Transnational Threats:

The Emerging Strategic Lessons from the US Intervention in Iraq

Anthony H. Cordesman

Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy
Center for Strategic and International Studies

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Executive Summary

Shaping the Strategic Outcome in Iraq

The US still has every chance to achieve some form of victory in Iraq if it is persistent, willing to commit the necessary resources, and will accept the real world limits to what it can do. No one can predict how the combination of nation building, low intensity combat, and Iraqi efforts to recreate their nation will play out over the short term, but there are ten tools the US can use to achieve the best strategic outcomes. The US has already shown since May of 2003 that it is adaptable, and it is already making use of all of these tools to some extent.

- Accept the fact that Iraq's interests and solutions will differ from those of the US:

- Stay the course militarily, while developing Iraqi security forces as soon as possible.

- Transfer political and administrative power as quickly as possible to Iraqis on Iraqi terms.

- Maintain a high level of aid, while allowing Iraq to reform its economy on its own terms.

- Sustained efforts to win forgiveness of Iraqi debts and reparations.

- Ensure energy investment and development on Iraqi terms:

- Shift the information campaigns and effort to win "hearts and minds" from a US-centric approach to one run by the Iraqis:

- Plan now for continued engagement after full Iraqi sovereignty for at least five more years:

- Engage Iraq's neighbors:

- Engage the UN and international community.

Looking Beyond Iraq

The US must look beyond Iraq and deal with its other "wars," and security interests. No strategy that focuses on Iraq alone, however, is an adequate approach to the future. Almost without sensing it, America has drifted into involvement in four separate and simultaneous conflicts. The most obvious war is Iraq, but each of the other conflicts also requires at least some shifts in US policy.

- *The War in Afghanistan*

    Nation building is having its own crisis in Afghanistan, but at less cost and largely without high profile media examination. The US cannot deal with the Afghan conflict, however, simply by transferring them to NATO or international control. If it does, the result is almost certain to be a resurgence of Taliban or Islamic extremism in some form, continued warlordism, and a drug-based economy – with an inevitable spillover into the Middle East and Central Asia. The necessary effort does not need the scale of the effort in Iraq, but the US must provide serious resources over a period of some 5-10 more years. It will almost certainly mean spending some $5-10 billion more over the next five years than the US currently programs.

- *The War on Terrorism*

    The US cannot afford to engage every terrorist movement by itself, and it risks alienating and radicalizing peoples and movements in nations throughout the Islamic world if it does so. It needs to create local partnerships with key nations like Saudi Arabia and Indonesia. It needs to focus systematically on just how different the various Sufi, Salafi, neo-Wahhabi, and Shi'ite movements are, and then deal with each separately on the terms best tailored to defeating violence and extremism in each separate case. The US must also look beyond words like "democracy," and remember that it is not a democracy, but rather a republic that protects the individual over the majority, and preserves the rights of all through limitations on the power of the federal government and checks and balances within it. It must remember what revolution, rather than evolution, can only bring misery to the nation's where it takes place, and violence and hostility to the US, and act accordingly.

- *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*

  The US does not have good options. It cannot abandon Israel or sacrifice its security. This means that the US should plan for the Israeli-Palestinian War to be a major strategic liability for the next 5-10 years. There is no way out of this dilemma other than a continuing and high visibility US effort to create a peace, regardless of how many times new initiatives fail. The US will not win Arab hearts and minds by doing this, but it can increase Arab tolerance. Moreover, Israel's strategic interests ultimately lie in a successful peace, even more than those of the US. Israel's social structure and economy cannot be sustained through constant low-level war. America will never be at existential risk because of Middle Eastern proliferation; Israel could be in a matter of years.

Strategy and Strategic Lessons

Strategic engagement requires an objective – not an ideological – assessment of the problems that must be dealt with, and of the size and cost of the effort necessary to achieve decisive grand strategic results. Neither a capabilities-based strategy nor one based on theoretical sizing contingencies is meaningful when real-world conflicts and well-defined contingencies require a strategy and force plan that can deal with reality on a country-by country basis, rather than be based on ideology and theory.

-- *There is no alternative to "internationalism."* There may be times we disagree with the UN or some of our allies, but our strategy must be based on seeking consensus wherever possible, on compromise when necessary, and on coalitions that underpin virtually every action we take.

-- *Our military strategy must give interoperability and military advisory efforts the same priority as jointness.* In order to lead, we must also learn to follow. We must never subordinate our vital national interests to others, but this will rarely be the issue. In practice, our challenge is to subordinate our arrogance to the end of achieving true partnerships, and to shape our diplomacy to creating lasting coalitions of the truly willing rather than coalitions of the pressured and intimidated.

-- *Great as US power is, it cannot substitute for coalitions and the effective use of international organizations, regional organizations, and NGOs* -- when their use is possible.

-- *At the same time, armed nation building is a challenge only the US is currently equipped to meet.* While allies, the UN, and NGOs can help in many aspects of security and nation building operations. They often cannot operate on the scale required to deal with nation building in the midst of serious low intensity combat.

-- *Deterrence and containment are more complex than at the time of the Cold War, but they still are critical tools* and they too are dependent on formal and informal alliances.

-- *War must be an extension of diplomacy by other means, but diplomacy must be an extension of war by other means as well.* US security strategy must be based on the understanding that diplomacy, peace negotiations, and arms control are also an extension of – and substitute for – war by other means. It is easy for a "superpower" to threaten force, but far harder to use it, and bluffs get called. Fighting should be a last resort, and other means must be used to limit the number of fights as much as possible.

-- *Military victory in asymmetric warfare can be virtually meaningless without successful nation building at the political, economic, and security levels.*" Stabilization" or "Phase IV" operations are far more challenging than defeating conventional military forces. They can best be conducted if the US is prepared for immediate action after the defeat of conventional enemy forces. Both in Afghanistan and Iraq, the US wasted critical days, weeks, and months in engaging in a security effort before opposition movements could regroup or reengage. It left a power vacuum, rather than exploited one, and it was not prepared for nation building or the escalation of resistance once the enemy was "defeated."

-- *Force transformation cannot be dominated by technology; manpower skills, not technology, are the key.* The military missions of low intensity combat, economic aid, civil-military relations, security, and information campaigns are manpower dominated and require skilled military manpower as

well as new forms civil expertise in other Departments. Human intelligence can still be more important than technical collection, local experience and language skills are critical, and the ability to use aid dollars can be more important than the ability to use bullets Simply adding troops or more weapons will not solve America's problems any more than trying to use technology to make US forces smaller and more cost-effective will. The missions that are emerging require extremely skilled troops with excellent area skills, far more linguists, and training in civic action and nation building as well as guerilla warfare.

-- *Technology-based force transformation and the revolution in military affairs are tools with severe and sometimes crippling limits.* The ability to provide Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (IS&R) coverage of the world is of immense value. It does not, however, provide the ability to understand the world, deal with complex political issues, and fight effectively in the face of terrorism, many forms of low intensity conflict and asymmetric warfare, and the need to deal with conflict termination and peace making or protect nation building. In practice, there may be a need to make far more effective use of legacy systems, and evolutionary improvements in weapons and technology, to support "humancentric" forms of military action requiring extensive human intelligence and area skills, high levels of training and experience, and effective leadership in not only defeating the enemy in battle but winning the peace.

-- *"Jointness" cannot simply be an issue for restructuring the US military, and is far more than a military problem. It must occur within the entire executive branch, and on a civil-military level as well as a military one.* An advisory National Security Advisor is a failed National Security Advisor; effective leadership is required to force coordination on the US national security process. Unresolved conflicts between leaders like Secretary Powell, and Secretary Rumsfeld, the exclusion of other cabinet members from key tasks, insufficient review of military planning, and giving too much power to small elements within given departments, have weakened US efforts and needlessly alienated our allies. The creation of a large and highly ideological foreign policy staff in Vice President's office is a further anomaly in the interagency process. The US interagency process simply cannot function with such loosely defined roles, a lack of formal checks and balances, and a largely advisory National Security Advisor. "Jointness" must go far beyond the military; it must apply to all national security operations.

-- *Policy, analysis, and intelligence must accept the true complexity of the world, deal with it honestly and objectively, and seek "evolution" while opposing "revolution."* The US cannot afford to rush into – or stay in – any conflict on ideological grounds. It cannot afford to avoid any necessary commitment because of idealism. What it needs is informed pragmatism. One simple rule of thumb is to stop over-simplifying and sloganizing – particularly in the form of "mirror imaging" and assuming that "democratization" is the solution or even first priority for every country. The US needs to deal with security threats quietly and objective on a country-by-country and movement-by-movement basis.

-- *Stabilization, armed nation building, and peacemaking require a new approach to organizing US government efforts.* The integration of USAID into State has compounded the problems of US aid efforts which had previously transferred many functions to generic aid through the World Bank and IMF. There was no staff prepared, sized, and training to deal with nation building on this scale, or to formulate and administer the massive aid program required. Contractors were overburdened with large-scale contracts because these were easiest to grant and administer in spite of a lack of experience in functioning in a command economy and high threat environment. US government and contractor staff had to be suddenly recruited – often with limited experience – and generally for 3-12 month tours too short to ensure continuity in such missions. This should never happen again. Denial of the importance and scale of the mission before the event in no way prevents it from being necessary when reality intervenes.

-- *The US needs to rethink its arms sales and security assistance policies.* The US needs to pay far more attention to the social and economic needs of countries in the Middle East, and to work with other sellers to reduce the volume of sales. At the same time, it needs to work with regional powers to help them make the arms they do need effective and sustainable, create local security arrangements, and improve interoperability for the purposes of both deterrence and warfighting.

The US needs to recast its security assistance programs to help nations fight terrorism and extremism more effectively, and do so in ways that do not abuse human rights or delay necessary political, social, and economic reforms.

-- *The US needs to organize for effective information campaigns while seeking to create regional and allied campaigns that will influence Arab and Islamic worlds.* The US needs to revitalize its information efforts in a focused and effective way that takes advantage of tools like satellite broadcasting and the Internet while working directly in country. The US, however, can never be an Arab or Islamic country. It needs to work with its friends and allies in the region to seek their help in creating information campaigns that reject Islamic radicalism and violence, encourage terrorism, and support reform. The US should not try to speak for the Arabs or for Islam, it should help them speak for themselves.

-- *The US private sector and foreign direct investment should be integrated into the US security strategy. achieving evolutionary reform.* The US has tended to emphasize sanctions over trade and economic contact in dealing with hostile or radical states, and assign too low a priority to helping the US private sector invest in friendly states. A "zero-based" review is needed of what the US government should do to encourage private sector activity in the Middle East.

-- *Current methods of intelligence collection and analysis, cannot guarantee adequate preparation for stabilization operations, properly support low intensity combat, or properly support the nation-building phase. The US needs to fundamentally reassess its approach to intelligence to support adequate planning for the combat termination, security, and nation building phases of asymmetric warfare and peacemaking operations.* It is equally important that adequate tactical intelligence support be available from the beginning of combat operations to the end of security and nation building operations that provides adequate tactical human intelligence support, combined with the proper area expertise and linguistic skills. Technology can be a powerful tool, but it is an aid – not a substitute – for human skills and talents.

-- *New approaches are needed at the tactical and field level to creating effective teams for operations and intelligence.* Tactical intelligence must operate as part of a team effort with those involved in counterinsurgency operations, the political and economic phases of nation building, and security and military advisory teams. It is particularly critical that both intelligence and operations directly integrate combat activity with civil-military relations efforts, US military police and security efforts, the use of economic aid in direct support of low intensity combat and security operations, the training of local security forces and their integration into the HUMINT effort, and the creation of effective information campaigns.

-- *Current methods of intelligence collection and analysis, and current methods of arms control and inspection, cannot guarantee an adequate understanding of the risks posed by proliferation.* The US needs to fundamentally reassess the problems of intelligence on proliferation and the lessons Iraq provides regarding arms control. Far too much the media coverage and outside analysis of the intelligence failures in Iraq has focused on the politics of the situation or implied that intelligence failed because it was improperly managed and reviewed. There were long standing problems in the way in which the CIA managed its counterproliferation efforts, and institutional biases that affected almost all intelligence community reporting and analysis on the subject.

-- *The US has agonizing decisions to make about defense resources.* The fact that the current Future Year Defense Plan does not provide enough funds to allow the US cannot come close to fund both its planned force levels and force improvement plans is obvious. Everyone with any experience stopped believing in estimated procurement costs long ago. What is equally clear now, however, is that the US faces years of unanticipated conflicts, many involving armed peacemaking and nation building, and must rethink deterrence in terms of proliferation. This is not a matter of billions of dollars; it is a matter of several percent of the US GNP.

