

# Bush responded to 9/11 according to traditional US foreign policy

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The war on terror that former U.S. President George W. Bush declared following the 9/11 attacks has been criticised for being incompatible with American traditions. Yet a new doctoral thesis from the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, shows that his decisions, actions and ideas really did not differ much from previous U.S foreign policy.

'The [Bush administration](#) is just one of many that have used these types of situations to expand the U.S. influence in the world,' says Frida Stranne, author of the thesis.

The war on terror, which started 10 years ago following the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington D.C., has been questioned on many grounds. President Bush and his political advisers have faced massive criticism. Bush's security doctrine on preventive warfare, repeated lies regarding the invasion of Iraq and the suspicion of a secret oil-related agenda have received particular attention.

As [Barack Obama](#) was elected President, many people were hoping for change in the U.S. However, their expectations were unrealistic, says Stranne, whose thesis concerns the driving forces behind U.S. foreign and [security policy](#) from the emergence of the country in 1776 to the present. Rather than changing the course of the nation, it seems like Bush's approach was quite traditional.

'His notion of preventive warfare was new, but his use of 9/11 to strengthen the U.S. [dominance](#) in the world is clearly just another

example of a U.S. administration that has used a certain event for this purpose. The role of [financial interests](#), ideologies, lies and exaggerated threats in U.S. [foreign policy](#) is not by any means new,' says Stranne.

Stranne feels that narrow analyses of U.S. foreign policy that do not include an assessment of the past fail to recognise some very important aspects that restrict the president's ability to act and that keep leading the country into new conflicts.

'It is important for the rest of the world to understand the driving forces behind U.S. policy since they clearly affect the security of the world at large,' says Stranne.

**More information:** The thesis was successfully defended on 30 September 2011.

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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