

Module 11: The End of the Cold War
Topic 4 Content: Presidents and Foreign Policy

Introduction



Presidents and Foreign Policy

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Terrorist Attacks in America



Terrorist Attacks in America

- Terrorists attacked the United States on September 11, 2001 using hijacked planes.
- Over 3,000 Americans were killed during the attacks.
- President Bush directed the military to find and defeat the terrorists in Afghanistan.

A few months after taking office, nineteen terrorists hijacked four commercial jet airplanes and crashed them into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon just outside Washington, D.C. The fourth plane crashed outside Shanksville, Pennsylvania after the passengers tried to take the plane back from the terrorists. Over three thousand Americans were killed in the attacks on September 11, 2001. President Bush had the difficult task of dealing with the terrorist attacks on America. He responded by sending the United States military to war in Afghanistan to defeat the organization that planned the attacks.

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Combating Terrorists



Combating Terrorists

- Bush demanded that the Taliban hand over their leader Osama Bin Laden.
- When the Taliban refused to hand over Bin Laden, the United States strategically bombed terrorist locations and sent in ground support.
- Quickly, the Afghanistan government collapsed and the terrorists fled to the mountains. Ten years later Bin Laden was killed by American forces.

The attacks were conducted by a global terrorist group called Al Qaeda that was working out of Afghanistan. After the attacks, Congress granted President Bush the authority to use "All necessary and appropriate force" against the responsible parties. President Bush issued an ultimatum to the leaders of Afghanistan, known as the Taliban, to hand over Al Qaeda members and its leader Osama Bin Laden. The Taliban refused, so on October 7th, 2001 the United States began to bomb strategic enemy locations in Afghanistan, and then sent over military ground forces to join the fight. Shortly after that, in December 2001, the Taliban-supported Afghanistan government collapsed. Members of Al Qaeda and the Taliban fled into the mountains that run along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The United States and its allies kept military troops in Afghanistan to continue fighting the terrorists and to help support a new Afghanistan government. Almost ten years later, on May 2, 2011 American military Special Forces killed Osama Bin Laden while trying to capture him in Pakistan. The new Afghanistan government grew stronger and by the end of 2014 most of the United States military forces left Afghanistan.

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Axis of Evil



Axis of Evil

- In 2002, Bush declared North Korea, Iran, and Iraq as the “Axis of Evil.”
- After a request by the United States, the United Nations passed a resolution calling for Iraq to verify it did not have any weapons of mass destruction.
- Iraq failed to abide by the resolution causing America and Great Britain to invade Iraq with the goal of replacing the Iraqi government and providing security to the new government.

During his 2002 State of the Union speech, President Bush described the countries of North Korea, Iran, and Iraq as an “axis of evil.” Around the same time, the United States government began associating the Iraqi government with terrorist activity, weapons of mass destruction, and crimes against its citizens. The United States asked the United Nations to pass a resolution to address the Iraqi government. In 2002, the United Nations passed a resolution calling for Iraq to verify that it was not in possession of biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons, also known as weapons of mass destruction. When Iraq failed to abide by this resolution, a coalition of military forces led primarily by the United States and Great Britain invaded Iraq on March 20, 2003 with the goal of overthrowing and replacing the Iraqi government. The conquering of Iraq lasted until April 30, 2003. After that, United States military forces remained in the country to provide security and to assist in establishing a new Iraqi government. There were many skirmishes during this period of occupation. American military forces left Iraq in December 2011.

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Patriot Act



Patriot Act

- The United States worked to improve security at home.
- The Patriot Act made it easier for government agencies to work together on national security issues, tightened immigration laws, and empowered investigators to use the most current technologies available to combat terrorism.
- The federal government was given more power to use surveillance to investigate potential terrorists.
- Some civil rights activists thought the law infringed on Americans' civil liberties.

In addition to attacking the terrorists in their countries of origin, the United States worked to improve security at home. Congress passed the Patriot Act to give the government more power to combat terrorism. The Patriot Act made it easier for government agencies to work together on national security issues, tightened immigration laws, and empowered investigators to use the most current technologies available to combat terrorism. The Patriot Act also gave the federal government greater powers to use surveillance to investigate potential terrorists. The intent of the Patriot Act was to go after terrorists and those helping them. However, some civil rights activists argued that the new law infringed on Americans' civil liberties. Debate about what constitutes the right amount of surveillance necessary for protecting the country while still protecting the rights of American citizens continues today.

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Transportation Security Administration



TSA

- Created in response to the 9/11 attacks.
- The TSA protects the security of the traveling public, and mostly focuses on air travel.
- Prior to the 9/11 attacks, airport security was handled by many private organizations.
- Today's airport screenings fall under the TSA's jurisdiction.

The Transportation Security Administration was also created in response to the 9/11 attacks. This government agency is responsible for protecting the security of the traveling public, however, it mostly focuses on air travel. Before 9/11, airport security was handled by many different private organizations. The terrorists took advantage of this vulnerability during the 9/11 attacks. Under President Bush, the government took over this responsibility, and today's security screenings at airports fall under the TSA's jurisdiction.

