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Editor's Note

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Editor's Note

Padraig O'Malley

If all the Barbarian conquerors had been annihilated in the same hour, there total destruction would not have restored the empire of the West: and if Rome still survived, she survived the loss of freedom, of virtue, and of honor.

— Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*

In the months preceding the U.S. presidential election in November 2004, George Bush and John Kerry conducted what, God help us, passed for a serious debate on U.S. foreign policy, especially the rationale for the war on Iraq and on the state of the “war on terror.” It was easy to lose sight of the primary purpose of these two special issues of the *New England Journal of Public Policy* on war. So I should perhaps, remind our readers.

The question posed was: what lessons can we draw from the wars and conflicts of the twentieth century that might help us to take preventative steps to preclude the outbreak of war and conflicts in the twenty-first? This is the second volume of the two-part series.

Judging the course of wars and conflict in the opening years of this century we are forced to conclude that we haven't learned very much, that a collective amnesia informs, that George Santayana's memorable aphorism, “those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat its mistakes” is either true or, more likely, true only *if* we act on what knowledge of the past teaches us. Knowledge itself is no guarantee that we will be able to adjust our behavior. And that, I think, is a more accurate description of the state of where we stand: the world order cannot adapt quickly enough to deal with present crises, despite having knowledge of the catastrophes that will inevitably follow as a consequence of the failure to act.

The essays in this volume fall into clusters. One cluster encompasses issues relating to genocide and latter-day ethnic cleansings, global responsibilities to protect and failure to meet obligations, the growing phenomenon of failed states among them those most poor and purported to be the most likely sources of terrorism, and the need to examine the constitutional processes that are available to deal with intractable conflicts.

The second cluster raises matters that are related to further consideration of the U.S. role in a unipolar world or whether “unipolar” is an apt description of the world order in the opening decade of the twenty-first century. The consensus is that the Bush administrations' unilateralism threatens the world order and that unilateralism lacks sustainability. The invasion of Iraq and its aftermath appears to be an example of how not to engage in unilateralism. At the Tufts University EPIIC

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conference excerpted in this issue, discussants agree that military might per se in a globalized and highly interdependent world puts severe constraints on the exercise and utility of military power. Military might does not solve political problems. There is also a consensus that democracy as we practice it in the West cannot be exported, imposed, or otherwise foisted on countries with radically different cultures, traditions, and values. Systems of governance must always have indigenous roots and reflect the people who will adopt them and mould them to their own needs, as true in Africa's DRC as it is in Iraq. Top down democratization invariably fails. One cannot reap from a harvest that was never sown.

A third cluster examines the war on terror — a theme carried over from Volume I. Post-9/11 some governments are beginning to question the concept of a global war on something that cannot be defined, has no fixed location, is invisible and yet pervasive, and for which there is no "battle plan" other than expanding security measures and the abridgement of individual liberties. The undercurrent in some articles in this and other clusters is that democracy of the kind that we have become comfortably accustomed to may have run its course. It is not that authoritarianism is around the corner, rather that the evolution of liberal democracy may lead to "people sanctioned" illiberal turns. When demands for security and claims of individual liberty clash, security trumps.

The major threat to world security in the decades ahead is nuclear proliferation. The post-Cold War era has heightened the risk of limited nuclear war. The association of nuclear war with total annihilation — the specter of Mutually Assured Destruction [MAD], which was the only checkmate possible on the nuclear chessboard between the superpowers — has been replaced with the specter of small scale nuclear attack made possible by advances in nuclear and digital technologies, superpowers replaced by quasi-state agents or rogue states as black markets in the sale of stolen nuclear materials, technical knowledge, processing and enrichment technologies proliferate and the means of assembling nuclear devices is now within the reach of many states and non state actors.

A fourth cluster addresses the "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim" dichotomy that has emerged as a cultural and political wedge post-9/11. Authors dismiss the "clash of civilizations" analysis, but caution that the causes of Islamic extremism have to be understood in the context of their own societies. The Islamic world embraces both political Islam and the Islam politics. The Judeo/Christian world embraces both Christian fundamentalism and political Christianity. An ascendant West, however, tends to analyze cleavages in the Muslim worlds in Western terms and thus both misunderstands the nature of the cleavages and prescribes "solutions" that insult the Muslim and aggravate differences between the West and Islam.

As in the first volume, writers acknowledge the primacy of American military might and its position as the world's preeminent global power. But if we talk of an American "Empire," it is radically different than the Empires of old. The United States may have imperial or hegemonic designs, not as the conqueror of territory but as a liberal force that promotes democracy, liberates countries from tyranny and backwardness, and entrenches individual freedoms and free market capitalism. But others are paying the price. And this may be America's Achilles heel. The financial flows that rule world markets are not impressed by pretensions to benign empire, which would rather borrow the resources necessary to finance its global interventions than have its own citizenry dig into its pockets.

Some even call into question American fitness to be the purveyors of democracy,



arguing that American power has corrupted American values. They argue that a public that is isolationist by nature and largely ignorant and unheeding of the world outside its boundaries, has allowed the government to wage covert wars using a national security apparatus (CIA) that is not accountable to Congress to operate outside United States and international law, using whatever means — torture, bribery, assassination, proxy agents, drug trafficking — to further ends that are undemocratic, about which the American public is disinterested. (Fifty percent of Bush voters believed that WMDs had been found in Iraq and 80 percent believed that a direct link between Al Qaeda and Saddam had been established.)

Another cluster takes another look at the obstacles to a settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It would seem that not much more can be written on this subject, but in their scope the essays reveal the extent to which the miasma of this conflict poisons relations between the Arab world and the West, between Muslims and the West. Yet again, with the death of Yassir Arafat, voices are being raised in hope that a new opportunity for peace will be snatched by both sides. Undoubtedly, Arafat's death changes the dynamics of Palestinian politics, but there is no Palestinian leader who can "deliver" his people, nor is there one who can deliver the Israelis.

Any Palestinian state will be on life support systems from the moment of birth. The culture of dispossession, violence, rebellion and humiliation, occupation and repression ingrained for generations will take generations to undo.

Among participants in the Tufts EPIIC forum there was consensus that the war in Iraq is a mistake, that the damage it has done in the broader Muslim world is inestimable and has at the very least broadened the base of support for Islamic fundamentalism, created problems for secular Muslim states, made democratization more problematic, and otherwise has unforeseen consequences that may radically alter the relationship between west Europe and the Muslim world. Moreover, the Bush administration, which seems wedded to the idea of never learning from mistakes — or history — is underestimating and misconstruing the opposition it faces by calling it the terrorism of the few. But this is a *political* insurgency. Insurgencies organized as guerilla warfare are fought over decades, not weeks or months. They ebb and flow. Losses are absorbed. They are wars of will, not wars of numbers, wars of propaganda, not military victories. Moreover, insisting on elections being held in January 2005 for no good reason other than not wanting to appear to be backing down in the face of a "few terrorists," plays into the hands of the insurgents since it heightens the possibility that Sunnis will boycott the elections or that turnout, under conditions of such violence, will be so low that the results are meaningless. In addition, the long suppressed Shiites will emerge as the majority in any new dispensation. One can hardly expect they will reach out to the Sunni minority, which suppressed and terrorized them under Saddam, for other than the most cursory period (until the U.S. military has largely withdrawn). And one might expect them to reach out to Shiite Iran when the moment is opportune. And then what?

One conclusion for which there is broad consensus is that the global institutions that are charged with ensuring global security are woefully inadequate, almost anachronisms in the world of the twenty-first century and that nothing less than a "housecleaning" is in order. The problem, of course, is that such a housecleaning must be undertaken by the residents who created the mess.

We know this. Indeed, we have arrived at this same damning conclusion at innumerable conferences, commissions, intergovernmental meetings, and in a library

of books. But we have done nothing. Bureaucratic inertia, vested interests, posturing, bumbling, an unwillingness on the part of states who are in a position of authority within the United Nations and related international security agencies have effectively stonewalled meaningful institutional change. Nor does it help that the United States, witnessing the ineffectuality of many international bodies and impatient at the procrastination, has decided to bypass global institutions it disapproves of and refuses to sign international protocols it regards as antithetical to U.S. interests. Thus, always putting U.S. interests above any larger interest, the United States has robbed many institutions of their legitimacy and potential for effectiveness. The result: U.S. actions in the opening years of this century have made the world unstable. Moreover, the United States, while quick to use its power to intervene, is less willing to accept the responsibilities of intervention. Its reflex “quick-fix” mentality spews out new problems that are corollaries of problems inadequately attended to in the first instant.

For the rest of this note I will draw on some of the articles in the clusters to further elaborate on my summaries. In “We Were Allies Once, Lessons of D Day 1944,” Nigel Hamilton swivels the century around the pivot of the massive cooperation and collaboration between the United States and its allies during World War II. In the early years, European and British troops suffered a series of discouraging defeats by the Nazis, and then when the United States entered the war the great collaboration among the allies was instrumental in achieving victory in Europe. This joint effort of nations continued for a time with such institutions as the UN and NATO and other international bodies. The war in Iraq ruptured the alliance. American unilateralism has distinguished most of the debacle of the war in Iraq, in which the lessons of history have been ignored with tragic result.

We can look at the twentieth century, study its mistakes, and lament the fact that most of the major conflagrations, most notably the two World Wars, did not suddenly emerge out of a political void. There were ample forewarnings of disaster ahead, but the gathering storms were ignored in hopes that they might not materialize. Leadership emerged to deal with crises *after* they had erupted, but was conspicuously absent, with a few exceptions, before crises broke. The lessons of the past do not provide a guidebook to the future, yet we ignore them at our peril. Unless we absorb the lessons, especially inaction in the face of probable threat, we will once again dance to the piper of last resort.

In the West there is now broad agreement that a limited nuclear attack on a west European or American city is more likely than not within the next twenty years. If that happens, then the New World Order begins. We, the West, can also be more than reasonably sure that by century’s end the balance of global economic power will have tilted irreversibly to the East. Western civilization will have undergone a fundamental transformation, with “white civilization” clinging apartheid-like to the last vestiges of its power or looking in the window at a new racially diverse world order. Given both the level of the threats the “white” West faces and our ability to react only when catastrophe strikes, our instinctive capacity to seek security and order will probably impel us to protect our diminishing hegemony.

George Bush Versus All Comers

George Bush offers a worldview that is frighteningly simplistic. America must “find terrorists wherever they are and kill them” before they find their way to America



and kill Americans. Over and out. America will do what it has to do. The world is with America or against it. There is no room for dissenting views. America will export liberal democracy; impose it where necessary, because in the long run liberal democracy means freedom and western modalities of freedom, we are confidently told, are the antidote to terrorism. The wars for which justification is invoked on the basis of these principles are the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Recent elections in Afghanistan are supposedly confirmation of the success of this policy, although by most objective standards they were partial and flawed and the government's control of territory does not extend much beyond Kabul. Elections were possible because the warlords were sufficiently persuaded that the results would not impinge on their authority. But the fact that they took place at all, we are confidently told, is sufficient cause for celebration. The fact that they are largely irrelevant is forgotten unless we want to assert that the veneer of democracy — elections without an institutional base, no national economy or the capacity to enforce the rule of law across the national territory — is a precursor to the real thing. The fact that elections took place at all, we are confidently told, is sufficient cause for celebration.

When every investigation/commission addressing the question of Iraq possessing WMDs established beyond a reasonable doubt that Iraq had possessed no WMDs — had not even the potential to assemble them, but that Saddam had harbored the intention of making them if only he could unshackle UN sanctions — the intention became reason enough for the war. And when further investigations/commissions established that there were no links between Iraq and Al Qaeda, President Bush simply asserted there were. When his own Intelligence agencies reported that the prospects for stability in Iraq were dim, he simply ignored the findings. The bottom line: “The world is a better place without Saddam Hussein.” Iraq, too, would have its day in the sun and tried and true, free and fair elections. America will not shrink from its duty.

Since we now know that Bush's reelection was driven by a faith-based constituency, it is not surprising that Bush would aggressively assert that even given the benefits of hindsight he would not have done a single thing differently. Faith breeds certitude. Christian fundamentalism and Islamic fundamentalism are driven by parallel dynamics. It was, after all, God's will that brought them together to defeat the Evil Empire in Afghanistan.

The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) published a report in October 2004 that offers a sobering assessment of Iraq. In the Muslim world the invasion and occupation of Iraq by the United States is seen as an attempt to change political systems in the Arab world to advance American strategic and political interests. It has “enhanced jihadist recruitment and intensified Al Qaeda's motivation to encourage and assist terrorist operations.” Hence, impetus for the attacks in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Turkey, the train attacks in Madrid and the gathering of foreign fighters against the U.S.-led coalition. Al Qaeda is present in more than sixty countries; with an estimated 18,000 such “warriors” trained in Al Qaeda camps, the fighters in Iraq represented only “a minute fraction of its strength”; radical Islam is increasing in Western Europe where Muslims are feeling increasingly marginalized; the Iraq coalition lacks cohesion.¹

The Pentagon's assessment of the strength of the insurgency indicated that that the United States had severely underestimated both its breadth, in terms of the number of fighters involved, the indigenous nature, and financial resources and access to financial resources. When foreign fighters and the network of the

Jordanian militant, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, were counted with homegrown insurgents, estimates put the hard-core resistance numbers between 8,000 and 12,000 people, a tally that swelled to more than 20,000 when active sympathizers or covert accomplices were included. The core of the Iraqi insurgency, the Pentagon concluded, now consists of as many as fifty militant cells that draw on “unlimited money” from an underground financial network run by former Baath Party leaders and Saddam Hussein’s relatives. Their financing is supplemented in great part by wealthy Saudi donors and by Islamic charities that funnel large sums of cash through Syria. Only half the estimated \$1 billion the Hussein government put in Syrian banks before the war has been recovered.²

To make matters worse (if this is possible), we know that the 380 tons of conventional explosives used to demolish buildings, make missile warheads, and detonate nuclear weapons that disappeared from one of Iraq’s most sensitive former military.

History will judge Bush. Exponentially increasing levels of globalisation mean that any unilateral action has multilateral consequences, which the initiator of unilateral action cannot control. In other words, the United States may act unilaterally but it may have little or no control over the consequences of its actions. It enters a world of total unpredictability, so much so that the intended purpose of the action gets swamped in the unintended consequences, thus altering the nature of the intended outcome itself. One can provide no better example than Iraq. Whether there are elections is broadly immaterial; at best, the scene is set for ethno-religious nationalism to assert itself, at worst, a civil war.

Nuclear Suitcases

Nuclear terrorism is *the* threat — not so much to world security but certainly to Western security — we would do well to start distinguishing between the two since the penchant to make them synonymous distorts the realities of a changing world order. Despite Bush’s unilateralism the post-9/11 mindset says very forcibly that unilateralism is a thing of the past, that a threat to any member of the global community is a threat to all, that cooperative governance among nations has to become the norm, not because nation-states want it or even desire it but because there is no other option; given that rates of technological transformation and innovation on every frontier, science is changing the way we live and interact with each other as individuals within nations and, as important, among nations. Amassing the capability to destroy on a large scale is no longer the preserve of the richest of the rich, but is well within the capacity of the poorest of the poor, not nation states, but what Wole Soyinka calls “the quasi-state.” Today, he writes, “the fear is one of furtive, invisible power, the power of the quasi-state, that entity that lays no claim to any physical boundaries, flies no national flag, is unlisted in any international associations, and acts every bit as mad as the M.A.D. [Mutual Assured Destruction] gospel of annihilation that was so calmly announced by the superpowers.”