-- *Limit new strategic adventures where possible:* The US needs to avoid additional military commitments and conflicts unless they truly serve vital strategic interests. The US already faces serious strategic overstretch, and nothing could be more dangerous than assuming that existing

problems can be solved by adding new ones – such as Syria or Iran. This means an emphasis on deterrence, containment, and diplomacy to avoid additional military commitments. It means a new emphasis on international action and allies to find substitutes for US forces.

One final reality – the image of a quick and decisive victory is almost always a false one, but it is still the image many Americans want and expect. One thousand or more dead in Iraq is hardly Vietnam, but it must be justified and explained, and explained honestly – not in terms of the ephemeral slogans. The budget rises and supplements of the last few years are also likely to be the rule and not the exception America may well have to spend another one percent of its GNP on sustained combat and international intervention overseas than any American politician is willing to admit.

America faces hard political choices, and they are going to take exceptional leadership and courage in both an election year and the decades to come. They require bipartisanship of a kind that has faded since the Cold War, and neither neo-conservative nor neo-liberal ideology can help. Moreover, America's think tanks and media are going to have to move beyond sound bites and simple solutions, just as will America's politicians and military planners. Put differently, it not only is going to be a very tough year, it is going to be a very tough decade.

The Emerging Strategic Lessons from the US Intervention in Iraq

It is all too tempting to focus on America's short-term problems in Iraq, particularly during an election year. The fact is, however, that the US is involved in four major conflicts in the Middle East, and that its acts have more than tactical meaning. The US not only is fighting in Iraq, but in Afghanistan, in a broader war of terrorism, and by proxy in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

America's actions are shaping the future in both strategic and grand strategic terms, and it is the longer-term strategic context of the actions that will ultimately determine the consequences for US security policy, for America's position in Iraq, and in the Greater Middle East. As a result, it is critical to begin to focus on the emerging strategic lessons that are coming out of the Iraq War, and the US engagement in Afghanistan, the war on terrorism, and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Realities of History

As a preface to the analysis of these consequences, it seems useful to remember George Santayana's statement that, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." In one sense, this statement has always been a troublesome one. Anyone who truly remembers history is all too well aware that one will be condemned to repeat it, regardless of whether they remember the past or not.

At the same time, there are four basic lessons of history that Americans tend to perpetually forget:

- One is that history takes time. Nothing moves half as quickly as American's would like to assume.

- Another is that history is filled with uncertainty and comes in erratic cycles. There are few consistent trends – particularly trends towards someone's idea of progress.

- A third is that history is complex. It does not lend itself to simple analyses, ideologies and solutions, and it is filled with unintended consequences when policymakers attempt such approaches.

- A fourth is that history can have tremendous momentum, and be very hard to change.

None of these points are ones American's accept easily, particularly in a city where each new Administration must perpetually seek to restructure the world in four to eight years. Furthermore, Americans are largely a nation of optimists, at least when they are the ones in charge of the government and are actively seeking to influence events.

We expect too much too soon, and we usually minimize risk. We forget that life is filled with risk and uncertainty. When reality then intervenes, and reminds us of this historical reality, we can then become too pessimistic with equal speed. We do not like discovering that risk is inevitable and how many trends and their consequences are beyond our control.

The Strategic Context of the War in Iraq

It is important to remember these lessons of history as in addressing strategic consequences of America's actions in Iraq. These consequences cannot be measured by what the US can accomplish between now and 2005 – or by the time when the US must transfer all power and decision making to a new Iraqi government. They will be determined by how what the US has done, and will do, plays out after it transfers sovereignty and leaves. The test of history is not 2005, but 2010, 2020, and beyond.

From this perspective, Americans need to remember that much will depend on the broader the strategic context of what is happening in the Middle East and the Islamic world – and that this context will not only shape the strategic outcome of events in Iraq, but in Afghanistan, the war on terrorism, and the Arab-Israeli conflict as well.

The Iraq War and the nation building that will follow will play out in a region filled with massive economic and demographic challenges.

- **The Middle East and North Africa are a long-term demographic nightmare.**

   The US Census Bureau estimates that the Middle East is a region where the population will nearly double between now and 2030. The total population of the Middle East and North Africa has grown from 78.6 million in 1950 to 101.2 million in 1960, 133.0 million in 1970, 177.9 million in 1980, 244.8 million in 1990, and 307.1 million in 2000. Conservative projections put it at 376. 2 million

in 2010, 449.3 million in 2020, 522.3 million in 2030, 592.1 million in 2040, and 656.3 million in 2050.

- **Population growth presents major problems for infrastructure and water; and is creating a "youth explosion."**

  This growth will exhaust natural water supplies, force permanent dependence on food imports, and raise the size of the young working age population aged 15 to 30 from 20.5 million in 1950 to 87.8 million in 2000, and 145.2 million in 2050.

- **Employment and education will be critical challenges to regional stability.**

  Some 70% of the population already is under 30 years of age and some 50% is under 20. It is a region where real and disguised unemployment average at least 25% for young males, where no real statistics exist for women, and where the number of young people entering the work force each year will double between now and 2025. This creates an immense "bow wave" of future strains on social, educational, political, and economic systems.

- **It is a region that has had limited or no real growth in per capita income, and growing inequity in the distribution of that income, for more than two decades.**

- This is reflected in the fact that growth in per capita income in constant prices dropped from 3.6% during 1971-1980 to –0.6% during 1981-1990, and was only 1% from 1991-2000 – reflected static income over nearly twenty years in a region with extremely poor equity of income distribution.

- **Overall economic growth is far too low.**

  The World Bank's report on Global Economic Development for 2003 shows a sharp decline in economic growth in GDP in constant prices from 6.5% during 1971-1980 to 2.5% during 1981-1990. While growth rose to 3.2% during 1991-2000, it barely kept pace with population growth.

- **The Middle East is not competitive with the leading developing regions.**

  While inter-regional comparisons may be somewhat unfair, the economic growth in East Asia and the Pacific was 6.6% during 1971-1980, 7.3% during 1981-1990, and 7.7% during 1991-2000. The growth in real per capita income was the economic growth in East Asia and the Pacific was 3.0% during 1971-1980, 4.8% during 1981-1990, and 5.4% during 1991-2000.

- **The region is not competitive in trade.** It is a region whose share of the world's GNP and world trade has declined for nearly half a century, where intraregional trade remains limited, and where virtually all states have states outside the region as their major trading partners. The rhetoric of Arab unity and regional development has little real-world relation to reality.

- **Radical economic changes are affecting regional societies. Agricultural and rural communities have given way to hyper urbanization and slums.**

  Most countries are now net food importers; and must devote a growing portion of their limited water supplies to urban and industrial use. The region cannot eliminate food import dependence at any foreseeable point in the future, and demographics inevitably mean its water problems force economic and social change.

- **"Oil wealth" has always been relative, and can no longer sustain any country in the region except for Qatar, UAE, and possibly Kuwait.**

  Real per capita oil wealth is now only about 15%-30% of its peak in 1980. For example, Saudi Arabia's per capita petroleum exports in 2002 had less than one tenth of their peak value. (From $24,000 in 1980 to $2,300 in 2002.)

- **In spite of decades of reform plans and foreign aid, there are no globally competitive economies in any of the 23 MENA states.**

  Productivity has been inhibited by problems in education, bureaucratic barriers, a focus on state industry, a lack of incentives for foreign direct investment, a strong incentive to place domestic private capital in investments outside the region, problems in the role of women that sharply affect productivity gain, and corruption. There are beginnings in nations like Tunisia, Jordan, and Dubai, but there are no real successes as yet, and many states have little more than ambitious plans.

- **Far too many countries have a sustained debt and budget crisis.**

  Most states already cannot afford many of the expenditures they should make or have national budgets under great strain. The end result is to cut back entitlements and investment in infrastructure, and allow state industries to decline. At the same time, many countries still spend far too much on military forces, continue to fail to effectively modernize their forces, and now must spend more on internal security.

- **Immigration is being driven by such forces and creates new challenges of its own.**

  It is hardly surprising therefore that the Arab Development Report should mention surveys where 50% of the young Arab males surveyed stated their career plan was to immigrate.

  Demographic and economic pressures, however, are only part of the story. There are tremendous cultural, societal, political, and ideological pressures as well. Virtually all of the countries in the region have serious ethnic and confessional differences as well as differences resulting from education, tribalism, and class.

- **The Middle East and North Africa is a region with a long history of failed secularism.**

  Pan Arabism, Arab socialism, the cult of the leader, and exploitative capitalism, have all had their day and failed. Most states have patriarchical and authoritarian

leaders, one or no real political parties, and elites unprepared for truly representative government. Far too often democracy is a word rather than a practical option.

- **In far too many cases, the symbols of Western materialism are unaccompanied by any matching values and are largely unaffordable.**

   At the same time, vast changes in communications – such as satellite TV News channels like Al Jazeera and the regional content of the Internet – produce serious cultural alienation.

- **This alienation is compounded by the Arab-Israeli conflict, the military dominance and intervention of the US, and often careless and extreme US and Western criticism of Islam and the Arab world.**

   The image of crusaders, of neoimperialism, and Western contempt or disregard for the values of the region and Islamic world is grossly exaggerated. So is the blame assigned to Israel and to the US for supporting Israel. It is, however, a reality in terms of regional perceptions and there are enough underlying elements of truth behind these perceptions so that no one in the US should ignore them.

- **It is hardly surprising, therefore, that many in the region have turned back to what they regard as their roots in Islam and ethnicity.**

   They see their future in terms of religion, a broad Arab identity mixed with reliance on extended family and tribe. And inevitably, the end result is sometimes extremism, anger, hatred, and violence.

- **It is equally unsurprising that American calls for reform and democracy are seen as outside interference, as motivated by selfish US interests or even "Zionist plots," and that US efforts at nation building are greeted with so many conspiracy theories and so much suspicion.**

This mix of complex forces can – and must – be changed with time. It cannot, however, be changed by overthrowing one dictator or be defeating one leading group of terrorists. It cannot be solved simply by calling for democracy, any more than it can be solved by having economic reform without political or social reform.

The Security Problems that Drive the Need for Continuing Engagement

The reality is that our intervention in Iraq, like the war in Afghanistan, the broader struggle against terrorism, and the Arab-Israel conflict must be seen in the context of continuing region-wide problems that will take at least 10-20 years to resolve, and which are spilling over into Central, South, and East Asia.

At the same time, the history of the modern Middle East shows that the way in which these forces will play out is normally highly national. No one can deny the reality that Arab and Islamic culture are powerful regional forces, or that the rhetoric of Arab unity still has powerful influence. The fact remains, however, that history shows most demographic, social, economic, and political problems play out at a national level. Solutions are found, or not found, one nation at a time, and there is little historical

evidence since the time of Nasser that any one nation may serves as an example that transforms the others.

This scarcely means that short-term American success in Iraq is unimportant. It does mean that the forces shaping the region are far too powerful to play out quickly or be deeply influenced by a single case. Regardless of how well or how badly America does in Iraq – and in the other three wars it is involved in it faces decades in which:

- **Internal tensions will lead to violence in many states.**

- **Demographic momentum will increase demographic pressure on virtually every nation for at least the next three decades.**

- **Economic reform will come slowly, particularly in reaching the poor and badly educated.**

- **Political *evolution* may succeed over time, but there is – as yet -- no foundation for sudden democracy or political reform. Stable political parties, the rule of law, human rights, willingness to compromise and give up power, and all the checks and balances that allow our republic to function, are still weak. Attempts at reform that outpace the ability of societies to generate internal change will lead to *revolution* and new – and generally worse – forms of authoritarianism or theocracy.**

- **Islamic extremism and terrorism may never come to dominate more than a handful of states, but they will mutate and endure for decades after Bin Laden and Al Qaida are gone and only sheer luck will prevent them from dominating at least some states or at least posing a critical challenge to some regimes.**

- **Anger and jealousy at the West and against the US in particular, may fade some *if* the US can find a way of helping to end the Arab-Israeli conflict, and can succeed enough in Iraq so that it is not perceived as a modern group of "crusaders" and an occupying enemy. This anger will not, however, disappear. It may well be compounded by the backlash from cultural conflicts over immigration and a steadily growing gap between the wealth of the West, and living standards in much of the MENA region.**

The fact that the future of Iraq and the Middle East will be as difficult, complex, and time consuming as its past, however, does not mean that the US can disengage from the region. Neither do the facts that US influence will be far more limited than we might like, that reform and change will be driven by local values and priorities, and that there will often by set backs and reversals.

