Virginia. The fourth plane is scheduled to attack the Capitol Building (home of the United States Congress) and the White House (residence of the US President). Their attempt was foiled when the passengers and crew on board tried another hijacking. Finally, the airliner crashed in the Pennsylvania town of Shanksville. (Zelizer & Allan, 2002).

Terrorism became a big international issue following the World Trade Center incident on September 11, 2001. This was a series of suicide strikes carried out by hijacking two Boeing 767-223ER planes and slamming them into the World Trade Center and Pentagon Buildings. (Nugraha, 2015) This tragedy had a long-term consequence, as the United States issued a war declaration against terrorism with the assistance of its allies. The Bush government instantly blamed the attack on the Islamic militant organization Al-Qaeda Associated Movement (AQAM), directed by Osama bin Laden. Al-Qaeda supposedly carried out such a devastating strike in retaliation for the US's continuous engagement in the Gulf War to assist Israel. (Azmi & Aulia, 2019).

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) initially projected that an Al-Qaeda strike would occur shortly, despite the fact that the time range was still fluid. The government, however, refuted the CIA's prediction, stating that the CIA had been successfully duped by Osama bin Laden, who was only pretending to be planning by the neoconservatives as a bigger threat, but in the end, the attack was launched and the White House had failed to take significant steps to combat terrorism. (Kurt, 2019) Based on CIA information, the US is increasingly certain that the Taliban group in Afghanistan was involved in this incident. The Taliban, which ruled Afghanistan and protected Osama bin Laden, refused to hand him over. So, one month after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the United States began an airstrike on Afghanistan to target the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. (BBC News Indonesia, 2021) That was the beginning of the war between the United States and the Taliban in Afghanistan which eventually lasted for two decades.

During the war between the United States and the Taliban, which lasted 20 years, the United States has been led by different presidents and has had a construction of thoughts that produce different policies as well. The construction of the thoughts of each president results in the dynamics of changes in US policy against terrorism and the sending of US troops to Afghanistan because each president has a different way of solving this problem. The presidents of the United States who led during the war between the United States and the Taliban in Afghanistan were President George W. Bush, President Barack Obama, President Donald Trump, and President Joe Biden. This study is intended to understand how the thoughts of every president of the United States are constructed when producing policies against terrorism during the war between the United States and the Taliban in Afghanistan. Because during this war, the United States was led by a different president. So that it will be seen how each president solves the problem of terrorism in a different way with the aim of maintaining the security of citizens and the interests of the United States of America.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Theory, which is sometimes used interchangeably with method and perspective, is crucial in the field of American Studies. Theories are required to assist us in describing the dynamics of economic, political, social, and cultural thought in American Studies, including concerns relating to the thinking of the American president who creates policies for the United States, such as policies dealing with terrorist cases.

This research is included in the post-nationalist scope as a section of American Studies since it tries to understand American identity and culture. On the other hand, some cultures will undoubtedly alter as a result of changing times, which will be followed by some key studies on gender, ethnicity, postmodernism, and postcolonialism. (Rowe, 2000) Looking at the changing times as well as American identity and culture, which develop and alter through time, this research is classified as post-nationalist and will focus on Alexander Wendy's Constructivism method, which claims that national interests are produced from the views of state leaders. for the sake of the country As a result, this study will employ a constructivism approach to examine the various perspectives of the United States president in deciding policies against terrorism from President Bush to President Biden following the 9/11 attacks, when the US sent military troops to Afghanistan in 2001 and remained there until 2021.

### Constructivism

Constructivism arose and evolved as a critique of rationalism, positivism, poststructuralism, and postmodernism. Constructivist criticism is mostly directed at Realism and Neorealism, which hold that the character or actuality of international politics is fixed, unchanging, and always characterized by anarchy, conflict, and the battle for influence and power. In reality, this is not the case. As the former Soviet Union demonstrated near the end of the Cold War, a country's attitudes and behavior may shift rapidly. As a result, from a constructivist perspective, the above-mentioned mainstream theories cannot explain the shift in the conduct of international actors (particularly leaders of countries), particularly from previously conflictual behavior to cooperative, peaceful, and friendly behavior.