The technological revolution post 1950 has revolutionized every aspect of living. Increasingly, technology drives public policy, the former more the master, the latter more the servant. The revolution in miniaturization enables us to carry computers in our briefcases and our pockets that have the capacity to store information that would have required a roomful of mainframes fifty years ago. The same is true of atomic technology. We can carry small but oh-so-lethal nuclear devices in backpacks. It is



possible to make an atomic bomb using information available in the open literature. The material required is smaller than a football field. “Even an assembled device, like a “suitcase” nuclear weapon (0.1 of kiloton), could be sent in a Federal Express package, shipped in a cargo container, or checked as airline luggage.”⁴

One no longer needs to achieve global nuclear annihilation to bring the world to a stop. A ten-kiloton nuclear weapon can be transported in a van. If such a device (and they are available) were detonated in Time Square, Graham Allison, former assistant secretary of defense in the Clinton administration, outlines in *Nuclear Terrorism* what would happen: Midtown Manhattan from Time Square through the radius of a third of a mile gone instantly, a fireball rolling out with a radius of a half a mile killing more than half a million, hundreds of thousands of others dying in the collapsed buildings or their rubble; all communications dead.

Then we have to factor in the provision of emergency services, uncontrollable fires, radiation, and panic across the country. Millions would flee, but to where? Huge swaths of the country, especially along the East Coast would become zones of terror. Global financial markets would collapse, the global economy would implode, and liberal democracy as we know it and the freedoms we associate with it would become memories. Mindsets would indeed change. History would record a turning point, a new era beginning, the old era not likely to end with a single detonation.⁵

Of course this is too horrible to contemplate. How do you articulate the unimaginable? Mobilize the public to “a clear and present danger?” And how do you warn the public of the likelihood of such an attack without spreading panic and paralyzing the citizenry with fear?

New York is just an example. It might be any city, anywhere, but more likely a city in west Europe or America. In May 2004, the EU conducted an exercise to estimate the repercussions of a 10-kiloton bomb being detonated in Brussels. Immediately 350,000 people would perish. Second and third wave casualties in the hundreds of thousands would follow.

The defense against such an attack exists on paper, if at all. Global policymakers and institutions are fully aware of its imminence. Numerous conferences on the subject are held. Scenarios played out. Consequences calculated. Probabilities debated. And we wait for that defining moment of technological singularity, unable to act before it happens, too willing to act after it happens. We are still in denial even though the probability of such an attack is inexorably mounting. This is the legacy of war in the twentieth century. Instructions on how to make the atomic bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki are available on the Internet.

If you had written a novel about how the man who was the father of the H-bomb in Pakistan had set up a global black market for selling nuclear technology that stretched from Malaysia to Dubai to Namibia to the Middle East to the financiers in Switzerland, the novel would seem wildly extreme, but this we know was absolute fact. And there were no repercussions because the United States needs to keep Pakistan in its good books.

Allison subtitles his book “The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe.” We can take actions, he argues, that reduce the likelihood of the attacks of which he speaks. The key is locking materials at the source. But given the amount of materials unaccounted for, this solution is tantamount to locking the barn door after the horse has bolted. Moreover, there is no way to “lock down” knowledge or new ways of spreading it.

But Allison believes nuclear terrorism is preventable. One supposes that after

laying out such grim scenarios for our contemplation, he felt the need to leave us with some hope that instant evaporation was not just a question of time. No fissile material that's highly rich in uranium or plutonium, no fission explosion, no nuclear terrorism. Thus, "all we have to do is prevent terrorists from acquiring fissile material by locking up all the material that currently exists." The United States, he points out, loses no gold from Fort Knox, Russia loses no treasures from Kremlin armory. Then the international community ensures that other states cannot produce additional fissile material. Thus, the doctrine of three no's: no loose nukes, no new national production of highly enriched uranium and plutonium, and no new nuclear weapon states. But in the absence of concentrated political will, such a straightforward, seemingly uncomplicated course of action will remain a proposal.

Michael Dolan's article "Weapons of Mass Destruction & International Law" provides a step toward "managing" the nuclear world by establishing a new principle of international law under which the NNPT would be universally enforceable against all non-nuclear nations, and all non-state actors. The failure of either to comply would result in action by the Security Council.

If only 10 percent of the resources expended in Iraq (\$ 20 billion out of some \$200+ billion, as I write the administration has asked for an additional \$ 70 billion to be made available early in 2005) had been devoted to an intensification of these efforts the world would be a safer place. But the legal framework must be comprehensively overhauled to take into account how the international community must act to preempt the acquisition of nuclear technology by rogue states and quasi-state actors. A legal framework that does not provide for immediate and severe punitive actions in the event of violations will not deter.

Unintended Consequences

The war in Iraq has crippled the capacity of the United States to intervene militarily anywhere in the world. The doctrine of preemptive strikes, never satisfactorily thought through, is in tatters. In Iraq itself, troop levels are inadequate, supply lines taut. Another troop deployment of a similar nature somewhere else in the world is unthinkable. With the world's attention focused on Iraq, Iran has quietly been enriching uranium. The capacity to produce WMDs is within its reach.

To date it has scorned the attempts of the IAEA to intervene and has warned that any tactical strike by the United States to destroy its processing facilities will meet with retaliation, not at the United States, but most certainly at Israel. Iran already has the capacity to launch non-nuclear warheads. North Korea threatens the Korean Peninsula.

Global stockpiles of weapons-grade material can be found in a number of countries. According to a report issued by the Center for Contemporary Conflict, the research institute of the Naval Postgraduate School's Department of National Security Affairs, there are approximately 450 tons of military — and civilian — separated plutonium, and over 17,000 tons of highly enriched uranium (HEU). While most of this material can be found within the borders of the five nuclear weapon states, with the overwhelming majority in the United States and Russia, there are also stocks of plutonium in Belgium, Germany, India, Israel, Japan, and Switzerland. Additionally, there are over 2,000 kilograms of HEU used or stored in research reactors in forty-three countries, often in sufficient quantities to make a nuclear weapon.⁶ According to *Jane's Intelligence Digest*, from 1992 to 2002, there



have been no less than one hundred seventy-five known attempts by terrorists or criminals to acquire or smuggle radioactive substances.⁷ Under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program — the U.S. agency that funds disarmament in Russia — Russia is committed to destroy 44,000 tons of chemical weapons by 2012. But Western countries have donated just \$217 million so far, about 7 percent of the \$3 billion necessary to build destruction facilities.⁸ (Russia's President Vladimir Putin recently announced that Russia was testing new nuclear weapons that other countries did not and would not have⁹ — just following in the footsteps of the United States, not developing offensive capacity, just “upgrading” defensive systems.)

Once upon a time not so long ago, we envisaged nuclear weapons as monstrous things typically deliverable by ballistic missiles and long-range bombers. Today these weapons can be reduced in size. Indeed, Russia has admitted having “lost” dozens of suitcase-sized nuclear bombs. Again, the production of WMDs is real, exponentially increasing levels of global risk: any unilateral action has multilateral consequences, beyond the control of the initiator.

Indeed, in this world of unintended consequences, the end of the Cold War, which was supposed to dispose of the threat of nuclear annihilation and usher in an era of global stability, has had the opposite effect. In 1963, four states had nuclear weapons. Today eight are known to have one and several others are suspected of developing them. Close to sixty operate or are building nuclear reactors, and at least thirty can build nuclear weapons at relatively short notice. The panel of experts appointed by Kofi Annan after 9/11 to examine ways in which the UN might become more responsive to global security threats reports, “We are approaching the point where the erosion of the nuclear regime could become irreversible and result in a cascade of proliferation.”¹⁰

Iraq was the wrong threat; the expenditure of huge resources there was unnecessary; the humiliations of Abu Graib have intensified the hatred of America among huge numbers of Muslims. The region is unstable, the world more divided, the western allies themselves divided, and in the end, the United States more susceptible to more devastating attacks rather than a safer place.

When the Darfur crisis was brought to world's attention, the United States fulminated. The U.S. Congress called it genocide, but U.S. involvement to broker a resolution was rejected out of hand by the Sudanese government. And when the UN handed the matter over to the African Union (AU), the Sudanese government again rejected U.S. assistance to AU peacekeeping troops. To all governments that do not hew to the U.S. line on the war on terror, the phrase “regime change” has specific resonance. But regime change is another casualty of Iraq. The delay in dealing decisively with Darfur, besides suggesting that African lives count for less than white lives, is in large measure due to the Sudanese government being able to sideline the United States and paralyze the Security Council.

But there is another factor that motivates the Muslim world and Africa to provide the Sudanese government with a cushion of reprieve. In Iraq, “Shock and Awe” and the ensuing insurgencies have claimed the lives of at least 100,000 Iraqi civilians, two-thirds of whom are women and children.

America simply ignores the carnage. They accept what the government says — America's precision weapons can sniff out and destroy “terrorists,” without touching the hair of an innocent. Indeed, the reality of the assault on Falluja conveyed to the U.S. people as they prepared for their Thanksgiving celebrations was one in which U.S. Marines fought door-to-door combat against a malevolent, evil, thug-ridden

gang of terrorists who had unfairly compounded the odds against the Marines succeeding by laying booby traps and using snipers from the safety of mosques. But God's side won the day. And nary a civilian was killed.

Not a word about the aerial bombings for weeks on end that preceded the attack, that the Red Cross was refused access to the city, that when the flags were hoisted most of Falluja's 300,000 residents had fled the city, or that they returned to a city that was now a heap of rubble or that three weeks later there was still no water or electricity or that the bulk of the insurgents had left Falluja long before the first Marine shouldered his thirty pounds of special equipment. Not a word that most males between fifteen and fifty-five have been detained. Indeed, sometimes one is tempted to believe that some great cosmic tragedy of errors has is being played out in heartland America. The surreal has supplanted every pretense to reality. On Thanksgiving, sixty-six television stations declined to run *Saving Private Ryan*, one of the few acclaimed war movies of our time, because of pressure from Christian lobbies — the word "fuck," either as verb, noun, or adjective is used twenty-one times and there is, the right asserts, "excessive violence." In the real war, violence is airbrushed out of the coverage, and there are no casualties other than bad guys.

Why, ask others, would the United States have empathy for the people of Darfur? They must have another agenda. And their answer: the United States wants regime change — a regime more sympathetic to American interests, especially since the present Sudanese government and China have a special oil relationship and Sudan is not perceived to be "onside" in America's war on terror. (Hence, Sudan can depend on China to veto any UN resolution that might result in action.)

Indeed, in this world of unintended consequences, the end of the Cold War, which was supposed to dispose of the threat of nuclear annihilation and usher in an era of global stability, has had the opposite effect, despite the fact that some 20,000 nuclear warheads have been destroyed.

A battery of bilateral and multilateral treaties was designed to limit the spread of nuclear weapons and there are competent monitoring agencies. Notwithstanding such treaties, proliferation continued. Israel, India, and Pakistan simply ignored their obligations under treaties, North Korea has announced itself as the next nuclear power; and Iran is well on its way to being one. Facing possible sanctions, Iran signed an agreement with the EU, which was accepted by the UN, promising to suspend enriching uranium until a longer-term agreement could be negotiated. But even here there is a loophole. Earlier, Iran had warned that in the event of an attack on its processing facilities, it would retaliate (not, of course, against the United States, but Israel falls within its ballistic capabilities). One can hardly imagine the Israelis standing idly by. But if Iran resumes processing and the EU and the United States take the matter to the Security Council their attempt to move a resolution for sanctions will be thwarted by China, which has turned to Iran to supply its oil needs.

Casualties of 9/11

The first casualty of 9/11 was truth; the second was the American constitution. Already we are gradually accepting that the state has the right to intern indefinitely persons government thinks are "terrorist threats." As in the small elisions in principle and behavior, we no longer even ask government to define precisely what constitutes a terrorist "threat." It means whatever the state wants it to mean. And in the event of a "small scale" nuclear attack (I use the words "small scale" to differentiate



between the region of 500,000 dead and 10 or 20 million dead) you will find few advocates of individual freedoms we now regard as divine rights, the enshrined of “inalienable rights.” If one “small scale” nuclear attack occurs, we have to ask: when will it happen again? Society will have to reinvent itself to survive.

If some of what I have written sounds alarmist, I only wish it were. In the immediate post–Cold War era, the so-called “end of history era,” we deluded ourselves into believing that doomsday threats to mankind were over, that we had entered an era where the world had become more “manageable.” Events were shortly to prove us wrong. The Cold War world was a world in which differences within blocs were suppressed. Each bloc had one choirmaster. In the opening decade of this century we have a babble of voices. While the United States can legitimately assert that it is the greatest military power on the face of the earth, it can win wars, but not bring peace. It can destroy, but cannot build. And in the process of winning wars it can create conditions for new ones. The economic might that underpins it is slowly being eroded.

A dirty bomb attack in the United States or a suitcase nuclear attack will alter the security and hence the political landscape of the international community. The age of liberal democracy as we know it will have run its short course. Concepts such as individual rights will become relics of nineteenth-century philosophers, arcane memorabilia that celebrated the human enterprise with the individual at the center of the universe and the gratification of his assumed freedoms a matter of whimsical recollection.

The Myth of 9/11

The reality is that many people in countries beyond America’s immediate pale and culture felt that America had 9/11 coming. This does *not* mean they did not feel genuine grief for the loss of innocent lives or empathy for the families of the bereaved. Three years later as a result of America’s subsequent actions, the mood has hardened. If another twin towers-type disaster were to occur in the United States, more people in more countries would say, once again, that America had it coming. What people mean is that American policies make them feel a visceral response to 9/11, not that they approve of the murder of innocent people. But then they will point to the “collateral damage” of America’s high-handed military adventures, its refusal to sign the Kyoto Agreement or to join the International Criminal Court (ICC), which George Bush referred to as “as a bunch of fellas over there who want to try our guys.”

The United States has no historical recollection of attacks or invasion or colonization, unlike South and Central America, Asia, Russia, Europe, and Africa, which have histories of conquering armies who laid waste their nations and in time were repulsed, nations that know colonization and resistance, devastation and rebuilding. Indeed, America’s unique claim is that it somehow escaped the mass, senseless slaughters that are the legacy of the twentieth century in the rest of the world. National identities are forged in wars fought to preserve the national identity. Even in the latter part of the twentieth century, many European countries dealt with “terrorist” groups: The United Kingdom with the Irish Republican Army (IRA), Spain with the *Euskadi ta Askatasuna* — Basque Homeland and Freedom (ETA), Germany with Baader-Meinhof, Italy with the Red Brigade, and Japan with *Aum Shinriko*. Yet, so isolated is the United States from historical reality that it

believes that it somehow “saved” Europe in World War I, that its role was significant and that America “paid a heavy price.”

