

## **THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT VERSUS THE WAR AGAINST IRAQ**

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### **Abstract**

Following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States President George Bush declared a “war on terrorism.” To support these efforts, Bush attempted to assemble a “coalition of the willing” and repeatedly claimed that the war on terrorism is a war without borders. In opposition to Bush’s agenda, the transnational peace movement has forged a resistance that is also without borders. For several governments it is now a question of which superpower to obey; the United States or the will of their citizens. This analysis combines aspects of social movement theory such as political opportunity structure, resource mobilization, framing, and social movement consequences to examine how, through transnational networking, groups have used a wide variety of tactics and have forged a global sense of collective identity that appeals to international norms in an attempt to alter public opinion, oust political officials unresponsive to their demands, change state policies, and ultimately undermine the institutional and political infrastructure that is supporting the war on terrorism.

### **Introduction**

Following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States President George Bush declared a “war on terrorism.” The United States invaded Afghanistan on October 2, 2001, and then Iraq on March 20, 2003. To support these efforts, the president tried to put together a “coalition of the willing” and repeatedly claimed that the war on terrorism is a war without borders. In opposition to Bush’s agenda, a transnational peace movement has forged a resistance that is also without borders. The effectiveness of the internationally coordinated mobilization and protests has affirmed the words of Robert Muller (former assistant secretary general of the United Nations). He stated: “Now there are two superpowers: the US and the merging voice of the people of the world. All around the world, people are waging peace. It is nothing short of a miracle and it is working – despite what you may see unfolding in the news” (Hoge 2004: 11).

Though the war on terrorism is of course still being fought, global civil society has asserted itself against the war at an unparalleled and international level by intervening aggressively in decisions regarding security, war and peace; all previously considered the

exclusive domain of the state. For several governments it is now a question of which superpower to obey, the United States or the will of their citizens. In scores of countries the war on terrorism and the invasion of Iraq in particular, has generated a struggle between those willing to come under the influence of Washington and those who resist it. Activists in the antiwar movement have played a pivotal role in this choice by taking advantage of divisions among elites to pressure policymakers to refrain from aligning with the United States and/or to alter their position. They have also effectively influenced public opinion, provided a source of moral vision and voice, and in some significant ways are undermining the institutional and political infrastructure that sustains militarism. Though President Bush will remain in power until January 2009 and the occupation of Iraq will certainly be sustained throughout the remainder of his tenure, leaders of several other prominent nations that were originally partners in the coalition have been voted or forced out of office, and this is reducing the effectiveness of the war effort and has led to a heavier social and economic cost for U.S. citizens.

This analysis combines aspects of social movement theory such as political opportunity structures (POS), resource mobilization, framing, and social movement consequences to examine how, through transnational networking, groups are organizing to utilize resources, alter public consciousness, and influence public authorities regarding the war on terrorism. Through their mobilizing efforts and a growing sense of collective identity peace activists across the globe have become a viable political force by exerting pressure on political representatives using both contentious politics and institutional forms of political pressure. They have taken advantage of structural conditions to build a strong oppositional stance toward government and state policies, and have gained support for the antiwar effort by exposing false statements by politicians in their attempts to rally support for the war, publicizing contradictions by government officials, playing on citizen anxieties regarding the economic and social costs of the war, and engaging in material and online forms of protest. A defining feature is that the movement has framed, interpreted, and attributed their grievances to international standards of justice and in ways that appeal to mainstream values that transcend national concerns. By embracing a global and compassionate perspective they illustrate what Tomlinson (1999) describes as “distanciated identity.” This concept embodies a sense of what unites groups and individuals as human beings, of common risks and possibilities, and of mutual responsibility. It is a reflexive awareness of the world as one of many cultural others – a grasp of the legitimate plurality of cultural and an openness to tolerance and difference – while being mindful of and questioning one’s own cultural assumptions. Ultimately, it is an active sense of belonging to the wider world; being able to live at the same time in both the global and the local.

## Social Movement Theory

Social movements are broadly defined as a collective challenge by a plurality of actors with a common purpose and shared conflictual issues who work in solidarity through sustained interactions to articulate resistance to elite opponents and authorities (Langman 2005; Tarrow 1994). Tilly (2004) suggests that there are three main elements to social movements: campaigns (sustained, organized public efforts making collective claims on target authorities); repertoires (tactics that a group has at its disposal given a certain socio-political environment); and WUNC (worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment). Key to any social movement are mobilizing strategies – “those collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action” (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 3). Resource mobilization is a strand of social movement theory that most explicitly looks at the role of mobilizing strategies. It examines the processes that give rise to social movements and focuses on organizational dynamics, leadership, and resource management (Tilly 2001; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; McAdam 1996; Gamson 1992).

Another key component of social movements is the construction and legitimation of collective identities (Langman 2005; Diani 2000; Melucci 1996). Collective identities refer to the association of the goals and values of a movement with one’s own, and can be a perception of a shared status or relationship rather than an exclusively concrete one (Polleta and Jasper 2001). Key to forging collective identity is how organizers “frame” their issues. They must do this in a way that resonates with potential recruits by linking participants’ grievances to mainstream beliefs and values (McAdam 1996; Benford 1993; Snow and Benford 1992). Framing thus helps explain the articulation of grievances, the dynamics of recruitment and mobilization, and the maintenance of solidarity and collective identity. The goal of challengers is to influence public opinion and mobilize participants while also appealing to diverse constituencies by identifying problems and posing solutions in a concise yet broad way. For framing to be influential organizers must persuade large numbers of people that the issues they care about are urgent, that alternatives are possible, that there is a worthiness (or moral standing) of the activists, and that the constituencies they seek to mobilize can be invested with agency (Tarrow and Tilly 2006; Cress and Snow 2000). In essence, for a frame to go from understanding to motivating action it must have the elements of injustice, identity, and agency (Gamson 1992).