Although constructivists question and reject some components of conventional theories, this approach embraces some features of these mainstream theories from an ontological, epistemological, and methodological standpoint. Constructivists, for example, accept positivist epistemology, which includes hyporesearch testing, the law of causation, and explanation. (Fierke, 2007) So it is not surprising that there are many touch points or similarities between constructivism and positivism theories, especially with neorealism and neoliberalism. Thus, it can be said that constructivism is a middle ground theory between rationalism and post-structuralism approaches. The position of this constructivism theory among other theories can be described as follows:

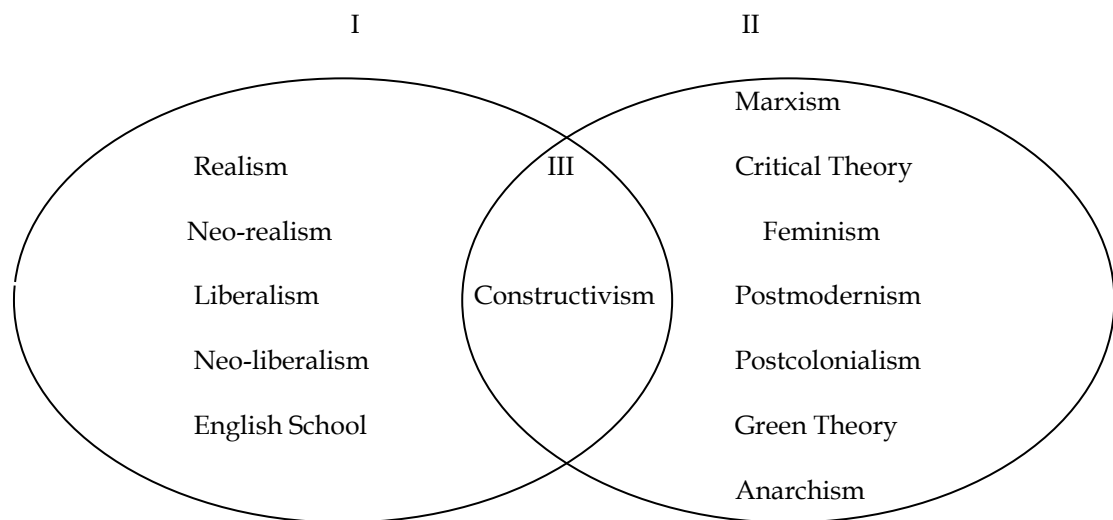


Figure 1. Constructivism

Source: Oliver Daddow, *International Relations Theory*, Los Angeles, Sage, 2009, pg.60

However, there are some basic differences between constructivism and mainstream or rationalist theories and theories included in relectivism, such as critical theory and postmodernism theory. Among these important differences, constructivism pays special attention to the social dimension. If the positivism or rationalism approach emphasizes the distribution of material power aspects such as military and economic power in understanding the behavior of a country, constructivists emphasize analysis on the role of ideas, thoughts, and beliefs of actor agencies (domestic and foreign), as well as how ideas and thoughts about the policies of the state leaders are formed into a shared understanding of these agencies or actors so as to form a new identity that ultimately influences their state policies. (Jackson R. , 2007).

According to the constructivist viewpoint, ideas, standards, beliefs, values, and assumptions held by the participants form and control a state's policy and international politics. (Hara & Abubakar, 2011) In other words, the reality of a country's policy and international politics is basically the result of social construction by agents through a process of learning and understanding together (intersubjectively) and influencing each other. This means that the national and international policy system is not merely a material or physical thing, but a social reality, the result of the construction of the actors. (Jackson R. , 2007).

Constructivists place a premium on identity while studying a country's conduct. This is because, from the perspective of constructivists, identity is the most important component in establishing a country's national interest, which, in turn, affects that country's behavior in the world. This identity is produced through reciprocal or intersubjective understanding between agents or actors about their ideas, thoughts, and beliefs.

In this research, the author will use Constructivism by Alexander Wendt. According to Wendt's constructivism, shared ideas rather than tangible factors construct national interests. Wendt, on the other hand, holds that the four objective objectives of survival, autonomy, independence, economic well-being, and collective self-esteem are included in the concept of national interest. (Wendt, 1992).

