After Power

How and under which circumstances post-presidential power
is applied

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Abstract

The President of the United States of America wields executive power like few other heads of state, in being commander-in-chief of the sole military and economic superpower within the international system. Yet after presidency, that *hard power* dissipates and is instead replaced by the ability to project *soft power*.

In our paper we seek to understand this *post-presidential power*, the means through which a post-presidential actor can enact influence over others through their position as a former president. The actors in our study are former U.S. presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton, whose power projections are contextualised by another previous head of state, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

We conclude that the link between the *post-presidency* and *soft power* in our cases relies heavily on the pretexts in which the specific actor had as leader and which avenues they pursued to instigate power.

Abbreviations

D: Democratic Party (U.S)
EMU: Economic and Monetary Union of the European Union
EU: European Union
L: Labour Party (UK)
MP: Member of Parliament (UK)
NARA: The National Archives and Records Administration
OQR: Office of the Quartet Representative of Tony Blair
PM: Prime Minister
R: Republican Party (U.S)
UK: United Kingdom
UN: United Nations
U.S: United States of America
USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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1. After Power

"A man is not finished when he's defeated, he's finished when he quits"

Richard Nixon[1]

1.1. Introduction

There is little to belie that the office of President of the United States of America is, bar none, the most powerful political office on Earth, an exclusive fraternity which but a handful of individuals will reach. *Post-presidency* is a fascinating concept; one that places the actor, who was once a central political player, to the peripheries of formal power.

After power; the actor is faced by juxtaposition; no longer formally empowered, though still able to wield informal power as a former political elite. Our discussion is shaped around former U.S Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton, who are contextualised by a third non-U.S actor, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

The concept of post-presidential power forms the core of our discussion, in understanding the avenues which former leaders can pursue to project influence and power, all within the theoretical context of *soft power.*[2]

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[1] (Lester, 2011)

[2] We would like to extend our thanks to Joseph Nye; whose correspondence guided us in understanding and judging the different angles of approach which are viable when looking at *soft power.*

1.2   Research Question

We believe that there is a discernible link between the post-presidency/premiership and the ability to wield power even after said actor no longer retains formal power.

We seek to elucidate post-presidential power and the ways it can be projected by former presidents; namely former U.S Presidents Richard Nixon (1969-1974) and Bill Clinton (1992-2001), both of who will be contextualised by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair (1997-2007) due to him also being an ex-leader who has had formal power.

Our research question is as follows: *How and under which circumstances is post-presidential power applied?*

From this we can investigate the following points:

- How did our chosen actors interact with their successors?
- Have they used old governmental connections to push concurrent agendas on domestic and international levels?
- Through which means did our chosen actors use their positions of power to cement their post-presidential legacies through an institution?
- As they relinquish their decision-making power, do they retain their power to influence?
- Is this a unique occurrence applicable to U.S presidents only?

Lastly; we want to comprehend how *soft power* and its theoretical variations can be applied to our work on "post-presidential power". This will be done through looking at the actors' abilities to sway, persuade and coerce their surroundings.

1.2.1   Disposition

In this paper we will analyse *post-presidency* within the context of *soft power* and its theoretical permutations. Firstly, in our method, we will define the three central points of our methodological choices. We will present a matrix of requirements regarding our choice in actors, which will be applied to the actors. Following that, we will look into the methodological structures of our work - presenting our different measurements. These measurements will consist of *internal*, *external* and *institutional* power networks, which will be divided into flashpoints - situations in which we theorise that our chosen actors utilised their power as post-presidential/premiership actors. Then we'll define our chosen theories and other terms relevant to our thesis. This will be coupled with a discussion on different theories of power and a motivation of our choice of power theory. Secondly, we will contextualise our chosen actors, Richard Nixon, Bill Clinton and Tony Blair by presenting brief summaries of their political lives. Then, we will look into

other works on the topic of *post-presidency* in order to get a clearer picture of the field of study and discuss the topic within the parameters of source criticism.

These flashpoints will be elucidated upon in sets of three, with those regarding Nixon and Clinton being the central points of study and those of Blair acting as context in terms of power usage when compared to that the two U.S president's. In total there are of nine flashpoints - three per actor. Lastly, the flashpoints will be tied together in a conclusion which consequentially ties back to each of the power networks and each of the actors respectively.

2. Method and Limitations

Our method is constituted by three core principles:

- Our study is of a theory-testing nature – we draw parallels between a concept and three different actors which fit our criteria (defined below). This allows us to validate the variations and potency of our discussion through our empirical examples.
- Our work is cumulative in that it builds upon the liberal theory of *soft power*.
- Our work is built upon two central actors which are dissimilar in nature yet result in a similar outcome. Our third actor is solely used to contextualise the other two leaders usage of power in the context of a former leader.

2.1 Choosing Actors - a matrix of requirements

When choosing post-presidential actors, we've established certain criteria to reach a sufficient foundation for a valid discussion and investigation. They are as follows:

i.   The two key actors must have held the seat of U.S president, a position which entails a unique place in political, historical and societal terms - as they are commander-in-chief of a key state within the international system.

ii.   Furthermore, our third actor must act as an external, contextualising factor to the two key actors in terms of power usage after their tenure as head of state. This actor will solely be used to give context and contrast to the actors of *criteria i*. Hence the third chosen actor cannot comply with *criteria i.*

iii. The actor needs to have had a fairly long post-presidency or post-premiership. If an ex-leader dies within a few years after leaving office, the probability of them utilising their power is minor compared to the ones which have enjoyed a longer life. However, it's important to note that a short post-presidency or post-premiership does not make for an inactive ex-leader. Conversely, a long post-presidency or post-premiership does not make for a formidable elder statesman - the individual ambition is key. The main reasoning behind choosing ex-leaders with a long post-presidency or post-premiership is the obvious material advantage which such a choice entails, making them more attractive units of analysis - there is simply more material to research.

iv.   The concept of post-presidential or post-premiership activity is key. A leader who simply retires at the end of their term is not relevant within the context of this study. Our intentions are formed by the notion of post-presidential or post-premiership power. This power must be clearly defined as actions which befit our parameters of internal, external or institutional power. Ex-leaders who shun these networks are beyond the parameters of this study.

v.   The chosen ex-leaders will have to be fairly concurrent individuals (existing and working at least within the boundaries of the latter half of the 20th century) in

order for them to be compatible with our theoretical groundwork. Furthermore, there is a distinct advantage in the discussion if the actors exist somewhat within the same time period, since they then have access to roughly similar societal and technological contexts during their post-presidencies or post-premierships. This makes the comparative of actors more coherent.

