



DEFEATING TERRORISM



STRATEGIC ISSUE ANALYSIS

The Campaign Against Terrorism: Finding the Right Mix of Foreign Policy Instruments

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Conclusions:

- If the U.N. is to play a strong and helpful role in the fight against terrorism, as well as in the stabilization of failing or failed states, the United States will have to give that organization full moral and financial support.
- Several specific flashpoints in the world call for U.S. diplomatic and military-to-military engagement, and possibly greater policy flexibility. The Israeli/Palestinian conflict and the Indian/Pakistani confrontation over Kashmir are only two such cases.
- “Nation building” or “peace building” does not necessarily call for the long-term presence of U.S. military forces, but does require the attention and resources of the world’s leading power, along with the parallel civil-military assets of its allies.
- The United States must strengthen the range of its human assets and internal capabilities to influence global affairs. No amount of technology can replace the human element required to gather and assess intelligence, conduct diplomacy, and promote military cooperation.
- Our best insurance for the future will be set upon three supports: a strong and united democratic country, a more capable homeland defense, and a more effective capacity to project national power—including landpower—overseas.

Foreign Policy Implications of September 11.

Until September 11, American foreign policy elites debated the utility of various approaches to grand strategy. Should the United States adhere to a policy of cooperative security or, mindful of our unique power, should we pursue a policy of primacy? The latter would be tempting. With apparently no other nation in position to challenge American authority and with the strongest economy and military forces in the world, we could consider a unilateral approach to international affairs. Some pundits have argued that we had already chosen the unilateral approach and that our choice had been reflected in the rejection of a series of international treaties and protocols during the first nine months of 2001.

Whatever arguments may have obtained before September 11, the reality of U.S. interdependence with the rest of the world readily

became apparent as we sought to respond to the most significant attack upon continental American soil since British forces burned Washington in 1814. Immediately after the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the U.S. Government chose a policy of coalition building to seek and destroy terrorists and their organizations throughout the world. This policy will have far reaching implications for U.S. foreign policy in the years ahead and will strongly influence the structures of our regional and bilateral relations worldwide.

Four implications of this policy are immediately apparent:

- The United States will have to breathe new life into its relationship with the United Nations. If that organization is to play a strong and helpful role in the fight against terrorism, as well as in the reconstruction and stabilization of failed states, we will have to give it full moral and financial support.

- Several specific flashpoints in the world call for U.S. diplomatic engagement and possibly greater policy flexibility. The Israeli/Palestinian conflict and the Indian/Pakistani confrontation over Kashmir need the attention of the United States, perhaps in concert with other significant powers.
- The United States must commit itself to long-term development efforts in states where instability can threaten the security of the entire region. "Nation building" or "peace building" does not necessarily call for the long-term presence of U.S. military forces, but it does require the attention and resources of the world's leading power along with the parallel assets of its allies.
- The United States must strengthen the range of its human assets and internal capabilities to influence global affairs. No amount of technology can replace the human element required to assess intelligence, conduct diplomacy, influence public opinion, and promote military cooperation.

Strengthening the Role of the United Nations.

For many years, an article of faith among foreign diplomats was that the United States gained politically far more from the existence of the U.N. than any other country. While many nations may have worked against U.S. interests in the General Assembly, most concluded that the United States used its seat in the Security Council to achieve its ends with remarkable success. Only in recent years, as the United States began to fall behind in its dues and as U.S. politicians disparaged the organization, did observers begin to question whether we lacked the will to use the organization we had worked so hard to establish after World War II.

With the strong support of the Secretary General and the Security Council for a new effort against terrorism and with an understanding that all member states are obliged to help fight terrorism, the U.S. Government has been handed an opportunity to reengage with the organization in meaningful ways. The recent payment of dues, as well as the acknowledgement of President Bush that the

U.N. can help with nation building and stabilization, holds promise for a revitalized relationship. For the United States to retain credibility, however, we must pay our dues on time and cooperate in as many joint ventures with the U.N. as is feasible. Strengthening the U.N.'s Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as well as its important humanitarian assistance organizations, should be high on the list of American priorities at the U.N.

Dealing with Flashpoints.

While there can be no justification for the horrific acts of terror the world witnessed on September 11, we need to understand some of the frustrations which fuel disaffection and alienation from the norms of international behavior. Undoubtedly, no amount of diplomatic or other positive activity by the United States will turn the hatred of a relatively small group of hardened ideologues, but we should examine the causes of so much resentment of the United States among the broader Middle East population. The unresolved conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis remains a festering sore which will continue to breed atrocities if we and other international partners do not take action. The cycle of violence must be stopped. Yet it is hard to see how this can be done without recognizing Israel's right to exist on the one hand and a state of Palestine and the limitation of Israeli settlements on the other. The issue of governance and protection of holy sites in Jerusalem is perhaps even more inflammatory. It is hard to overestimate the degree of feeling in Israel and the Arab states on this issue. Unless a plan is devised allowing for unbiased international administration of these sites, long-term peace is unlikely, and the United States will continue to be pulled into the maelstrom.

Likewise, the international community can ill afford to stand by as India and Pakistan, both possessing nuclear weapons, continue to struggle over Kashmir. Volatile and subject to pressure from internal radical fundamentalist groups, Pakistan needs help to find its way out of a self-defeating confrontation which drains resources and fuels political intemperance. Should Pakistan implode, the consequences for

the region and, indeed, the world could be costly. As Pakistan and India sit at a strategically important point in the world, it seems unlikely that one nation serving as a mediator would be sufficient to overcome the various balance of power interests which could militate against a solution. This conflict best lends itself to mediation by a carefully selected contact group of three to five nations.