According to Alexander Wendt, constructivism is actually a reaction to realism, especially neo-realism. Therefore, constructivists focus more on social aspects, unlike realists who emphasize more on materialist aspects. According to constructivists, the social world is not something that is given; it is not something whose rules can be discovered by scientific inquiry and described through scientific theories, as advocated by behavioralists and positivists. In the framework of foreign policy, the state will consider it from a social standpoint, as in the preceding example of developing and settling on a foreign policy. Of course, everything is done with their own national interests in mind. Countries will see other countries as friends or enemies according to what is in line with their respective interests. (Wendt, 1992).

Based on Wendt's explanation, it can be concluded that the Constructivism theory can answer from the title raised by the author "The Dynamics of the United States Elite's Constructions against Taliban in Afghanistan from President George Walker Bush's Period to President Joe

Biden's Period (2001-2021) in finishing this research. Constructivism can be seen from the perspective of American Presidents from 2001-2021 in determining policies against terrorism because each president has a different leadership style.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In this research, the author will use qualitative and descriptive analysis methods. The qualitative method will use data in the form of official presidential documents, statements from each United States president in speeches and policies that have been made, books, previous research, and trusted media sources. As well as how to obtain sources for this research using library research data collection techniques.

And to analyze library research data using qualitative methods, the authors will use descriptive analysis methods. The descriptive analysis method comes from the primary sources of qualitative methods: official presidential documents, statements based on the president of the United States' statements and actions, books, prior analysis, and reliable media. The author will then analyze each President of the United States' thoughts or conclusions regarding the implementation of anti-terrorism strategy, particularly with regard to those responsible for the 9/11 attack, and will report the findings of the research.

## **DISCUSSION**

Constructivists believe that the world in terms of international order or structure, identity, and actor interests are the result of the social construction of society and that reality or structure then constructs society or actors. (Reus-Smit, 2005) The social world is an intersubjective area formed by society at a certain time and place. Identity and interests cannot be separated from social situations. (Jakson & Sorensen, 2009) Identity and interests are result as a product of social formation through interactions between actors. This is possible because constructivists have a shared knowledge and understanding known as intersubjective understanding. The process of giving a sign or signal, interpreting it, and responding to the provided sign results in intersubjective comprehension. The interaction of the actors results in this process. The actor employs spoken and written language, as well as actions, to provide signs, interpretations, and replies during the interaction process. (Folker, 2006) Thus, discourse can be considered to play a role in the construction of intersubjective understanding, which shapes actors' identities and interests.

Constructivists believe that the international dispersion of ideas and understandings determines and shapes international structure. This distribution of ideas and understandings gives the universe structure and shapes the identities of actors and the world. (Pushkarsky, 2009) This distribution of ideas and understanding occurs through interaction and communication between actors, who communicate their ideas and thoughts through the use of language and discourse.

Nicholas Greenwood Onuf emphasized the role of language for constructivists. Onuf developed and built his constructivist theory on Anthony Giddens' theory. Language is central to Onuf's analysis. Language does not only describe or represent reality; it creates it. Onuf stressed that humans build reality

through their actions. This action manifests itself in the act of speaking or communicating. Talks or speeches will shape and influence the actions of others. Talking moves people to action. Thus, language shows both performative and descriptive aspects. Onuf classifies speeches or talks into three categories: assertiveness, directives, and commissives. The first, the assertive, is a statement of belief that, by implication, the speaker wants the hearer to accept. Second, directives contain the actions the speaker wants the listener to perform. Third, the commissives consist of the speaker's declaration of commitment to some future action. (Zehfuss, 2004)