2.2   Selected Actors - a matrix of requirements

Based on the criteria in the matrix of requirements we have chosen Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton due to the fact that they've both spent an extended period of time as ex-presidents, a fact which is reflected in the wealth of sources which studies and details them as actors. Secondly, they were both fairly active in their post-presidencies in exerting certain degrees of influence on other political elites and institutions. Both of the actors are well documented and relatively concurrent. We realise that our chosen actors are contrasting in terms of how they've acted in their post-presidencies but the primary reason for choosing them is that they comply with the criteria as pertained above. Furthermore, we want to investigate if two actors with fairly different presidencies both are able to project *soft power* in their post-presidential lives.

In compliance with our second criteria, our chosen third actor is former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Blair contextualises the two presidential actors as a contradistinction in terms of political systems, political culture, nationality and ability to project power within the international system. We hope that these contrasts will highlight the uniqueness of post-presidential power.

2.3   Methodological Approach

We've decided to apply our thesis of post-presidential power within the context of *soft power* and its theoretical permutations on a predetermined set of three flashpoints within each actor's post-presidency/premiership. These nine flash points will act as the thematic framework for our paper, allowing us to freely interlink the three actors' actions in discussing the similar and dissimilar nature of their actions.

These flashpoints will be divided into three avenues of power; *external*, *internal* and *institutional* relationships. Subsequently these three avenues of power will allow us to quantify each actor's influence on the broader international political system, drawing parallels or differences from their usage of power. The flashpoints covering Blair will contrast and contextualise the key flashpoints of Clinton and Nixon in terms of usage of power and interactions within their flashpoints.

2.4 Motivation of Flashpoints

Our chosen 'flashpoints' are specific points in time that befit our three actors' post-presidential/premiership careers, which fit within the frameworks of our five criteria above. The flashpoints have been chosen to comply with our three power networks which will be defined below.

These instances allow us to paint patterns within our three power networks, which we believe can benefit a discussion from our chosen perspective. Cases where the specific actor may or may not have exerted his influence as a post-presidential/premiership actor could for example be: the exertion of influence on their nation's head of state (*internal*), an old international connection with the head of state of another nation (*external*) or in cementing their power through initiatives, foundations, libraries, organisations etc. (*institutional*).

These nine instances covering our chosen actors are divided henceforth;

- Six central flashpoints: Nixon and Clinton
- Three contextual flashpoints: Blair

These flashpoints will act as springboards for discussion within the criteria and theoretical incursions as denoted above.

2.5 Measurements of Power

This is a vital part of our method; how we've compared and contrasted the actors in our discussion. We've decided to split the measuring of power to be relevant in the context of our three power networks. This empowers us with a bespoke framework from which we can analyse each actor's actions.

2.5.1 Internal Measurements

The internal measurements will determine the influence our chosen actors hold over the incumbent president/prime minister of their respective state - a look into the relationship between the ex-leader and incumbent leader who is of the same political party. Our goal is to edify the role which our chosen actor took in said relationship and the power which they may or may not have projected upon the current leader, e.g. through an advisory role.

2.5.2 External Measurements

The external measurements will determine said actor's influence on an international head of state/establishment; influence in the form of projecting the attractiveness of one's culture, ideals and values in coercing/persuading the external actor to align their policies to favour that of our chosen actor.

2.5.3 Institutional Measurements

The institutional measurements will determine the measuring of said actor's role within organisations - lobbying for specific agendas within the international system; the role of the individual within organisations and their *star power* in influencing goals, policies and resource management (Nye, 2013: 570). This is a fact which applies to both Clinton and Blair as they are both key benefactors in their respective organisations - The Clinton Foundation and Tony Blair Faith Foundation.

   In the case of Richard Nixon; an investigation into why he chose not to institute an organisation similar to that of Blair and Clinton will be conducted. Focus will be placed on the establishing and role of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum as a part of Nixon's legacy. The library and its dedication has been fraught with tension and controversy - conflicts between the private Richard Nixon Foundation and NARA (Nagourney, 2011). By choosing to study the library, it will act as juxtaposition to the more aid-oriented organisations as mentioned above.

3.   Theoretical Definitions

Below, we've sought to define and contextualise the understanding of the fundamental theoretical terms which we've deemed key to the implementation of our work.

Post-Presidency/premiership: The time after a U.S President/British Prime Minister leaves office until they in pass away.

3.1   Definitions of Power

Power is a key topic within the field of political science – some may even say that to study power, is to study politics. The concept of power is multifaceted and complex, a fact which is also true for the methods of studying it. Below are a few select theories on its application. The Three faces of Power as defined by Steven Lukes is one prominent example (Lukes, 2004), as are Robert Dahl's theories on democracy and power (Dahl, 2005). However, power is too broad a concept to be studied in a text of this nature. The focus will instead be on the power of elite individuals within the context of political culture. Even so, power has been extensively studied within this context as well. Margaret Hermann, amongst others, postulates that the personalities of leaders matter in decision-making and how power is exercised (Hermann et. al, 2001). Robert Jervis argues that leaders within the international political elite tend to fit the actions of others into hypothesis of their own making - thus promoting power in specific patterns (Jervis, 1968).

Yet with the above definitions of power in mind, due to the limited nature of this paper, we've chosen to focus solely on the Harvard based political scientist, Joseph Nye's work on *soft power* and its theoretical variations. The definitions below will act as our quantifiable definitions of power. Each definition will in our cases be used as a measurement of how the actor can influence the world around them through the constraints of each theoretical variation.

Soft power: The use of persuasion and attraction through shared values, such as cultural and ideological similarities, which an actor propagates in the hope of influencing another actor (Nye, 2004: 7). *Soft power* is in our case used as a measurement of the influence and attractiveness actors project when coercing their contact networks in impacting the international community from a micro level (Changhe, 2013: 553).

