

An Indispensable Partner? Bush, Obama, and the US' Soft Power

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Abstract

Barack Obama's victory in 2008 signalled the renewal and reinforcement of soft power in the United States' foreign policy. He repudiated Bush's militaristic, messianic and unilateral approach, and strove to reduce his country's obsession with military metaphysics. He emphasised engagement, multilateralism, and restrained and proportional use of force. His moderate and pragmatist approach paid off and, except for some occasions, his administration succeeded in solving foreign policy concerns without resorting to the use of force. Thus, unlike the Bush administration, the Obama administration (with a few exceptions) showed respect for international law; and focused on the growing importance of multilateral institutions and organisations in a world shaped by the forces of globalisation and economic interdependence.

Keywords: Soft Power, Moral Credibility, Economic Interdependence, Foreign Policy, Post-Cold War Era.

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