### **The Global War on Terror Declaration by President George W. Bush**

The terrorist organization Al-Qaeda attacked two locations that were extremely important to the United States on September 11, 2001. George W. Bush was the president of the US at the time. George W. Bush had an unfavorable response to this behavior. The purpose of America's invasion was to hunt down the Taliban through a military campaign known as the Enduring Freedom Operation, which was centered on chasing the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, which were suspected of causing international turmoil following the September 11, 2001 tragedy. (Hardiyanti, Kebijakan Militer Pemerintahan Amerika Serikat Dalam Memerangi Kelompok Taliban di Afghanistan Pada Kepemimpinan Barack Obama Periode 2009-2012, 2019) President Bush explicitly stated that he would continue to intensify this campaign until all terrorist groups were found, stopped, and destroyed.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Kingdom supported President George W. Bush's decision to declare a foreign policy war on terror as a result of this occurrence. President George W. Bush started the War on Terror, a global initiative, in response to the September 11 attacks, a momentous event in the United States. Bush was successful in rallying the United Nations Security Council, NATO, and the European Union to develop counterterrorism policies as soon as possible. Bush described his program as a military campaign against terrorism. (History.com, 2019) President Bush signed a resolution on September 18, 2001, denouncing the ongoing Taliban-led assault on Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. The United States actively supports military operations in Afghanistan, including logistical aid, Afghan military training, and the deployment of American military personnel to battle zones. The main purpose of the US in carrying out these operations is to avoid potential future strikes in Afghanistan by a growing terrorist group. (Thomas, 2022).

The three components that Onuf gathered together are readily apparent in the War on Terror policy discourse. First, assertiveness appears when Bush reassures and offers various values and beliefs that exist in the United States and are generally accepted, for example, the value of freedom. This value is then applied to the new group. Second, through directives, the United States provides instructions on how to overcome terrorism by building global cooperation. Third, as commissives, the implication of all that is that various rules and cooperation are formed, which give birth to regulations and laws that support the global war against terrorism.

Through the War on Terror narrative, Bush built an intersubjective knowledge or common global understanding that terrorism is a human rights violation and a threat to international security. As a result, terrorism must be combated collaboratively. The construction of this shared understanding is evident in the discourses of good and evil. Through this discourse, Bush crafts a universe in which the other is wicked. Bush uses language in his speeches to construct the world's reality.

In other words, Bush used speeches to build and shape understandings of right and wrong, good and evil, in the war on terrorism. In Bush's first speech on September 11, 2001, an understanding of good and evil formed, *"Today our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature"*. (Bush G. W., Statement by the President in His Address to the Nation, 2001) Terrorists are thus an evil gang, and through his address, Obama also asked other countries to join the United States in combating terrorism as evil..

*We ask every nation to join us. We will ask, and we will need, the help of police forces, intelligence services, and banking systems around the world. The United States is grateful that many nations and many international organizations have already responded – with sympathy and with support. Nations from Latin America, to Asia, to Africa, to Europe, to the Islamic world. Perhaps the NATO Charter reflects best the attitude of the world: An attack on one is an attack on all.* (Bush G. W., Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People, 2001).

Following the public delivery of Bush's speech, governments began to see that the world was divided into two groups: the wrong and evil terrorist groups that had to be opposed, and the right groups that had to be followed. Understanding the world will lead to specific activities, such as joining a group or developing and adjusting rules, identities, and interests with the group that is followed. (Solheim, 2006) Thus, by creating a consensus that terrorism is a crime through the presentation of reasons and evidence, the discourse of the War on Terror started to spread out from the United States to all regions of the world.

### **Smart Power Strategy of President Barack Obama**

Following President Bush's presidency, President Barack Obama presided over the US. The Democratic Party's Barack Obama's victory in the presidential election appeared to alter American politics. During his presidency, President Obama had alternative ideas, such as working with friends in Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban together. The president's role, according to Obama, is to protect the country and ensure security. (Obama, *Chang We Can Believe In*, 2008) In the war against terrorists, Barack Obama's measures are more reasonable and strategic than Bush's. Obama holds numerous viewpoints and ideas; his policy philosophy is focused on the Smart Power concept in various domains, particularly the military. The idea of "Smart Power" combines hard power and soft power through peace talks, stronger ties with Muslim nations, and military cooperation. The concept of smart power was popularized mostly by US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and President Barack Obama. (Husna, 2012).

Obama underlined in this approach that the fight against terrorists is a long-term strategy. As a result, Obama has his own ideas about how to solve this problem. Obama prefers a more diplomatic approach to battling the Taliban by



employing smart power. (Milia, 2015) Aside from military operations, Barack Obama's other policies include deploying military forces to Afghanistan, training Afghan soldiers so that they may participate equally in the struggle against the Taliban, and constructing US military outposts in Afghanistan. According to Obama, catching terrorists may be accomplished by prioritizing diplomacy and acting more strategically. Obama was able to cooperate with the Alliance nations as well as the Afghan government as a result. (Gita, 2012).