You only have to compare the reaction of Russia to the massacres at Beslan to American reactions to 9/11. The Russian psyche is steeped in the consciousness of the arbitrary and senseless; the American is not. Russians see the hand of inevitability in the face of the horrific; Americans do not. Russians understand fate; Americans do not. Russians can salvage meaning from their history; Americans have no history to salvage.

Cushioned from attack, knowing itself only as a world power, a liberating power or a power that fought its war thousands of miles from the “Homeland” in Asia and Europe, the United States has a distinctly a-historical memory. And having no past to provide the wisdom that accumulated invasion brings of the dark side of man, it strikes out in blind fury at an ephemeral entity called terrorism rather than at an identifiable one. It prepares feverishly for a war, and since it doesn’t know who the enemy is, the preparations become total — the mobilization of all resources, search and seizure, indefinite detentions, indiscriminate phone tapping and emailing, instructing citizens to report actions of persons of a suspicious nature, guard the ports, the airlines, search the ships at sea, seal the borders, build anti-ballistic shields. All this turns “Securing the Homeland” into the national mantra, and the Patriot Act becomes the new badge of allegiance. And yet, Americans do not feel safe. It must make the enemy very happy. This fear summons its citizens to a patriotic call, but against whom? The inculcation of fear of an indefinable, invisible threat hovering has citizens puzzled: What exactly are they waiting for? People are caught between two polarities: on the one hand they are prepared in their minds for the idea that another attack seems inevitable and, on the other hand, they hope that it won’t occur.

Waiting for the inevitable induces paralysis, a psychosis of chronic anxiety, and a culture of creeping fear. Caution replaces spontaneity. Idiosyncrasy becomes more commonplace. It is easy to read meaning into things where none exists.

And thus America falls back on a history it is familiar with: the politics of hysteria, of *imminent* attack, of the enemy *within*. McCarthyism in the 1950s is Al Qaeda-ism a half century later.

The country is subjected to a barrage of terror alerts. Be alert for what? Be alert for whom? And the questions meet with silence. Americans are told repeatedly that more 9/11’s will occur. The implication is that all these states of alert are either useless or that they have foiled disasters in the making even though we are not cognizant of the fact that we have foiled them.

Is it a war against Al Qaeda or a war against terrorism? Is the latter a subset of the former? Al Qaeda means base, the basic unit of resistance. But Al Qaeda can also mean a precept, a maxim, a rule, a methodology, “a formula system for what is carried out.” Every “success” against Al Qaeda does not dismember “an organization,” because you can’t dismember what does not exist. Al Qaeda’s aim is to radicalize Muslims. The West’s is “to win the war on terror.” Ironically the more the West persists in winning the war its way, the more it is likely to radicalize Muslims. The center is a very fragile thing. Extremism draws moderates to it more in sorrow than in sympathy.

In Northern Ireland in the 1970s, the IRA, with almost no support in the Catholic community was given the “sea” in which to swim as a result of a series of actions by the British government that required moderates to speak out *against* the government



erasing the small distance between the outer perimeters of moderation and the more pragmatic boundaries of extremism. An “army,” at best composed of active service units in the low hundreds could not be “defeated” by the British army, and despite the army’s own assessment that it could not do so, the authorities continued to pursue security policies that exacerbated its problems. In the end, a government that publicly and repeatedly proclaimed that it would never negotiate with terrorists ended up doing exactly that. But the Brits, it must be said, are capable of a kind of finesse in these matters that is alien to the American sensibility.

Thus, in Iraq, Moqtada al-Sadr, a minor Shiite cleric, a “ruffian” in the eyes of many, the once-upon-a-time-leader of a small radical fringe, was catapulted into prominence, becoming a national cause, symbol of anger and resentment among ordinary Iraqis for what the American occupation has done to their country and their lives. His following grew with his defiance, especially among the young and impoverished in Sadr City, the slum on the outskirts of Baghdad. The early decisions the United States took to bring Sadr “to heel” misunderstood the dynamics of Iraq’s highly stratified religious and cultural imperatives. U.S. actions ignited latent radicalism, the backlash to the occupation. There is no such thing as a “good” occupation. They destroy self-esteem, disempower, make the indigenous grovel in their own country, dispossess them of their inherent sense of being, emasculate their pride in themselves. “We lack metrics to know if we are winning or losing the global war on terror.” So sayeth the gospel according to U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.¹¹

Holed up in Najaf in Shi’a Muslim’s holiest mosque, Inman Ali, Sadr threw down the gauntlet to the U.S. Marines, the new Iraqi army and interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, a former member of Saddam’s ruling Baath Party. Allawi threw down his own gauntlet — disarm and leave the holy shrine and join the political process or face an assault on the mosque, which could trigger a countrywide Shiite uprising. While events moved to their climax, oil prices continued their climb. If things went badly awry, the actions of one cleric could decide whether global economic recovery would stay the course or be derailed by soaring oil prices. The market didn’t await the outcome. As Paul Starobin puts it:

In the context of our age — an age in which certain dark forces, most prominently terrorism, confront the state with the elemental task of maintaining security and civic order — the principles Bush named are not just irrelevant but almost precisely the opposite of the ones we should be dedicating ourselves to. Leaving aside the question of military power, the necessary response to terrorism is not to limit the power of the state but, rather, to bolster it, so as to preserve the basic order without which the defenseless citizen has no prospect of enjoying the splendors of liberty. In the wake of Madrid, in the wake of 9/11, in the wake of suicide bombings in Moscow subway stations and Jerusalem cafés, the state is impelled to become even more intrusive and muscular than it already is. How well today’s leaders meet this obligation to construct more-vigilant states is very likely to stand as one of history’s most important criteria for assessing their stewardship.¹²

Here in the United States we, too, have had to become used to previously inconceivable security measures. Although some are more noticeable and perhaps more inconvenient than others, they have redefined what we feel to be normal. New threats to international security make us more willing to live with stringent precautions and almost unconscious wariness.

First you feel nervous about riding the bus. Then you wonder about going to a mall. Then you think twice about sitting for long at your favorite café. Then nowhere seems safe. Terrorist groups have a strategy — to shrink to nothing the areas in which people move freely — and suicide bombers, inexpensive and reliably lethal, are their latest weapons. Israel has learned to recognize and disrupt the steps on the path to suicide attacks. We must learn, too.¹³

The Israelification of the United States: Apartheid of a New Kind?

America cannot be made safe. The country is too vast, the borders too porous. As David Carr has told us:

If America is riddled with holes and targets, it's because a big society designed to be open is hard to change — impossible, probably. In 2000 more than 350 million non-U.S. citizens entered the country. In 1999 Americans made 5.2 billion phone calls to locations outside the United States. Federal Express handles nearly five million packages every business day, UPS accounts for 13.6 million, and until it became a portal for terror, the Postal Service processed 680 million pieces of mail a day. More than two billion tons of cargo ran in and out of U.S. ports in 1999, and about 7.5 million North Americans got on and off cruise ships last year.¹⁴

Yet the extraordinary lengths to which America is going to try and make itself immune from future attack breed animosity and resentment among many groups. Thus professional Muslims from certain countries, who are invited to attend conferences in the United States, are routinely denied visas as are Asians from certain countries. Visitors are photographed and fingerprinted. Such measures have the opposite effect of their intended result, and unilateralism has its nexus in a new isolationism. But the more America tries to demarcate the “us” from the “them,” the more it creates an ambiance that perpetuates the very forces it seeks to isolate.

At a meeting of the Non Aligned Movement in Durban, South Africa, in August 2004, one of the African continent's key power brokers issued a statement castigating the United States and its allies. “There is a growing tendency on the part of the countries of the north,” Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sue van der Merwe, said “to mount global campaigns against threats that are perceived and defined in the north but allegedly originate or are based in countries in the south.” And a meeting of the SADC Heads of State agreed to a common electoral rulebook, committing them to monitoring each other's elections without the presence of western observers.¹⁵ Small things, but hints, nevertheless, that the Lilliputians are beginning to think that tying up Gulliver in knots is not quite as difficult as they had supposed.

The Power of One

In Iraq, hostage-taking has begun to follow a formula. A video of hostages begging for their lives captures global attention and puts pressure on the government to meet the demands of hostage-takers. The beheading of hostages is shown live on web sites and instills fear in the West: these are the barbarous acts of an “uncivilized” people. Elsewhere these visions inspire “militants” in such places as Haiti (where militants call their attacks “Operation Baghdad”), Thailand, and the Netherlands to behead their victims or slit their throats.¹⁶ The flow of information about these actions is



itself an instrument of war. How the financial markets of the world react to the *use* of such force or the *outcome* of the use, and to the *expected reactions* to the outcome is part of the war. Thus a series of suicide bombings in Iraq can trigger a chain reaction on bourses in New York, London, and Tokyo. Markets exist because we have confidence that they will perform, and when confidence collapses, so do the markets.

Uncertainty is the enriched uranium for the information bomb. With the exponentially expanding flow of information available, the variables that can have an impact on uncertainty increase. And thus the paradox: every technological advance that enables us to communicate more instantaneously increases our vulnerability to uncertainty. When global uncertainty reaches a certain level, any event triggers an explosion and the fallout can threaten our global economic welfare.

The objective of terrorism is not to hijack airplanes and plow them into buildings; these are the means of terrorism. The end is to create uncertainty; the markets will do the rest. Thus we have become the hostages of the technologies we have created. Indeed, an electronic impulse exploded three hundred miles above earth will “kill” our computers. The developed and much of the developing world would simply stop. The poor and the wretched would inherit the earth. Exaggeration, you say. Unfortunately not.

Military might is no longer power. One suicide bomber in the right place can cause more international havoc than twenty tank divisions with precision computer-guided systems. The power equations that count are no longer mathematical, they are biological. American might is linear, multilinear to be sure, with horizontal and vertical organizational structures and lines of command, but the might that falls under the umbrella of the new terrorism is biological, it is amoebic, with every adversity it mutates, replicates in a slightly different form, has no command structure, and takes off in a different direction.

We fear it because we have chosen to fight it without understanding it. We are “embedded” in old paradigms. We are comfortable in our ignorance because the democracy we supposedly cherish compels our leaders to deceive us. And we do not punish them for their deceptions except in matters of the utmost triviality — a sexual peccadillo is deserving of political decapitation.

We cannot establish any meaningful international order until the United States understands that 9/11 was not the end of the world, will not rate among the great atrocities of all time, that U.S. “collateral damage” in Iraq by even the lowest, uncontested estimate, is that over 100,000 people, mostly women and children, which is at least ten times as many “innocents” as those who died in the twin towers.

What distinguishes our attitude toward extremism today is the scale of the impact a single act of extremism may have. Suicide bombers, once the preserve of Palestinian militants, are now commonplace in Iraq. Technology and black market availability of bioterrorism ingredients makes real the fictions of Hollywood disaster movies. Change a few characters and James Bond, fitted out with MI5 gadgetry would be at home hunting down Osama bin Laden in the barren, glacier-capped mountain terrain, having enlisted a warlord or two along the way. There is little to hinder the quasi-state, whether group or individual, from elevating terrorism to science fiction proportions.

The media is terrorism’s concubine. The imagery of destruction or its aftermath, when it is captured by the ubiquitous camera and replayed across the globe until every still is imprinted permanently on the psyche, changes the nature of the terrorist act.

“This quasi-state,” writes Wole Soyinka, “instills the greatest fear and often boasts a liberating manifesto. Choice,” he tells us,

... remains the bedrock of the democratic process, and if a people have made a choice that eliminates all further necessity for the ritual rounds of choosing, well ... that argument appears to have reached its terminal point. History has been fulfilled.

The perennial problem with that proposition of course is that this denies the dynamic nature of human society, and preaches that the purely fortuitous can substitute, at any time, for the eternal and immutable. Such a position opens the way for the triumph of a social order that is based on the concept of The Chosen — a mockery of the principle of choice — and totally eliminates the impulse to change, or even experimentation, as a factor of human development. On the political field, it entrusts power in the hands of a clique of rulers, whose qualification could rightly range from membership of a military class to that of a Masonic order, a labor or clerical union. Revelation replaces enquiry, dictation dismisses debate.

Tilting At Terror Mills

Terrorism, of course, has always been with us; throughout the last century colonial powers routinely used the term to describe indigenous rebel armies trying to run European powers out of their countries. In Britain, the public was fed a news diet of the savage atrocities of the Mau Mau in Kenya — blood curdling stuff, raped white women with throats slit from ear to ear. The word Mau Mau became synonymous with any gruesome act, a term of the other. The point is that liberation movements were criticized by the western media because of their disregard for human life, ironic, coming from countries awash in the blood of their own slaughtered millions and the murderous practices of their imperialism.

But with time the aphorism “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” threw some cold water on government propaganda. A terrorist, it appears, is somebody who poses a threat to your security and you’re at a loss how to deal with the situation other than to warn your populations that they are all around you and out to destroy your way of life and if they take over they will pillage, rape, and rage.

Sound familiar? That’s what those commies were up to in the 1950s when the United States, with complete nuclear supremacy over the Soviets, managed to instill such a sense of hysteria among the population that families scurried to make bomb shelters, stack up with tinned goods and water, and in schools throughout the world’s richest and most powerful country, children were taught to get under their desks to avert what otherwise was inevitable.

This kind of hysteria is purely American. Fifty years ago all the resources of the country would be devoted to defeating communism. Today, in the wake of 9/11, all the resources of the country will be devoted to eliminating the new type, the Al Qaeda a la Osama bin Laden-type. America has manufactured Osama bin Laden, endowed him with powers that border on the supernatural, embodied him with evil incarnate, a madman hiding out in a cave with only one obsession: to destroy America. This might come as news to bin Laden, but who is he to issue a statement rebutting the more fiendish attributes so lavishly bestowed on him by the United States? Saatchi & Saatchi couldn’t do a better job.

In the name of security, America chips away at its constitution. Horrible stuff: men are picked up and transported to Guantánamo Bay. That’s that. Their families



never know what has happened to them. They simply disappear off the face of the earth.

You dehumanize the enemy and then when the poor schmucks at the bottom of your military ladder take you seriously and torture prisoners (goddamn terrorists, lets show the bastards a thing or two!) we are, yes, surprised and *horrified*. But then there are always a few bad apples. No questions asked about the culture or institutions that so shape ordinary God-fearing American guys & gals.

One might turn to *Generation Kill*,¹⁷ written by Evan Wright, a *Rolling Stone* journalist “embedded” with an elite Marine company, Bravo, which spearheaded the invasion of Iraq. His book describes the mindset of ordinary boys and men, mostly from poor backgrounds — the poor are the labor pool that is assiduously cultivated by military recruiters — who are asked to make split-second decisions on matters of life and death. More than half the platoon came from broken homes, and absentee, single working parents raised them. They grew up on a diet of video games, reality TV, and Internet pornography. Their ignorance of the world was almost complete. Some had no idea that places with mud huts and wandering goats existed. They were kids raised on the violent thrills of hip hop music, the anarchic excesses of heavy metal rockers like Marilyn Manson, and the trash TV culture of Jerry Springer. For them “motherfucker” is a term of endearment. They raced across Iraq through towns whose names they couldn’t pronounce, teenagers manning machine guns, blazing away at anything or person that moved. They were immersed in a culture of the super macho, super fit, united with an almost reckless desire to test themselves in battle in their most extreme circumstances and, says Wright, the desire to kill. For some, action was erotic, close to a sexual experience.