Keck and Sikkink’s (1998) work describes types of global mobilizing strategies as Transnational Activist Networks (TANs). They demonstrate how movements with transnational ties can help cultivate movement identities, shape new activist frames, transcend nationally defined interests, and build solidarity with a global emphasis. Though these networks are flexible and are made up of various coalitions that often work on different issues, the main bond between them is that they maintain similar values and visions. The strategy is to link activists in less powerful countries with more empowered

political actors and groups that have more leverage in influencing decisions regarding global political and economic dynamics. One of the primary goals of TANs is to create, strengthen, implement, and monitor international norms (Khagram and Sikkink 2002). These international norms are sometimes part of the resources social movement actors use to draw in new recruits and to develop their collective beliefs, as appealing to preexisting international norms helps to legitimate local grievances. This concept is what Snow and Benford (1992) refer to as “frame bridging,” whereby movement participants appeal for justice in a very generalized sense (such as war being a human rights issue) to attract new constituents.

As an alternative, transnational networks may attempt to transform their collective beliefs into international norms by using information sharing, persuasion, and moral pressure to change institutions and governments (Khagram and Sikkink 2002). They often do this by displaying or publicizing norm-breaking behavior to embarrass political officials to get them to conform to norms – referred to as the “mobilization of shame.” In the peace movement, numerous protests and other mobilizing strategies emphasize the need for the creation of clear international standards that can be *enforced* regarding the legality of war.

The ability of social movement activists to engage successfully in contentious politics relies to a large extent on political opportunity structures. These are defined by Gamson and Meyer (1996) and Tarrow (2001) as institutional initiatives in the form of a shift in governance configurations towards more openness or closure of institutions and policy arenas, and/or a shift in governance culture or discourses – in other words the perception of what are legitimate forms of social engagement in a certain political context at a certain point in time. Gamson and Meyer specify that there is a distinction between static and volatile features of political opportunities. While formal structural openness to political activity is a necessary opening for social movement activity, they argue that equally important is the way that actors perceive and define the situation and to determine which tactics will be adopted. One essential political opportunity presents itself when there is division among elites (Jenkins and Perrow 1977; Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). Such a division affects the opportunities for political action and social movement activism because it allows groups to manipulate the competition between political elites, as well to take advantage of openings that result from the struggles in the institutional political arena. This clash among the elites has been key to the anti-war movement and will be discussed at greater length in a later section of the paper.

### *Framing, Repertoires, and Resource Mobilization in the Peace Movement*

Repertoires allude to the choices activists have within structured options (Tilly 1978). Peace activists have historically utilized a wide range of repertoires including conventional political activity, consciousness raising, moral persuasion, civil disobedience, violence, sabotage, and self-immolation (Maurillo and Meyer 2004). Civil

society activism and contentious politics have proven crucial in promoting socio-political awareness and change, deepening democratic spaces, helping establish policy agendas, increasing accountability among elected officials, and influencing states' approaches to governance (Goldstone 2003; Putnam 2000; Dryzek 1996). One of the most common repertoires for the peace movement has been contentious politics in the form of street protests and rallies. Though single protests rarely have direct or immediate results, they are effective in a number of other ways. For example, they serve the function of dramatizing the legitimacy, unity, numbers, and commitment of groups supporting the social movement goals (Tilly 2004; McAdam et al. 2001; Klandermans 1997). They also help to consolidate activist identities among new recruits and long term members by dramatizing conflict and creating "us-versus-them" identities as they develop an oppositional consciousness (Smith 2002; McAdam 1996).

### *Protest*

The power of protest mobilization as an expression of public opinion was evident on February 15, 2003 (F15), the day after United Nations (UN) inspector, Hans Blix, made his report to the UN that no weapons of mass destruction had been found in Iraq and that the Iraqi government was in fact cooperating (Alexander 2003). The world experienced the largest international mobilization for peace ever which was coordinated simultaneously in dozens of countries. This was one of a series of demonstrations organized by Stop The War Coalition before and after the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. Stop the War served as an umbrella organization that networked with the Socialist Workers Party, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Globalized Resistance, Labor Party legislators, trade unions, and a large portion of the British Muslim community. On F15 two million people took to the streets in protest in London, 200,000 in Barcelona, 300,000 in Rome, 800,000 in Paris, 100,000 in New York City, 500,000 thousand in Berlin, and 250,000 in Sidney (Podur 2003). Estimates ranged as high as fifteen million people across seventy-five countries. This international mobilization demonstrated the efficacy of global solidarity, voluntary cooperation, and grassroots protest as thousands of independent yet interconnected groups organized to challenge U.S. foreign policy as well as the role of their own governments in supporting the war. Following the protest, the *New York Times* described the global peace movement as "the world's second superpower," and it was immediately after this global demonstration that governments of nine countries backed the coalition of the willing (*New York Times* 2003: A1). By framing their claims globally (the main slogan being "let the inspections work" and the underlying critique of preemptive as illegal and immoral) peace activists made a clear appeal to international law.