America is not involved in a "clash of civilizations." It is, however, on the periphery of a clash within a civilization that affects their vital strategic interests, that can lash out in the form of terrorism and extremist attacks, and which deserves an active US role on moral and humanitarian grounds. Like the Cold War, the fact America faces what could be half a century of problems, and can neither foresee nor fully shape the future, in no way allows Americans to stand aside.

Like it or not, the US is involved in a war of ideas and values in the Arab and Islamic worlds, and there is no easy dividing line between the Middle East, the general threat of Islamic extremism, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the war in Afghanistan, and instability in Central and South Asia. The US will be a target almost regardless of how active it is in the region. The events of "9/11" have made part of the threat as obvious as the previous points have shown the need for outside aid and encouragement. Terrorism can reach anywhere in the world, and sometimes will.

Moreover, the problem of proliferation goes far beyond Iraq. Iran, Israel, and Syria are active proliferators and Libya's ultimate intentions remain uncertain. Technology has already flowed in from many other countries, including Pakistan. Proliferation has already been a focus of terrorist groups like Al Qaida and the flow of technology currently favors the proliferators.

It is not possible to address all of the emerging technical challenges that will make proliferation a more serious problem, but the key trends include:

- **Chemical Weapons technology is becoming steadily more available in dual-use form, knowledge of weaponization is spreading, and 4th generation weapons present a future threat.**

  - The steady dissemination of civil and dual-use equipment that can be used to produce chemical weapons, ranging from insecticides to industrial chemicals.

  - Dissemination of technology for advanced persistent nerve gases and fourth generation chemical weapons.

  - Creation of civil production facilities with legitimate civil uses that can be rapidly or covertly converted to weapons production.

  - Improved tunneling, excavation, and construction capabilities for the creation of underground or covert facilities.

  - Dissemination of civil and dual-use environmental and safety equipment that can be used to better conceal trace activities that might reveal proliferation.

  - Broad dissemination of satellite weather and other data that can be use to improve the employment of chemical weapons.

- **Biological Weapons technology is becoming far more lethal and easier to acquire**

  - The steady dissemination of civil and dual-use equipment that can be used to produce biological weapons including large-scale biomedical facilities, pharmaceutical plants, fermentation facilities, etc.

  - Dissemination of technology for genetic engineering.

  - Better understanding in developing countries of methods of "tailoring" diseases to alter their level of infectivity, cycles of infection, and resistance to standard treatments.

  - Creation of civil production facilities with legitimate civil uses that can be rapidly or covertly converted to weapons production.

- Improved tunneling, excavation, and construction capabilities for the creation of underground or covert facilities.

- Dissemination of civil and dual-use environmental and safety equipment that can be used to better conceal trace activities that might reveal proliferation and reduce the risk of biological contamination.

- Broad dissemination of satellite weather and other data that can be use to improve the employment of biological weapons.

- **Nuclear Weapons remain a major technological and systems integration problem, but design and construction problems are easing and centrifuge technology is becoming more effective and easier to acquire.**

  - Major advances in computers and commercial or dual-use test equipment that can be used to design weapons and to carry out non-fissile tests and simulations, greatly reducing the need for the actual testing of fission and possibly boosted weapons.

  - Dissemination of difficult to control components that can be adapted for triggering nuclear weapons and manufacturing high explosive lens.

  - Dissemination of centrifuge technology and dual use materials, and advances in centrifuge designs providing steadily greater capacity.

  - Option of creating small, dispersed centrifuge facilities and small folded centrifuges.

  - Better understanding in developing countries of the ability to use materials not normally classified as weapons grade materials to produce fissile events.

  - Improved tunneling, excavation, and construction capabilities for the creation of underground or covert facilities.

  - Dissemination of civil and dual-use environmental and safety equipment that can be used to better conceal trace activities that might reveal proliferation.

- **Delivery Systems technology for cruise missiles, line source attacks, and covert attacks is becoming steadily more available**

  - Growing commercial availability of components for cruise missiles, UAVs, and aircraft conversions.

  - Growing availability of GPS and other civilian-use components that can be used to provide guidance systems.

  - Dissemination of civilian technology that can be used to detonate weapons automatically at a given location while in transit.

  - Better understanding in developing countries of transmission methods for the use of infectious biological weapons.

  - Production of conventional explosive bomblets that can be adapted to disseminate chemical and biological agents.

- Civil production of items that can be used as non-destructive dissemination devices – like sprayers and air bags.

Growing Strategic Dependence on Middle East Energy Exports

America and all its trading partners are also going to become steadily more dependent on a global economy that is going to become steadily more dependent on the energy exports of the region. The US Department of Energy projects that the global economy will require Middle Eastern oil production to more than double by 2020, and Gulf oil exports to more than double as well. These estimates are based on models which also assume coal and nuclear use increases in large amounts, gas moves throughout the world in vast quantities that increase faster than the movement of oil, that renewables experience major increases, and that conservation steadily makes the use of energy more efficient.

- **Gulf oil production must increase sharply to meet world demand.**

- For all the Bush Administration and Congressional debates over energy policy, the US Department of Energy still estimates that the global economy requires Gulf oil production capacity to increase from 22.4 million barrels per day (mbd) in 2001 to 24.5 mbd in 2005, 28.7 mbd in 2010, 33.0 mbd in 2015, 38.96 mbd in 2020, and 45.2 mbd in 2025. All Gulf producers are expected to increase oil production capacity significantly over the forecast period, and Saudi Arabia and Iraq are expected to more than double their current production capacity.

- **Exports must more than double and flow securely to meet this demand.**

  The Gulf OPEC states alone exported an average of 16.9 mbd, or 30 percent of a world total of 56.3 mbd in 2002. If one includes the North African states, the exports climb to 19.5 mbd, or 35 percent. The EIA projects in its Annual Energy Forecast for 2004 that Persian Gulf producers are expected to account for 45 percent of worldwide trade by 2007 – for the first time since the early 1980s. After 2007, the Persian Gulf share of worldwide petroleum exports is projected to increase gradually to 66 percent by 2025. In the low oil-price case, the Persian Gulf share of total exports is projected to reach 76 percent by 2025.

- **US oil imports are only a subset of US strategic dependence on Middle East oil exports.**

  As has been noted earlier, the United States is dependent on the overall health of the global economy, and largely on amounts of indirect energy imports in the form of manufactured goods dependent on Middle East oil. Moreover, oil is a global commodity, and the United States must compete for the global supply on market terms. As a result, it is the global supply of oil exports— not where the United States gets oil at any given time—which determines availability and price to the United States as well as other nations. The United States is also obliged by treaty to share oil exports with other OECD states in the event of a major interruption in exports.

- **US energy imports will rise sharply.**

  The DOE annual energy forecast for 2004 does however, report that net imports of petroleum accounted for 53 percent of domestic petroleum consumption in

2002. It also estimates that U.S. dependence on petroleum imports will reach 70 percent in 2025 in the reference case, versus 68 percent in the 2003 forecast. In the high oil price case, imports are expected to be 65 percent. In the low oil price case, imports are estimated at 75 percent. These estimates are both approximately 5% higher than in the DOE estimate for 2003.

The Realities in Dealing with Iraq

One can argue the rationale for the war in Iraq, its timing, and the degree of international consensus. It is clear that there were major problems in the intelligence on proliferation and that the US was as badly prepared for nation building, the security mission, and low intensity combat as it was well prepared to defeat Iraq's conventional forces and force the collapse of Saddam's regime. In retrospect, one can argue that many of these same failures in preparing for nation building, the security mission, and low intensity combat have extended the war in Afghanistan and helped expand it into Pakistan.

The fact that the US still has a great deal to learn about the strategic and military realities of the 21st Century does not, however, mean it can avoid having to deal with them. The wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and against terrorism, are wars where a refusal to have fought them would almost certainly have at best deferred the challenges involved, and probably made them far worse. Containment could not have dealt with Saddam Hussein, the Taliban, or Al Qaida. It would have merely allowed them to fester and grow stronger.

At the same time, the US cannot afford any further illusions regarding the challenges it faces in Iraq, and what it can and cannot hope to accomplish. In fact, Iraq is virtually a "test case" of how to combine all of the region's challenges into one country:

- **The US and its allies have won a limited window of tolerance from most Iraqis.**

  However, the US must deal with the continued challenge from former regime loyalists and Islamic extremists, and a situation so unstable that the Shi'ite majority could become hostile or the country could drift towards civil conflict.

- **Iraq faces a long-term population explosion.**

  In spite of sanctions, war, and mass graves; the US Census Bureau estimates that Iraq's population has leaped from 5.1 million people in 1950, and 13.2 million in 1980 – at the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War – to some 25 million in 2004. The fertility rate is 4.9 and the birth rate is 2.9%. Conservative Census Bureau estimates indicate the population will rise to 30 million in 2010, 37 million in 2020, and 44 million in 2030.

- **Jobs are a critical problem, and the problem will grow with time.**

  Some 530,000 young men and women now enter the work force each year at a time when unemployment is 50-60%. The figure will rise to over 800,000 per year by 2025. Approximately 40% of the population has been affected by the educational problems that began during the Iran-Iraq War, and which became steadily graver after 1990 as a result of the Gulf War and sanctions.

- **The current Iraqi leadership has been denied the experience it needs in Saddam's tyranny.**

  Iraq's political problems have been made worse by nearly three decades of dictatorship, nearly continuous war and sanctions, failed command economy, and ruthless political purges. Roughly 70% of the population has never known any political leader other than Saddam and the Ba'ath Party. No rival political leaders or parties could develop in Iraq, and its leaders that have returned from exile have not been able to win the trust of the people.

- **The Iraqi people have a national consciousness, but are deeply divided.**

  The Iraqi people have no real political experience and there are deep ethnic divisions. While there has never been an accurate recent census, Iraqis seem to be divided into 60% Shiite, 20% Sunni, 15% Kurd, and 5% Turcoman and other. Further divisions exist between Sunni and Shi'ite, by tribe, and between the rural and urbanized populations, and in terms of how religious or secular particular Iraqis are.

- **Guilt by association is a major problem affecting the ability to draw on Iraqi talents and skills.**

  The most experienced technocrats, managers, police, and military are all tarred by their association with the former regime.

- **There is no history of an adequate structure of law for dealing with security, civil law, crimes or human rights.**

- **The economy has long been a state controlled kleptocracy favoring the minority in power and giving guns priority over butter.**

  Few economies in the region have less real world experience with global competition and the free market.

- **The oil sector has been crippled by years of underfunding, lack of technology, state mismanagement, and overproduction of key reservoirs.**

  Many pipelines and large centralized facilities are highly vulnerable to sabotage or terrorism.

- **Oil income is virtually to only export income and funds virtually all of the state but is grossly inadequate to meet current and future needs.**

  The US Department of Energy estimates that oil sector earnings in real dollars have gone from real earnings ($US2000) of $58 billion in 1980 to a maximum of $12.3 billion in 2002. They will probably be around $9-$12 billion in 2003, and a little over $15 billion in 2004 and $19 billion in 2005. Even with an expansion to 6 MBD, it is unlikely that real per capita oil income can be more than half what it was in 1980.

- **The agricultural sector has been driven by inefficient state planning and subsidies which never resulted in more than half the productivity Iraq should have had and which produced crops with large portions of inedible output.**

  Some 60% of food has been imported, and farmers have no experience with financing their crops or marketing them on a competitive basis.

- **Foreign investment has been illegal and there has been no real banking system in the Western sense.**

  Industrial employment has been dominated by some 200-250 state industries, of which roughly 48 have been critical employers. None are remotely competitive in global terms, and most cannot survive competition from imports. Massive military industries effectively no longer exist.

- **Utilities and infrastructure have been crippled by underfunding that began in 1982-1984, cannibalization, and fragmented organization.**

  Most systems favor urban and Sunni areas and services like water and sewers are grossly inadequate in slums and in many Shi'ite areas.

- **Information has been government dominated at every level.**

  There is no past basis of trust in the media or authority, and Iraqis have had to turn to sources outside their country for anything approaching the truth.

It is hardly surprising under these circumstances that postwar nation building in Iraq has proved to be an incredible challenge at the political, economic, demographic, social, ethnic, and religious levels. This challenge has been compounded by the fact that virtually every aspect of nation building had to be improvised after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in an environment of increasing low intensity combat, and by US officials and contractors with virtually no experience working in Iraq or in transforming a command economy.