Whose Ends? Whose Means?

Alfred McCoy’s article “CIA Torture Research & the Conduct of U.S. Foreign Policy” is a monumental documentation of abuse and torture on the part of the CIA, which has systematically cultivated a culture of torture in the pursuit of its aims and thus is a testimonial to the degradation of American ideals. It is damning in its thoroughness, a searing indictment of the agency. This article, together with McCoy’s article in the first of our two volumes on WAR (“The Costs of Covert Warfare: Airpower, Drugs, and Warlords in the Conduct of U.S. Foreign Policy”), raise fundamental questions about the practices of the institutions of American government. They make it possible for us to distinguish between the formal governance sector, which adheres in principle to the constitution, and the informal government, accountable to Congressional oversight only in part, with no transparency, no budgetary examination, and no accountability.

In this issue, Alfred McCoy sets out how the CIA has operated almost covertly within its own society, penetrating key American institutions — universities, USAID, and the U.S. Army — to establish and then conceal certain programs from later executive and legislative review. These practices have required manipulation of the government through clandestine techniques such as disinformation and destruction of incriminating documents.

In short, a covert structure hidden in legal entities that can conduct whatever activity it wants in the name of national security is not bound to obey the laws of the United States. McCoy goes on to explain:

As its most troubling legacy, the CIA's psychological method, with its legitimating scientific patina and avoidance of obvious physical brutality, has provided, for the past forty years, a pretext for the preservation of torture as an acceptable practice within the U.S. intelligence community.

Once adopted, torture is so powerfully seductive in its illusion of impact that its perpetrators, high and low, remain wedded to its use, refusing, in defiance of evidence and rationality, to recognize its limited utility and high political costs. At least twice during the Cold War, the CIA's torture training would contribute to destabilization and de-legitimizing of two key American allies, Marcos and the Shah. *Yet the CIA, seduced by the scientific aura of its all-powerful weapon, could not see that its psychological torture method was destroying the allies it was designed to defend. [My italics.]*

McCoy details the process codifying — almost making bureaucratic — the practice of torture through its “Counterintelligence Interrogation” manual in 1963 and then disseminating the practice to police in Asia, Latin America, and Central America. Following a ten-year hiatus at the end of the Cold War, the U.S. intelligence community, led by the CIA, revived the use of torture as a weapon against Al Qaeda in the War on Terror. There is, therefore, a striking similarity in interrogation methods used by both American and allied security agencies from Vietnam in the 1960s, to Central America in the 1980s, all the way to Afghanistan and Iraq since 2001.

Torture spread globally with the proliferation of U.S. training programs and then receded when America turned resolutely against the practice with the end of the Cold War. In its pursuit of torturers across the globe for the past forty years, Amnesty International has been, in a certain sense, following the trail of CIA torture-training programs.

Weeks before this publication went to print, the International Committee of the Red Cross charged in confidential reports to the United States government that the American military was intentionally using psychological and sometimes physical coercion “tantamount to torture” on prisoners at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.¹⁸

It was the first time that the Red Cross, which has been conducting visits to Guantánamo since January 2002, asserted in such strong terms that the treatment of detainees, both physical and psychological, amounted to torture. The report said that another confidential report in January 2003, which was never disclosed, raised questions of whether “psychological torture” was taking place.¹⁹

The Red Cross said publicly thirteen months ago that the system of keeping detainees indefinitely without allowing them to know their fate was unacceptable and would lead to mental health problems.

The report of the June visit said investigators had found a system devised to break the will of the prisoners at Guantánamo, who now number about five hundred fifty, and make them wholly dependent on their interrogators through “humiliating acts, solitary confinement, temperature extremes, use of forced positions.” Investigators said that the methods used were increasingly “more refined and repressive” than learned about on previous visits.

“The construction of such a system, whose stated purpose is the production of intelligence, cannot be considered other than an intentional system of cruel, unusual, and degrading treatment and a form of torture,” the report said. It said that in addition to the exposure to loud and persistent noise and music and to prolonged cold, detainees were subjected to “some beatings.” The report did not say how many of the detainees were subjected to such treatment.



The team of humanitarian workers, which included experienced medical personnel, also asserted that some doctors and other medical workers at Guantánamo were participating in planning for interrogations, in what the report called “a flagrant violation of medical practices.”

The Bush administration sharply rejected the report. The public yawned. Since the end of World War II, one of the preoccupations of many academics was whether the German people knew about the concentration camps and especially the systematic annihilation of the Jews.²⁰ One day, will academics ask to what degree were ordinary Americans concerned about the torture being meted out to detainees on Guantánamo Bay, a concentration camp established by their government, when their media reported the findings of the Red Cross and other international human rights and humanitarian bodies that detainees were being tortured? Did they simply accept at face value their government’s dismissal of such charges and get on with their lives saying there is nothing we can do? Or did they simply not give a damn?

One of McCoy’s most telling points is that democracies have real difficulty dealing with torture. The media and the American public have been willing to blame a few bad apples rather than admit that many of the standard methods are, under the UN convention, a form of torture. But McCoy reminds us that,

After September 11, there was a surprisingly public debate, with little dissent, to reach a consensus that torture was now an acceptable tactic in the War on Terror — a tactic that would be used selectively on a few Al Qaeda leaders. But we have seen an epidemic of abuse was the result.

McCoy raises questions that cry for a serious debate. But neither George Bush nor John Kerry raised the issue of Abu Graib during the campaign. And for the next four years with the Executive and Congress in Republican hands, there will be little discussion.

For the Arab world, Abu Graib, so graphically captured in the photographs of sexual humiliation, degradation, dehumanization of a dead man, denial of Allah, faith, culture, and religion, is an explosive depiction, now imprinted on their psyche, an abomination of their humanness, an invasion of their inner selves at the core of their beings and at the connection to eternity. It evokes in the collective subconscious their victimhood at the hands of the West, collective humiliation, and depersonalization. It is now part of the collective myth that sustains suicide bombers across the Middle East.

Remembering History

Many of our current global predicaments suggest that we are trapped by our history — World War I, the war fought among the great powers themselves on behalf of imperialism and colonization left us with a legacy that we cannot escape. The “Great War” sowed the seeds of fascism and National Socialism and precipitated World War II. It also created a plethora of new countries that unraveled seventy years later. Indeed, it is ironic that just as the great powers used the Berlin Conference in 1885 to carve Africa into geographical entities called countries, artificial creations with artificial borders, the Treaty of Versailles carved artificial countries out of the remnants of the Ottoman Empire. They fell apart seventy years later, and we are left with a hodge-podge of artificial entities created for the sole purpose of balancing the size of different ethnic groups to minimize the possibility of conflict rather than to settle ethno/national disputes. We are a little jolted to learn that events in Europe in

the twentieth century may have their roots in events of the fourteenth century.

Britain's mishandling of the Palestinian Mandate created the mess that is the Middle East today. At the root of every conflict in the region is the Palestinian question, which has become the common expression of grievances against the West.

In the opening years of the Cold War, the United States engineered the murder of Muhanned Mossaddeq, Iran's first democratically elected prime minister, because he might create a socialist state and align Iran with the Soviet Union. It reinstated the Shah, who had been deposed in 1947 and allowed him to rule with an iron fist, modernizing and repressing at the same time. The Shah was a staunch ally of the United States until his overthrow by the Islamic revolution inspired by the Ayatollah Khomeini. Khomeini was vehemently anti-American and intent on spreading the Islamic revolution to other Muslim states, which he believed had betrayed Islam.

Attempting to depose the Ayatollah, the United States sided with Iraq in the brutal war between Iraq and Iran. It financed Saddam Hussein's military, provided the hardware — including anthrax — and thus ensured his survival. Donald Rumsfeld, then Ronald Reagan's envoy, met with Saddam in December 1988 and with Tariq Aziz, then Iraq Foreign Minister, on March 24, 1984, the day on which the UN released its report on Iraq's use of poison gas against Iranian troops. Training in the use of chemical and biological agents had been provided to Iraq as early as the 1960s. Now the United States has deposed him.

In Afghanistan it financed the *mujahideen* in order to undermine the Soviet occupation; and with the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, elements of the *mujahideen*, assumed power. In response to the rule of the warlords, the Taliban, radical Islamic militants, overthrew the *mujahideen* and established a theocratic state. After 9/11 the Taliban was crushed by the United States because of its links to Bin Laden. The United States created Bin Laden, used him, discarded him, tried to capture him after he declared a *jihad* on the United States in 1998, had him in their sights, lost him, and the rest is yet another version of history.²¹

On the broader spectrum, there is the relationship between history writing and forms of power:

There are two broad forms of history writing [writes Mamdani], nationalist and meta nationalist. If nationalist history has been mainly about giving the nation — a very modern and contemporary subject — an identifiable and often glorious past, metanationalist writings have given us equally glorified civilizational histories, locating the nation in a global context . . . Today the most commonly used world map [Mercator] has Western Europe at its center.

India a subcontinent, Southeast Asia has no status, and Africa may as well not exist. The globe delineated in projections that reflect the West as the epicenter.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that most of the literature on conflict resolution and most of the think tanks that devote their energies to conflict prevention are in western countries. They address issues of global security in terms of *their* perceptions of the impact of other state or quasi-state actors on western interests. Invariably the “spin” commentators giving us the “inside” analysis of what is happening in either potential or actual conflict situations are from the West. Thus, the absurdity of western commentators analyzing the mindsets of state and quasi-state actors without the codebooks to decipher the labyrinthine ways in which they think. “Civilization” has become a one-way street, with unpaved side roads wandering into the wilderness of others.

In “Ethnic Cleansing in World War II Yugoslavia,” Paul Bookbinder examines



historical antecedents to some aspects of ethnic cleansing that became an endemic, demonical feature of life in the Balkans in the 1990s. His conclusions are, as we would expect from an outstanding academic, rational and persuasive: With a new awareness of the consequences of ethnic hatred, people can study their own histories cleansed of myth and nationalist delusions so that wars that unleash ethnic violence can be stopped before these excesses erupt. But rationality itself is problematic. It raises the question, whose rationality? The western mindset finds the behavior of a suicide bomber irrational. Many Islamists do not.

History is biased in favor of the victor. So we have “official” histories and “remembered” histories. The latter incite conflicts, the former record them. The former change history, the latter provide the textbook for expressing the grievances of history, but each grievance is recorded by historians of different persuasions whose dispositions to interpret history is itself determined in part by their own life and culture and relative norms. Hence the questions: whose history? Whose rationality? Whose values?

Fragmentation: Divided Societies

The Balkans is not the only quilt work of nations squeezed piecemeal into countries. Across Central Asia, from the Caucasus to the China Sea there are volatile spots. Chechnya has all the hallmarks of becoming the next Palestine, absorbing whatever residue of resentments Muslims may harbor.

In the Russian Federation, numerous minority ethnic groups are in subordinate positions vis-à-vis the titular nationality or majority ethnic group. The non-Russian Slavic states are also characterized by ethnic conflicts with economic and political overtones – the Ukraine, Moldova, and even Belarus would be subject to ethno territorial claims and boundary issues, were it not for the dictatorial hand of President Lukashenka.

The South Caucasus are replete with volatile issues of self-determination. And Central Asia – Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan — is riddled with similar issues among states and within states. In the latter four “stans” there is an estimated 100 billion barrels of oil and 250 trillion cubic feet of gas. The Russian government lacks the capital needed to lift and export this energy.²² During the Clinton administration, the policy was to “promote the independence of these oil rich countries, to break Russia’s monopoly control over the transportation of oil from the region . . . [to] promote Western energy security through diversification of supply.”²³ Not precisely the plan Russia has in mind. Resource conflicts will dominate the decades ahead.²⁴

Nicholas Haysom’s essay, “Nation Building & Constitution Making,” examines the range of constitutional measures available to address intractable armed conflicts in societies divided along the fault lines of race, religion, ethnicity, language, and region. Even where such identity conflicts have not taken on a violent form they serve to prevent the emergence of interest-based politics in multicultural societies. The political systems in such nation-states — and their national constitutions — must address the way in which multiple identities coexist with an inclusive national polity, coexist alongside a national identity. This challenge is one that faces not only new democracies but also older ones whose constitutions no longer reflect the relationships that the nation desires. This is all the more important as the twenty-first century witnesses ever more strident assertions of identity in the face of globalization’s uniformity.

Individual pluralism, Haysom argues — the solution offered by liberal democracy — is not always an answer to identity conflicts, because the *conditions for actualizing* individual pluralism simply do not exist in many divided societies. At the same time, nation-states do not want to constitutionalize “difference” by segmenting society into ethnic or cultural groups. This reluctance is due to fears of inter-ethnic violence, an unwillingness to rigidly and permanently enshrine boundaries among citizens, or to fears of secession and civil war.

One response to the challenge of multiculturalism in a divided society is to ameliorate the “winner-take-all,” adversarial features of liberal democracy in order to make the functioning of a multiparty democracy more inclusive. This approach places emphasis on greater participation, stakeholding by minorities in the political system, albeit through ethnically neutral institutions. Federalism is also a way of promoting greater stakeholding by minorities because it, too, allows ethnically supported parties that do not garnish much support in national elections to be regional winners in sub-national units.

Hope Springs Eternal

For the Arab world, the failure to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the continuing embargo against Iraq are sources of resentment that damage confidence in the sincerity of western discourse and the coherence of our values. A disproportionate and prolonged attack against Afghanistan, coupled with even the vague possibility of using the fight against terrorism for other purposes, or the misperception that everything Islamic is dangerous, could have dramatic consequences on our relations with the Islamic population in Europe.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict, too, had its origins in World War I, but in its present form the conflict dates from the 1967 Arab-Israeli war when Israel seized the occupied territories. The conflict encapsulates the overlapping of political Islam and the politics of Islam, between the ideology of Zionism and the existence of a secular Israeli state. The essence of the problem is simplicity itself: the Israelis want to establish a secure state; the Palestinians want national self-determination. To the rational mind it appears the most negotiable of propositions: the Israelis cannot achieve their objective without conceding a Palestinian state, the Palestinians cannot secure their state without conceding the security of the Israeli state. The two objectives appear complementary.

In “Formulas for Partition,” Mahdi Abdul Hadi traces the history of the partition formula since the Steel Commission in 1937, and in his analysis we would be well advised to have the international community address the conflict understanding there is no solution or even a settlement in the near future upon which the protagonists themselves can agree. The Jews in Israel understandably come from a perspective that says, “Never again.” But they have squandered their moral capital. Israeli military actions, whether or not seen as defensive, repeatedly manifest the human propensity for the oppressed to become the oppressor. On the other hand, the indiscriminate action of Hamas, the civilian toll in Israel from suicide bombings, justify to the Israeli public whatever retaliatory actions the state sanctions — an eye for an eye until the blind stumble in their futile rage to find their sightless enemies.