After F15 numerous events, protests, and coordinated actions took place to capitalize on the momentum of the protest. Many of these took place in Britain in particular. In November of 2003, 200,000 people protested in Trafalgar Square when President Bush made a state visit to the United Kingdom (*Agence French Press* 2004). In

March of 2004, on the first anniversary of the Iraq invasion, over 25,000 mobilized for a street protest again in London to contest Blair's decision to closely align the UK with the United States in the war against terrorism. Activists in several other countries have also protested specifically against state visits by President Bush and what is perceived as U.S. imperialism. When he visited Ireland in 2005, 50,000 citizens protested the use of Shannon Airport as a stopover point for U.S. troops bound for Iraq, and transformed the area into what the press called a "ring of steel" (*Organization Trends* 2005). When Bush left Shannon for Turkey and then later traveled to Canada he encountered similar scenes of hostility. Several Canadian protestors held signs that depicted Uncle Sam with his typical hat and pointed finger reading, "I WANT YOU To Blindly Follow or Else!" (Nowar-piaix.ca). Other popular signs at protests that questioned the motive for the invasion and displayed resentment toward Bush included slogans such as, "No Blood for Oil," "Drop Bush Not Bombs," and "Regime Change Begins at Home." Other activists held signs with the notorious photo of the prisoner at Abu Ghraib, balanced on one foot on a box and hooked up to electrodes. The American flag served as a backdrop and the image was superimposed with the question, "Got Democracy?"

The framing of the issues among the protesters, as illustrated on their signs and banners address global concerns by questioning governments' and citizens' uncritical support for preemptive war, publicizing the growing anxieties over President Bush's ambitions in the Middle East, and challenging the framing of the opposition itself in its attempt to justify war efforts through the stated intention of bringing democracy to the Middle East. As Khagram and Sikkink (2002) note, one of the main intentions of transnational movements is to establish and petition for respect for international norms, and these can be part of the resources actors use to draw others to the cause and to develop their collective beliefs. The peace movement's appeal to preexisting international norms has helped to legitimate local grievances through frame bridging – presenting its claims for justice that is generalized beyond the specific issue of the ill-effects of war.

ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism) and UFPJ (United for Peace and Justice), the two largest U.S.-based and transnational antiwar SMOs (social movement organizations), have also used frame bridging and the mobilization of shame to elicit new recruits. For example, ANSWER refers to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 78 U.N.T.S. 277, which was executed in 1948 and ratified by the United States. The agreement stipulates to its signers that, "This carries with it the binding force of the law of nations and prohibits genocide or complicity in genocide. This includes acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group by various means" (Answer.org). Expanding the contours of unjust war ANSWER argues that under the premise of international law the Iraqi war qualifies as a criminal war.

UFPJ also expands the lens through which it condemns the war on terrorism to draw attention to larger issues of democracy, human rights, and justice abroad and at

home. The organization is made up of over 1,300 international groups and opposes what it describes as “our government’s policy of permanent warfare and empire-building” (Unitedforpeace.org). Its unity statement declares that they oppose “pre-emptive wars of aggression waged by the Bush Administration and the drive to expand U.S. control over other nations that strip us of our rights at home under the cover of fighting terrorism and spreading democracy.” They call for a broad mass movement for peace and justice, and in particular, for “peaceful resolution of disputes amongst states; respect for national sovereignty, international law, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the defense and extension of basic democratic freedoms to all; social and economic justice; and the use of public spending to meet human and environmental needs” (Unitedforpeace.org). As a multi-issue organization its website states, “We envision UFPJ as a movement-building coalition that coordinates and supports the work of existing groups and builds linkages and solidarity where none exists. We link the wars abroad with the assaults at home, and U.S. militarism to the corporate economic interests it serves.”

The peace movement’s tactics and mobilizing strategies as utilized by Win Without War, ANSWER, and UFPJ support Keck and Sikkink’s research on TANs. By framing preemptive war as a human rights issue the movement has been able to attract several diverse groups and individuals that share a similar vision and set of values but focus on a variety of social justice campaigns beyond the exclusivity of war. For example, one of the key allies in the peace movement has been the global justice movement (often referred to as the anti-globalization movement). This convergence is steadily solidifying because globalization is creating common interests that surpass national and interest-group boundaries. Specifically, both the global justice movement and the peace movement see the Bush Administration as the promoter of militarized globalization for economic profit in an attempt to secure oil reserves and other natural resources, as well as contracts with multinational corporations at the expense of human life and local economic development. In both instances there is a push for international law to regulate military and economic activities and protect human rights – illustrating how social movements not only seek to uphold international norms but also seek to transform their collective beliefs into such norms. In addition to organizing several national protests against the invasion of Iraq, ANSWER and UFPJ, in conjunction with the global justice movement, have also organized protests outside of the offices of corporate contractors such as Bechtel and Halliburton, two of the largest U.S.-based contractors now operating in Iraq, and both of which have close ties to members of the Bush Administration (Hayden 2004).

ANSWER demonstrates Tomlinson’s (1999) concept of “distantiated identity,” which calls for an acknowledgement of mutual responsibility for and shared consequences of government policies and actions. It does so by appealing for the right of Iraqi citizens to determine their own destiny and to realize that U.S. soldiers’ “... lives and dignity are too important to be used in the commission of war crimes or to serve as

cannon fodder in a war that only benefits corporate and banking elite” (Answer.org). Both ANSWER and UFPJ frame their message in simple humanistic terms: “Bring the Troops Home Now” and “End all Occupations,” illustrating a transnational sense of interdependence, collective identity, and solidarity.