Obama underlined in his speech that the United States requires a new approach to face new challenges in a dangerous world. This approach combines military force with intellectual power, economic power, intelligence, and diplomacy. This approach will help to strengthen the alliance system, which promotes the ideals of liberty and democracy, free markets, and rule-following.

*"..... We needed a new overarching strategy to meet the challenges of a new and dangerous world. Such a strategy would join over helming military strength with sound judgment. It would shape events not just through military force, but through the force of our idea: through economic power, intelligence and diplomacy. It would support string allies that freely share our ideal of liberty and democracy; open markets and the rule of law. It would foster new international institutions like the United Nations, NATO, and the World Bank, and focus on every corner of the globe..."* (The New York Times, 2018).

Another Obama speech, titled "A New Beginning," made in Cairo, Egypt, in 2009, stressed the different approach to US foreign policy."

*"I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles -- principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings."* (Obama, The President's Speech in Cairo: A New Beginning, 2009).

*This speech highlighted the direction of American foreign policy, emphasizing a more robust approach to countering the menace of international terrorism. A new and accommodative approach to Muslim countries in the world is the main foundation of this strategy, better known as Smart Power.*

In the Smart Power policy discourse, the three elements grouped by Onuf can be found clearly. First, assertiveness can be seen when Obama is convinced that the War on Terror, which is President Bush's hard power policy, is not effective in solving the problem of terrorism. Settlement by means of violence is not suitable for use in the era of Obama's leadership, therefore Obama emphasized that a diplomatic way is an answer to resolving this problem. Second, directives, the United States provides directions on how to overcome terrorism, namely through the Smart Power policy discourse, in a more diplomatic and humane way so as not to reduce the number of civilians who become victims in wars with terrorism. Third, commissives, the implication of all this is that various rules and cooperation between the US and countries or Muslim groups are formed that are mutually beneficial to both parties in the fight against terrorism.

It can be concluded that President Obama's thinking on terrorism after the 9/11 tragedy differs greatly from that of President Bush. If President Bush employs hard power to combat terrorism in Afghanistan, Hard power combined with soft power is what President Obama refers to as "smart power." According to Obama's thinking, resolving Afghanistan through combat is not a viable option for ending the war that has lasted nearly ten years since Obama took office. However, only diplomacy can address the issues surrounding the Afghan situation. However, the matter of the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan was not concluded until the end of President Obama's two terms in office.

### **Donald Trump's Strategy Against Terrorism**

In the 15 years since the September 11th attacks, the presidential administrations of George W. Bush and Barack Obama have demonstrated significant strategic consistency. Furthermore, the United States is led by Donald Trump, the elected president, who takes command of the counter-terrorism effort. Donald Trump's beliefs and opinions differ from those of prior presidents. The previous president's policies, according to Donald Trump, were a failure of American strategy. Donald Trump evaluates everything that has been said about the failure of the anti-terrorism effort under Presidents Bush and Obama. (Azmi & Aulia, 2019).

Before becoming president, Donald Trump highlighted the love for one's country by offering numerous opportunities to even put American interests ahead of those of other countries through the concepts of "America First" and "Make America Great Again." This idea emphasizes the morality of the attitude of the spirit to make the country better by emphasizing the identity and interests of the country through the main features that underlie the regime. The executive order has delivered a proclamation of truth as well as reinforcement of Donald Trump's spirit of nationalism as President. This policy is a systematic attempt that departs from the nationalism of a US president in reaction to mounting concerns and Trump's concern that the refugee acceptance program may allow terrorists to enter the US. (Scribner, 2017) Trump considers this resolved and makes it happen in his travel ban policy.