The context for a Middle East settlement is no longer regional, but global. Heribret Adam argues that even if there is consensus on a two-state solution, it is doubtful whether it would lead to a stable outcome after the two states were

established. He asks whether the lessons learned from the South African negotiated settlement can be applied to the conflict.

“The ongoing tragedy in Israel-Palestine has yet to be properly named.” He concludes, “The antagonists don’t even agree whether the conflict is between two nationalisms, as Zionists assert, or amounts to liberation from settler colonialism, as Palestinians state.” Modern apartheid as a mobilizing label does not fit. The differences outweigh the similarities. Palestinians who insist that “Israeli apartheid” must be fought with the same methods as the successful anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa are not realistic. The lesson of the South Africa compromise is “Only when people come to grips with their past truthfully; when they no longer feel humiliated; when they can realistically envision security, recognition, respect, and economic improvements, will they be ready to embrace radical alternatives. Overcoming intolerance depends on diminished threat perceptions and optimistic expectations on both sides in a win-win situation.”

Although disparate movements have rallied around Maudhood Abbas, the former Palestinian Prime Minister to succeed Yassir Arafat as head of the PLO, Arafat’s death, nevertheless, has created a power vacuum that may take years to work its torturous way through subcultures of allegiances, the ravages of *intifada*, repression, dispossession, and dependency that generations of life in stateless, refugee camps has bred among the Palestinian people. The one man who might have the charisma and the cross-factional credentials to unite the disparate elements within the Palestinian struggle, Marwan Barghouti, lies in an Israeli prison. The Israeli occupation has ensured the ungovernability of a Palestinian state, leaving aside the absence of an economic base, no prerequisites for sustainable development, and an endemic culture of violence. On the other hand, the Israeli preoccupation with security, with their sense of vindication post-9/11, argues, as does the Wall, which continues to be erected despite international censure, for a hardening of attitudes. Why do more than utter the usual platitudes about negotiations when your enemies are busily engaged in the business of self-elimination?

The problem that bedevils every effort to move the process, David Matz writes, is that the “rejectionists,” (the extremes on both sides,) cripple the center. Since neither the Palestinians nor Israelis are capable of restraining their rejectionists nor willing to do so, a “solution” that assumes local governments are able to confront their rejectionists will fail. Matz proposes “the formation of an international intervention coalition prepared to agree on and announce several principles,” followed by

... several steps, all taken at the same time. There must be strong, and, to the extent possible, highly visible efforts to cut the blood lines for both the settlers and the terrorists. There must be energetic pressures placed on Israeli and Palestinian governments to take on their rejectionists, complete with offers of direct assistance. There must be guidelines for each government indicating the steps each should take to confront its own rejectionists, and a clear report indicating whether or not the government is adhering to those guidelines. This last is a tool to be used as part of the coalition’s larger effort (using diplomatic and economic tools) to encourage each side to produce a government willing to confront rejectionists and finish the peace negotiation.

The essays on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict were written some time before Arafat’s death. Their strength lies in their continuing relevance: the belief that the conflict, which is so historically rooted, is itself part of the national identity of both Palestinians and Israelis. The politics of both are so fractured that neither can mold a consensus among their own people. Can the death of one-man sideline history or

move it in a new direction?

Adam, Hadi, and Matz do not offer hope, but pragmatism. But pragmatism, like much else in the Middle East is in short supply. They are not of the opinion that if the United States “leaned” on Israel, all would be well with the world. What comes through clearly from their texts is that in the present circumstances and in the foreseeable future, no settlement is viable because the region is so unstable. Given the zones that the extremes occupy, any process of negotiation can easily be obviated by a single series of violence and retaliation. Thus, negotiations, if at all possible, must be undertaken with the understanding that violence will continue. The lessons of South Africa are pertinent here: over 10,000 Africans were killed in violence between 1990 and 1994, from the release of Mandela until elections were held, more than were killed in the previous two decades by the apartheid security forces.

The Muslim ‘Other’

In his book “Good Muslim Bad Muslim: America, The Cold War & The Roots of Terror,” Mahmood Mamdani examines not Muslim values, but American ones. The reductionist politics of “good and evil” practiced by the Reagan administration — and now Bush administrations — and a succession of proxy wars conflated means and ends and militant nationalism with terrorism. Often unable to juxtapose Christian fundamentalism and political Christianity, it is harder put to juxtapose Islamic fundamentalism and political Islam. In a presidential campaign, the most eagerly followed by the international community with issues of war and peace at stake, the wedge issue was moral values — the candidates’ positions on abortion, same sex marriage, and stem cell research.

In *Islam & the West: At the Crossroads* Chris Patten cogently argues that Sam Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” is at best a special case scenario of relations between the Muslim world and the Judeo/Christian West, an eventuality that depends on the triumph of the extremes. Extensive data indicate that the Arab world is not mad at Americans, but at American policies, that Arab countries aspire to values similar to those close to American hearts, albeit often much discarded in the policies their governments pursue. This contradiction between what America purports to stand for and how it behaves is the cause of the damning reactions it evokes in large parts of the Muslim world — and elsewhere.

Muslims are already an integral part of Europe — there are about four million in France, two and a half million in Germany, one and three quarter million in the UK. Now the EU is set to consider Turkey’s application for membership, which will undoubtedly be approved. Turkey’s membership in the European club will transform the nature of the Union. With the infusion of 80 million Muslims, Christian and Muslim worlds will be joined in political wedlock, but not the happiest of marriages without fundamental attitudinal changes and cultural reorientations in both the West and Turkey. Nevertheless, a truly historic moment is in the making.

For the EU there are huge strategic dividends — a reliable ally in the border zone between Islam and the West who can “interpret” the Muslim world, securing energy supplies as well as controlling the Bosphorus straits through which five thousand oil tankers pass every year and the pipeline that brings oil to Europe from the Caucasus. Turkey’s accession would show that religion is not a factor in determining EU membership, that Europe is not a bastion of Christian values. And, if Turkey is not admitted then these presumed fault lines will become real and the world a more



dangerous place. Strategic interests aside, the assimilation of Turkey, free movement of labor, larger Muslim enclaves within member countries will, if the experiences of the present are any guide, create huge social problems, unleash racism, provide fodder for the political right, and bring Europe, especially Germany, France, Austria, Denmark, and Holland, where there is strong opposition to Turkey's admission on the grounds that it will destroy the infrastructure of shared values and traditions that provides the EU with the glue holding it together. For all the trappings of diversity, inclusiveness, and multiculturalism, Europe would always do well to remember its colonial history, its troubled past, and the subcultures of fascism and racial superiority that still compete for the attention of the national mainstream.

We forget how widely the Muslim world is dispersed: three quarters of its 1.2 billion citizens live beyond the countries of the Arab League, in, for example, the democracies of Malaysia, Indonesia, and India. Thus to think of the Muslim world as a monolith poised to launch a *jihad* against the advance of Western civilization is, argues Patten, ludicrous. Of course, no one denies the existence of Islamic extremism, epitomizing the quasi-state. But Islamic extremists have no monopoly on extremism.

According to Joseph Maïla, Director of the Peace Research Centre at the Institut Catholique de Paris, in an article in *Le Monde*, "the terrorist attacks are the work of groups, networks, and individuals from which the great majority of Muslims distance themselves, including (and this should be underlined) many of those whom we call Islamist." We must try to deal with perceived threat in ways that do not "construe it as a response to a universal threat," thus "transforming a specific challenge into a universal war." Hardly the way in which the United States appears to *want* to do business.

Greg Mills agrees with Patten's contention that "the clash of civilizations" has to be taken seriously. Of particular importance, he writes, is how Muslim states themselves contain radicalism, of which terrorism, as defined by the modestly non-West aligned Muslim regimes, is but a particular manifestation.

On the question of democracy, the United States, Mills tells us, is decidedly two faced. On the one hand, it wishes to "export" democracy to non democratic countries, arguing that the values it embodies — the rule of law, equity, equality, and government by the people — is the best antidote to the incubation of terrorism. Hence, "democracy" for Afghanistan and next for Iraq to "free and fair elections," or, as in the case of Afghanistan, "sufficiently" fair and free. On the other hand, it has few qualms supporting clearly authoritarian regimes in places like Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, both Muslim countries with secular governments. Both are highly repressive, with state control of the media and the judicial system, and both are characterized by large-scale abuses of human rights. Both are supported by the United States because they provide bases for the United States military in Central Asia.

On this issue — the export of western forms of democracy to others — participants in the EPIIC forum were virtually unanimous in their opinion that democracy as practiced in the West cannot be successfully exported to other countries with different traditions of governance, stages of economic and social development, cultural norms, and paths of historical evolution. But despite the immense logistical problems, threats from the Taliban Afghanis, with the approval of their warlords and tribal scions, went to the polls and elected Hamid Karzai

President. Karzai was inaugurated on December 7, 2004, to preside over a country wracked by ethnic divisions, a devastated infrastructure, looming threats from a persistent Taliban insurgency, and an economy where the opium trade accounts for 60 percent of GDP and three-quarters of global supply. Karzai is the country's "narcocratic" President.

Pervez Musharraf, the President of Pakistan, is the former Chief of Staff of the Pakistan Defense Forces who seized power in 1999, ousting the democratically elected government. Since that time there have been periodic "demands" from the West for elections and a return to parliamentary democracy. But a fractious and sectarian political campaign among parties ranging from the hard-line Islamists to neo-liberals to American-style neo-cons would greatly destabilize Pakistan and doubtless aid Al Qaeda and its allies.

At present, Pakistan is the coal face of the war on terror, the Pakistani military have penetrated into the unforgiving and heretofore largely inaccessible corridors in the Torabora straddling Pakistan and Afghanistan, supposedly weeding out bin Laden and Al Qaeda. Agents of the Pakistani intelligence, the Inter Services Intelligence of Pakistan (ISI), have penetrated terrorist networks. No one questions what methods the Pakistani military, once supporters of the Taliban, uses as it now stalks the remnants of the Taliban in the Torabora, and no one calls for accountability. Respect for the rule of law does not get in the way of the tactics used to squeeze information out of not so co-operating Pashtuns. But then, again, it would be concepts of our rule of law, hardly the *Sharia* law the local population ascribes to. Indeed, in the Faustian bargains struck for indefinable goals, Pakistan occupies an apocryphal position: at one time ally of bin Laden, now hunter; at one time dispenser of nuclear secrets, now nuclear watchdog.

A cauldron of contradictions with the Saudis stirring the pot. Thus Musharraf tries to simultaneously balance Islamic radicalization, poverty, corruption, and poor regional relations while civilianizing his government:

A tall order for any leader, [Mills writes] let alone one trying to walk the fine balance between keeping onside with the United States and maintaining legitimacy at home. As he put it in July 2004, "Muslim states are seen as the source of terrorism," warning of new "depths of chaos and despair" and of more "terrorism and an impending clash of civilisations" if the West, particularly the United States, and Muslim countries fail to eradicate the root causes of anger and resentment. . . .²⁵

Dealing with the post-9/11 brand of Islamic terrorism will take at least a generation. Military means can remove leaders but, as Iraq as shown, at best they will struggle to win the peace. In Pakistan, attempts to confront Islamic militants through military clampdowns are complicated by the self-governing system outside of Islamabad's control in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). As the violent response to the Army's 2004 operations in Wana and Wazeristan also illustrates, there is considerable local sympathy for Al Qaeda and other far-right religious groups in these tribal frontiers known as the *ilaga ghair* — lawless country — to local Pathans.

A number of Pakistan's Islamic parties are dedicated to the stricter enforcement of Islamic Sharia law. These include *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi*, a Sunni Islamist militant group banned in 2001 because of alleged links to Al Qaeda. A similar fate befell *Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan* after the Sunni movement reportedly commenced a programme to recruit 50,000 suicide bombers. So has the militant Shi'a group *Tehrik-e-Jafria-e-Pakistan*.

Both moderates and extremists claim the legacy of Pakistan's founder Mohammed Ali

Jinnah, with radicals claiming that he wanted to build an Islamic state. Musharraf has to overturn the direct legacy of Major-General Zia ul Haq who ruled Pakistan from 1977 to 1988, and who introduced Islamic principles in most aspects of Pakistani life.

Again, in one of the wonderful ironies of the unintended consequences of U.S. foreign policy's twists and turns in the prevailing winds of its narrow definition of national self-interest, Zia had the full support of the United States because he aggressively supported America's covert war to oust the Soviets from Afghanistan. The *mujahideen* fighters needed for the war were groomed in his *madaris* and recruited to the struggle.

Former U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, denounced Pakistan's *madaris* as being "breeding grounds for terrorists."²⁶ "No wonder," writes Mills, "that Musharraf has said that his country is involved in a 'greater jihad (*jihad-e-akbar*) . . . a jihad against illiteracy, a jihad against poverty, backwardness, hunger."²⁷

There are 1.7 million students in Pakistan's 10,430 *madaris*.²⁸ Many of them get drawn in for the food aid offered to students, with a bountiful supply of recruits for militant causes given the economic conditions in much of South Asia. As Musharraf has put it, "They feed and house the poorest of the poor children."²⁹ In this way, poverty can cause terrorism.

Accordingly, when radicalization has a social dimension, analysis should not discount both the extent of religious ideological content and the organization behind it. This is what regional conflict specialists describe as "spiritual poverty." And in Kashmir, potential nuclear drop dead spot for both Pakistan and India, Musharraf, with his ties to the military elite is in a far better position to negotiate with India than a democratically elected country in which we mistake the trappings of democracy — a country much of which lives in the feudal age, albeit one replete with cell phones and the paraphernalia of western culture.

Whither Africa?

On the opposite side of the globe in Nigeria, a democratic state with elected born-again-Christian President Olusegun Obasanjo (also a former general) struggles to hold his country together. Faced with Muslims in the north trying to enforce *Sharia* law, endemic communal violence, religious fault lines, and competing warlords, his task is daunting and democracy essentially a matter of trappings, albeit a decidedly better tapestry than the brutal dictatorship of military rule. But ethnicity governs. In the Niger delta, the center of oil production, the Ijaw militia, Niger People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), threatens secession, sending the price of crude spiraling in New York every time rebel leader Mujahid Dokubo-Asari opens his mouth. The Ijaw are Nigeria's fifth largest ethnic group with a presence in five of the country's oil rich southern provinces. In the last three years, fighting between rival Christian and Muslim groups in Plateau State, which lies in Nigeria's central belt — the fault line between the Muslim north and Christian south — has claimed 54,000 lives, one third of them children. Anarchy reigns in the state of Anambra, in eastern Nigeria, where political assassinations are commonplace. Transparency International ranks Nigeria as the third most corrupt country in the world (an improvement over last year's second place finish.) The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) is poised to call a general strike to protest rising domestic fuel prices. Despite its huge oil wealth and position as Africa's top oil producing country, Nigeria has to import oil because of the appalling state of its four oil refineries.