Although demonstrations and rallies didn’t prevent the war in Iraq, or convince all nations to reject joining the coalition of the willing, the mobilization tells us important things about social movement consequences. Successful outcomes can be the realization of challengers’ goals, changing public opinion, influencing policymakers to change their goals, and/or the challengers being recognized as a legitimate representation of a constituency by the target of collective action which can alter the relationship between the two (Maurillo and Meyer 2004; Gamson 1992). Thus, the power of social movements often lies not only in their ability to influence specific policies, but also in their capacity to change the context in which societies debate problems and to influence the types of policy alternatives that are considered legitimate in a given socio-political context. Over time, the anti-war movement helped to shift the debate, put the antiwar sentiment on the political map, and brought the mobilization into the public eye. Though some governments’ policies did not change despite public outcry, the display of shared grievances regarding these policies drew vast media attention and served as an outlet for citizens to solidify their collective identity in opposition to their governments’ decisions. And eventually the mobilization did affect the agenda for waging the war and forced many governments to recognize the political price to be paid for aligning themselves with the United States [this will be discussed more thoroughly in a later section of the paper].

### *Global Witnessing*

Another successful tactic activists have used is global witnessing. This entails personal accounts from individuals directly subject to injustices that challengers are forging resistance to. This helps to humanize conflict and injustice, gives credence to activists on the basis of individuals’ first hand experience, increase awareness about the global context of social issues, and helps establish a sense of collective identity among activists and citizens through what Polleta and Jasper (2001) refer to as a “perceived shared status.” In this instance collective identity takes the form of citizens across the globe who have empathy for soldiers fighting the war on terrorism as well as Iraqi citizens who are the direct victims of the war.

Fernando Suarez del Solar, who lost his son in the Iraq war, is one of the most prominent speakers critiquing the war and travels internationally to expose what he believes to be the lies and injustices perpetuated by the Bush administration (Globeexchange.org). Robert Sarra, a veteran of the Iraq war, has also become an antiwar activist despite his perception of protesters as hippies who, in his eyes during the Vietnam War protest movement, had “no right to protest and just hated the military” (Chaundry 2004). He is now the co-founder of Iraq Veterans Against the War and travels across the United States to raise awareness about the reality of the war. His comments



represent the importance of framing grievances in general terms that appeal to an overall sense of justice, and how increasing awareness of injustice based on first hand experience can solidify opposition across party lines. He states, “What I’ve been doing, though, is to stay non-partisan. I’ve been doing that because people have got to remember that this isn’t something political. There are both Democrats and Republicans with kids over there fighting...for the guys over there, politics isn’t a factor to them. It’s about fighting for that guy next to you and getting home in one piece and getting back to your family” (Chaundry 2004). Wes Davey, also of Iraq Veterans Against the War, states that “while servicemen and women and their families have bore the war’s sacrifice, the affluent in the political and corporate worlds are sacrificing nothing and are profiting from the war” (Ivaw.org). The messages that these activists/veterans are espousing are construed in a way to petition for a broad sense of injustice regarding the motives and intentions of the Bush administration, nonpoliticizing the issue by focusing on commonalties rather than divisions, and also embody a sentiment of compassion for U.S. soldiers that is evident at any U.S. protest as embraced by the slogan of “Bring the Troops Home Now!”

### *Cyberactivism*

Activists have also used forms of cyber-activism and cyber-organizing via new forms of information communication technologies such as the Internet. The Internet provides fast, cheap, and efficient ways for citizens to forge transnational links and strategize for protest organization. The numerous antiwar protests and speaking tours, as well as other mobilizing tactics such as vigils and teach-ins have been organized largely via the Internet. Web-based Peaceful Tomorrows, Win Without War, and MoveOn are some of the primary antiwar online SMOs that provide leading outlets of cyberactivism dedicated to activating a broad, global movement toward peace and justice. Peaceful Tomorrows, founded by family members of victims of the 9-11 attacks was one of the first online organizations to form following the 9-11 events in an attempt to unite and mobilize relatives for peace by urging restraint against any form of military retaliation. According to their website the goal is to acknowledge the common experience with all people affected by violence to create a more peaceful environment for everyone (Peacefultomorrows.org). The group focuses on both macro-level dynamics of foreign policy and international norms, and micro-level dynamics that encourage attitudes embracing compassion and empathy yet on a global scale. The stated goals include, among others:

- To promote a dialogue on alternatives to war, while dedicating and raising the consciousness of the public on issues of war, peace and the underlying causes of terrorism
- To support and offer fellowship to others seeking non-violent responses to all forms of terrorism, both individual and institutional
- To encourage a multilateral, collaborative effort to bring those responsible for 9-11 to justice in accordance with the principles of international law

- To promote U.S. foreign policy that places a high priority on internationally recognized principles of human rights, democracy and self-rule.

The common themes running through the organization's mission demonstrate a concern for adherence to international standards of justice and law, critical thinking about reasons for war and terrorism, and an attempt to establish a strong sense of collective identity. Win Without War, another online SMO, is made up of nearly fifty national progressive organizations, and its mission statement declares, "We share the commitment to countering terrorism and weapons proliferation, but oppose the doctrine of unilateral military preemption. We believe that international cooperation and enforceable international law prove the greatest security for the United States and the world, and the greatest opportunity for people to live in free, healthy, and just societies (Winwithoutwarus.org). Similar to Peaceful Tomorrows, the issue is framed in a way of promoting collective identity by combining concerns of foreign policy at the structural level with an understanding of how these institutional decisions impact the security and everyday life for citizens everywhere.