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The Economy, Healthcare, Education, and Social Security



The Economy, Healthcare, Education & Social Security

- In 2001 and 2003, Bush signed into law broad tax cuts.
- No Child Left Behind was signed in 2002, and focused on high academic standards in public schools, standardized tests to measure achievement, and penalties for poor academic growth.
- Social Security reforms did not get passed through Congress.
- Bush signed into law a stimulus package including tax rebates, incentives for business investment, and changes to mortgage rules.

In addition to the war on terror, President Bush promoted domestic policies on the economy, healthcare, education, and social security reforms.

In 2001 and again in 2003, Bush signed into law broad tax cuts which reduced tax rates and simplified parts of the tax code.

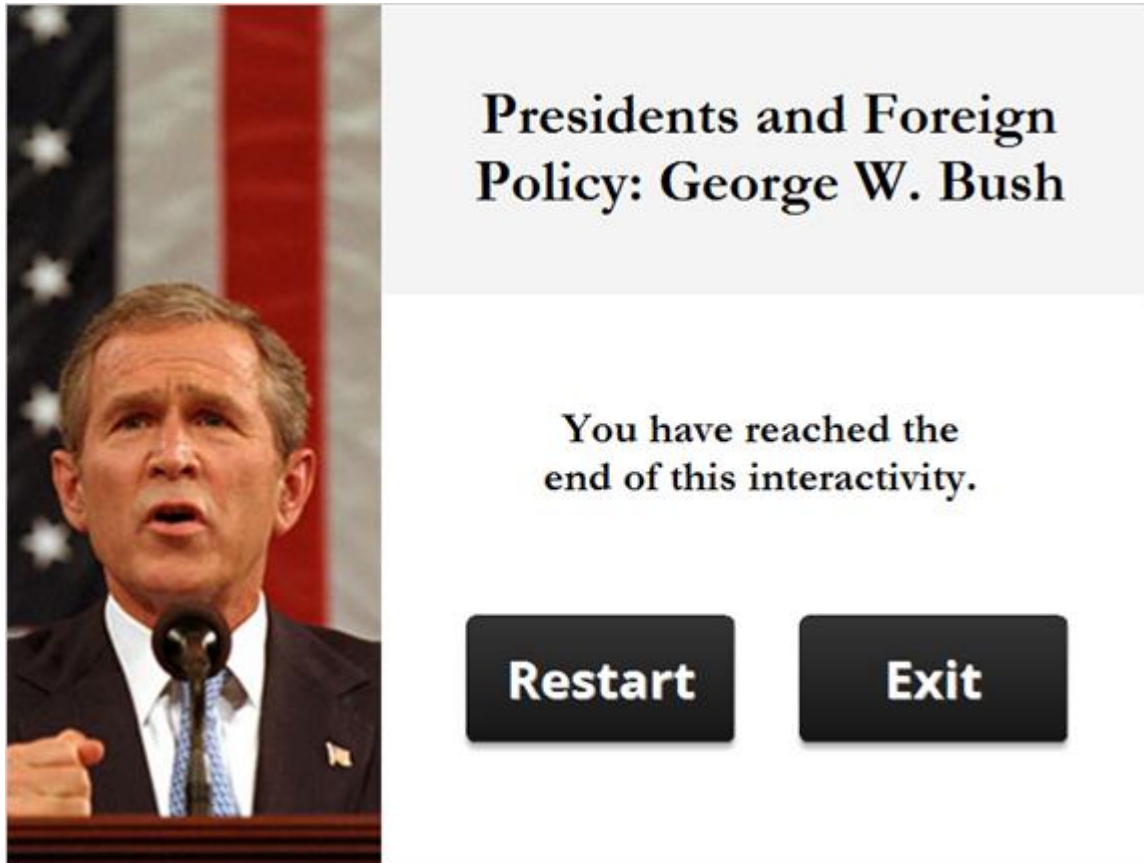
The President also signed the No Child Left Behind Act on January 8, 2002. This law focused on setting high academic standards for public schools, used standardized tests to measure achievement, and had penalties for schools that could not maintain academic growth.

At the beginning of his second term, Bush tried to get social security reform passed through Congress, but was unsuccessful.

Toward the end of his term, President Bush signed into law a bipartisan economic stimulus bill to try and help a sagging economy. The stimulus package included tax rebates, incentives for business investment, and changes to mortgage rules.

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Conclusion



The screenshot shows a digital interface for an interactive module. On the left is a photograph of George W. Bush speaking at a podium with an American flag in the background. To the right, the title "Presidents and Foreign Policy: George W. Bush" is displayed in a serif font. Below the title, a message reads "You have reached the end of this interactivity." At the bottom of the right section are two dark buttons with white text: "Restart" and "Exit".

You have reached the end of this interactivity.