Smart power: The projection of legitimacy by an actor in relation to the changing trends of the international system, such as the rise of the Internet and social media. *Smart power* is pragmatic: tackling the issues of the modern world and highlighting that power isn't bound to the polarities of *soft* and *hard power* (Nye, 2009: 3). Taking into account the contextual permutations of the international system and how it interplays with an individual's strive for

legitimacy (Nye, 2013, 565). Examples of such power can be seen in international sanctions - when said sanctions only target sectors of a state, i.e. in freezing the assets of specific actors and organisations without affecting the civilian population (Fernandez, 2012).

Hard power: An actor's projection of statecraft through economic and military means with the aim to influence and coerce other states/actors within the international system (Nye, 2009: 1). Such power is defined through the projection of threats, sanctions and military interventions as means to command and coerce (Nye, 2013: 564).

Star power: We define *star power* as the applicable power which is entailed through the "celebrity status" of our actors, the fact that they're able to act as a representative for specific agendas and initiatives, by virtue of being recognisable public figures.

3.2   Definitions of Power Networks

Power networks: This is our own broader classification of the three avenues of power which an ex-leader can use. These avenues act as the backbone of our examination of the actors in question.

External relationships: The avenues of contact established by a post-presidential actor with another concurrent head of state. These external connections have themselves been used for both private and public means. An example of such a relationship is the use of two-track diplomacy, where the actor reacts to an international political situation as a private individual as well as a political mediator between the involved states in an effort to resolve said situation.

Internal Relationships: The relationship between the concurrent incumbent President of the United States/British Prime Minister and the specific post-presidential/premiership actor in question, an interaction which is cemented by the singular nature of their office. Such a relationship can be used by both parties to gain leverage for specific agendas and policies. This is a relationship which remains ongoing and topical, as every sitting president/prime minister will (almost) always have the backing of a few ex-leaders who can for example act as arbitrators on current topics.

Institutional relationships: The institutional legacies established by ex-leaders as they move into their post-presidential/premiership lives, where the actors' legacy is placed in focus. Power in this case is promulgated through the establishing of aid foundations, initiatives, libraries and think-tanks which are then named in their honour. This avenue of power differs from the other two, as it allows us to see the longer term impacts of said actors' legacies, power which can immortalise their inherent values into an institution.

4. Context

Below we will give historical and political context to our three chosen actors, describing their lives up until they leave office.

4.1 Richard Nixon

Richard Milhous Nixon (1913-1994) served as U.S President (1969-74) (R) during a time of imbalance in the U.S - facing issues such as gaining closure in Vietnam, whilst discontent towards the drawn out and costly war grew at home (Sanders, 2008: 33). The nation saw widespread socio-economic tracts, with both the 1973 oil crisis and the radicalisation of civil rights groups (Sanders, 2008: 37). However, Nixon did achieve one major breakthrough in foreign affairs - the 1972 visit to China, a vital spark in United States-China relations. Nixon's second term proved to be less successful - culminating in 1974 with his highly controversial exit due to the Watergate scandal[3]. Consequently he both shunned and was shunned from public life and politics. However, from the 1980s until his death, he took a renewed interest in public life and more specifically, foreign affairs. Nixon died a controversial, but in many cases respected, elder statesman.

4.2 Bill Clinton

William Jefferson Clinton (1946-) served as U.S President (1992-2001) (D), his time in office was characterised by his charismatic leadership, reflective of the economic prosperity of the 1990s. Yet this came to be contrasted by the failings of Welfare Reform in 1996, which accentuated the demographic rifts which still existed in his America (Sanders, 2008: 169) and the Lewinsky Affair of 1998 which saw him threatened with impeachment and domestic pressures as part of "Monicagate" (Sanders, 2008: 183). Yet despite his internal failings in governing his domestic life, Clinton left office with the highest approval rating of any president (Gallup, 2014).

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[3] The Watergate scandal: a political scandal in the U.S 1972-74. Journalists at the Washington Post uncovered links between the break-in at the Democratic Party's headquarters at the Watergate Complex in Washington DC and the administration of Richard Nixon. Several top aides were tried in court and proven guilty. As a result, Nixon became the only U.S president to date to resign.

4.3   Tony Blair

Anthony Charles Lynton Blair (1953-) served as British prime minister (1997-2007) (L) and as an MP (1983-2007). Entering office in 1997 as the forerunner of New Labour, he was seen as the much needed "new blood" in the British political establishment. Seeking to centralise the party's political ambitions in a Britain heading into a new millennium, Blair is accredited as the revitaliser of British politics, following 18 years of Conservative party rule (Gallagher, 2013). His tenure was epitomised by the burgeoning British economy, public welfare reform in both the education and health sectors (BBC News, 2007b).

Yet he was shunned by many in the British public following his support of President George W. Bush's interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan (Laidlaw, 2011). By his third term; Blair was stained by the drawn out and unpopular conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, the 7/7 bombings and the Hutton inquiry. Blair resigned in June 2007, leaving a party in discourse, as backbenchers sought to push more conservative policies in wake of *Blairite* policies (Faucher-King, 2010: 43).

4.4   Contextual Discussion

These three men faced markedly different contexts during their times in office. Nixon; a product of two World Wars and the Red scare during the Cold war, fuelling his own scepticism of the Soviet Union and strengthened his realist convictions (Nixon, 1978: 284). This reality is contrasted by Clinton's ideological upbringing as a Baby boomer in a America of post-war prosperity, experiencing young adulthood in the climactic 60s which came to colour his liberal ideals (Clinton, 2004: 141). These ideals, coupled with the fact that he came into office as the first fully post-cold war U.S president, fuelling his centrist values. Blair came up through the political ranks during the 1990s, embodying the revitalisation of a political party and subsequently a national image. Like Clinton, Blair was a child of post-war expansionism, his freewheeling school days as an aspiring rocker shaped his political life by being a steadfast contrast to the institutional norm which had stagnated British politics (Riddell, 2001, 24).

These three leader's previous experiences came to shape their ideologies and their interactions with the world around them, interactions which form avenues of power worth unravelling further.

5. Past Research and Source Criticism

Below we'll define past research on the topic of *post-presidency* and power. Furthermore, we'll look at our sources and work from a critical perspective in establishing a critical understanding of our sources.