MoveOn also mobilized immediately after 9-11 in a call for peace (though it was established earlier during the impeachment trial of former president Bill Clinton), and has been very effective in utilizing online contentious politics. Prior to the invasion of Afghanistan it sent an online petition to congress stating, "If we retaliate by bombing Kabul and kill people oppressed by the Taliban, we become like the terrorists we oppose" (MoveOn.org). The issue is once again constructed as one asking for compassion and self-reflection at the local level but on a global scale. In February of 2003 MoveOn, in conjunction with Win Without War, held one of the most prominent acts of online civil disobedience in the form of a virtual march to protest the imminent invasion of Iraq. Using email connections to coordinate and organize a sufficient protestor base, on February 26<sup>th</sup> 200,000 individuals signed up and made more than 400,000 phone calls and sent 100,000 faxes to every senate office in the United States with the message: DON'T ATTACK IRAQ! (Winwithoutwarus.org). Every member of the U.S. Senate also received a steady stream of emails, clogging up virtual mailboxes in Washington D.C. for the entire day.

Once the invasion was underway, MoveOn organized a massive transnational email drive to enlist signatures for a citizens' declaration that read: "As a US-led invasion of Iraq begins, we the undersigned citizens of many countries reaffirm our commitment to addressing international conflicts through the rule of law and the United Nations. By joining together across countries and continents, we have emerged as a new form for peace. As we grieve for the victims of this war, we pledge to redouble our efforts to put an end to the Bush Administration's doctrine of preemptive attack and the reckless use of military power" (MoveOn.org). Over one million signatures were collected in less than five days and were delivered to the United Nations Security Council (Utne 2003). Signatory names and comments were also sent to the petitioners' respective congressional representatives. By presenting the issue as one of international concern

and not one of partisan politics MoveOn was able to develop support from diverse groups. It did not alienate moderates or conservatives who had begun questioning the Bush Administration's policy toward Iraq. Also, this was a transnational petition in terms of participants as well as the proposed solution – adhering to international law. Additionally, online activist groups such as Bring Them Home Now, Military Families Speak Out, Mothers Against War, and VoteVets are specifically comprised of military families, veterans, active duty personnel, and reservists that are organized through wired networks. These online communities provide emails and chatrooms that portray an alternative to the sanitized “official” version of the war through testimony from soldiers themselves, and they also launch email campaigns and organize political events all the while building and enhancing a sense of collective identity.

Although much of the organizing and activism has taken place online, activists also use computerized communications and virtual networks to coordinate offline political events in order to create and foster salient collective identities and to strengthen advocacy networks (Carty and Onyette 2006; Nip 2004; Rheingold 2003). For example, the F15 global protests and subsequent demonstrations, rallies, and global witnessing speaking tours could not have been coordinated so effectively or quickly without the Internet. MoveOn specifically and aggressively encourages its members to be as active in the material world as they are in online activism in the form of rallies, vigils, house parties, town hall meetings, press conferences, and engagement in the political process through face-to-face contact with their fellow citizens and representatives, assisting with phone banks, and doing door-to-door canvassing to support antiwar democrats.

In sum, an analysis of the various repertoires utilized by the peace movement expands our understanding of resource mobilization by illuminating how organizational dynamics and resource management are used in specific contexts though with a global vision and agenda. As Gamson (1992) argues, for a frame to go from understanding to motivating action it must have the components of injustice, identity, and agency. The framing used by the protesters in the forms of signs, slogans, petitions, mission statements, and advertisements in major newspapers incorporate these three elements and have embodied a resistance to injustice through global forms of collective identity. By framing their concerns in moral and ethical terms the peace movement has questioned the validity of the claims for the retaliation for the events of 9-11 and the invasion of Iraq, has exposed the contradictions of government officials ignoring international norms and subsequently challenged the framing of the issues by those promoting the war. It has also appealed to citizens and politicians by challenging them to identify with victims of the war. Through their efforts the movement has built flexible TANs to create and sustain collective identity by overriding nationally-based concerns to build solidarity with a global emphasis on shared values. Though it has taken time, these alliances have begun to alter decisions among some of the most powerful nations regarding their loyalty to the war on terrorism, and this in turn can potentially aid those in less powerful countries – in this case the victims of the war. The next section analyzes how resource mobilization

and taking advantage of POS has helped to undermine the institutional and political infrastructure that is supporting the war on terrorism and invasion of Iraq.

### *Mobilizing and Political Opportunity Structures*

The success or failure of mobilizing strategies is influenced by the available political opportunity structures (POS) at a specific historical juncture, which either constrain or provide incentives for collective action (Tarrow 2001). The POS approach assumes actors are rational and utilize a cost-benefit assessment of the likelihood of success among actors given the evaluation of the possible outcomes of their actions, and the response of their adversaries as well as their allies (Meyer 2005; Ayres 2001). Social movements have greater chances for success when there is sufficient political space or openness to organize when institutional politics appear to be unresponsive to activists' concerns. Two other major factors that can enhance the potency of collective behavior are the existence of a division among those that the challengers are opposed to and the ability to question a state's legitimacy.

The peace movement has taken advantage of a clash among elites regarding the war on terrorism. President Bush's inability to garner international support to form a credible coalition of the willing has resulted in a conflict between leaders on a local and international scale. There is neither widespread support among politicians and citizens within countries for the United States to "go it alone," nor a broad international consensus that preemptive strikes or unilaterally declared wars without the approval of the UN are legal or moral. In fact, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan called the invasion "illegal" (BBC Online).