If anything, the CBO report of January 2004 on Paying for Iraq's Reconstruction estimates some $50-$100 billion will be needed for nation building during 2004-2007. This total does not begin to cover the full cost of creating a new economy and meeting a backlog of human needs. It may still sharply underestimate the scale of the funding required, even if war and sabotage do not add further major burdens. Total reconstruction expenses and government budgets could range from $94 to $160 billion during this period, and oil revenues are estimated to range from $44 to $89 billion, and seem likely to total well under $70 billion.

Iraq's economic and social problems will continue well beyond 2010, even under the best of circumstances. Iraq can also only approach the progress it needs to make if it is not crippled by loan repayments well in excess of $100 billion, and reparations claims that are even larger.

Five Scenarios for Future US Engagement

No one can predict how the combination of nation building, low intensity combat, and Iraqi efforts to recreate their nation will play out over the short term, but there seem to be

five possible strategic outcomes after US-led coalition fully transforms power or is forced to leave:

- **Departure through disaster or "defeat:"**

  This worst case seems very unlikely, but it is at least possible that some combination of major enemy successes on the order of the Marine Corps barracks disaster in Lebanon, coupled to popular demands for a US departure, could force the US and its allies to leave under conditions that appeared to be a major defeat. This would be the worst case. The US would appear weak and vulnerable to terrorism, and its allies would be deeply discouraged. It would leave a power vacuum in Iraq and encourage extremism and revolution throughout the region.

  At the same time, one must not describe even this case as a disaster. Saddam would be gone, along with Iraq's conventional threat and near-term ability to proliferate. The Iraqis would still have a better chance than under Saddam, Iraq would still need to export as much oil as possible, and America's allies in the region would still need the US. As in Vietnam, the issue would be how well and how quickly the US could learn from its mistakes.

- **Departure through rejection or civil conflict:**

  This case also seems unlikely, but is somewhat more possible. The US and its allies could not stay in Iraq without at least the tolerance of most Shi'ites, and the support of the Kurds. They cannot stay indefinitely in the face of Iraqi inability to create a stable new structure of government, if a new government asks the US and its allies to leave, or in the face of a major civil conflict. Just as the US in many ways lost the war in Vietnam when it failed to create a viable new government and lost the Buddhist majority, it would loose the "peace" in Iraq.

  This too, however, would be a reverse and not a disaster. It would in many ways absolve the US of responsibility for Iraq without being any kind of military defeat. The new Iraqi regime might also well find that it needed US support and aid, particularly given the power vacuum it would experience relative to Iran and Turkey. Once again, America's allies in the region would still need the US.

- **Partial departure in 2005-2006, with signs of hope but with rejection of any major continued US role in Iraq:**

  This case is more likely than many Americans care to admit. It would occur if a new Iraqi government wanted continued US civil and military aid, but placed severe limits on the size of the US presence and the role the US played as an advisor. It could occur if the transfer of power results Arab, Islamic, or nationalist forces that severely limit the role of the US; the government wants to assert or prove its independence, and it reacts to forces like the backlash from the Arab-Israeli conflict. In effect, the US would be tolerated out of need, but scarcely have a real friend or ally.

  Much would depend on whether the Iraqi regime involved held together, reflected some degree of pluralism and political reform, and made at least limited economic progress. A partial departure would then still be a "victory" in strategic terms and

would put a host of conspiracy theories about American neoimperialism to rest, and still real hope for the Iraq. It would again absolve the US of responsibility for what is nearly certain to be 5-10 years of turmoil in Iraq.

Much would depend, however, on the ability to: internationalize the aid effort; find Arab and UN help in dealing with political issues; and help many of the core aid programs and the reforms the US is starting going in some form. As in all five scenarios, much would also depend on the Iraqis capability to help themselves.

- **Total transfer of sovereignty in 2005-2006, with a major continuing US presence:**

This scenario has significant probability, but is marginally less probable than scenario three. It would be very similar to the previous case, but the US and allies would remain popular enough (or needed enough) to maintain a major aid and military role, and have enough influence and leverage to sustain push for political and economic reform.

This case is the "best case" in many ways. It gives the US continued strategic influence. It is, however, certain to involve considerable internal instability in Iraq, and likely to be an awkward mix of carrots and sticks in dealing with the Iraqi regime of today. The US also will not be truly popular, and if this case endures much beyond 2007-2008, it will only be because of Iraqi failures to deal with the country's economic, political, and security problems. It has the advantage that the US would have the time to do more, and be in a position to act. It still means, however, that the US would have to act largely on the basis of Iraqi priorities and Iraqi terms, and at considerable cost while being perceived as having considerable responsibility for the outcome.

- **Iraq as an example to the region; a New Jerusalem or "city on a hill."**

With all deference to the hopes of various neoconservatives, and the more optimistic breed of "nation builders," this scenario simply is not going to happen. Iraq is too difficult a challenge in the near and mid term; the region is affected by too many other factors, and the US will have too limited a span of future control.

Iraq may become an example to other nations over time, but if so, it will be because Iraqis transformed Iraq successfully on their own terms, and not because it is a mirror image of the US or even a symbol of US values. It will be because the Iraqis used the initial opportunities the US gave them over a period of a decade or so to prove that an Arab and Islamic state can be successful on Arab and Islamic terms.

Once again, however, such an outcome would be a strategic victory, even if it bore little resemblance to the more grandiose hopes of at least some that felt a victory over Saddam could suddenly transform the Middle East.

Shaping the Strategic Outcome in Iraq

The US cannot be certain that it can choose between these scenarios and ensure "victory" in Iraq, but it has every chance to achieve some form of victory if it is persistent, willing to commit the necessary resources, and will accept the real world limits to what it can do.

No one can predict how the combination of nation building, low intensity combat, and Iraqi efforts to recreate their nation will play out over the short term, but there are ten tools the US can use to achieve the best strategic outcomes. The US has already shown since May of 2003 that it is adaptable, and it is already making use of all of these tools to some extent.

- **Accept the fact that Iraq's interests and solutions will differ from those of the US:**

  Multiculturalism does not consist of turning different countries with different cultures into mirror images of the US. The US cannot succeed by trying to transform Iraq into its own image. It cannot succeed if it does not allow Iraqis to make their own choices and mistakes, and if does not allow Iraqis to take over power in every dimension as soon as is practical. The US also cannot succeed if it behaves as if Iraq does not have different foreign policy and security interests from the US.

- **Stay the course militarily, while developing Iraqi security forces as soon as possible.**

  The US military has already shown far more realism and adaptability than in Vietnam, and "Iraqisation" has already provided more than 200,000 men for military, police, and security forces. The problem now is to accept the need to fight the mix of insurgents to the point they are truly defeated; fund the mix of military, aid, and civil action programs that are needed; and create effective Iraqi forces.

  The US may not need more troops in Iraq, but it must continue to provide all of the necessary US assets in terms of low intensity warfare capabilities and at least a year more of casualties and armed nation building. It certainly means tens, if not hundreds of billions of dollars of international aid, over a period far longer than the next fiscal year, and which cannot be paid for by mortgaging Iraq's oil – and several years of armed nation building.

  Americans need to accept the fact the price tag may be much higher than the US now plans, and higher in more than dollars. It is time to start thinking of price tags such as at least 1,000 American dead. It is also clear that the US may have to accept the political cost of reaching out to its allies and the UN, even if this means admitting mistakes. Most important, the solution lies in doing as much as possible, as soon as possible, and flooding resources forward even at the cost of waste. Every delay and exercise in cost-effectiveness means higher costs and higher risks in the future – and the risks include seeing the Shi'ite part of the country and ordinary Sunnis turn against the US.

- **Transfer political and administrative power as quickly as possible to Iraqis on Iraqi terms.**

  The US already is acting on a schedule that should do much to meet Iraqi expectations, and is funding vital programs to aid in democratization, legal reform, and human rights. The main challenge will be to accept the fact that Iraq will not, and does not want to, meet many US political expectations and

standards; that the new government will not be as favorable as the US wants, and that many popularly chosen members may be critical and sometimes hostile. The US has unleashed internal forces in Iraq that it must live with, and it may well find that many leaders who have come in from exile, or are overtly pro-American are not chosen. The US must also be prepared to allow Iraqis to make their own mistakes at every level, and do things in the Iraqi way. In general, it must accept the fact that human rights, the rule of law, and stability in power sharing are the key goals, and not creating some copy of the US political system.

- **Maintain a high level of aid, while allowing Iraq to reform its economy on its own terms.**

  The US cannot afford to be cost-effective in using its aid funds, or try to impose its own drastic reforms when Iraqis do not support them. The goal must be to buy stability and opportunity; not achieve rapid economic transformation.

- **Sustained efforts to win forgiveness of Iraqi debts and reparations.**

  Similarly, the US must push for forgiveness of debts and reparations and bring in other countries—not seek to advance US interests.

- **Ensure energy investment and development on Iraqi terms:**

  The US already seems to have rejected efforts to rapidly privatize the Iraqi oil industry, or "securitize" Iraq's economic recovery and reform by US efforts to mortgage Iraqi oil. Iraqis have the capability to manage Iraq's energy development on their terms and should be allowed to do so, and in a free and competitive manner in dealing with new contracts and exploration.

- **Shift the information campaigns and effort to win "hearts and minds" from a US-centric approach to one run by the Iraqis:**

  It is already too late for the US to win Iraqi hearts and minds through any means other than the success of its actions. The US does, however, need to do everything possible to aid the Iraqis in creating their own media, and give the new Iraqi government the tools in terms of broadcast capabilities to reach the Iraqi people on as pluralist a basis as possible. The Iraqis do not need to hear the US speak for the US; it needs to hear the Iraqis speak for the Iraqis.

- **Plan now for continued engagement after full Iraqi sovereignty for at least five more years:**

  Even in the worst-case scenario, the US will still have to deal with Iraq on some basis. In all of the other scenarios, and perhaps even in the worst case scenario, it will need a strong embassy staff that can assist Iraq with aid at the security, political, and economic levels; encourage foreign investment; and respond to emergency needs and crises as they arise. The US cannot control Iraq's future, but it can influence it and help Iraq achieve its own goals. This almost certainly means a significant foreign aid program to at least 2010. What the US must not do is react to even a relatively hostile Iraq by severing relations, enforcing new sanctions legislation, or taking any measures that cut the US off from a state that can as easily evolve towards a more favorable regime and relationship.

- **Engage Iraq's neighbors:**

  US policy in the Gulf does not, and will not hinge around Iraq. The US must pursue its broader interests in the region. In doing so, however, it must take into account the fact that Iraq's future is heavily dependent on the role that US friends and allies like Jordan, Kuwait, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia play in both helping Iraq and avoiding the kind of interference in Iraq's internal affairs that could trigger new problems. The US must also be prepared to work with Iran and Syria when this is productive and put pressure on them when this is the only alternative. The US must recognize that rather than having Iraq transform the region, the US must work to ensure that Iraq is safe from the region and receives as much aid as possible.

- **Engage the UN and international community.**

  The US cannot preserve control over Iraq's destiny; it never really had it. It can defuse a great deal of the tension that now exists between Iraqis and the US, however, by broadening the basis for international aid and support as quickly as possible, and expanding the security mission to include NATO and other international participation.

Looking Beyond Iraq

The US must look beyond Iraq and deal with its other "wars," and security interests. No strategy that focuses on Iraq alone, however, is an adequate approach to the future. Almost without sensing it, America has drifted into involvement in four separate and simultaneous conflicts. The most obvious war is Iraq, but each of the other conflicts also requires at least some shifts in US policy.

- **The War in Afghanistan**

  Afghanistan has become the "not quite forgotten" war. Americans and America's allies die there, but not as regularly. Nation building is having its own crisis in Afghanistan, but at less cost and largely without high profile media examination.

  "Victory," however, has proved to be as relative in Afghanistan as in Iraq. The Taliban has mutated and is fighting again, Al Qaida has lost many of its leaders but has mutated and relocated some of its operations to Pakistan, the internal tensions in Afghanistan threaten to make its central government the government of "Kabulstan," and the spillover of Islamic extremism into Central and South Asia continues.

  Moreover, the US (and many of its allies) are repeating many of the nation building mistakes they are making in Iraq in a country with far fewer resources and far less hope. The security effort is marginal and being done on the cheap to the point where each incremental fix tends to lag behind the growth of the problem.

  The creation of a political "Kabulstan" is confused with the creation of a true Afghan government, and economic aid efforts seem to be in perpetual denial of the fact the country has no near-term basis for an economy other than drugs. Basic lessons about the need for objective planning and adequate resources are being

ignored. Afghanistan remains a real war. The US cannot seek to win in Iraq at the cost of leaving Afghanistan without the military capabilities needed to pursue the Taliban and Al Qaida.