5.1 On Post-presidency

There are but a few actual works on the subject of post-leadership, though there are none which we've found that cover our specific perspective of *"post-presidential power"*.

Nancy Gibbs and Michael Duffy of Time Magazine have worked on the subject of *post-presidency* and the relationships between incumbent presidents and ex-presidents - *The Presidents Club: Inside the world's most exclusive fraternity*. The concept of *post-presidency* is elaborated upon in *The Post-Presidency from Washington to Clinton* by Burton I. Kaufman from the University of Kansas.

The autobiographies of Blair, Clinton and Nixon will act as context, shaping our understanding of them as individuals over longer periods of time. This context adds to our comprehension of their undertakings as ex-leaders.

These autobiographies will be contrasted with a collection of complementary sources in the form of academic papers, news articles and contextual literature on the nature of post-presidential power.

5.2 On Power

As discussed in section 3.1, our main source on power theory is the work of Joseph Nye. His theories of *soft power* and other variations of power form our central point of reference in our discussion on post-presidential power.

5.3 Source Criticism

It's important to belay that we've found no earlier research which specifically supports the link between *post-presidency/premiership* and power projection. We'll strive to take inspiration and context from the three leaders' own literary publications/autobiographies. These materials will aid our understanding of their actions and traits from their own perspectives. We'll obviously counter these

sources which may be coloured by underlying personal and political tendencies (Esaiasson, 2012, 285). The fact that we've to question the reliability of the sources in their empirical trustworthiness and proximity between the writer, the actors and the event in question is vital (Esaiasson, 2012: 283). It's important to ask oneself, are these sources in turn corroborated or countermanded by one another? (Esaiasson, 2012: 279). This is a key question we'll have to ask ourselves whilst reading and studying said material.

To counter such eventualities, we've drawn knowledge from a broad skew of secondary sources in the form of academic articles and newspaper publications on said matters. It's also worth noting that time is a central component, in that some of these sources (those of Richard Nixon specifically) lack concurrency in a socio-cultural context in that they're written in a different time, an era with a bipolar international system (Esaiasson, 2012: 285). Henceforth in the discussion, we'll treat said sources as historical constructs of their own time. However, the notion of context is an essential part of the discussion - allowing us to look at the backgrounds and locate the "why" of their choices.

Additionally this work should be viewed with the pretext of that we're limited by economic and spatial constraints in collating data and information in analysing said actors.

6.   Three Dimensions of Post-presidential Power

In this section we'll discuss three different dimensions of post-presidential/premiership power, first through internal relationships then external and finally institutional relationships.

6.1   Internal Relationships

These internal relationships will emphasise the post-presidential/premiership actor's interactions and possible influences on their successors (ergo the next leader to eminate from the same political party as our chosen actors).

6.1.1   Nixon and Reagan

When Nixon left office in 1974 he had lost most of his political attractiveness and political platform, making the prospect of a comeback distant. For the rest of his life he sought to be viewed as an elder statesman and an accomplished diplomat rather than a fallen ex-president (Kaufman, 2012: 395). During the following months Nixon was distanced from the White House. This affected him negatively in many ways - both his physical and mental health suffered (Kaufman, 2012: 406).

The Nixon/Reagan relationship wasn't always a given. Nixon was seemingly never impressed with Reagan, Nixon advising Reagan could simply be considered an act of re-establishing his reputation in the world of politics (Gibbs and Duffy, 2012: 353). Nixon was also reclaiming some of his old powers by helping Reagan deploy new ones (Gibbs and Duffy, 2012: 356). As years passed, Nixon was able to move back into the public light. By the time Reagan was campaigning for president in 1980, enough time had passed for Nixon to take the last big step; he then reached out to Reagan and became an unofficial White House-guide (Kaufman, 2012: 422).

Nixon saw his opportunity to influence the new president through such means as sending Reagan long letters on how to conduct matters of state and the handling of different politicians (Gibbs and Duffy, 2012: 355). Reagan had come to respect Nixon and supported him, in contrast to Carter and Ford who had little interest in doing anything for Nixon. The fact that an ex-president freely gave advice to Reagan is an example of how attractive the position of president is to those around him, no matter how successful said president was during his tenure (Nye, 2004: 7).

Nixon always had his own agenda; such as in wielding *soft power* to influence Reagan, as to whom Reagan was to name his Secretary of State.

Reagan, who was thankful for Nixon's advice during his presidential campaign, listened Nixon suggested another man for the job (Gibbs and Duffy, 2012: 356-357). Little did he know that this would facilitate Nixon's ability to influence and gain insight regarding both domestic and international decision-making.

We can see that both Nixon and Reagan enacted *Soft power* towards one another. Nixon wasn't Reagan's only advisor (Reagan and Brinkley, 2007: 365), nevertheless, the fact that Reagan acknowledged Nixon and listened to his advice meant a great deal to Nixon (Gibbs and Duffy, 2012: 357). This increased the level of attractiveness of Nixon in creating a mutual agenda between the two. Examples of this could be seen in Nixon encouraging Reagan after public speeches and events, facts which augmented the co-optive nature of *soft power* projection between them (Reagan and Brinkley, 2007: 426).

During his tenure, Nixon had generated important personal international relationships, for example with the leaders of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, both of whom he met with. These interactions proved useful to Reagan and his possibilities to project American power throughout the international system (Talbott, 1987). Reagan; as we'll see later, allowed Nixon to informally travel and meet with Gorbachev, a factor which undoubtedly proves the level of influence Nixon had over Reagan.

6.1.2 Clinton and Obama

The political relationship between Bill Clinton and President Barack Obama has been one of political relativity; in that their relationship, though initially cold, has grown during Obama's second term (Lizza, 2012). Whilst both men share a political party and converge on a range of ideals; their relationship has always been kept at arm's length (Kaufman, 2012: 522), hence Clinton's ability to project power has been limited.

Parallels can however be drawn between both men; Clinton's time in office, much like Obama's, came to be mired by a controversial and slow moving bill which would sow distrust in both the House and Senate (Clinton, 2004: 515). Such mutual political experiences and the unique position of presidency, creates points of mutuality upon which Clinton can enact *soft power* as a voice of experience and support in fending off Obama's critics (Glueck and Byers, 2014).