A sharp division among world leaders quickly followed the initial overwhelming empathy and support for the United States after the 9-11 attacks. The sympathy diminished as many close allies became alienated due to the U.S. response to the attacks and the subsequent indignation that the Bush Administration publicly displayed toward other nations that were questioning U.S. foreign policy. For example, international relations were severely damaged when U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld referred to France and Germany as the "old" Europe when they refused to participate in the coalition. Additionally, some U.S. lawmakers vowed to invoke trade sanctions on French wine and water. Representative John McCain (and now the Republican nominee for the 2008 U.S. presidential election) likened France to an aging starlet from the 1940s that is "still trying to dine out on her looks, but doesn't have the face for it anymore" (*New York Daily News* 2003: A9). In retaliation for Germany's reluctance to support the Iraq invasion Bush threatened to withdraw U.S. military bases from the region. Both Germany and France were also threatened with the loss of U.S. contracts for defense-related goods and services (Aguera 2003). Furthermore, Bush's statements regarding the United Nations as "irrelevant" when it refused to authorize the war led to an even greater division between the Bush administration and the leaders of other powerful nations.

This discrepancy among international elites served to encourage and reinforce a multilateral approach to the antiwar struggle. As Smith (2002) and Keck and Sikkink (1998) argue, states can become more vulnerable to activists when they are divided because it creates new spaces in which to question state agendas and create alliances with powerful actors outside the domestic political arena. As a result of the multilateral efforts the antiwar movement was successful in pressuring several governments, including Canada, France, and Germany (some of the most steadfast allies of the United States) to stay out of the coalition of the willing and/or pull their troops from Iraq. On the other hand, Spain, Italy, Australia, Denmark, Portugal, and Japan accepted the U.S. position despite the massive opposition of their citizens, placing their standing vis-à-vis Washington ahead of political legitimacy locally. However, whether these decisions were based on genuine support for U.S. policies or based on fear of possible retaliation following Bush's statement in a post 9-11 press conference that you are "either with us or with the terrorists" (Whitehouse.gov) is debatable.

While not joining the coalition carried consequences in the form of U.S. retaliation or denouncement, the peace movement ensured that joining it would also have repercussions. Many of the countries that originally signed onto the coalition were pressured to back out or experienced regime change of their own. Protests in several countries where political leaders originally aligned with Bush led to the defeat of politicians as activists dramatized the conflict and demanded accountability. Some of the staunchest allies, Britain's Tony Blair, Italy's Duce Silvio Berlusconi, Spain's Jose Maria Aznar, Poland's Jaroslaw Kaczynski, and Australia's John Howard all suffered losses in recent elections. On March 20, 2003 one million people protested against Berlusconi's complicity with Bush and demanded the withdrawal Italian troops (Ross 2004). His challenger and now new Prime Minister, Romano Prodi, pledged to withdraw the troops in his first speech to the senate and called the war "a grave mistake that has complicated rather than solved the problem of security" (Beeston 2005: 37). In Poland Karzynski was replaced by Donald Rusk, who also responded to public sentiment by using his first speech to parliament to announce a withdrawal of troops from Iraq.

Blair and Aznar also went against the wishes of large segments of their public. However, their ouster was most likely impacted by the bombings that each country suffered. Three days before the Spanish general elections in March of 2004 five Madrid commuter trains were bombed, killing 190 people and injuring 1,4000 (Elliot 2007). Voters elected Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapaero who fulfilled his campaign promise by swiftly removing Spain's troops from Iraq. On election night voters stood outside of Aznar's Popular Party headquarters holding up newspaper photos of Blair, Bush and Aznar, while "No to the War!" stickers were posted on the voting machines (Ross 2004). On July 7, 2005 fifty-two people were killed in London when bombs exploded on various public transportation systems, and there was another failed bombing attempt on July 21 (Cowell 2007). In February of 2006 Blair was voted out of office amidst growing opposition in Britain to his fidelity to President Bush regarding the Iraq war (Dorfman

2007). His determination to stand “shoulder to shoulder” with Bush put him at odds with British public opinion, his own Labor Party, several members of his cabinet, and members of British intelligence and the military.

Furthermore, Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, one of the first coalition partners to send troops to Iraq, was the first Australian prime minister to be voted out of parliament since 1929 as his eleven year old government was swept from power (Fullilove 2007). The new Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, had promised to withdraw most (but not all) combat troops from Iraq. Thus, in many instances democratic pressures from civil society have successfully eroded Bush’s coalition of the willing. In each of these cases, the mobilizing efforts of the challengers were successful in reaching their goals as outlined by social movement theorists. Their objectives came to fruition, they were able to sway public opinion, policy makers were influenced to change their goals or were replaced by other elected officials that represented the activists’ goals, and the challengers came to be perceived as a legitimate representation of those opposed to participating in the coalition of the willing by the opposition and general public. The election results also demonstrate how contentious politics can shift the relationship between the challengers and their target to the advantage of the challengers; in this case having the capacity to replace the target through institutional politics.

In other cases, governments were more afraid of their own people than of the American government from the onset. Annan’s reluctance to commit staff workers to Iraq, and his unsuccessful attempts at persuading countries to contribute troops to protect UN workers is due, according to Annan, to the fact that governments “...have their own public opinion and parliaments to convince” (Hoge 2004: 11). Some elected officials have escaped being voted out of office by succumbing to public pressure. South Korea, Turkey, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Honduras, the Philippines, Norway, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Thailand, Ukraine, Tonga, Iceland, Japan, Moldavia, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Singapore, Portugal, and Hungary – twenty-one of the original thirty-two of the coalition partners (in addition to the other five who suffered regime change) have departed from Iraq. Though these may only be small steps in the larger struggle, as Keck and Sikkink’s (1998) findings suggest, when activists effectively shape individual state decisions, international campaigns have a better chance of changing international policy.