In some ways, the task may be easier than in Iraq, but only if the US is willing to pay for Afghan and Allied nation building and military forces that can secure the country. NATO is already in Afghanistan. Germany has already played a critical role. One answer to reducing US global strategic overstretch is to pursue an "allied strategy" in Afghanistan to free as many US resources as possible in Iraq.

The US cannot deal with the Afghan conflict, however, simply by transferring them to NATO or international control. If it does, the result is almost certain to be a resurgence of Taliban or Islamic extremism in some form, continued warlordism, and a drug-based economy – with an inevitable spillover into the Middle East and Central Asia. The necessary effort does not need the scale of the effort in Iraq, but the US must provide serious resources over a period of some 5-10 more years. It will almost certainly mean spending some $5-10 billion more over the next five years than the US currently programs.

- **The War on Terrorism**

  The third war, the broader "war on terrorism," continues, but often in ways that generate more heat than light. The Bush Administration has sometimes sought to make Iraq its focus, knowing that Americans (and presumably the world) will react better to the "war after the war" in Iraq if it is blamed on terrorism and Al Qaida, than if the Iraq war perceived as a product of the Bush Administration's failure to prepare for conflict termination and nation building.

  The faults are solidly bipartisan. Rather than focusing on specific terrorist movements hostile to the US and its allies, many in the US Congress and media have used rhetoric that has made the "war on terrorism" seem like a war on Islam and the Arab world. Others continue to try to make Saudi Arabia its focus, in spite of the fact that the Saudis are fighting their own battle against Al Qaida.

  The reality, however, is that the war on terrorism involves hostile Islamic extremist movements and cells all over the world, and the problem is global and not simply Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and/or Afghanistan. It is a war being fought primarily *within* Islamic states between secular leaders and religious extremists – Shi'ite, Salafi, Sufi, and neo-Wahhabi. However, it is a "clash within a civilization" that does spill over into other regions and where terrorists and extremist often uses the US as a proxy target for their efforts to change or overthrow local regimes.

  The US faces enduring threats from terrorism and violent Islamic extremism, driven by all of the mid and long-term forces discussed earlier. The US cannot afford to deal with Islam or the Arab world in terms of ideological prejudice. The US does not need either neo-conservatism or neo-liberalism. It needs pragmatism, neo-realism, and a return to the "internationalism" that has shaped its most successful national security policy efforts ever since World War II.

The US cannot afford to engage every terrorist movement by itself, and it risks alienating and radicalizing peoples and movements in nations throughout the Islamic world if it does so. It needs to create local partnerships with key nations like Saudi Arabia and Indonesia. It needs to focus systematically on just how different the various Sufi, Salafi, neo-Wahhabi, and Shi'ite movements are, and then deal with each separately on the terms best tailored to defeating violence and extremism in each separate case.

A far more visible effort is needed to make it clear that the US understand these nuances, and understands that it is fighting against a relatively small minority of extremists, and not the Arab world and Islam. In the process, the US must also make it clear that the US will seek to persuade other countries that its values are correct and not seek to impose them.

The US again needs to start thinking in terms of decades. It needs to understand that it must make a long term effort to work with the nations of the Arab and Islamic worlds to both fight terrorist movements and encourage the full range of well-defined evolutionary reforms best suited to a given country at a given time.

The US cannot succeed if it continues to make vague calls for democracy, rather than well-planned nation-by-nation efforts to achieve evolutionary reform. In fact, the current US approach threatens to turn "democracy" into a four-letter word; a synonym for half-reasoned US efforts to force its own political system on other countries or simply serve its own interests through regime change. President Bush did advance support a more nuanced approach in his speech on democracy in the Middle East in early November 2003, but both American neo-conservatives and neo-liberals often still seem to dwell in slogans and often in a world where the net result of what they recommend would be "one man, one vote, one time."

Elections are only one element in what should be a carefully tailored country-by-country effort to achieve evolutionary change and reform. The first step may often be to improve human rights and the quality of the rule of law. At the same time, helping nations achieve economic reform and deal honestly with their demographic problems should have equal priority. Creating consultative institutions, moving through a process where countries learn what voting means, develop a basis for political parties, create media capable of supporting an honest elective process, and creating transparency in the way states use their resources and manage the state, can all be preconditions to effective pluralism in given cases.

The US must look beyond words like "democracy," and remember that it is not a democracy, but rather a republic that protects the individual over the majority, and preserves the rights of all through limitations on the power of the federal government and checks and balances within it. It must remember what revolution, rather than evolution, can only bring misery to the nation's where it takes place, and violence and hostility to the US, and act accordingly.

- **The Arab-Israeli Conflict**

The fourth war does not involve direct American use of troops, but rather the Arab and Islamic perception that the US is a cobelligerent with Israel. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict involves the US strategically in almost as much depth as if it were a belligerent. The US is Israel's ally, and its main source of aid and military equipment. It is seen throughout most of the Arab and Islamic world as partially responsible for Israel's actions.

A struggle that the US and Israel perceive as a struggle against terrorism and extremism is perceived by Arabs, Iran – and increasingly by Muslims throughout the world -- as a struggle where Palestinians reply to settlements and occupation using the only means they have to struggle for liberation and independence. Far too often, Arab and Islamic media are anything but objective, and most European media are increasingly hostile to Israel and US support of Israel.

Worse, the US "occupation" in Iraq interacts with the political backlash from the Arab-Israeli conflict is increasingly perceived in the Arab world as the mirror image of the Israeli occupation in Gaza and the West Bank. There is a flood of conspiracy theories charging that the US is copying Israeli tactics or that its actions in Iraq are somehow dictated by Israel.

The US does not have good options. It cannot abandon Israel or sacrifice its security, but it must deal with two failed leaderships, and two peoples who no longer have faith in each other or are capable of seeing the world with the other's eyes. The US will be at a major disadvantage in Iraq, in the war on terrorism, and in the Arab and Islamic worlds as long as the Israeli-Palestinian War continues.

This means that the US should plan for the Israeli-Palestinian War to be a major strategic liability for the next 5-10 years. Nothing the US can do is going to prevent Arab and Islamic media from portraying one-sided images of the conflict and blaming the US in part for Israel's actions. At the same time, the US cannot abandon Israel and may well confront the fact Israel's deteriorating economy will require some form of additional aid.

There is no way out of this dilemma other than a continuing and high visibility US effort to create a peace, regardless of how many times new initiatives fail. The US will not win Arab hearts and minds by doing this, but it can increase Arab tolerance. Moreover, Israel's strategic interests ultimately lie in a successful peace, even more than those of the US. Israel's social structure and economy cannot be sustained through constant low-level war. America will never be at existential risk because of Middle Eastern proliferation; Israel could be in a matter of years.

The broad course of action the US has laid out in the "road map" is the right one, but several factors must be kept in mind. The timing may well be a matter of a decade and the US cannot achieve either its goals or the true strategic interests of the Israeli people by simply supporting the Israeli government of the day. Intolerance of terrorism should be accompanied by equal intolerance of settlements and separation.

The security situation is going to be extremely difficult in both continued war and any peace. The US must support Israel in fighting terrorism, and it should support Israel in pushing the Palestinians into a real effort to suppress terrorist movements. But this does not mean supporting the present Israeli government in setting impossible standards for Palestinian action. The US must also resist every Israeli and pro-Israeli effort to drag it into a confrontation with Syria, Hezbollah, Hamas, and the PIJ unless they clearly attack US targets. Israel's problems and priorities are Israel's, not America's. The US cannot afford to wander off in search of enemies.

At the same time, the US must be extremely careful about any plans to put US forces on the ground to separate Israelis and Palestinians. The end result is to create a natural target for every Islamic extremist movement that would like to broaden the scope of the war on terrorism, and potentially put the US in the position of new media images of involvement against Palestinians.

This is an area where the US needs to think hard about what an international military presence might really mean in enforcing or preserving a new peace agreement or ceasefire, and work with its allies to find if there are options that both Israel and Palestinians can accept. Moreover, it is an aid where massive new aid will be needed to both a new Palestinian state and Jordan -- over a period of a decade-- to ensure the success of any future process peace, and provide the necessary "nation building" support.

- **Conflicts in Waiting**

  Other potential struggles are waiting in the wings, although it is far from clear that war will actually occur. These flashpoints include Iran and Iranian acquisition of nuclear weapons, North Korea's efforts to proliferate and constant stream of threats, and the much lower level of tension across the Taiwan Straits. At a less intense level, the US is also involved in Colombia in a war on drugs that inevitably means some degree of involvement in Colombia's civil war.

Strategy and Strategic Lessons

In fairness to the Bush Administration, only one of the four wars the US now faces –Iraq – can be called "optional." Afghanistan came as the result of a major attack on the US. The problem of terrorism had arisen long before "9/11," and US involvement in Arab-Israeli conflicts is inevitable unless a true and lasting peace can be achieved or the US abandons an ally.

Even Iraq is an "optional" war largely in retrospect. The Bush and Blair governments may have politicized some aspects of the assessment of Iraqi proliferation, but virtually all experts felt the threat was more serious than it has proved to be. Moreover, it seems doubtful that Saddam's Hussein's Iraq would not have triggered another regional conflict at some point, just as it is doubtful that most of Iraq's present internal problems would not have surfaced at some point in the future even if the US, Britain, and Australia had never invaded.

The end result, however, is the US does not face the *possibility* of fighting two major regional contingencies – the strategic focus of both the first Bush Administration and the

Clinton Administration. It instead faces the reality of *actually* fighting three low intensity conflicts and deep strategic involvement in a fourth. Moreover, the US still faces the risk of involvement in major regional conflicts. These risks include Iran, North Korea, Taiwan, and Columbia.

American military planning and strategy must be reevaluated in terms of this situation and many of the lessons that grow out of US experience in Iraq apply to the other wars as well:

- **Strategic engagement requires an objective – not an ideological – assessment of the problems that must be dealt with, and of the size and cost of the effort necessary to achieve decisive grand strategic results. Neither a capabilities-based strategy nor one based on theoretical sizing contingencies is meaningful when real-world conflicts and well-defined contingencies require a strategy and force plan that can deal with reality on a country-by country basis, rather than be based on ideology and theory.**

  The US does not face a world where all problems were solved by the end of the Cold War. It does not face a world it can control or predict in the future. It must constantly adapt to the tasks at hand and those it can immediately foresee, not base its plans on hopes and strategic slogans.

  The US must pursue strategies and tactics that reflect the fact that many of the conflicts we are now involved in cannot be resolved by defeating a well defined enemy and involve political, social, and economic forces that will take years, if not decades to run their course. Iraq, at best, will be an unstable and evolving state for a decade after we leave. At worst it could be the subject of strong anti-American feelings in the Gulf and Arab world.

  The war in Afghanistan is mutating in ways that are beyond our control and nation building so far is failing. The war on terrorism is not a war against Al Qaida but against violent Islamic extremism driven by mass demographic, economic, and social forces in a region with limited political legitimacy. It may take a quarter of a century to deal with. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict seems years away from peace, and the last peace process has shown how tenuous and uncertain even a seemingly successful peace process can be.

- **"Superpower" has always been a dangerous term. The resulting exaggeration of US capabilities and strategic focus on bipolar threats and "peer rivals" misses the point. The real problem is being a global power with limited resources – a problem that Great Britain encountered throughout the 19th century. The world already is multipolar. There are severe limits to what the US can do, and how many places it can do it. Coalitions and alliances are more important than ever.**

  There is no alternative to "internationalism." There may be times we disagree with the UN or some of our allies, but our strategy must be based on seeking consensus wherever possible, on compromise when necessary, and on coalitions that underpin virtually every action we take. Our rhetoric can no longer be simply

American or be driven by domestic politics; it must take full account of the values and sensitivities of others.

Our military strategy must give interoperability and military advisory efforts the same priority as jointness. In order to lead, we must also learn to follow. We must never subordinate our vital national interests to others, but this will rarely be the issue. In practice, our challenge is to subordinate our arrogance to the end of achieving true partnerships, and to shape our diplomacy to creating lasting coalitions of the truly willing rather than coalitions of the pressured and intimidated.

- **Great as US power is, it cannot substitute for coalitions and the effective use of international organizations, regional organizations, and NGOs –** *when their use is possible.*

The term "superpower" may not be a misnomer, but it certainly does not imply US freedom of action. At the same time, most NGOs and international organizations are not organized for armed nation building and face severe – if not crippling – limitations if they are targeted in a low intensity combat environment or by large-scale terrorism.