We can however see that Clinton has manoeuvred closer to Obama on specific policies, such as the Patient Protection and Affordable care act in 2013, a bill which came to be just as controversial as Clinton's Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act in 1996, actions which underlines the cultural and centrist political values which Clinton and Obama share (Lizza, 2007). Such actions are a projection of *soft power* in the case of Clinton's adhesion and support to such motions, accentuated through their shared experiences of political fraternity and ideology (Changhe, 2013: 552).

The concept of "Clinton" as a political brand is a projection of *smart power* that's bespoke within the context of the presidency, shaped by the political realities of the present day. Clinton's actions are pragmatic and project his role as

a statesman and as a post-presidential actor on both a domestic and international level. This relationship has lead Obama to distinguish Clinton as "*Do Gooder in Chief*" (The White House: 2011), symbolic of the mutual respect which has blossomed between the two men.

One key factor in the Clinton/Obama relationship is the issue of Clinton's actions within the context of relative short/long term goals. Are his actions today a prerequisite action in gaining support for his wife, Hillary Clinton's presidential ambitions in 2016? This is a factor worth keeping in mind over the passage of time, seeing as it can dramatically alter the relationship between the two men.

The relationship between Bill Clinton and Barack Obama is one which is still ongoing. Yet we can see that Clinton's exertion of post-presidential influence and power emanates from his position as a former president, hence giving him political legitimacy (The Economist, 2011). Though he may not have the power to influence presidential policy, he does have the power to sway public opinion in lobbying for the president on a national level. Clinton's projection of power comes from his pragmatic ability to project charisma and subsequently mobilise credible public support as a post-presidential actor (Logiurato, 2013). Clinton's projection of opinion informally affects Obama's ability to project *hard power* through adding clout or doubt to any initiative he backs or berates (Nye, 2004: 106).

6.1.3   Blair and Brown: a comparison to post-presidential succession

The British and American political systems are fundamentally differing in terms of their power dispersion and scale. In the UK, politics is more institutionally driven, unlike the more unilateral presidential structure of the U.S (Niblett, 2007: 634). Yet in the case of Tony Blair, his actions were more akin to those of his counterparts across the Atlantic (Theakston, 2010: 224). In contrast to the U.S; the majority of British PM's retain a position of political power as either an MP, or member of the House of Lords (Theakston, 2010: 6). Tony Blair left office at the relatively youthful age of 54, this is indicative of Blair wanting to pursue new endeavours in 2007. He went against the political norm in also giving up his Sedgefield MP seat (Theakston, 2010: 217).

As power transferred to his successor Gordon Brown, Blair moved away from British politics, though now only capable of projecting informal power. Tony Blair and Gordon Brown were never destined to be best friends, however their quasi-friendship stretched back to the 1980s. Brown sat as Chancellor of the Exchequer under Blair 1997-2007. This was a time which came to be mired in disputes between the two men on matters such as; economic reform, the role of the UK within the EU and most importantly the EMU referendum (Blair, 2010: 307). This distrust carried into the post-premiership, as Blair came to distance himself from Brown, this is symbolic of the two PM's divergent approaches to applying power (Tonge, 2009: 299).

Yet Blair came to repeatedly support and visit Brown during the financial crisis of 2008-2009, pledging empathy and support for the PM within the context

of the situation (Blair, 2010: 670). The purpose of such actions was to placate the public through a call of support by (externally) showing empathy for Brown. This indicates the informal power which Blair could mobilise at the time, through adhering to shared values between the population and the incumbent PM, projecting *smart power* within the context of crisis (Nye, 2013: 571). Much like Clinton, Blair is seen as a progressive force to an otherwise rigid political system, a role which gives him credibility to project informal power across a range of situations.

Conversely, it's interesting to note that Blair has also used said power to distance himself from and vilify Brown through often aggressive characterisations through media, uttering allegations such as that Brown suffered from "psychological flaws" (Marr, 2008: 525). This may just be a sign of the fraught nature of the two actors' relationship, yet it illuminates the *star power* which much like his American counterparts, Blair has accrued. What he says, invariably gets attention through centralised mass media outlets and in so has the power to colour the perceptions of others and to set a specific agenda throughout the British populace (Nye, 2013: 572).

Unlike Clinton, Blair's post-premiership has been less of a public affair. His fraught relationship with Brown has accentuated the fact that visible opportunities for power projection have been limited at best. This is indicative of the contrasts between post-premierial and post-presidential power and the cultures in which they are hence enacted, culture which proves to be invaluable in giving context to *soft power*. Much like Nixon, Blair chose to stay beneath the internal political radar due to his discrepancies with the political establishment and his successors.

6.2 External Relationships

In this section we'll discuss the influence our chosen actors' have had on various international heads of state. We hope to show that the power our actors' wielded extended internationally.

6.2.1 Nixon and Gorbachev

Richard Nixon's 1986 trip to the Soviet Union marked his decisive return to international politics. The ex-president had previously advised incumbent president, Ronald Reagan, on how to deal with the new Soviet leader Gorbachev in preparation of the 1985 Geneva summit (Gibbs and Duffy, 2012: 358). Nixon wanted to meet the Soviet leadership in person, working as a one-man informal envoy of the United States – as an actor capable of utilising *soft power* as a complement to the more hard-line dialogue and power of the concurrent administration.

Nixon was certainly no stranger to the concepts of *soft power*. The 1959 *"Kitchen Debate"* between Nixon, then Vice-President, and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev took place in a model of the "typical American home" during the

American National Exhibition in Moscow (Safire, 2009). By propagating American culture and choosing such a setting for a televised debate, Nixon utilised *soft power* against the Soviets. The televised debate, in conjunction with the public display of the supposed advantages of capitalism, was an exercise in *soft power* through cultural promotion and communication (Changhe, 2013: 554).

During his 1986 trip, Nixon once again gained access to the top of the Soviet hierarchy – a meeting with Gorbachev. It's important to remember that Nixon travelled as a "private citizen" on a visit to a foreign country. However, being a former U.S President opened doors not available to the ordinary citizen. Nixon, a veteran of international politics, could perhaps more effectively make use of such a situation than an official envoy. By authorising Nixon's voyage to the Soviet Union, the U.S government allowed Nixon to create a channel for *"back-door" diplomac*y. Nixon's reputation lent an air of authenticity to the dialogue between him and Gorbachev which, by extension, strengthened the credibility of Nixon's narrative as a representative of the United States. In other words, the co-optive nature of the dialogue in the relationships between said actors enabled an exchange of power (Nye, 2013: 568-571).