Activists have also taken advantage of POS by increasing public anxieties regarding the high cost of the war and future risks of other terrorist attacks – ultimately challenging states’ legitimacy. As the cost of war increases both in terms of finances and human casualties, the state’s justification for its decisions and actions becomes more difficult to uphold and consequently activists can draw in new recruits and build support for their position. This is particularly true for the United States as trajectories are that the Iraq and Afghanistan wars could reach \$3.5 trillion for United States (Herbert 2007) and fatalities of American soldiers are now over 4,200. Also, the miscalculations and consequent growing dissatisfaction among the general public has jeopardized the

legitimacy of nations that have supported the coalition, giving activists additional space and opportunities to voice their grievances. The lack of an achievable goal and/or exit strategy, the exposure of the erroneous reports of weapons of mass destruction (and the therefore purported need for self protection from an imminent attack against the United States), have all helped to strengthen opposition to the war. So too did the infamous “Downing Street Memo” that was disclosed following a meeting of British Prime Minister’s senior ministers on July 23, 2002 which was published by *The Sunday Times* in May of 2005. It revealed that a U.S. invasion of Iraq was inevitable and that the facts and intelligence were being “fixed around the policy” by the Bush administration (Fielding 2005: 26). This exposed that the Bush Administration intentionally misled the United States into war, and Britain blindly followed its lead. The ability of social movement actors to take advantage of the legitimation crisis of the Blair administration clearly contributed to his eventual replacement.

Activists can also play on citizens’ anxiety arguing that the price to be paid for joining the coalition of the willing will be casualties in their own countries. The bombings in Spain and Britain are two examples. In a press conference in May of 2007 Bush stated that the United States and United Kingdom “are fighting these terrorists with our military in Afghanistan and Iraq and beyond so we do not have to face them in the streets of our own countries” (Whitehouse.gov). However the bombings in London and Madrid allowed an opportunity for the antiwar movement to question the legitimacy for the war as explained by leaders, arguing that citizens were increasingly vulnerable to attacks precisely *because* they were attempting to fight al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Iraq. Though Anzar emphatically tried to pin the Madrid bombings on the nationalist Basque Party, this was as erroneous as Bush’s implication of Saddam Hussein in the 9-11 terrorist attack. In July of 2007 the trial of the twenty-nine suspects accused in the Madrid attack demonstrated that any link or implication of the bombings with the Basque party was either misleading or without any foundation. The official investigation by the Spanish judiciary determined the attacks were directed and carried by an al-Qaeda-inspired terrorist cell (*The Times* 2007). In a videotaped message from al-Qaeda spokesman, Abu Dujan al-Afghani, he clarified that the Madrid attack was “an answer to the crimes that you (the Spanish government) have caused in the world and specifically in Iraq and Afghanistan” (Chernis 2007).

The London bombings also indicate that these were in retaliation for Blair’s involvement in the coalition of the willing as both were linked to Islamist terrorist cells funded and aided by al-Qaeda. The Secret Organization Group of al-Qaeda of Jihad Organizing in Europe claimed to be behind the July 7 events. In a statement posted on an Islamic website, the group said the attacks were “in revenge of the massacres that Britain is committing in Iraq and Afghanistan” (Democracynow.org). One of the accused of the July 21 bombings, Osman Hussain, claimed that he was motivated to participate in the attacks after viewing videos of war-torn Iraq. He elaborated, “I am against war. I’ve marched in peace rallies and nobody listed to me...There was a feeling of hatred and

conviction that it was necessary to give a signal, to do something” (hindustantimes.com). Additionally, Mohammed Khan, one of the convicted bombers, describes himself in a video as a soldier concerned with “protecting and avenging my Muslim brothers and sisters” (*Newsweek* 2005). These statements help to substantiate activist claims that supporters of the Bush Administration’s policies in the Middle East would have a boomerang effect on their own societies.

Bush and Blair have also repeatedly opined that al-Qaeda strikes at the West out of hatred for western values. However, challengers have once again used this as leverage to question the authenticity of state claims. Regardless of the rhetorical comments citing the hatred of freedom and democracy by the two leaders, al-Qaeda’s stated objective has remained consistent; an attempt to change U.S. foreign policy towards the Muslim world. The 9-11 Truth Commission report stated this categorically, noting that al-Qaeda conceived the 9-11 attack in part as a punishment on the United States for supporting Israel’s policies toward the Palestinians, the previous Iraq war, and UN sanctions (Kurlantzick 2007). In his own words, during a 2005 videotape addressed to western countries, bin Laden explained: “The people of Islam have suffered from aggression, iniquity, and injustice imposed by the Zionist-Crusader alliance and their collaborators.... I am amazed at you. Even though we are into the fourth year after the events of 9-11, Bush is still engaged in distortion, deception and hiding from you the real causes. And thus, the reasons are still there for a repeat of what occurred” (Morrison 2005).