- **At the same time, armed nation building is a challenge only the US is currently equipped to meet. While allies, the UN, and NGOs can help in many aspects of security and nation building operations. They often cannot operate on the scale required to deal with nation building in the midst of serious low intensity combat.**

Armed nation building requires continuing US military and security efforts, and civil and economic aid programs. Security and nation building not only require new forms of US "rapid deployment," but major financial resources and the development of new approaches to providing economic aid and the necessary contract support.

- **Deterrence and containment are more complex than at the time of the Cold War, but they still are critical tools and they too are dependent on formal and informal alliances.**

The need to create reliable structures of deterrence must respond to the reality of proliferation. The problem no longer is how to prevent proliferation, but rather how to live with it.

The US needs to develop more mobile forces that are better tailored to rapid reaction, power projection in areas where the US has limited basing and facilities, and capable of dealing better with the kind of low intensity combat dominated by terrorists or hostile movements that require an emphasis on light forces and HUMINT, rather than heavy forces and high technology.

Military intervention cannot, however, be the dominant means of exercising US military power. The problem is to find better ways to use the threat of US military power to deter and contain asymmetric conflicts, and new kinds of political and

economic threats. War avoidance is just as important in the post-Cold War era as
it was during it.

- **War must be an extension of diplomacy by other means, but diplomacy must
  be an extension of war by other means as well**.

  US security strategy must be based on the understanding that diplomacy, peace
  negotiations, and arms control are also an extension of – and substitute for – war
  by other means. It is easy for a "superpower" to threaten force, but far harder to
  use it, and bluffs get called. Fighting should be a last resort, and other means must
  be used to limit the number of fights as much as possible.

- **Military victory in asymmetric warfare can be virtually meaningless without
  successful nation building at the political, economic, and security levels.**

  "Stabilization" or "Phase IV" operations are far more challenging than defeating
  conventional military forces. They can best be conducted if the US is prepared for
  immediate action after the defeat of conventional enemy forces. Both in
  Afghanistan and Iraq, the US wasted critical days, weeks, and months in engaging
  in a security effort before opposition movements could regroup or reengage. It left
  a power vacuum, rather than exploited one, and it was not prepared for nation
  building or the escalation of resistance once the enemy was "defeated."

  The Quadrennial Defense Review was right in stressing the risk asymmetric
  warfare posed to the US in spite of its conventional strength. It failed, however, to
  look beyond the narrow definition of the problems of direct combat to the
  problems of containment and deterrence, conflict termination, and armed nation
  building. Much of today's problems in Iraq stem from the fact that the Defense
  Department and the Bush Administration were as badly prepared for conflict
  termination, nation building, and low intensity threats after the defeat of
  Saddam's regular military forces, as they were well prepared to carry out that
  defeat.

  The price tag also involves more than dollars. It is some share of responsibility for
  every US body bag being flown out of Iraq. To a lesser degree, the same is true of
  the situation in Afghanistan, and the problem is scarcely new. The US failed in
  both nation building and Vietnamization in Vietnam. It failed in Lebanon in the
  early 1980s. It failed in Haiti, and it failed in Somalia. The stakes, level of
  involvement, and the costs to the US may have been far lower in some of these
  cases, but the fact remains that the US failed.

- **Force transformation cannot be dominated by technology; manpower skills,
  not technology, are the key.**

  The military missions of low intensity combat, economic aid, civil-military
  relations, security, and information campaigns are manpower dominated and
  require skilled military manpower as well as new forms civil expertise in other
  Departments. Human intelligence can still be more important than technical
  collection, local experience and language skills are critical, and the ability to use
  aid dollars can be more important than the ability to use bullets.

- **Simply adding troops or more weapons will not solve America's problems any more than trying to use technology to make US forces smaller and more cost-effective will.**

  The Afghan War led to an emphasis on a method of using airpower that now has clearly failed because it could not secure the country or deal with Taliban and Al Qaida forces that quickly mutated and dispersed. The Iraq War began with heavy conventional land forces and soon became a heavy air-land battle. It was all airpower, armored, IS&R and precision through late April. As such, it showed that high technology forces could decisively defeat lower technology conventional forces almost regardless of force numbers and the kinds of force ratios that were critical in past conflicts.

  The problem of both force numbers and force costs cannot, however, be dealt with through force transformation to one kind of war fighting. As has been discussed earlier, the US has virtually been forced to reinvent the way in which it uses its forces since the fall of Saddam's regime. Technology and an emphasis on destroying enemy hard targets and major weapons systems failed when the problem became conflict termination, armed nation building, and low intensity warfare.

  The missions that are emerging require extremely skilled troops with excellent area skills, far more linguists, and training in civic action and nation building as well as guerilla warfare. Many of these forces, however, would have little value in a Korean or Taiwan contingency. The US needs to pause and think out the issue of quality before it does anything about force quantity. The fact is that 200,000 under-trained troops in Iraq would not be better than 150,000, and having F-22s instead of F-15s would be pointless.

- **Technology-based force transformation and the revolution in military affairs are tools with severe and sometimes crippling limits.**

  The ability to provide Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (IS&R) coverage of the world is of immense value. It does not, however, provide the ability to understand the world, deal with complex political issues, and fight effectively in the face of terrorism, many forms of low intensity conflict and asymmetric warfare, and the need to deal with conflict termination and peace making or protect nation building.

  The ability to use precision weapons, helicopter mobility, and armor to destroy enemy conventional forces and blow fixed targets up "24/7" is also of great tactical value, but it does not mean that defeating enemy conventional forces really wins wars. The US is as bad at knowing what to blow up in terms of strategic targeting and many aspects of interdiction bombing as it was in World War II.

  There also are good reasons to question whether many aspects of "Netcentric" warfare are little more than a conceptual myth, concealing the military equivalent of the "Emperor's new clothes" in a dense forest of incomprehensible PowerPoint

slides than cannot be translated into procurable systems, workable human interfaces, and affordable Future Year Defense Plans.

In practice, there may be a need to make far more effective use of legacy systems, and evolutionary improvements in weapons and technology, to support "humancentric" forms of military action requiring extensive human intelligence and area skills, high levels of training and experience, and effective leadership in not only defeating the enemy in battle but winning the peace.

This, in turn, means creating US military forces with extensive experience in civil-military action and which can use aid as effectively as weapons – dollars as well as bullets. It also means redefining interoperability to recognize that low technology allied forces can often be as, or more effective, as high technology US forces in such missions.

- **"Jointness" cannot simply be an issue for restructuring the US military, and is far more than a military problem. It must occur within the entire executive branch, and on a civil-military level as well as a military one.**

The Iraq War has shown that the end result of allowing small cadres in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Vice President, and National Security Council was to allow ideological cadres to bypass the US national security process in ways that led to critical failures in key strategic tasks like conflict termination and nation building. More broadly, similar failures have occurred in virtually every aspect of US strategic engagements and diplomacy, including critical areas like counterproliferation and the Arab-Israel peace process.

To date, this lack of "jointness" in the Bush Administration's national security team has had many of the same effects as a similar Department of Defense-driven breakdown in the interagency process during the period in which critical decision were made to carry out a massive US building up in Vietnam.

An advisory National Security Advisor is a failed National Security Advisor; effective leadership is required to force coordination on the US national security process. Unresolved conflicts between leaders like Secretary Powell, and Secretary Rumsfeld, the exclusion of other cabinet members from key tasks, insufficient review of military planning, and giving too much power to small elements within given departments, have weakened US efforts and needlessly alienated our allies. The creation of a large and highly ideological foreign policy staff in Vice President's office is a further anomaly in the interagency process.

The US interagency process simply cannot function with such loosely defined roles, a lack of formal checks and balances, and a largely advisory National Security Advisor. "Jointness" must go far beyond the military; it must apply to all national security operations.

- **Policy, analysis, and intelligence must accept the true complexity of the world, deal with it honestly and objectively, and seek "evolution" while opposing "revolution."**

  The US is involved in four very complex wars, each of which requires the most objective intelligence and analysis that is possible. There is no room for ideological sound bites or overly simplistic solutions, and force transformation cannot cut some mystical Gordian knot. The US cannot afford to rush into – or stay in – any conflict on ideological grounds. It cannot afford to avoid any necessary commitment because of idealism. What it needs is informed pragmatism.

  One simple rule of thumb is to stop over-simplifying and sloganizing – particularly in the form of "mirror imaging" and assuming that "democratization" is the solution or even first priority for every country. The US needs to deal with security threats quietly and objective on a country-by-country and movement-by-movement basis. It cannot afford to carelessly abuse words like "Islam" and "Arab," or ignore the sensitivities of key allies like South Korea in dealing with the threat from the North. It cannot afford to alienate its European allies or lose support in the UN by throwing nations like "Iran" into an imaginary "axis of evil." It needs nations like Saudi Arabia as an ally in the struggle against movements like Al Qaida, and it cannot afford to confuse terrorist movements driven by different and largely neo-Salafi beliefs with terms like Wahhabi, any more than it can afford to act as if Al Qaida somehow dominated a far more complex mix of different threats.

  The US needs a nuanced pragmatism that deals with each nation and each threat individually and in proportion to the threat it really presents. It must give regional and other allies a proper role and influence in decision-making rather than seek to bully them through ideology and rhetoric. It needs to engage the checks and balances of the fully interagency process, of area and intelligence professionals, and seek a bipartisan approach with proper consultation with the Congress.

- **Stabilization, armed nation building, and peacemaking require a new approach to organizing US government efforts.**

  It is not clear when the US will have to repeat stabilization and nation building activities on the level of Iraq. It is clear that that the civilian agencies of the US government were not adequately prepared to analyze and plan the need for the political, security, aid, and information programs needed in Iraq, and to provide staff with suitable training and ability to operate in a high threat environment. The State Department was prepared to analyze the challenges, but lacked both planning and operational capability and staff prepared to work in the field in a combat environment.

  The integration of USAID into State has compounded the problems of US aid efforts which had previously transferred many functions to generic aid through the World Bank and IMF. There was no staff prepared, sized, and training to deal with nation building on this scale, or to formulate and administer the massive aid program required. Contractors were overburdened with large-scale contracts

because these were easiest to grant and administer in spite of a lack of experience in functioning in a command economy and high threat environment. US government and contractor staff had to be suddenly recruited – often with limited experience – and generally for 3-12 month tours too short to ensure continuity in such missions.

It is a tribute to the CPA and all those involved that so much could be done in spite of the lack of effective planning and preparation before the end of major combat operations against Iraq's conventional forces. The fact remains, however, that this should never happen again. Denial of the importance and scale of the mission before the event in no way prevents it from being necessary when reality intervenes.

- **The US needs to rethink its arms sales and security policies.**

  The US still is selling massive amounts of arms to the region with more attention to the dollar value of sales than to their impact on local societies, the need for interoperability and effectiveness, and changes in security needs that increasingly focus on internal security.

  The US signed $13.3 billion worth of new arms sales agreements with Middle Eastern countries during 1995-1998, of total sales to the region of $30.8 billion. Most are still in delivery or early conversion and require extensive US advisory and contract support to be effective. The US signed another $17.2 billion during 1999-2002, out of a worldwide total of $35.9 billion. All of these latter sales require extensive US advisory and contract support. At present, almost all of these sales are going to countries with poorly integrated arms buys, and low levels of readiness and sustainability. They are also being made in ways which offer only limited interoperability with US forces.

  The sheer volume of these sales also does as much to threaten regional security as it does to aid it. The US needs to pay far more attention to the social and economic needs of countries in the Middle East, and to work with other sellers to reduce the volume of sales. At the same time, it needs to work with regional powers to help them make the arms they do need effective and sustainable, create local security arrangements, and improve interoperability for the purposes of both deterrence and warfighting.

  At the same time, most countries now face internal security threats that are more serious than external threats. The US needs to recast its security assistance programs to help nations fight terrorism and extremism more effectively, and do so in ways that do not abuse human rights or delay necessary political, social, and economic reforms.

- **The US needs to organize for effective information campaigns while seeking to create regional and allied campaigns that will influence Arab and Islamic worlds.**

  The integration of the US Information Agency (USIA) into the State Department, and major cutbacks in US information and public diplomacy efforts, have deprived the US of a critical tool that works best when regional efforts are

combined with well-funded and well-staffed efforts at the embassy and local level. The US needs to revitalize its information efforts in a focused and effective way that takes advantage of tools like satellite broadcasting and the Internet while working directly in country.

The US, however, can never be an Arab or Islamic country. It needs to work with its friends and allies in the region to seek their help in creating information campaigns that reject Islamic radicalism and violence, encourage terrorism, and support reform. The US should not try to speak for the Arabs or for Islam, it should help them speak for themselves.