Cleavages between Christians and Muslims have increased after a dozen states in the North extended Sharia law from civil to criminal matters. The hope that the return to constitutional rule in 1999 would yield a peace dividend has not been fulfilled. Institutions are weak. Much of the country does not receive basic public services; the needs of ethnic minorities are ignored. Wole Soyinka believes his country is falling apart.


In Sudan, of course, the twenty-two-year-old civil war, although formally ended, continues to simmer, and Darfur has become the symbol of the powerlessness of international institutions to act decisively to curtail the killing of Africans by other Africans.

In the power shifts of the world, either in terms of population or economic performance, Africa for the foreseeable future will remain at the bottom rung of every developmental ladder. Although the African Union (AU) offers much promise, its capacity to deliver on those promises remains constrained by the old conflicts, corruption, chronic underdevelopment, and in Sub Sahara Africa, disease, drought, poverty, non sustainable development, and marginalization from mainstream global economic activity. Sudan, Liberia, the DRC, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Burundi, all either major sources of conflict, emerging from conflict into fragile peace, veneers of democracy or outright autocracy, large areas of territory beyond the pale of governance, warlords, staggering burdens of poverty — ten of millions living on less than \$1.00 a day, failed states by every yardstick. The strategically important, that is countries with mineral or oil producing potential, will receive some help from USAID and the EU, direct foreign investment (DFI) will continue to flow to the East.

“From Dictatorship and War to Democracy: Alternative Future for the DRC,” is Claude Kambuya Kabemba’s account of the DRC’s slow, tentative emergence from a war that some estimates suggest may have resulted in four million deaths, the biggest war in Africa’s history, engaging armies from nine African countries that was ignored in the West. A bombing in Belfast claiming one life is news; whatever happens in Africa cannot be worse than what is expected. The likes of South Africa’s Thabo Mbeki rails, cajoles, pleads in the forums of global power, is listened to, sympathetically, of course, and sent on his way with the message: when Africa starts reforming itself aid will flow — one of the Catch 22s that enable the club of rich nations to avoid a straightforward, albeit complex question: will it ever make a commitment to provide the resources, aid, expertise, open markets to African products that might jumpstart sustainable development?

The answer is no, it probably won’t. Already facing huge cuts in social welfare including public old-age pensions and health benefits, and the migration of people from poorer new EU member states, the countries of Western Europe have large problems of their own. And all this does not augur well for a positive response to requests that they dig deep into their pockets to help what seems to them to be a continent still unable to govern itself, still filled with corruption — being asked to help it out of the bottomless pit of poverty to which fate seems to have consigned it.

The only solution to the perennial crisis of the state in the DRC lies in the reinvention of the political economy of the country: It lies, in other words, in the creation of institutional use of resources which would ensure equitable distribution across provinces and populations. This would mean Congolese would have to put the national interest before external interests, which has never been the case since independence. This would mean Congolese taking control of their resources together. This would require a visionary and



committed leadership. How this would happen in the presence of powerful forces of globalization remains to be seen. External input is necessary to sustain peace and foster democratic transition. But what would maintain peace in the DRC is a different approach to politics — one that transcends the limits inherent in a style of governance that is largely informal, private, and highly centralized. Congolese must first accept that democracy is above all. This presupposes a notion of justice that is centered on the principle of impartiality. Rules must become ends in themselves in the DRC. They cannot be bent or ignored without penalties. This is a call for the creation of a Congolese society with strong values and strong procedures.

But it also presupposes a civil society where vast tracts of the national territory remain inaccessible and public administration is absent. Only militias hold things together, and warlords exercise authority in their fiefdoms.

“A civil society needs to be built very quickly,” Kabemba rightfully observes, but in the end it is one more wish on a long list of needs, easy to articulate, almost impossible to do much about for decades. And “linked to a weak civil society is the weakness of political parties. Most political parties are ethnic-based.”

None of the Congolese political parties can claim an organized following. They have no plan for the reconstruction of the Congolese state and economy. Their discussion usually revolves around the advantages of their sharing or taking power.

Generally, Congo has a problem with its leadership. Congolese politicians seek power through whatever means are deemed expedient. In general, personalities tend to dominate parties that do not cooperate. The danger is that in an effort to secure their own political survival these personalities, which have no political base, might prefer to scarify the interests of the Congolese people by retreating from democracy and instead maintain the status quo.

The colonial experience, Mobutu legacy, the destruction caused by five years of war, ethnicity, regional and international imperatives, the vast territory of the DRC, the lack of infrastructure, and the country’s abundant resources could only contribute to the weakening of the state if citizens fail to find consensus on governance issues.

Ironically, perhaps Africa’s best hope of becoming an item on the West’s agenda is predicated to some degree on its leaders being able to “convince” the United States that its further deterioration and alarming levels of relative deprivation might make its vast and difficult to access territories a haven for terrorists from other countries and the usual “breeding ground” for new terrorists.

In “Africa and the War on Terror,” Eddy Maloka postulates that the continent’s oil (6 percent of the world’s total oil reserves) is the source, perhaps the sole source, of U.S. interest. The top four African oil producers are Nigeria, Angola, Gabon, and the Congo Republic. Chad, Equatorial Guinea, and Sudan are coming oil producers with potential. Nigeria is the fifth largest crude oil exporter to America after Canada, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, and Venezuela. Angola is ninth. “One thing that is very clear,” he writes, “is that the strategic interests of the West determine donor enthusiasm more than mere moral outrage against hunger and deprivation. . . .”

We must come to terms with the reality of our situation that, for now, we do not matter to the West; we will not receive huge sums of money to grow our economies, develop our private sector, strengthen our institutions, provide a social safety net for the vulnerable, and build roads, schools and clinics Depending on the West to build our future is like planning a harvest entirely upon the whims of rainfall.

Genocide/ Politicide & Mass Murder

The twentieth century was a century of mass killings and three genocides.

Beginning with the Armenian genocide (1915-18), in which 1.5 million Armenians were exterminated by the Turks, the Holocaust (1941-45) in which six million Jews were exterminated by the Germans and the Rwanda genocide (1993-94) in which 800,000 Tutsi were exterminated by the Hutu. Sandwiched between the two we had the mass civilian killings in Sudan 1956-72; (two million) Nigeria (1966-70) one million, 1972), Cambodia (1982), the DRC (1997-2003).

Genocides do not happen by happenstance. They are planned, the conditions carefully nurtured until hatred empties itself into the cauldron of murder. They pass through identifiable stages: All cultures have categories to distinguish people into “us and them” by ethnicity, race, religion, or nationality: We give names or symbols to the classifications. On the slide to genocide, classification and symbolization are used as instruments of dehumanization. When combined with hatred, symbols may be forced upon unwilling members of pariah groups: the yellow star for Jews under Nazi rule, the blue scarf for people from the Eastern Zone in Khmer Rouge Cambodia.

Only rapid and overwhelming armed intervention can stop genocide.

The twenty-first century has opened with a debate over what constitutes genocide. In April this year, the tenth anniversary of the Rwanda genocide we gathered in solemn ceremonies and somber rituals to remind ourselves that we would never let the likes of it happen again. On that nefarious occasion the world watched as an estimated 800,000 Tutsi were massacred by their brothers and sisters, friends and neighbors, fellow citizens in less than one hundred days. Aid agencies and NGOs saw what was happening, but no country stepped forward to fulfill its obligations under the 1948 Genocide Convention and intervene to stop the killing.

But even as we were beating our breasts in *mea culpas*, with the UN itself leading the chest-thumping “never again” was in fact happening in Sudan, in Darfur. Yes, the U.S. Congress actually passed a resolution calling the massacres of Africans by Arab militia genocide, but then backed away: there are genocides and then again, there are genocides. Deciding which genocide meets the technical criteria for being, well, a *real* genocide that would mandate an intervention to stop it is a matter for the genocide technocrats who hold international conferences to establish more clarity before making an official finding.

And the UN passed a motion giving the Sudanese government thirty days to disarm the *Janjaweed*, the Arab militias raping, pillaging, looting, scorching the parched earth and massacring to clear the region of its rebellious African population. Meanwhile, *only* 30,000 people have been murdered, one million are refugees, all the while NGOs, assorted aid agencies, governments’ observer teams calling it the “world’s worst humanitarian crisis.” We stood still once again, watching from the sidelines, spectators in the Great Massacre Coliseum placing wagers: Would this be a real genocide or only an itty-bitty one. Might we have to intervene? Perhaps. But who is “we”? Yes, Koffi Annan got into the act and Colin Powell followed suit and every night the harrowed and hunted faces of African women with children in tow straddling the horizon on the long walk to parched earth in Chad stare out at us from our TV screens, silhouettes of the *Janjaweed* on their panting horses galloping into the fading background.

Now, of course, the rains have come and the food relief trucks bog down in mud and sunken roads and disease starts to reap its own grim havoc. Did we have enough



time to anticipate what was going to happen? Of course. Did it make a difference? Not really, or only in the sense that learning from the mistakes of the past, governments quickly got on record as saying that Darfur was a genocide waiting to happen — and passed the buck. Of course, we all know that Khartoum is incapable of bringing the *Janjaweed* to heel, never mind disarming it, and we cluck in disapproval as Khartoum tries to hide as expeditiously as possible large segments of some elements of the Arab militias in the security forces that will, yes, you've guessed, protect Africans from marauding militias. Putting the fox in charge of the chicken coop. Moreover, the *Janjaweed* are not a homogenous lot, the Sudanese has lost control over some and others have their own agendas. "Since they turned it on they can turn it" Colin Powell intoned. *How naïve was this man?*

"Sudan's rulers are gambling they will have to do very little, and they may win their bet," the *Economist* editorialized. "The country's size and turbulence deters all but the most ardent interventionists."³⁰ The hatred the U.S. invasion of Iraq has engendered across wide swaths of the Muslim world complicates peacekeeping intervention. Khartoum astutely plays the card, calling on its people to fight to the death foreigners who would invade the country. In the mosques, the mullahs call for *jihad*.

Months have passed since I wrote the preceding paragraphs. An accommodating intervention has yet to be arrived at. The killing goes on, more measured and less obvious because the TV cameras have called it a day and moved to new killing grounds in search of fresh imagery to rescue us from atrocity fatigue. And again, we have to ask whether there is any hope for an internationally agreed policy of intervention to protect civilians that would transcend "selfish foreign policies"? Time, the West mutters, for the African Union (AU) to step up to the plate and prove its mettle, the presumption that a peacekeeping force from the AU would not be perceived as "foreign," more a comment on the racism of the West than historical fact.

New aid calculations put the number of dead at seventy thousand. The Sudanese insisted that they would only agree to African peacekeepers on their soil. The UN seized its moment and dispatched three thousand troops drawn from seven countries to protect the aid workers. Famine, disease, and death became routine.

Nothing is resolved. Some 160,000 refugees have been forcibly removed, access to aid workers denied, talks brokered by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo have given the government and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) until the end of 2004 to reach a settlement that will end the civil war. Separately there are talks on Darfur between Khartoum and the Sudanese Liberation Movement (SLM) and the Justice & Equality Movement (JEM). The best the UN could accomplish was a resolution calling for "a cessation of all violence," in Darfur and an expression of hope that the decentralization provisions in the proposed pact would help to facilitate agreement in Darfur. Meanwhile the killing goes on. A thousand AU peace monitors, a thoroughly inadequate number, are present but impotent. A further two thousand are expected by the end of February 2005. Obasanjo refuses to call the killing genocide.

Indeed, adding another layer of complication is the developing world's increasing unwillingness to accept U.S. declarations of what constitutes abuse of human rights in view of what they perceive as U.S. war crimes in Iraq — the weeks-on-end air strikes on Fallujah, for example, the treatment of prisoners at Guantánamo Bay, indefinite detention of Muslims without charge or access to attorneys, some now for four years, the continued use of interrogation techniques the Red Cross decries as being "close to torture," none of which elicit condemnation from the West.

Any motion brought before the UN for sanctions on Sudan or Zimbabwe will backfire, even evoke anger among African countries, where the West is seen as two faced. The failure of the West to condemn actions of the United States and the failure of the West and the United States to condemn human rights violations in Saudi Arabia because of their dependence on Saudi oil ensures that developing countries will not back the West's attempts to have a developing country censured for supposed human rights violations.³¹ There are no moral inspectors.

These problems are a litany of the familiar. Humanitarian aid becomes a casualty of conflict, one side or another cynically uses the overwhelming need for the assistance to bargain, gain advantage, and divert resources for their own purposes. The rules of aid engagement are cruelly twisted for nefarious purposes. *But we know this will happen.*

Do the Killings in Darfur Constitute Genocide?

According to Alain Destexhe,³² former head of Doctors Without Borders, the word "genocide" has often been used when making comparisons with later massacres throughout the world in order to attract attention by evoking images of the concentration camps and their victims.

The term genocide [he writes] has progressively lost its initial meaning and is becoming dangerously commonplace. In order to shock people and gain their attention to contemporary situations of violence or injustice by making comparisons with murder on the greatest scale known in this century, "genocide" has been used as synonymous with massacre, oppression, and repression, overlooking that what lies behind the image it evokes is the attempted annihilation of the entire Jewish race. . . . The original context is of course religious and means, literally, "a ritual sacrifice wholly consumed by fire." The use of this term has a twofold effect, both mystifying and spectacular, which distorts and denies reality. The inevitable consequences of such misuse of language are a loss of meaning and a distortion of values.

Intrinsic meaning is lost when a word is used so loosely to describe any human disaster with a large number of victims, regardless of the cause. As a further consequence, we arrive at a situation where no individuals are to be singled out as guilty or responsible because blame is laid at the door of historical fate and "unfortunate circumstances," the climate of the time, and sheer bad luck. It would be hard to deny that some form of evil has always existed in the world. But if such evil is seen in general, impersonal terms such as barbarism, "man's inhumanity to man," chance circumstance or plain hatred, then there are no individual culprits at who, an accusing finger can be pointed. On the other hand, if everyone is considered to be somehow involved and therefore somehow responsible, then the picture becomes hazy and guilt and innocence are somehow confused. This so-called collective blame is just another way of denying the facts.

It is clear that the UN cannot agree that this is genocide in part because of the politics of the post-Iraq invasion and occupation and the associated insinuations of pretexts for regime change. Certainly, a resolution of the U.S. Congress condemning the Sudanese government as being the instigators of one raises hackles in Africa, which is predisposed to interpret such a resolution as intended to deflect attention from the U.S. genocide in Iraq, the tortures at Abu Graib, and implicit support of Israel's policies in Gaza and the attempt of the West to impose yet another form of neo colonial control.



Mahmood Mamdani articulates what many African leaders believe: in 1999, UNICEF found that UN sanctions in Iraq had resulted in three hundred thousand “excess deaths” of children under five. Yet the sanctions continued.

Today the United States does not even count the number of Iraqi dead, and the UN has made no attempt to estimate them. Iraq continues to bleed.

These facts should prompt us to ask at least one question: Does the label “worst humanitarian crisis” tell us more about Darfur, or more about those doing the labeling? Can America’s allies commit atrocities with impunity while its adversaries are demonically held accountable to an international standard of human rights?