Prime Minister Blair and President Bush have furthermore been resolute in their dismissive attitude toward warnings from several prominent elected representatives in their own countries regarding the danger of conducting and participating in the war on terrorism. In the UK many members of parliament have voiced their opposition to aligning with the United States in fear of retaliation. One of the most forthcoming, RESPECT Prime Minister George Galloway, opposed the Afghanistan war on the basis that it would “create 10,000 new bin Ladens” (Ali 2005). Following the London bombings he declared that British citizens had “paid the price” for Blair’s attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq. In a statement to Blair by London Mayor, Ken Livingstone, he forewarned, “An assault on Iraq will inflame world opinion and jeopardize security and peace everywhere. London has a great deal to lose from war and a lot to gain from peace, international cooperation and global stability” (Ali 2005). According to Chatham House, a British-based independent think-tank on foreign policy, the events of the London bombings exemplified the problem that the UK is “riding as pillion passenger with the US in the war against terror” (*Guardian* 2005).

These sentiments parallel the concerns voiced by the peace movement. For example, in response to the London bombings Stop the War Coalition proclaimed that, “Every day British troops stay in Iraq the more, in the eyes of millions of people across the world, the people of this country are taken to be implicated in a murderous occupation. By associating this country with the U.S. puppet regime in Iraq...Blair increases the threat to everyone who lives there. There has to be a dramatic reverse in policy, at home



and abroad...The majority of people in the United States have turned against Bush's war – we must intensify the pressure on the British government to break from him as well” (Swp.org). The efforts of Stop The War, in conjunction with other SMOs were ultimately successful in removing Blair from office and withdrawing British troops from Iraq, thus undercutting the efforts of the United States through the loss of an important ally.

Several politicians in the United States have also been vocal in their opposition to the Bush Administration's policies, including Senators Dennis Kucinich, Charles Schumer, and Robert Byrd. The most outspoken on the senate floor has been Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV). In a Senate floor speech on February 12, 2003 he stated: “The doctrine of preemptive war...appears to be in contradiction to international law and the UN charter. And it is being tested at a time of worldwide terrorism, making many countries wonder if at some time they will be on our – or some other nation's – hit list...Anti-Americanism, based on mistrust, misinformation, suspicion and alarming rhetoric from U.S. leaders is fracturing the once solid alliance against global terrorism which existed after September 11...The case this administration tries to make to justify its fixation with war is tainted by charges of false documents and circumstantial evidence. When did we become a nation that ignores and berates our friends? How can we abandon diplomatic efforts when the turmoil in the world cries out for diplomacy?” (Commondreams.org). These comments echo the sentiments of the international mobilization against the invasion of Iraq and the plea for adhering to international standards of justice through diplomacy. The wedge between politicians within particular countries has aided the challengers in rallying support for their cause, questioning the validity of their governments' policies, and replacing them with supporters of their concerns. While this has already taken place in many countries with parliamentary systems, the ultimate challenge for the peace movement in the United States, which has a congressional system, will be to make the war a central issue in the 2008 presidential campaign and to rally for the backing of the candidate who advocates withdrawing U.S. troops from Iraq. In the 2006 mid-term elections many republican incumbents were indeed replaced by democratic challengers who voiced their opposition to the war in Iraq. The 2008 U.S. presidential election further demonstrated how anti-war sentiment and a critical questioning of U.S. foreign policy was growing in the United States, as nominee Barack Obama defeated Hillary Clinton in the primaries, and John McCain in the final election in part due to his critique of both his challengers' policy on Iraq.

## **Conclusion**

The war on terrorism has spurred a truly global social movement that has embraced an international and compassionate perspective in its advocacy for peace. The collective behavior employed by the activists helps refine our understanding of how

social movements are formed, utilize resources, appeal to the general public, and achieve their goals. Independent yet interconnected SMOs have organized to foster a global sense of collective identity, framing and attributing their grievances under the rubric of global justice and international norms to support local grievances and ferment a sense of mutual responsibility. By articulating the broader interconnectedness of issues activists have made several governments an arena of struggle over resistance to their support for the war on terrorism. Citizens have used their leverage to take advantage of democratic spaces to hold governments accountable and to influence their decisions while increasing their own public image as a legitimate representation of civil society. They have made issues such as equality, dignity, well-being, and human right a central focus of contention, thus enabling them to question the legal and/or moral basis for preemptive war and to ultimately make substantial inroads into undermining the political institutions and infrastructure that support the war on terrorism. The formation of collective identity on a global scale has resulted in a common sense of connectedness through the common experience of all people affected by violence world wide.

This research highlights the importance of the POS theoretical framework in a few ways. It demonstrates how social movement actors, by launching a multilateral approach in their struggle, have taken advantage of opportunities to voice their grievances, taken advantage of public anxieties and dissatisfaction with government policies at home and abroad regarding security issues, and have used the clash among elites on a domestic and international level to question the accountability of governance and state legitimacy. It also illustrates how resource management, organizational dynamics, framing, and the use of the “mobilization of shame” in exerting moral pressure and persuasion on the opposition are all significant variables in understanding collective behavior. And finally, it adds to our understanding of how the utilization of POS and resource mobilization can affect social movement outcomes. Through its organizational skills and wide variety of tactics the peace movement has altered public opinion, influenced policy makers to change their goals or replaced elected officials that resisted their demands, influenced the agenda regarding participation in the coalition of the willing, and ultimately altered individual state policies. Though the war on terrorism continues, the occupation of Iraq is currently much more difficult to sustain due to the growing coalition of the unwilling, and the debate within the United States itself has clearly shifted toward a policy of withdrawal. The undermining of the original coalition of the willing and the shaming of the U.S. government are certainly factors in the anticipated exit from Iraq – both consequences of the efforts of the contemporary antiwar movement.

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