- **The US private sector and foreign direct investment should be integrated into the US security strategy.**

    Far too often, the US ignores the role that the US private sector can and must play in achieving evolutionary reform. The US has tended to emphasize sanctions over trade and economic contact in dealing with hostile or radical states, and assign too low a priority to helping the US private sector invest in friendly states. A "zero-based" review is needed of what the US government should do to encourage private sector activity in the Middle East.

- **Current methods of intelligence collection and analysis, cannot guarantee adequate preparation for stabilization operations, properly support low intensity combat, or properly support the nation-building phase.**

    The US needs to fundamentally reassess its approach to intelligence to support adequate planning for the combat termination, security, and nation building phases of asymmetric warfare and peacemaking operations. The same jointness is needed in the intelligence community effort to prepare for asymmetric warfare that is needed in the overall interagency process, and to ensure that the analysis given to policymakers, planners, and operators fully presents the problems and challenges that must be dealt with in stabilization and armed nation building. There must never again be a case in which the Department of Defense filters or rejects community-wide analysis or priority is given to intelligence for military operations in ways that prevent adequate intelligence analysis and support being ready for the stabilization and nation-building phase.

    It is equally important that adequate tactical intelligence support be available from the beginning of combat operations to the end of security and nation building operations that provides adequate tactical human intelligence support, combined with the proper area expertise and linguistic skills. Technology can be a powerful tool, but it is an aid – not a substitute – for the human skills and talents necessary to support low intensity combat, expand the role of tactical human intelligence, and do so in the context of supporting aid efforts and civil military relations, as well as combat operations. At the same time, civilian intelligence agency efforts need to be recast to support nation building and security operations.

- **New approaches are needed at the tactical and field level to creating effective teams for operations and intelligence.**

   Iraq and Afghanistan have also shown that tactical intelligence must operate as part of a team effort with those involved in counterinsurgency operations, the political and economic phases of nation building, and security and military advisory teams.

   It is particularly critical that both intelligence and operations directly integrate combat activity with civil-military relations efforts, US military police and security efforts, the use of economic aid in direct support of low intensity combat and security operations, the training of local security forces and their integration into the HUMINT effort, and the creation of effective information campaigns. In the future, this may require a far better integration of military and civil efforts in both intelligence and operations than has occurred in either Iraq or Afghanistan.

- **Current methods of intelligence collection and analysis, and current methods of arms control and inspection, cannot guarantee an adequate understanding of the risks posed by proliferation.**

   The US needs to fundamentally reassess the problems of intelligence on proliferation and the lessons Iraq provides regarding arms control. Far too much the media coverage and outside analysis of the intelligence failures in Iraq has focused on the politics of the situation or implied that intelligence failed because it was improperly managed and reviewed. There were long standing problems in the way in which the CIA managed its counterproliferation efforts, and institutional biases that affected almost all intelligence community reporting and analysis on the subject.

   The fact remains, however, that virtually all of the world's intelligence agencies viewed Iraq as a far more serious proliferator than there is now any evidence to support. Moreover, some ten years of arms inspection by UNSCOM, IAEA, and UNMOVIC also failed to provide a clear characterization of what Iraq had or hand not done.

   The reasons were driven more by currently unavoidable limits in collection and analysis that politics or the internal failings of the US intelligence community and its counterparts. They are failures that affect intelligence covers of proliferation in other proliferating states like Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Libya, North Korea, Pakistan, and Syria. Moreover, they are failures that are far more serious in terms of what current arms control agreements permit in terms of inspection than intelligence.

   The issue is not the politics of intelligence in Iraq, it is how to best fix a mix of serious problems in the capabilities of the intelligence community to collect and analyze information on proliferation, and deal with the even greater challenges to arms control inspect an verification. At a minimum, this means either improving intelligence in each of the following area or frankly communication its limitations and uncertainties.

o **Problems in Intelligence Collection**

An analysis of the long series of UNSCOM, UNMOVIC, and IAEA reports also shows that proliferating nations like Iraq are well aware of these problems and how to exploit them:

-- *Iraq and other developing powers that are sophisticated enough to proliferate are also sophisticated enough to have a good understanding of many of the strengths and limitations of modern intelligence sensors, the timing and duration of satellite coverage, and the methods use to track imports and technology transfer.* They have learned to cover and conceal, to deceive, and to create smaller and better disseminated activities.

--*Intelligence collection of relies heavily on finding key imports and technology transfers.* Such reports, however, only usually cover a small fraction of the actual effort on the part of the proliferating country, and the information collected is often vague and uncertain, in part because importers and smugglers have every incentive to lie and are also familiar with many the ways to defeat intelligence collection and import controls. When information does become available, it is often impossible to put in context, and a given import or technology transfer can often be used in many difficult ways, often was other than proliferation. Such import data can hint at the character of a proliferation effort, but give no picture of the overall character of the activity.

--*Even when data are available on given imports or technology transfers, they generally present three serious problems.* One is that there is no way to know the end destination and use of the import and how it is integrated into the overall effort. The second is there is no way to know if it is integrated into an ongoing research and development effort, a weapons production effort, being procured or stockpiled for later use, or simply an experiment or mistake that is never further exploited. The third is that many imports have civilian or other military uses. These so-called "dual-use" imports may have legitimate use.

--*In most cases, the problem of technology can be solved through imports or through internal development. The problem of creating effective and well managed programs, however, has often proved to be difficult to impossible, as has the effort to integrate complex mixes of technology into effective systems.* This is further compounded in many countries by the fact that the managers or heads of such programs lack the experience to objectively analyze their own efforts or deliberately lie to their political superiors. There are few physical indicators, however, that allow intelligence assessment of how effectively a given effort is managed or the level of systems integration involved. The end result is to encourage "worst case" analysis in the absence of any clear evidence and indicators.

--*There are few reliable benchmarks or measures of effectiveness.* Even transparent access to a nation's efforts to proliferate would often lead to major uncertainties about the lethality and quality of its chemical,

biological, and nuclear weapons activities, and missile and other delivery programs. For example, the level of quality control in producing key weapons components may be so uncertain that it is impossible to determine the outcome. There may be too few tests to know how good a given country's efforts are, and it may rely on engineering and simulation methods whose adequacy simply cannot be accurately assessed. It is almost axiomatic that intelligence cannot collect what the proliferator does not know. In most cases, however, there is no transparency in terms of key issues like nuclear weapons design, quality of biological agent development and/or production, quality of chemical agent development and/or production, and missile reliability, Collection requires a level of access that simply is not credible.

--*There may be no reliable technical parameters for measuring weapons effectiveness.* Both the weapons development and arms control communities often take technical measure for granted that may have little or no real-world meaning. Collection is based on the assumption that the proliferator knows its level of effectiveness, or that measures developed for assessing Western programs conducted by the standards of developed countries do, in fact, apply to developing countries. The end result often blurs the distinction between collection and analysis but creates the following kinds of problems:

o *Nuclear weapons design and effectiveness:* No proliferating country has conducted an adequate set of weapons tests to fully characterize its weapons or – in most cases – to allow that country to predict the reliability and yield of its weapons. Countries like India and Pakistan have claimed far higher yields than they have been able to test, and have lied about the yields of the weapons they have tested. Other countries like Israel are credited with thermonuclear or boosted weapons designs of very high efficiency (and low weight) without any know test data. The level of fissile enrichment is often assumed to meet US weapons grade standards, although material with less than one-third of such enrichment could produce a fissile event. The triggering and HE lens design is assumed to have a given level of quality. In short, virtually every aspect of a weapons design and assessments of its effectiveness may have to be based on country claims or mirror imaging.

o *Biological weapons design and effectiveness:* US Army and other studies have indicated that the level of uncertainty surrounding estimates of the lethality of a nuclear weapon can reach two orders of magnitude because of the inability to know how well a given agent is produced and weaponized, and because of the inherent uncertainties surround the use of weapons that have never had large-scale human testing and whose behavior will not mimic natural outbreaks. These problems are compounded by the fact that the method of delivering wet or dry agents has a major impact on lethality; there often is no way

to know what strain of disease is being used, and there are virtually no empirical data for estimating the lethality of mixes (or cocktails) of different biological agents delivered at or near the same time. These problems are compounded because the proliferators probably has no realistic basis for estimating the real-world lethality of the weapon being developed or deployed.

o ***Suspect models are used for infectious diseases, usually based on natural outbreaks that may have little relation to military or terrorist use.*** The nominal data used for such estimates usually are not based on statistically relevant historical data in terms of infectivity and lethality, and tend to use point estimates rather than a range based on sigma. The assumption is made that the disease strain is known or behaves according to prediction. These problems are compounded because the proliferators probably has no realistic basis for estimating the real-world lethality of the weapon being developed or deployed.

o ***Chemical weapons design and effectiveness:*** While chemical weapons are considerably less lethal than biological or nuclear weapons, they present many of the same problems. Without actual testing or empirical experience, lethality estimates are speculative at best, and the problem is compounded by the ability of given countries to handle the complex targeting and meteorological data necessary to achieve high lethality and the sheer randomness of many real world delivery conditions. These problems are again compounded because the proliferators probably has no realistic basis for estimating the real-world lethality of the weapon being developed or deployed.

o ***Radiological weapons:*** The development of crude contaminates is relatively easy, but the technology for distributing lethal material over a wide area is high complex and theoretical. Most devices will produce largely Alpha and Beta effects with limited lethality and decontamination problems. If such weapons are improvised, however, the attacker may use virtually any agent at hand, and the end result could be far more lethal. As a result, radiological weapons tend to have a high degree of randomness, where intelligence collection may be impossible.

o ***Missile/aircraft/UAV range-payload***: The range of a given delivery device is often based on a theoretical calculation based on a nominal payload like 1,000 kilograms (and on the assumption of aerodynamic efficiency). The real world device may be much heavier or lighter, and it is usually impossible to know how much is really the weapon versus other components. A country may never test a real weapon to maximum range or fly such sorties. As a result, range estimates may have little real world validity.

o ***Accuracy vs. reliability vs. targeting***: both the proliferators and intelligence tend make estimates that assume the weapon actually

works according to design and is properly targeted and then deliveries are the proper point and moment of detonation necessary to achieve the desired effect. These changes of most developing countries doing this with any consistency – if ever – are negligible. There is no clear way, however, to assess the impact of random error.

o *Misuse of CEP*: Many estimates attempt to apply the term circular error of probability (CEP) to collection and assessment. In practice, this term assumes sufficient data exist to estimate where 50% of the weapons go if the entire delivery system and guidance function perfectly. It then describes the length of the radius from the aim point. Quite aside from the fact most developing countries do not test enough to produce empirical CEPs, this measure ignores the fact that half the weapons will go somewhere else in a far more random pattern along the weapon's vector, and that reliability and targeting may critically degrade actual performance.

o *Warhead/bomb/device design***:** The actual weapon or agent is only part of the problem of assessing proliferation. The physical nature or a warhead or bomb can be as critical. For example, the timing of height of burst and efficiency of dissemination may be more important in terms of real world lethality than the chemical or biological agent used, and will be critical in determining the level of fall out and tradeoffs between radiation-thermal-blast in a nuclear weapon. Reentry effects can have a major impact as can sprayer design.

o *Production capacity verses actual capability.* The theoretical or nominal design production capacity is used because no data are available on actual capability.

o *Deployed forces are active forces, and nominal strength is actual strength.* Although few developing countries come close to achieving high readiness rates, or ever supply all of their combat units with their fully UE or TO&E, they are assumed to be combat ready and have the required or nominal number of launchers/delivery vehicles and weapons.

o *Psychological effects are theoretical or unknown.* Both nations and terrorist may use weapons for demonstrative or psychological effect, but the impact is largely speculative.

--*For proliferating countries, arms control is an extension of war by other means.* The very nature of arms control agreements like the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NNPT), Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and Chemical Weapons convention (CWC) encourages proliferating nations to lie and conceal as effectively as possible. The same is true of supplier agreements like the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and Australia List, and any form of sanctions. Arms control only encourages compliance among non-proliferators and non-sellers, and current enforcement efforts are too weak to be effective while their provisions

effective license technology transfer to those nations who succeed in lying or concealing.

--*The technology of proliferation generally permits the research and development effort to be divided up into a wide range of small facilities and projects.* Some can be carried out as legitimate civil research. Others can be hidden in civil and commercial facilities. As proliferators become more sophisticated, they learn to create dispersed, redundant and parallel programs, and mix high secret covert programs with open civil or dual-use programs. Chemical, biological, and cruise missile programs are particularly easy to divide up into small cells or operations. However, this is increasingly true of nuclear weapons centrifuge programs, plutonium processing and fuel cycles, and the testing and simulation of nuclear weapons that does not involve weapons grade materials. Many key aspects of ballistic missile R&D, including warhead and launch system design fit into this category.