There is no question that oil has played a role in the international alignment on the Darfur crisis, both for those with access (China) and those who covet it (the United States). But the more strategic point may be political. For official America, Darfur is a grand opportunity to draw Africa into the war on terror by sharply drawing lines that demarcate “Arab” against “Africans” just as this very fact that the crumbling government in Khartoum presents a last opportunity to downplay its own responsibility and call for assistance from those who oppose the “war on terror.”³³

To sidestep difficulties of the kind posed by Mamdani, Allan Ryan argues in “Genocide: What do We Want It To Be?” that we must be *very specific* when we designate acts of violence as actual or potential genocide. One reason is because in the absence of some universally agreed criteria, swift, decisive action by the world community will be deferred, become bogged down in agenda-driven politics, bargaining with the perpetrator, thus legitimizing it rather than having it isolated as a pariah regime, and perpetuating the humanitarian crisis. The corollary to the will in their common situations such as Darfur will result in inaction. To resolve the ambiguities inherent in the definition of genocide in the Genocide Convention, Ryan proposes that we should disregard the motives or objectives of the perpetrator and secondary phenomena, such as dehumanization of the victims and global apathy, and separate genocide from ethnocide. Among his specifications: genocide should require the killing of humans, and in absolutely large numbers; that the victims be objectively identifiable by race, religion, ethnicity, and similar criteria; that they comprise a relatively large proportion of that group in the national or global community; that the state (where there is a state) be a participant; and that legitimate warfare is inconsistent with genocidal conduct.

But agreed definition becomes academic unless it is accompanied with clear and unambiguous actions that will automatically follow.

Failed States

Jonathan Moore puts the crises we face in countries we classify with the stamp of “failed state” in blunt and forceful terms in his essay, “Peace Building in an Inseparable World.”

First, the challenge is prodigious:

A poor country in the aftermath of war is afflicted with multiple problems and vulnerabilities that tend to reinforce each other. To turn them around is a massive task. This is especially true when external factors work against progress rather than in favor of it: a highly competitive and discriminatory international economy, a widening gap between the haves and have-nots, technological leaps that exacerbate disparities and resentment, and international pathologies such as disease, terrorism, narcotics, environmental

degradation, and spreading conflicts. In the transition from war to peace, rehabilitation after recent conflict and early development out of poverty — rebuilding and building — are combined. Although priorities must be set, the various needs must be addressed simultaneously because they are mutually interdependent.

Second, the powerful donor nations, which set the multilateral and bilateral agendas for peace-building and provide its financing, do not commit the necessary will and funds.

We pretend to do so. But recognizing the need to respond to these human tragedies and political dangers, the “international community” tends to lessen the huge size and complexity of this phenomenon to something that matches what it is willing to invest. The true dimensions are distorted, perception is fuzzed; the Poconos are substituted for the Himalayas. The result is that insufficiency is built into the policies, and their implementation is inherently flawed. Failure results and is followed by recrimination. A different way of describing this is to point out that there is a natural lag between early efforts to deal with a new problem and the greater understanding and strengthened skills that come with experience over time. Another is simply to say that the situations calling out for peace-building, while requiring some attention, do not engage our national interest enough to merit greater investment, so we give some of them a try on the cheap, hoping for the best and trusting to luck. We play catch up and fall behind.

And third, there is a disconnect between the root causes of the problems these conflicted states need help coping with and the efforts applied by those outsiders who are offering help.

The four principal sectors of effort are security, humanitarian, political, and development. Early effort encompasses rehabilitation and reconstruction programs that well-designed emergency humanitarian relief should have prepared the way for. These efforts lead to longer-term social and economic development, which stretches beyond the post-conflict transition period. The terms are inexact and subject to misuse. There is a continuum or spectrum of effort, dynamic rather than static in nature, with discernible phases but also simultaneity, overlapping, and bridging. Development invariably comes in a poor last. Security must be established and sustained for anything else to work. Political/diplomatic efforts proceed throughout. Humanitarian programs come when needed, are generally popular and attract relatively more funding, at least in the short-term, and are run by UN agencies and international NGOs. Development programs are more complex, controversial, take much, much longer, and must be undertaken in delicate partnership with local authorities and assets.

Moore gives us as precise a presentation of the problems that have to be *simultaneously* addressed in the immediate term *and* through the long haul, if we are to drag large parts of the world out of interminable conflict, disease, and chronic poverty. But we *know* this. God knows how many times Moore has promulgated the same thing at the United Nations, before this forum and that forum, and finished to applause, and that is that. We lack the collective institutional capacity to deal with these problems. We lack a collective vision, a common commitment. We drag our feet when we should be running at full speed. And unfortunately, with such institutional inertia, the developed world sits on its rich ass dealing out aid in stingy amounts and invariably to their “own” countries from which they will receive a benefit in return for the aid. Aid given in insufficient dollops, in haphazard and unconnected ways — unconnected to the region in which a country subsists may be worse than no aid — the aid is simply siphoned off in corruption, projects that will collapse because there is no infrastructure to sustain them.

We in the rich parts of this planet are a greedy lot and we are not prepared to share much of our vast wealth with our poorer cousins. Rather we like to poach from their small pools of developing skills, stealing their new professionals to meet our needs.

Whither the UN?

In November 2003, Koffi Anan set up “a high level panel of eminent personalities” to assess the UN’s role in dealing with new global threats. Despite the jaded cynicism the group’s announcement was met with (“Relics trying to reform a relic”), the twenty-six member assemblage has reached near agreement on one of the most intractable issues that has dogged the UN: the composition of the Security Council. The present council, consisting of five permanent veto-wielding members (the victors of World War II plus China) and ten others elected for short durations on a regional basis would be replaced by an expanded twenty-four-council of three tiers: the existing five permanent members (America, China, Britain, France, and Russia); a second tier of seven or eight semi-permanent members on renewable terms of four or five years (Brazil, Germany, India, and South Africa, for example) and a third tier of rotating regional members elected as at present for a nonrenewable two-year stint. Only the permanent five would have a veto.

The panel will recommend that the UN reorient its work to meet global threats into six categories: inter-state conflict, internal violence including genocide, social and economic threats, such as poverty and disease; terrorism and organized crime and corruption. The Security Council would have the power to authorize a preventive use of force, but only after “a serious and sober assessment” of the threat based on “clear and compelling evidence.” The panel’s final report will be presented to Koffi Annan on December 1, 2004, presented to the General Assembly in September 2005 and passed by a two-thirds vote to be adopted. These, I should add, are best case scenarios.

This will amount to tinkering, and perhaps we should simply accept that “best” tinkering is the best we can do, given the existing wide divergences of interests, divergences that will increase in the next fifty years as the economic and demographic structures of international relations change and strategic interests take precedence. (A recent example: China abstained on the UN resolution condemning Sudan and giving it thirty days to disarm the rampaging militias. China has different agendas, adheres as principle to the doctrine of the sovereignty of nation-states and non-interference). Some reforms will be made. They will be completely inadequate. Factional, institutional, and national interests will create paralysis of an institution, which is too bloated, too bureaucratic, too set in its ways, too vast, too out of managerial control, unaccountable only to its own inadequate structures for assessing accountability, without performance monitors. The deadlock over Darfur, the inability to take quick, decisive action to protect the African community there is simply repletion of ingrained incapacity, resolve, and decisiveness. It lacks the tools it needs, the resources and the decisiveness to act when immediate humanitarian crises arises, and especially in matters relating to genocide and ethnic cleansing.

You cannot restructure piecemeal an organization like the UN. The “reforms” simply are absorbed by the “non-reformed” and you end up with some cross-bred hybrid with dysfunctional organizational genes. To say that the world is better off because the UN is there cannot be challenged since there is no other “world” or prior

reality to measure its performance against. The statement is therefore meaningless. The UN in its present form must be abolished; a new organization created that can meet the needs of the twenty-first century.

Sir Brian Urquart, former Under-Secretary-General of the UN, sketches a picture of the UN that is distressingly dysfunctional, not yet able to decide on the best way to handle the “large” issues like large scale terrorism, or nuclear proliferation, or rogue states. But worse still it is unable to arrive at a clear-cut consensus about humanitarian intervention or any other form of intervention.³⁴ The UN is, he says, close to being “a museum piece.” Without immediate remedial action he argues that the United States will continue to act outside the UN framework. The problem, however, is that the United States has its own very specific agenda for “reforming” the UN, which in the political circumstances of today means that reform gets stalled when it becomes a proxy vehicle for advancing other agendas – or registering objections to the agendas of others. Given that unanimous approval of the Security Council plus two-thirds approval of member states of the General Assembly is required to instigate reform, reform of the degree and extent required to streamline decision-making is problematical at best. Given the veto power in the Security Council that five member states can exercise, the intent of any reform when it reaches the implementation level can be stymied. Unless reform aligns swift decision making procedures with an efficient and immediate capacity to implement decisions, reform will simply add more layers of bureaucracy and become part of the problem, words will continue to paper over the underlying lack of consensus.

When is it permissible to enforce the law to use armed force? What constitutes a violation of the law?

In addressing these questions, the Annan’s panel of experts makes specific recommendations regarding the criteria for intervention. Some states, it observes use the mantle of sovereignty as an illegitimate shield to hide behind. Thus it proposes that member states have a responsibility not just a right to intervene when genocide or large scale abuse of human rights or ethnic cleansing are occurring. The panel also recommended that the UN establish a Peacebuilding Commission to help countries emerging from the devastation of conflict to mobilize the resources and skills to rebuild their infrastructures, including police force, other government functions and establishing political processes for drafting constitutions. On the issue of preemption the panel concludes that a state has the right to act unilaterally if the threat is imminent. However, where the threat is real but not imminent the state should refer the matter to the Security Council. The panel also recognized that in the past the Security Council has not acted forcibly or with urgency when it should have.

In all, the panel makes 1021 recommendations, all well argued, urgent to address, common sense to an outsider. How many survive the mangling they will go through in the UN, receive the imprimatur of two thirds of the General Assembly and the Security Council is problematical. Moreover, while there is universal recognition that the Security Council does not reflect the power realities of the twenty-first century, this is no guarantee the needed changes will be easily adopted. China will object to Japan being on the SC, Pakistan will object to India, and Indonesia, the world’s most populous Muslim country, will agitate for its inclusion. Argentina and Mexico will argue that a Spanish speaking country should represent Latin America while Portuguese countries will argue for Brazil. The result may be interminable deals, obfuscation of terms of reference, duplication of functions and reforms so



crippled by compromise that they will add to the deadlock, immobilize rather than energize. And left unaddressed is the question of finance. With an annual budget that amounts to what the United States spends in Iraq in one week, the UN in matters of security is and will remain largely impotent, another emperor with few clothes.

Economic Power

The foci of economic might are shifting. New barbarians are at the gate: China and India are camped outside. The two economies will account for at least 60 percent of total world output in twenty-five years. China's economy is growing at over nine percent a year, India's at eight. China's will surpass the size of Germany's in five years and overtake Japan's, the world second largest, by 2025. Even though the phenomenal growth is likely to be accompanied by much internal dislocation, internal migration from rural to urban areas, widespread corruption, unemployment, and ancillary social problems — there is an "excess" of at least 30 million males for whom no female partners are available — China's surge to the premier league of the global economic stakes is unstoppable. India's surge may not be far behind. While trajectories of economic growth are problematical, the trends in global growth point unmistakably to the fact that the two Asian powers together account for one third of the world's population.

China (and Hong Kong) became the leading producer of eight out of twelve key electronic products in 2004 — more than half of the world's DVD players and digital cameras, more than one third of DVD-ROM drives and personal desktop and notebook computers, about one fourth of mobile telephones, color televisions, personal digital assistants and car stereos.³⁵

In the early twentieth century, the rising power of Germany and Japan failed to adjust to each other and the resulting conflict set the paradigm for half a century. Like Germany and Japan, India and China are nationalistic; seek redress of past grievances — Kashmir, the Korean Peninsula, and Taiwan, most prominently, which have eluded peaceful settlements for half a century. Three of the four powers directly involved in these disputes have a nuclear capability. The fourth, North Korea, is a wild card, almost there but not quite. The economic recovery of Japan after a decade long malaise is directly related to the voracious needs of China's economy. Historically Japan and China have never been powerful at the same time.³⁶ India and China have not resolved a forty-two-year-old border dispute and distrust each other. Both have enormous military capability.

Accordingly, global institutions that reflect the balance of power, either military or economic at the end of World War II are hopelessly at odds with the realities of the emerging economic order. Thus, the UN, the IMF, the World Bank, the G8, the perceived instruments of the West's hegemony in the prioritization of the economic and political order is rapidly becoming obsolete. "I change my mind," John Maynard Keynes once observed, "when the facts change." Global institutions, however, show no inclination to practice a similar propensity when their memberships no longer reflect the realities that made them eligible for membership in the first place. Again, a formula for "promoting" new states to the elite leagues but without "demoting" those who no longer make the grade will dilute the capacity of these institutions to carry out the global functions for which they were established. But the West will not easily relinquish mantles it has become accustomed to wearing.

Military might no longer means security might. American borrowing to finance

both budget and trade deficits is engendering reluctance among international borrowers to hold dollar denominated assets. Unilateralism financed by international debt has consequences that place such unilateralism in a different context. A unilateral action intended to make the country more secure from terrorist strikes has made the U.S. economy more vulnerable and less equipped to secure the futures of the next generation of Americans. Once the growth rate in the United States falls below 4 percent, equity prices fall and capital inflows begin to slow, no longer sufficient to offset the burgeoning deficit and thus acerbating the impact on the currency, but forcing other currencies to intervene to protect the trading value of their own. Currency wars are a harbinger of global recession.

The current deficits are unsustainable, both in terms of the absolute amounts that have to be borrowed, debt repayments and interest payments on the debt, themselves variable as interest rates rise and fall and unless checked could within five years trigger a run on the dollar, which would in turn, trigger a global recession. For some reason, American policymakers seem to believe that since a run on the dollar is in the interests of no one, especially countries such as Japan that hold huge amounts of dollar denominated assets, the global community would act to preempt such catastrophic occurrences. But this is not how markets work. Private investors are already moving out of dollar denominated assets, Asian governments, already drenched with dollars continue to cover for the dollar. The EU, however, is balking. The astronomical appreciation of the euro makes EU exports uncompetitive and is strangling economic growth. Thus the EU, like Japan, is angered that the burden of American excess consumption is being borne by the EU. China, on the other hand, with its currency pegged to the dollar, is quite willing to loan the United States Chinese savings so that Americans, who do not save at all, can buy cheap Chinese imports.³⁷

In 1980, the United States was still the largest net lender among nations; in 1985, its global assets exceeded its global liabilities. In 2004, its net investment is one in which the United States owes the rest of the world \$ 3 trillion. Thus America's unilateralism is ultimately unsustainable, only possible as long as the rest of the world is prepared to fund it in an unlimited way forever.³⁸ At the beginning of the twentieth century, the pound sterling was the world's medium of exchange, the currency used to settle international financial obligations. Half a century later it had become redundant. If one had made such a prediction in 1900, one would have been scoffed at; to make a similar prediction regarding the standing of the dollar in 2050 would elicit less scoffing.