The outcome of Nixon's trip to the Soviet Union was a lengthy memorandum to President Ronald Reagan and his administration regarding the character of Gorbachev and the changing nature of Soviet governance. Drawing upon his past experiences, Nixon described Gorbachev as the most formidable of the Soviet leaders that he had met (Talbott, 1987). However, Nixon remained hesitant to view Gorbachev as a great reformer - the possibility of major changes in the Soviet system seemed distant in Nixon's mind (Nixon, 1988). Nixon's impressions allowed for another perspective into the dynamics of Soviet leadership – a view which had potential to influence the administration of Ronald Reagan and its policies towards the Soviet Union.

Overall, it's difficult to determine to which extent Nixon was able to use *soft power* towards Gorbachev. Nixon's ability to influence both Reagan and Gorbachev to continue further dialogue could potentially be seen as a success owed to his usage of *soft power*. Nixon and his opinions were heard by the White House to some extent (Gibbs and Duffy, 2012: 360-361) – talks between the Soviets and the United States continued. President Ronald Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev continued with their summits, warming the relations between the two superpowers. Whether Nixon greatly contributed towards the warming of relations between the two superpowers is hard to pinpoint; Nixon pushed for more hard-line policies toward the Soviets, a view not shared by the White House (Gibbs and Duffy, 2012: 362). Whatever the outcome, Nixon played a role in bringing the two leaders closer.

6.2.2 Clinton in North Korea

Bill Clinton's informal diplomatic trip to North Korea on 4-5th August 2009 aimed at securing the release of imprisoned American journalists Euna Lee and Laura Ling. Both journalists were working for the U.S-based *Current TV* near the

North Korean border, when they were captured by North Korean troops and were subsequently convicted of espionage for the alleged production of anti-Korean propaganda. Both were swiftly sentenced to 12 years hard labour. Clinton's negotiations consequently lead to both women being immediately freed (Stratfor analysis, 2009).

During his presidency, in 1994, Clinton sought to promulgated *hard power* against North Korea's growing nuclear ambitions (Jeffries, 2012: 118). The defuser of the situation became former President Jimmy Carter who was sent to mediate in the face of escalating tensions (Henriksen, 1996: 33). By 2009 we see a shift, where much like Nixon with Gorbachev, Clinton took on the role of Elder statesman. He acted as a mediator on two levels; one as a private citizen, a role in which he has informal power as a former U.S president and secondly as an informal mediator between the Obama administration and the North Korean state (Jeffries: 2012: 117).

The U.S holds vast amounts of informal power within the international system, influence which it can apply through specific actors such as Clinton (Nye, 2004: 61). This is a fact which is reflected in photographs of the meeting between Clinton and Kim Jong-il, which show the two actors' vividly contrasting body language. This is representative of both states' and actors' power differentiations (The Economist, 2009). Informal diplomacy of this caliber allows the actor to approach the situation without the constraints of international political accountability (Nye, 2013: 572).

Bill Clinton acts as an exporter of American ideals, ideals which are accentuated through the notion of s*tar power* in that he's, due to the prominent position of the U.S, globally recognisable and carries political legitimacy (Changhe, 2013: 550). North Korea was placated through mere recognition by Bill Clinton's visit, which underlines the influence of American *soft power* through an actor such as Bill Clinton. This can be seen as an evolution of *soft power* towards the more pragmatic *smart power* (Nye, 2013: 563).

It's important to note as no official diplomatic relations between the U.S and North Korea exist, this informal visit by Clinton places North Korea in the spotlight. The realities of Clinton's *star power* alleviated the tensions of the situation. Clinton's symbolic power between these two states is key, seeing as it's a relationship which is bereft with political symbolism, especially in North Korea (Stratfor, 2009). The diffusion of *smart power*, in the form of Clinton as a representative of American values, set an agenda within the pretext of placating North Korea (Nye, 2013: 568).

This olive branch; however small comes from an actor who has shifted his usage of diplomacy in *post-presidency*. Though having lost his ability to delegate *hard power,* Bill Clinton has come to convert that power to *smart power* as a private citizen. This is a symbol of political legitimacy and trust, emanating from his presidential tenure and consequential legacy within the international system (Muravchik, 1995: 36).

This use of "back-door diplomacy" is an evolution of Nixon's journey to the USSR, in that Clinton used his own credibility as a political actor to pragmatically secure the release of both political prisoners. This is a process which was aided by

the communicative and technological advancements of the 21st century. This is an optimal case study where we clearly see the causal patterns of post-presidential power in action.

6.2.3   Blair as Envoy to the Middle East: a comparison of international relationships

After his tenure as Prime Minister, Tony Blair was appointed Special Envoy to the Middle East on behalf of the Quartet on the Middle East. The Quartet is composed of the UN, the EU, the U.S and Russia. Blair's role is to act as a conflict mediator and negotiator – focusing on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (BBC, 2007a). The role of the Office of the Quartet Representative is to facilitate reconciliation between the parties in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict through non-coercive means (Quarterep, 2014).

Tony Blair's work as Envoy is based on cultivating ground-level solutions to many of the problems associated with the Israeli-Palestinian discourse (ibid.). This is an example of the utilisation of *smart power* in tackling the geopolitical shifts of the globalised international system (Mahbubani, 2013: 256). Using tools to create common grounds between Palestinians and Israelis by promoting co-optive movement between the parties in the conflict, Blair and the organisation he presides over uses *soft power* to create an environment which can produce the desired policy of peace (Nye, 2004: 99).

While Blair's role as Prime Minister certainly helped him in getting where he's today, the focus simply does not lie on his former office. He strives to be perceived as an international actor, not a British one.

Tony Blair shares one central trait in his post-leadership work with both Nixon and Clinton; the absence of *hard power*. All three of these ex-leaders seem to have given up the possibility to command *hard power*, instead focusing on various other spheres of influence. Their roles in the international system have instead shifted towards *soft* and *smart power*.