Trump's travel ban policy against immigrants who want to enter the country is not without reason. The detrimental potential of immigrants seen by Trump, as someone who has nationalism, provides space for him to provide real solutions through his policy authority so that the country is not disadvantaged. The primary goal of this order is to ensure that people who are not in line with the United States will be prevented from entering United States territory for the protection of citizens. (Lopez, 2019) This is an effort by Donald Trump's protective attitude, through the authority of his leadership role as President, to defend the interests and lives of American citizens. The American public's interest is seen to have a detrimental impact on the entry of immigrants. Donald Trump's protection of America is a visible aspect of the existence of measures affected by his nationalism to safeguard his population from the threat of terrorism.

Not only domestically, Trump is also thinking about the policy of sending US troops to Afghanistan, which has been going on since 2001 after the

September 11 tragedy. Despite Donald Trump's hard stance against terrorism, there were disagreements in US foreign policy toward Afghanistan near the end of his presidency. If the past presidents did not reach a deal to actually make peace, Donald Trump's leadership reached an unexpected agreement. During Donald Trump's presidency, there was optimism for peace in Afghanistan, and when the President of Afghanistan met Trump at the White House, Trump stated that he preferred conversation over combat. "If we want to fight and win, we will be defeated in one week," Trump stated. Afghanistan has the potential to vanish off the face of the earth." (Kompas.com, 2019) However, Trump does not want to go down the path of war because it could kill millions of people. Finally, a peace agreement between the US and the Taliban has been signed in an effort to put an end to the 18-year conflict in Afghanistan, but there are a number of factors that could derail the peace effort. The agreement addressed four issues: reducing violence, removing foreign soldiers from Afghanistan, starting intra-Afghan dialogue, and making sure that Afghanistan would also not serve as a safe haven for terrorists. (Kompas.tv, 2021) After months of discussions in Qatar, the United States and the Taliban reached a peace agreement on February 29, 2020, thereby ending the conflict.

In the Travel Ban policy and the United States-Taliban Cooperation Agreement, the three elements grouped by Onuf can be found clearly. First, assertiveness appears when Trump believes that the Travel Ban must be carried out by the United States to protect the citizens from terrorist attacks. And the decision on the peace agreement between the United States and the Taliban is considered too long, and there have been many losses for both parties; therefore, this peace agreement must be realized. Second, through directives, the United States provides instructions on how to deal with terrorism, namely with the Travel Ban Policy. Through this policy, the United States can find out the reasons for immigrant interests to enter the United States and immediately take an action if the immigrant is indicated as a member of a terrorist group. And the United States cooperation agreement with the Taliban provides a clue to ending the war that has been going on for too long, which has resulted in many losses for both sides. Third, by taking constructive actions, the implication of all of this is that the Travel Ban rule was formed to protect United States citizens from the threat of terrorism and to achieve a peace agreement between the United States and the Taliban to achieve the interests of both parties.

It can be concluded that President Trump has a tough personality in dealing with terrorism situations both at home and abroad. Despite his many tough policies, President Trump is arguably someone who truly defends American civilians from the dangers of terrorists. Yet, despite his tough stance on terrorism, Trump has a different perspective on the two-decade-long war in Afghanistan. President Trump would rather make peace than continue to fight and cause more victims of war. And the peace deal reached between the United States and the Taliban was implemented before President Trump's term ended.

#### **Joe Biden's Strategy Against Terrorism**

President Joe Biden used the jargon "America is back" to replace the "America First" foreign policy that President Donald Trump has run for four

years. Biden conveyed that when introducing foreign policy and his national security team. Biden said the team would drop what he called old-fashioned thinking and habits without a change in the United States' new approach to the world. As in the speech he delivered;

They are a team that reflects the fact that America is back, ready to lead the world and not back down, back in the seat of importance, ready to confront our opponents and not alienate our allies, and ready to defend our values. (Republika.co.id, 2020).

The Biden administration officially began leading the United States on January 20, 2021. Biden gave a signal to turn the United States back from Trump's unilateral nationalism approach. According to Biden, the United States under Trump's leadership shows an attitude of uncertainty toward many of the United States' traditional allies in Europe and other parts of the world.