The Demographic Mix

An aging white Europe, no longer replacing itself and a graying of white America will bring seismic changes in the bastions of western civilization, redefining the concept of European, and expanding the definition of the Americas. On the one hand, the Muslim population in Europe, characterized by relatively high birth rates, will increase substantially in the next fifty years, while the Christian population, characterized by relatively high death rates and low birth rates, will decrease in absolute numbers. Turkey will become the fulcrum between the European world and the world to the east. With its accession to the European Union (EU), Turkey will, in time, erase the erroneous equation of Europe with the Judeo/Christian ethos; "the clash of civilizations" will more likely take the form of a merger than a hostile



takeover. But west Europe remains tentative. In Holland, the murder of an outspoken, controversial filmmaker, Theo van Gogh by a Moroccan /Dutch Muslim in November 2004 triggered a wave of anti Muslim sentiment. In a survey a week after the murder, 40 percent of respondents believed that Muslims should be no longer welcomed in the country, 90 percent felt that anti terrorist measures should be tightened, even if at the expense of civil liberties.³⁹

On the other side of the Atlantic, within two generations the southwest region of the United States will become an extension of Mexico; the non-white population will become the dominant political class. In short, the white man will become “an endangered species,” fighting to preserve his privilege and power behind walls of security, space shields, surveillance that will make George Orwell premonitions of a dark future seem quixotic.

These population shifts, especially in East Asia, together with the accumulation of economic power will make huge demands on raw resources. The United States represents a more complex picture. In the 1990s, 33 million people were added to the population — mostly through immigration. The composition of the population was 75 percent white, 12 percent Afro American and 13 percent Hispanic in origin. But with the West and Southwest — encompassing the states having the greatest increase in the 1990s — the picture becomes increasingly diverse. In California, the fastest growing state, Hispanics account for 33 percent of the population, whites for 60 percent. Within decades, white will constitute a minority, a trend that will work its way across the Southwest. Hispanics may constitute 25 percent of the U.S. population by 2050, in California over 50 percent. (In 2003, the majority of newborn children in California were Hispanic.)⁴⁰ Currently, in New Mexico and Arizona, Hispanics account for over 25 percent of the population.

In a recent, provocative book, “Who We Are,” Samuel Huntington observes that the states now being populated by Mexican immigrants, legal and illegal, were part of Mexico before they were annexed after the Texas War of Independence (1835–36) and the Mexican American War (1846–48). “Mexican Americans,” writes Boston College political scientist Peter Skerry, “enjoy a sense of being on their own turf that is not shared by other immigrants.”⁴¹ And, as Huntington observes, “history shows that serious potential for conflict exists when people in one country begin referring to territory in a neighboring country in propriety terms and to assert special rights and claims to that territory.”⁴²

Between 2000 and 2050, the global population will increase from 6.4 billion to 9.3 billion — an increase of 45 percent. Of that, an estimated 99 percent will take place in the developing countries, that is, in countries with predominantly non-white populations. In west Europe the white population will fall in absolute numbers, in the United States, the population will grow and the white population will be either a plurality or heading to minority status among the fastest growing states. In the largest state, California, the Hispanic population will be in a plurality.

The difference in median age between the developed and developing worlds will continue to grow with concomitant impacts on market structures, types of markets, and economic concentration. Thus the next fifty years will see significant population shifts, in geography, numbers, and age.

The impact of internal migration (non population growth) in developed countries has increased. In western countries 35 million net migrants accounted for 28 percent of combined population growth between 1970 and 1995 while the loss of these migrants reduced population in the rest of the world by less than two percent.

Religious Fundamentalism

Religious fundamentalism is on the rise, not just among Muslims and Christians, but also among Hindus, Buddhists, and Jews. Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world, driven by higher birth rates. Since 1970, the number has doubled to 1.2 billion adherents. By 2005 the number is expected to exceed two billion compared to Christianity's three out of a population of eight billion.

Among Christians, non-whites are now a majority. Over 60 percent come from non-white areas outside Europe and America. This shift in the center of gravity southward into the poorer developing countries is the result of the growth of evangelical Protestant churches in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The statistical mean follower of Christianity today is under 20, lives in Asia, and has a per capita income of less than \$ 600 a year.

Probably the most significant religious development of the last century was the rise of Pentecostal/Charismatic movement and its dramatic growth. In the United States it more than compensated for the decline of mainstream churches. In less than three generations this movement has spread across the West, Africa, and Asia to over than half a billion, making it the second largest expression of faith, second only to the Catholicism.

For a few months following the invasion of Iraq, as American might reached Baghdad and the Commander in Chief in full battle gear (why is it that men who go out of their way when they are young adults to avoid fighting in their country's wars develop a penchant for wearing the paraphernalia of war when they become leaders?), declared on the flight deck of the *Abraham Lincoln* "mission accomplished," we were inundated with books and publications hailing or condemning the unipolar world, Empire America and the rest of it. Standing tall in hubris and the apparent ease with which it had ousted Saddam, the United States further sidelined the UN. George W warned that the UN would fade into history as an ineffectual, irrelevant "debating society" when it refused to sanction his attack on Iraq. The message was clear: you either stood with the United States or you didn't count. A few months later, things fell apart and the United States was faced with a few obvious truths: In whatever world order exists, unilateralism is not an option because globalization, especially the technological interdependence of our communications systems and our financial markets, swallowed unilateralism some time ago. Instead of being in front of the curve, the smart boys were way behind. Markets live and die by information and the pure, instantaneous flow of information, *any* information, can play havoc in markets that becomes self-sustaining.

Imagining the Future?

So, what does the last century tell us about war that might temper our actions in this one?

First, remembering the past: Already we have failed to do so. The United States actions in Iraq violate every notion of their being a historical past that is a repository of grievances and resentments — the result of previous conflicts that ignored the historical past.

The flow and control of information greatly influences public opinion, hence the manipulation of the media is crucial. But given the nature of the information revolution, developing and underdeveloped and Third World countries have a great



deal of access to “instantaneous” revolution. For tens of millions of people who live in areas where no landline is available, the cell phone revolution has enabled them to leapfrog from archaic forums of communication into the digital era. It has altered the fabric of living. Rwanda has five times as many cell phones as landlines. China has 300 million users.

The Arabic TV station Al Jazeera is shaping Muslim opinion about the Iraqi war. The Iraqi interim government closed the station because it was mobilizing the Iraqi public against the occupation. It still continues to shape opinion in other Muslim countries. The images they recently received of American airpower, artillery, and marines laying waste to Falluja, of mosques under attack — these have become assaults on their own sense of identity. They will be frozen, like images on a DVD, available to be played back, to stoke the resentments, nurture the grievances, and feed the appetite for revenge.

Embedded journalism is a perversion of free journalism, it is a case where the opportunity to put video images of the action on our screens make us feel as if we were there in the fight itself, it skews all idea of objectivity (The public receives “live” reports from CNN embedded reporters with the disclaimer by the anchor person that the report was “cleared by the “military.”) The military’s war becomes our war. Identification with imagery is everything. But it works both ways. The insurgents use of imagery; for example, pleas from hostages and website beheadings have a powerful impact on the public whose vicarious empathy with the desperate pleas of innocent hostages, can lead governments to act in ways they would have ruled out of just ten years ago. Governments cannot be seen to be unresponsive to the demands of their publics to intervene on the part of their citizens, once just anonymous strangers, now intimates in their homes. An insurgent group was instrumental in bringing Jack Straw, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Michel Barnier, French Foreign Minister, to Baghdad to try and negotiate “deals” that would free their citizens. Not that they hoped to accomplish much or considered meeting the hostage takers demands, *but* they had to be seen to be pro active. The rapacious capacity for imagery of violence has distorted our understanding of the world. Just as the dominant powers manipulate the media, their enemies are equally adept. Or more so. Because they use then media to instill fear, dominant powers want to convey to their constituencies the eerie feeling that war is almost costless. Certainly the Bush administration’s decision to prohibit television of body bags arriving at Andrews airport base, the Defence Department’s staggered delays in releasing casualty data are deliberate. No images on TV screens of body bags arriving from the war field = no dead. If something isn’t captured by television it hasn’t happened.

The exponential rate of technological innovation in weaponry, information, and miniaturization, enables any state to become a threat to world order. The poorest of the poor can attain the means to strike out at the richest of the rich. In situations that are asymmetrical in power, but also in the consequences of the use of that power works in favor of the poor & the weak. The nature of warfare changed the day an illiterate Afghan peasant sitting on a mule with a stinger missile launcher perched on his shoulder pointed it at a low flying Soviet helicopter, pulled the trigger and brought it down. A four rate nuclear bomb launched at a western state with the power of the Hiroshima bomb would most likely cause havoc not only in the country attacked but globally as well. There are huge external economies of impact. In the west recovery will take a long time because people are less well equipped to

adapt to situations where what they have always taken for granted for survival is suddenly missing. In the poor countries where the people have always had to live close to or under the survival line, adapting to conditions of increasing deprivation will be less problematic. Given our position of wealth and privilege, an attack on us will have a greater impact than an attack of a similar magnitude on a poor country.

The digital revolution triggering instantaneous flows of information, the Internet, interactive communication — and we are only at the start of the curve — has connected the world and facilitates conflict as much as it does understanding. In developing countries it has changed perceptions of relative deprivation and increased resentments of the West. And it plays a crucial role in the ways wars are conducted and reported. More media time will be devoted to one terrorist group threatening to kill a small number of hostages than to the fact that China has recorded five years of economic growth in excess of 10 percent. During the U.S. election debates on foreign policy there was not a single reference to East Asia, yet developments in East Asia will be the key determinant of where and how the major conflicts will take place.

Scenarios of threats to global security in the twenty-first century include three fundamental variables, already “in play” that will shape trends in the twenty-first century — technological advance, global warming, and aging.⁴³

Far better at this point in time to begin to lay out the premise that should guide the actions of the global community in the aftermath of a small scale nuclear attack on an American or European city, a suitcase bomb triggering a Hiroshima, that might perhaps kill between 500,000 and 1 million people, reduce the city to rubble rupture infrastructure, the provision of basic services (electricity, water), touch off wide spread panic in every city and town across the country. The fact that the devastation of such attacks will be instantaneously conveyed to every corner of the globe, the visual impact of the scale of devastation and death will destroy all sense of security. It is then that we will enter the new age, the interregnum between the Cold War and the new order will be over. The Security Order. The West will promote democracy, as long as it serves the interests of security. But it will be a truncated democracy. And in the west, too, democracy will be truncated. Individual rights will be abridged to accommodate the overriding imperatives of collective security. Legal systems will be similarly modified. The West will implement its own apartheid. It is happening now, but we do not notice.

Human systems are systemically reactive. We respond to crisis, tardily to the expectation of crisis. All responses to expectations are predicated on our being able to imagine expected outcomes. When the sheer scale of the outcome is beyond our comprehension then we cannot prepare for it. Organizations cannot plan for the unfathomable, the unimaginable, especially when the terror the unimaginable can conjure strikes at our collective sense of mortality.

International institutions, national and local governments with different mandates, terms of reference, organizational structures, which in the best of times have difficulty working with each other and who are under funded and perhaps over-worked cannot be expected to prepare for an abstraction. The reality we can imagine cannot induce a psychological response commensurate with the sheer immensity of the catastrophe.

The institutional mechanisms, especially the UN Security Council, are hopelessly outmoded. Reform runs into the embedded interests of the existing members, especially the United States. It was constructed to reflect relations that existed sixty



years ago. Even when it did reflect those relations it was ineffective, the pro West always in opposition to the pro Soviet. In the decades since, its ineffectuality is related to the United States propensity to act unilaterally. The Security Council is reactive, ineffective. But we have known this for years.

War and technology are inextricably linked. In the twentieth century, each was the catalyst of innovation in the other, changing both the direction of technological innovation and the manner in which wars are conducted. We have achieved the ultimate, the capacity to destroy ourselves as a species. We know the dire consequences if we open the door in the floor, we have been warned, oh so often, but some of us just want to take a one little peek and others believe that you can open the door occasionally if you are very careful and still others don't care what happens because "they" have been warned by "we" — the Other.

We killed because we feared each other. And in the opening decade of this century we have identified a new fear, the fear is one of furtive, invisible power, the power of the quasi-state, that entity that lays no claim to any physical boundaries, flies no national flag, is unlisted in any international associations, and acts every bit as mad as the M.A.D. gospel of annihilation that was so calmly enunciated by the superpowers.

The last century, [writes Wole Soyinka] post World War II, was indeed dominated by the fear of a nuclear holocaust. That fear, let it be noted however, was only a successor to another. It replaced, once the war was over, yet another collective fear — that of world domination by a fanatic individual who preached, and sought to actualize a gospel of race purity. In the cause of that mission, some millions of humanity were systematically annihilated, while millions more perished on the field of battle that stretched from the North Pole to the South Sea Islands. As I narrated in my childhood memoirs, "AKE: The Years of Childhood," the figure of Adolf Hitler was one fearsome presence that percolated distances, all the way from embattled Europe to far-flung colonial possessions. Parents invoked Hitler as the bogeyman to quiet the obstreperous child. And when, finally, a cargo ship caught fire on the lagoon in the capital city of Lagos, and explosions shattered windows even far away from the Marina, we, as children, had no doubt that the Terror of the Free World had indeed come to cart us off into slavery.

That universal season of fear ended on the battlefield. In its place rose the fear of the very weapon of the world's liberation — at least, that was the excuse — whose devastating effects appeared to have no limitations. The literature of science fiction took a swing towards prospects of a devastated world, peopled by mutants in whom the loss of the last vestiges of humanity would be reflected in their very physical decomposition.

Events of a hitherto unimaginable reach have rendered virtually every corner of the globe vulnerable. A sachet of sarin is located no one knows where, but is ready to be punctured when the signal is given. The banal, shopping bag left innocuously at the entrance to a metro station is eyed as a potential enemy, capable of devastation less dramatic but every bit as awesome as the sight of a plane hurling down from the sky in a ball of flames.

Ironically, one of the byproducts of globalization is growing fear, a relentless search for "the other." The suffocation of instant togetherness makes us cry out for and assert our cultures of difference. Minorities resist assimilation into dominant cultures. Muslims in Europe, invariably part of the growing migrant communities that populate the cities of Western Europe and the UK, assert their culture as a badge of identity and dignity as human beings. They demand respect. And the dominant

groups resist, as dominant groups have throughout recorded history. But there is a difference. Now subordinate groups, within nations or among nations can easily acquire the means of a vengeful and awful retaliation if their voices go unheard, their resentments dismissed, and their grievances unmet.

On the senseless futility of World War I, W.B. Yeats wrote:

I balanced all, brought all to mind
The years to come seemed waste of breath
A waste of breath the years behind
In balance with this life, this death

Haunting lines that are peculiarly relevant to our present malaise as a seemingly endless supply of suicide bombers lay down their lives for their beliefs. And we react to their terror with fear and anxiety. But is our real fear a gnawing in the belly because we know that we are not prepared to end our lives for the beliefs we claim to cherish. Or that we don't cherish them enough to die for them. Not sometime in the indefinite future, but right now, this moment.

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