However, Blair differs greatly from Nixon and Clinton in relation to his country. As an ex-leader, Blair has focused on issues as an actor representing the "international community" and the West, not being specifically bound to Britain (The Economist, 2007b). Whether this is due to the controversies surrounding his resignation or his frosty relationship with his successors (both of which have been discussed in an earlier section), Blair has chosen not to act as an agent bound to his home country. Clinton and Nixon have done the opposite – they've embraced their roles as post-presidential actors. Both Clinton and Nixon would probably not have had the international clout they utilised in their respective flashpoints if not for their positions as former U.S presidents.

Though Blair presents an anomaly compared to the cases of the two U.S ex-presidents. He has chosen to focus less on his role as a post-premiership actor and more on the role of international envoy. One cannot exclude that this could simply be a question of magnitude. An American post-presidential actor might simply gain much more by holding on to the heritage that comes with being a former

leader than their British counterpart would. However, Blair still utilises many of the same tools when it comes to power projection, just on a more discrete level.

6.3   Institutional Relationships

In this section we'll investigate whether it's possible to institutionalise *soft power* within an organisation. We'll discuss the differences between *active* and *passive power* in context to our chosen actors.

6.3.1   Nixon Presidential Library

In contrast to both Bill Clinton and Tony Blair, Richard Nixon spent little of his *post-presidency* as head of different organisations. Instead, he opted to operate as a single actor. However, few ex-leaders are completely without organisational connections. The Nixon Presidential Library represents is one such connection – an active legacy of both the Nixon administration and the man himself. However, the establishment of the library was not without controversy, mostly due the Watergate affair. Below, the connection between *soft power* and presidential libraries will be explicated.

After presidency, the materials produced by a president were traditionally seen as the personal property of said president until he chose to bequeath them to a library, upon which the materials became public. Relevant legislation was vague on the topic of ownership (Ambrose, 1991: 448). In the case of Richard Nixon, ownership of said material was not as explicit as in the case of earlier presidents. Watergate made the material a hot commodity for both detractors and supporters of Nixon (Ambrose, 1991: 451). The material was finally declared as property of the federal government through the Presidential Records and Material Preservation Act of 1974 (Ambrose, 1991: 475). This delayed the establishment of his presidential library greatly. Nixon's presidential library was not dedicated until 1990 (Ambrose, 1991: 576). Even then the library was not administered by NARA, instead by the privately funded Richard Nixon Foundation (Nixon Library, 2014). In 2007 the library become federally funded, which elevated it to an official library within the presidential library system (ibid.).

A library is obviously very different from an aid organisation. However, both represent projections of *soft power*. The main distinction is that an aid organisation represents *active* propagation of *soft power* and a presidential library represents passive propagation. *Active* propagation of *soft power* entails active participation of the chosen actor, ergo running an aid foundation or engaging in diplomatic activity. In contrast, *passive* propagation of *soft power* is built upon *soft power*-inducing activities which are centred on a specific actor, without said actor actually being a part of the activities. The outcome is similar; broadcasting and utilising *soft power* through the "ability to attract" (Nye, 2004: 6). Due to its

lack of direct actor-dependency, *passive* propagation of *soft power* has potentially longer term impacts than its active counterpart.

The presidential libraries manage and showcase the legacies of presidents and their administrations, perhaps even polishing them (Economist, 2014b). In other words, their purpose is to manage the "*brand*" of former presidents. However, this management is not unbiased – a fact which can clearly be seen in the case of the Nixon presidential library. Exhibitions have clearly been altered to become more critical of Nixon after the Richard Nixon Foundation relinquished management of the library to NARA (Nagourney, 2011). This is a central weakness in the case of *passive* propagation of *soft power*; as the projection of "brand" is beyond the actor's control.

Active and *passive* projections of *soft power* have their advantages and disadvantages. *Passive* propagations could potentially last beyond the lifespan of an actor – even if the actor in question might have been controversial. Although, active propagations may be more effective in projecting short term power. Heavy reliance on either might not be optimal – the world of *soft power* is complicated. Thusly, in order to propagate power effectively, an actor must be knowledgeable of its multifaceted nature.

6.3.2 The Clinton Foundation

When Clinton left the White House in 2001 he was considerably younger than most previous ex-presidents (Kaufman, 2012: 504). Thus he wasn't ready to slow down or retire; instead he kept active and established a non-governmental organisation called the William J. Clinton Foundation (Clinton foundation, 2014). Initially it was created to fund his presidential library and museum; however he quickly extended it to include humanitarian work (Kaufman, 2012: 520). Today the foundation has evolved and is working globally, taking on diverse humanitarian initiatives and projects. Its name has also been changed into the Bill, Hillary and Chelsea Clinton Foundation to acknowledge the whole family's role in shaping their foundation's future (Clinton foundation, 2014).

The foundation itself could be considered rather different from ordinary foundations; in some aspects it has a business-like approach with Bill Clinton as the major "attraction" (McLean and Levinstein, 2006). The foundation has in its fairly short history made an immense difference and has accomplished more than many initially thought was possible (Senior, 2005). The success could be due to the fact that Clinton uses his *star power* to ensure large and on-going donations, while also attracting and motivating his staff (Change, 2013: 550). Clinton is admired around the world; thanks to his presidency he still has many personal relationships with world leaders, whom he strives to influence to "do the right things" (Senior, 2005). He has even published a book solely focused on giving and the different benefits through giving (Clinton, 2007).

Clinton also uses the foundation as a means to safeguard his legacy and establish a well-known Clinton brand (Senior, 2005). This branding is shaped through *soft power* and partnerships with other organisations, which broadens the

spectrum in which he can influence and attract those around him (The Economist, 2007a). Clinton's personality is hence of great importance since it shapes the ways he can wield *soft power*. People describing him often talk of characteristics such as being able to connect on a personal level with both individuals and large audiences (Kaufman, 2012: 513) and his abilities to motivate people and "move mountains" are often lauded (McLean and Levinstein, 2006). These characteristics could be crucial in such instances as when negotiating with foreign governments on behalf of his foundation. Nye states that *soft power* often depends on a receptive audience; Clinton's attractiveness as a popular ex-president and his ability to motivate people certainly aids him in projecting *soft power* (Nye, 2004: 95).