Joe Biden is considered to be in line with the values of the Democratic Party, which in its history has been friendly and close to various groups such as opening the same space for the Muslim Community, one of which is by abolishing the Muslim Ban. However, it will not stop fighting the terrorists who threaten the United States. Biden has released what he will describe as a national plan to counter domestic terrorism. Biden conveyed that the National Strategy for Overcoming Domestic Terrorism is intended to improve government analysis and share information about domestic terrorism with law enforcement agencies at all levels. Biden also made it clear in his speech;

Preventing the recruitment of terrorists and undermining their ability to mobilize, as well as thwarting and stopping their activities, is the key to the strategy. (VOA, 2021).

This plan is also to address the factors that encourage domestic terrorism in the long term, such as racial, ethnic, and religious hatred. As Biden put it;

Domestic terrorism—fueled by hatred, bigotry, and other forms of extremism—is a stain on the American soul. This goes against everything our country stands for and is a direct challenge to our national security, democracy, and unity. (VOA, 2021).

The plan was made public more than six months after the assault on the US Capitol by tens of thousands of Donald Trump backers as Congress got ready to certify President Joe Biden's victory, which Trump had refused to accept.

President Joe Biden is not only focused on fighting terrorism in the country but also on the peace agreement between the United States and the Taliban that was implemented during the administration of President Donald Trump. One of the contents of the peace agreement is the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan. According to Biden, the policy of withdrawing all troops from Afghanistan is a wise decision that prevents future generations of the United States from continuing to engage in war. In a statement broadcast from the White House, Joe Biden reaffirmed his decision to withdraw all US troops after 20 years of fighting the Taliban.

I stand firmly behind my decision. After 20 years, I have learned the hard way that there is never a right time to withdraw United States troops. The responsibility lies with me. (CNN Indonesia, 2021).

Biden also emphasized that the decision to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan was to stop a war that had progressed far beyond its initial goal of punishing the Taliban for having links with Al-Qaeda after the events of 9/11. Even though US troops have left Afghanistan, Biden said that counter-terrorism operations would continue. The US government, led by President Joe Biden, will assess the peace agreement reached between the US and the Taliban. The US will pay close attention to whether insurgent groups have curtailed their attacks in Afghanistan.

In the discourse "America is back", the three elements grouped by Onuf can be found clearly. First, assertiveness can be seen when Biden reassures and offers various values and beliefs that exist in the United States and are generally accepted, such as the value of freedom. This value is then applied to the new group. Second, through directives, the United States provides instructions on how to overcome terrorism by building global cooperation. Third, as commissives, the implication of all that is that various rules and cooperation are formed, which give birth to regulations and laws that support the global war against terrorism.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The conclusion of this research is that the four presidents of the United States who led during the war between the United States and the Taliban in Afghanistan had different leadership styles and thought constructions to make policies to protect their citizens from terrorism crimes and state interests. It can also be noted that the four presidents' leadership styles are similar and dissimilar. Based on the effects of President George W. Bush's idea construction, specifically deploying US military soldiers to the hideouts of Al-Qaeda leaders in Afghanistan after it was established that the Al-Qaeda group was responsible for the 9/11 attacks. It can also be argued that Bush's character is particularly tough in instances of terrorism and that what Bush is doing is hard power. In contrast to President Barack Obama, who has a more diplomatic way of thinking. Obama employs a smart power strategy in all of his programs, including the battle against terrorism and cooperation with Afghanistan in the fight against the Taliban. Then there's President Donald Trump, who, like Bush, has a gruff demeanor. Trump enacted a Travel Ban policy as a result of his thought construction to protect his citizens from terrorist assaults. But there's more to the problem of the United States' conflict with the Taliban; Trump sees the war as extremely harmful in a variety of ways. As a result, during his presidency, the United States and the Taliban, who had been at odds for 20 years, reached a peace pact. And the current leader, President Joe Biden, has a different mental structure than Trump but is similar to Obama's leadership. Because Biden served as Vice President throughout Obama's presidency. Biden is just carrying on the outcomes of the previously agreed-upon peace agreement, and he is currently more concerned with improving internal security against terrorist threats. It may be inferred that the four presidents have distinct thinking structures for anti-terrorism strategies, but they all have the same purpose, which is to protect citizens from terrorist assaults and to safeguard the United States' interests in Afghanistan.

## **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

The author believes that this research is not perfect in terms of content and methodology, the authors hope that this research can be continued by fellow readers with more in-depth and structured research studies.

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