The continued rogue status of Iraq is equally worrisome. Saddam Hussein shows no signs of retreating from his desire to develop weapons of mass destruction, but he appears to be winning the propaganda war. Broad sanctions against Iraq are unenforceable, and continued allied efforts to contain his activities are losing international support. Forceful ejection of Saddam militarily would be costly and politically disastrous under current circumstances, as we work to build an international coalition against terrorism. A policy of containment and development of a finer regional understanding of the threat that he poses to his neighbors would be our best strategy at this time. Such a strategy should be supplemented, nonetheless, with renewed and quiet warnings to Saddam that any use of WMD by his government will be met with his own certain destruction.

Laying the Groundwork for Stability.

Where there is hunger and dire poverty, nothing will advance in the absence of humanitarian assistance. It is the sine qua non of existence where all else has failed, but it is not sufficient to ensure a stable future. In states threatened by poverty, weakened by corrupt governments, and devoid of representative structures, instability and violence are liable to emerge, particularly in a world in which increasingly accessible views of material prosperity elsewhere inflame the appetites of those who have been denied. Demagogues with ethnic or ideological agendas easily manipulate such passions.

If the United States wishes to remove the breeding ground of radicalism and political violence, there is no substitute for nation building. There is no cheap ticket to success. A mixture of development assistance, strengthening of education and health care systems,

and, above all, an emphasis on good governance will be required. The good news is that, in addition to the U.S. military, the United States is richly endowed with governmental and non-governmental organizations which can address these issues, provided sufficient resources exist. It is time we regard this challenge not solely as a development issue, but as a national security one.

Happily, we don't have to tackle these challenges alone in developing countries. We have partners in Europe and Japan who have demonstrated interest and commitment through generous assistance which, on a per capita basis, far exceeds our own. In any event, in order to avoid charges of seeking hegemony either in individual states or regions of the world, we will find it advantageous to strengthen our development partnerships in the OECD and the U.N.

In our efforts to confront global terrorism, we undoubtedly will deal more closely with states from which we have kept at some distance in the past. Uzbekistan is a prime example. With a government which is corrupt and undemocratic and a record further blemished by the existence of thousands of political prisoners, Uzbekistan hardly lends itself to traditional American assistance. Yet if the United States is to embrace Uzbekistan for practical security reasons, then we must extend our development assistance to it as well, including emphasis on education, good governance, and the development of democratic structures.

While the United States cannot naively seek to make the world in its own image, we must surely recognize, after years of experience with failed states, that good governance and legitimate forms of popular representation are essential to development. Flexibility will be required in states fragmented by ethnic or religious division. Federal structures, governments of national unity, and proportional representation systems, all of which avoid the chimera of "winner take all" solutions, may be particularly applicable. Further, systems which acknowledge the importance of traditional leaders and fold them into modern governance may be helpful. We should not delude ourselves, however. Nation building and the development

of democratic processes are hard work. Failure to address these issues, on the other hand, is even more costly.

Americans regard our technical prowess, economic strength, and proficient military as the primary building blocks of our security. Ironically, while these factors are enormously important, they are most significant as support for America's greatest strength: our democratic tradition. In a world where ideology may eschew wealth and guerrilla bands and terrorists may avoid confrontation with overwhelming military force, our genius for good governance and public education may be our most effective long-term weapon. In northwestern Pakistan, where children may be fed, housed, and schooled in narrow, mind-bending madrasahs, the most effective program we could support would be the provision of excellent and accessible government schools which meet the needs of young minds and bodies. In countries struggling to make governments and economies perform, the provision of financial expertise and governance training is essential. And, in utterly failed states, the international community, under the leadership of the U.N., may wish to consider return to international trusteeship, much as is being done in East Timor. There is no question that economic assistance and debt relief must be matched by the development of good governance capacity and educational opportunity.

Likewise, it would be a mistake to underestimate the importance of military-to-military contacts and assistance. For years, U.S. Special Forces have demonstrated the efficacy of "mil-to-mil" programs in de-mining, peacekeeping, military justice, and civilian/military operations. Equally, the United States has benefited from contacts developed as foreign officers have attended U.S. military institutions. There may be increased pressure for weapons sales abroad and a growing desire to reduce military personnel tied up in "engagement" activities overseas, but we would do well to remember that our greatest return on investment is precisely in the areas where U.S. forces demonstrate personal interest and competence. There is no substitute for focused, professional military contact.

Strengthening Our Human Resource Base.

Our capacity, ultimately, to influence events throughout the world will depend upon the quality of our people on the front lines. If we are to spot the development of political trends, if we are to intercept and cut off dangerous currents, if we are to promote positive programs, we will need to reinforce our cadre of language qualified Foreign Area Officers, Foreign Service Officers, and intelligence officers. We reaped the peace dividend at the end of the Cold War by neglecting our Foreign Area Officers' careers, failing to hire sufficient numbers of Foreign Service Officers and cutting resources for human intelligence operations for too long. We are currently paying a price. There is no substitute for top notch, professional personnel at diplomatic missions and listening posts throughout the world. This is the backbone of intelligent policy and effective engagement, and if we wish to win the campaign against terrorism, we must effectively fund it.

Conclusion.

As realists, we must recognize that the campaign against violence and instability will never end. We may eradicate one form of terrorism, only to see another raise its head. Our best insurance for the future will be set upon three supports: a strong and united democratic country, a more capable homeland defense, and an extremely effective capacity to project our diplomatic, democratic, and military strength overseas. This calls for long-term commitment and the expenditure of significant resources. We must be attuned to local conditions in every region of the world, and we must remain engaged with partners across the full spectrum of social, economic, and political development. If we eschew this responsibility, the forces of instability and violence will find us where we live.

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