6.3.3   Tony Blair Faith Foundation: a comparison of institutional approaches

The Tony Blair Faith Foundation is an initiative which was founded by Tony Blair in 2008 as an institution which propagates the expansion of humanitarianism, with a specific focus on empowerment and the spread of understanding through education across the third world (Tony Blair Faith Foundation, 2013). The Foundation also acts as a force of acceptance in eradicating boundaries between religious groups and is focused on three key terms; exposure, education and practical support (ibid.).

Secondly, the power which is projected is unique in the context of our flashpoints, seeing as it uses power indirectly to gain influence for Blair's values through institutional means. The Faith Foundation is built upon appealing to shared values of respect and cooperation within the boundaries of faith. While the Foundation is not explicitly tied to any specific faith, it's clear that the goal is to work within religious frameworks (ibid.). Such projections of influence act as examples of *smart power,* as the foundation pragmatically adapts to the societal and geo-political permutations of the international system (Nye, 2013: 571). Such advocacy allows for the propagation of Blair's values on a macro level, values which are shaped by his own personal pretexts in life, ergo his faith (The Economist, 2014a). Projections of faith befitted Blair during his premiership, as a form of influence and *soft power* when interacting with other heads of state, especially when such actions co-existed with the *hard power* of the political arena (Graham, 2009: 151). Tony Blair institutionalising his faith could be seen as a continuation of this power, albeit he now lacks the *hard power* he could previously wield.

This is a fact which is reflected by both Nixon and Clinton in that their values came to be embodied in an institution, which empowers them to sustain long term *soft power* - being able to affect the lives of others as part of their institutional legacies. This institutional approach differs from Clinton's and Nixon's institutional projects in how it pushes a specific angle in tackling concurrent global issues.

There are certainly similarities between Blair's institutional projection of power and those of Clinton, seeing as both institutions emanate from a philanthropic vein of thought in tackling actual issues within a globalised society. This entails for the use of active power projection, in that Blair takes a direct role within the organisation by being active within its confines, by lending his name, image and time towards spreading the organisation's values. All of the processes as defined above exist within the operational context of Blair propagating a specific angle of approach to the work, in this case being within the framework of religious values. In other words, *soft power* has the power to influence through lobbying for policy changes on national and consequentially international levels. Hence the institution has the ability to shape *hard power,* albeit through indirect means.

7. Conclusion

The flashpoints above indicate evidence towards a link between *post-presidency/premiership* and power projection. Seemingly, the position of president acts as an empowerer for our chosen actors to cultivate power in their post-presidencies and consequentially, their ability to project *soft/smart power.*

The projection of post-presidential power allows for a range of possible avenues of power such as through the projection of power on the national, international and institutional levels. We can discern a link between the position of *post-presidency* and the projection of *soft/smart power* within a selection of the chosen flashpoints.

Most visible is the usage of said power within the external case studies, where all the actors in question have come to influence the international political system through their stature and actions as former presidents/premiers. Bill Clinton and Richard Nixon have both acted internationally as post-presidents, though through divergent means and with differing results. One key aspect they both share is their ability to connect with foreign leaders, who they then have the opportunity to influence on matters of key political significance.

In the internal case studies, it's much less clear to which extent our post-presidential actors have impacted their successors. This is due to the fact that the flows of information are less visible on a national level than on the international. Furthermore, internal connections and exchanges are wholly dependent on the will of the actors to disclose their personal relationships to a wider audience. For example, the relationship between Bill Clinton and Barack Obama is much more public than the relationship between Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan. While this could very likely be due to personal relation-reasons, it's also a consequence of the information age - wherein even the most senior of actors act publically through social media networks and other public information flows.

In the case of institutional relationships, the lines of power projection are more onerous to discern. The "ability to attract" shifts from the individual's direct activities to the influence they can exert indirectly, for example in giving their *star power* and image to an organisational cause. We can also see the concepts of passive and active power propagation play a key role in the makeup of post-presidential power on the institutional level. Nixon's presidential legacy takes a more passive form in affecting the status quo without the actor needing to be on hand, whilst both Clinton and Blair act as figureheads for their respective organisations – taking a more active part in forming their legacies. These institutional variations may come down to contextual factors; Nixon's *post-presidency* existed in another societal context than those of both Clinton and Blair. Still, one factor permeates them all, they all have had the ability to shape institutions as a form of *soft/smart power* continuation. As the actor loses the ability to project *hard power,* the nature of their power merely shifts.

We also have to remember that pretexts are key in understanding the actors' ability to project power post-office. The power they wield in their post-

presidencies is directly connected to their exploits as leaders. Hence, in our cases, the nature of power and influence doesn't simply dissipate once they leave office - instead it can be accentuated by their policies and networks as leaders. In our cases the core strength of post-presidential power lies in its longevity and legacy-building nature, in that Nixon, Clinton and Blair have been able to project influence long after they formally held power as heads of state.

An example of such a pretext is President Clinton's visit to North Korea in 2009, an event influenced by his presidential policies in 1994. This indicates how the nature of his power has shifted from *hard* to *soft power* - illuminating how the interplay between the president's actions during his presidency are central in shaping the networks of influence he's able to wield in the *post-presidency*.

Nixon's and Clinton's projections of power post-office are both intrinsically linked with the fact that they both are former U.S presidential actors within the international system, a seat with huge prominence. Hence, in our analysed cases, both Nixon and Clinton seem to hold certain credibility both domestically and internationally, whatever their presidencies entailed.

Tony Blair's projection of power post-office is of a slightly different nature to that of his American counterparts. His ability to propagate *soft power* is limited due to him lacking the informal stature of being a former U.S President. He's not without credibility however, as seen in his actions in the Middle East. Overall Tony Blair's life as an ex-leader has been more muted than that of Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton.

The avenues of power which have been at the disposal of Richard Nixon, Bill Clinton and Tony Blair indicate that in the cases we've studied that power is sustained. There is a link between the seat of president/premier and the ability to project *soft/smart power* in a multifaceted fashion after leaving office. This power finds providence from the credibility, status and networks of influence which the actors have accrued during their tenures in office. Power remains an integral part of their legacies, just in different guises.

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