--*Iraq and most other proliferators have, in the past, focused on creating stockpiles of weapons for fighting theater conflicts against military forces. These stockpiles require large inventories, large-scale deployments, and generally mixes of training and warfighting preparations that create significant intelligence indicators. There are, however, other strategies and many proliferators may now be pursuing them.* One is to bring weapons to full development, and to wait until a threat becomes imminent to actually produce the weapon. A second is to follow the same course, but create large dual-use civil facilities that can be rapidly converted to the production of weapons of mass destruction. These can include pharmaceutical plants, food-processing plants, breweries, petrochemical plants, and pesticide plants, but key assembly lines can be concealed in a wide range of other commercial activities. Weapons production facilities can be stockpile for a later and sometimes sudden breakout. A third is to focus on creating as few highly lethal biological or nuclear weapons to attack key political or civilian facilities in a foreign country, rather than its military forces. Highly lethal noninfectious or infectious biological agents are one means of such an attack, biological weapons directed at crops or livestock are another.

--*Countries can pursue very different strategies in dealing with their past inventories of weapons*. They can disclose and destroy them, knowing they do not face an urgent warfighting need, better weapons are coming, and this suits current political objectives. They can claim to destroy and hide the remaining weapons in covert areas known only to a few. They can claim to destroy, or lie, and disperse weapons where they can be used for warfighting purposes. In many cases, intelligence collection may not be able to distinguish between such strategies, and a given proliferator like Iraq can pursue a mix of such strategies—depending on the value of the weapon.

--*In many cases, there is no clear way to know whether a program is R&D, production and weapons deployment, or production capable/breakout*

oriented. The problem is further complicated by the fact that Iraq and other countries have learned to play a "shell game" by developing multiple surface and underground military facilities and dual-use facilities and to create relatively mobile mixes of trailer/vehicle mounted and "palletized" equipment for rapid movement. Large special-purpose facilities with hard to move equipment often still exist, but they are by no means the rule. Intelligence collection takes time and may often lag behind country activities.

--***There is no clear case other than the worst case***. Unless a country keeps extremely accurate records of its programs, it is often far easier to estimate that maximum scale of what it might do than provide an accurate picture of what it has actually done. This problem was particularly severe in the case of Iraq, which had systematic lied and concealed its efforts since the late 1970s, and had become even more secretive after the Osirak raid. Intelligence had a 20 year Iraq track record in which the worst case turned out to be the real case. UNSCOM discovered a massive new Iraqi biological weapons program. Discoveries of lies about weaponizing persistent nerve gas were a key factor leading to UNSCOM's expulsion in 1998, and while UNMOVIC made no new major dramatic discoveries about CBRN weapons in 2002-2003, it did find new illegal missile programs. The historical pattern in Iraq was just as clear as it was unclear in 9/11, but it reinforced worst case analysis.

--***In most cases, it is impossible to know how far a given project or effort has gotten and how well it has succeeded.*** The history of proliferation is not the history of proliferators overcoming major technical and manufacturing problems. It is the history of massive management and systems integration problems, political failures, lying technical advocates and entrepreneurs, project managers who do not tell their political masters the truth, and occasional sudden success. Short of an intelligence breakthrough, it is rarely possible to assess the success of a given effort and even on the scene inspection can produce vary wrong results unless a given project can be subjected to detailed technical testing. For example, UNSCOM and the IAEA found that virtually all of their preliminary reporting on Iraq's nuclear effort in 1992-1993 tended to exaggerate Iraqi capabilities once they had had the time to fully assess the efficiency of key efforts like the Calutron and centrifuge programs.

--***The only definitive way to counter most of these collection problems is to have a reliable mix of redundant human intelligence (HUMINT) sources within the system or as defectors.*** The United States, however, has never claimed or implied it had such capabilities in any proliferating country, and the history of US, British, UNSCOM, and UNMOVIC efforts to deal with Iraq makes it painfully clear both that such transparency was totally lacking in Iraq and that most Iraqi defectors and intelligence sources outside Iraq made up information, circulated unsubstantiated information, or simply lied. Breakthroughs do occur, but HUMINT is normally inadequate,

untrustworthy, or a failure, and these shortcomings cannot generally be corrected with data based on other intelligence means. Either inside information is available or it is not. When it is, imagery and signals intelligence generally do far more to indicate that HUMINT is wrong or suspect than to reveal the truth.

--*In many cases, even the leaders of a proliferating country may not have an accurate picture of the success of their efforts, and most probably do not have a clear picture of the accuracy, lethality and effects, and reliability of their weapons*. US and British research efforts have long shown that even highly sophisticated technical models of the performance and lethality of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and delivery systems can be grossly wrong, or require massive levels of human testing that simply are not practical even for closed authoritarian societies. No declassified intelligence report on any proliferation effort in any developing country has yet indicated that Iraq or any other proliferator has sophisticated technical and testing models in these areas. Intelligence cannot collect data that do not exist.

--*Even if a nation's war plans and doctrine are known – which is unlikely – they may not be relevant.* Many countries almost certainly acquire and deploy such weapons without developing detailed war plans or doctrines. Leaders may treat such weapons more as symbols or deterrents than in terms of actual use. Targeting and escalatory doctrine may be nominal or highly unrealistic. An actual crisis may then lead to efforts to develop a completely different approach to using such weapons that then becomes interact with the enemy's behavior. The resulting "escalation ladder" may then bear no relation to the peacetime intentions on either side, or to any game theoretic model of efficient deterrence and use. Moreover, the inability on both sides to properly target and predict weapons effects – and simultaneously manage conventional and WMD combat – can give any resulting combat a highly random character.

o **Problems in Analyzing Iraqi and Other Country WMD Capabilities and Delivery Systems**

Many of the resulting problems in the analysis of the WMD capabilities of Iraq and other countries are the result of the previous problems in collection. The details of US, British, and allied intelligence analyses remain classified. At the same time, background discussions with intelligence analysts and users reveal the following additional problems in analyzing the WMD threat:

--*The uncertainties surrounding collection on virtually all proliferation and weapons of mass destruction programs are so great that it is impossible to produce meaningful point estimates.* As the CIA has shown in some of its past public estimates of missile proliferation, the intelligence community must first develop a matrix of what is and is not known about a given aspect of proliferation in a given country, with careful footnoting or qualification of the problems in each key source. It must then deal with uncertainty by

creating estimates that show a range of possible current and projected capabilities—carefully qualifying each case. In general, at least three scenarios or cases need to be analyzed for each major aspect of proliferation in each country—something approaching a "best," "most likely, " and "worst case."

--*Even under these conditions, the resulting analytic effort faces serious problems. Security compartmentation within each major aspect of collection and analysis severely limits the flow of data to working analysts.* The expansion of analytic staffs has sharply increased the barriers to the flow of data, and has brought large number of junior analysts into the process that can do little more than update past analyses and judgments. Far too little analysis is subjected to technical review by those who have actually worked on weapons development, and the analysis of delivery programs, warheads and weapons, and chemical, biological, and nuclear proliferation tends to be compartmented. Instead of the free flow of data and exchange of analytic conclusions, or "fusion" of intelligence, analysis is "stovepiped" into separate areas of activity. Moreover, the larger staffs get, the more stovepiping tends to occur.

--*Analysis tends to focus on technical capability and not on the problems in management and systems integration that often are the real world limiting factors in proliferation.* This tends to push analysis towards exaggerating the probable level of proliferation, particularly because technical capability is often assumed if collection cannot provide all the necessary information.

--*Where data are available on past holdings of weapons and the capability to produce such weapons—such as data on chemical weapons feedstocks and biological growth material—the intelligence effort tends to produce estimates of the maximum size of the possible current holding of weapons and WMD materials*. While ranges are often shown, and estimates are usually qualified with uncertainty, this tends to focus users on the worst case in terms of actual current capability. In the case of the Iraq, this was compounded by some 12 years of constant lies and a disbelief that a dictatorship obsessed with record keeping could not have records if it had destroyed weapons and materials. The end result, however, was to assume that little or no destruction had occurred whenever UNSCOM, UNMOVIC, and the IAEA reported that major issues still affected Iraqi claims.

--*Intelligence analysis has long been oriented more towards arms control and counterproliferation rather than war fighting, although DIA and the military services have attempted to shift the focus of analysis.* Dealing with broad national trends and assuming capability is not generally a major problem in seeking to push nations towards obeying arms control agreements, or in pressuring possible suppliers. It also is not a major problem in analyzing broad military counterproliferation risks and programs. The situation is very different in dealing with war fighting choices, particularly issues like preemption and targeting. Assumptions of capability can lead to preemption that is not necessary, overtargeting,

inability to prioritize, and a failure to create the detailed collection and analysis necessary to support warfighters down to the battalion level. This, in turn, often forces field commanders to rely on field teams with limit capability and expertise, and to overreact to any potential threat or warning indicator.

--***The intelligence community does bring outside experts into the process, but often simply to provide advice in general terms rather than cleared review of the intelligence product.*** The result is often less than helpful. The use of other cleared personnel in US laboratories and other areas of expertise is inadequate and often presents major problems because those consulted are not brought fully into the intelligence analysis process and given all of the necessary data.

--***The intelligence community does tend to try to avoiding explicit statements of the short comings in collection and methods in much of its analysis and to repeat past agreed judgments on a lowest common denominator level— particularly in the form of the intelligence products that get broad circulation to consumers.*** Attempts at independent outside analysis or "B-Teams," however, are not subject to the review and controls enforced on intelligence analysis, and the teams, collection data, and methods used are generally selection to prove given points rather than provide an objective counterpoint to finished analysis.

--***Time or bureaucratic momentum and poor supervision lead to a failure to proper review or "zero-base" analysis***. Any review of unclassified reports shows a tendency to endlessly repeat prior assessments and conclusions without reviewing their content and with any effort to comprehensively review past judgments.

o **Policymakers and Users Create Pressures to Avoid Accurate Reporting on Uncertainty**

There will be many cases where intelligence simply cannot resolve the problems and shortcomings in this list. In such cases, it will be absolutely critical that both the intelligence community and users frankly admit the level of uncertainty involved. This will not be an easy challenge to meet. The users of intelligence are at best intolerant of analysis that consists of a wide range of qualifications and uncertainties even at the best of times, and the best of times do not exist when urgent policy and warfighting decisions need to be made. Users inevitably either force the intelligence process to reach something approaching a definitive set of conclusions, or else they make such estimates themselves.

Intelligence analysts and managers are all too aware of this fact. Experience has taught them that complex intelligence analysis—filled with alternative cases, probability estimates, and qualifications about uncertainty --generally go unused or make policy makers and commanders impatient with the entire intelligence process. In the real world, hard choices have to be made to provide an estimate that can actually be used and acted upon, and these choices must either by the intelligence community or the user.

- **The US has agonizing decisions to make about defense resources.**

  In spite of major recent increases in defense spending, even the present force plan is unsustainable in the face of the combined funding burdens of operations, modernization, and transformation.

  The fact that the current Future Year Defense Plan does not provide enough funds to allow the US cannot come close to fund both its planned force levels and force improvement plans is obvious. Everyone with any experience stopped believing in estimated procurement costs long ago. What is equally clear now, however, is that the US faces years of unanticipated conflicts, many involving armed peacemaking and nation building, and must rethink deterrence in terms of proliferation. This is not a matter of billions of dollars; it is a matter of several percent of the US GNP.

- **Limit new strategic adventures where possible:**

  The US needs to avoid additional military commitments and conflicts unless they truly serve vital strategic interests. Regardless of the outcome of the reevaluation of force transformation recommended earlier, it will be two to three years at a minimum before the US can create major new force elements and military capabilities, and some change will take at least five to ten years. The US already faces serious strategic overstretch, and nothing could be more dangerous than assuming that existing problems can be solved by adding new ones – such as Syria or Iran. This means an emphasis on deterrence, containment, and diplomacy to avoid additional military commitments. It means a new emphasis on international action and allies to find substitutes for US forces.

One final reality – the image of a quick and decisive victory is almost always a false one, but it is still the image many Americans want and expect. One thousand or more dead in Iraq is hardly Vietnam, but it must be justified and explained, and explained honestly – not in terms of the ephemeral slogans. The budget rises and supplements of the last few years are also likely to be the rule and not the exception America may well have to spend another one percent of its GNP on sustained combat and international intervention overseas than any American politician is willing to admit.

America faces hard political choices, and they are going to take exceptional leadership and courage in both an election year and the decades to come. They require bipartisanship of a kind that has faded since the Cold War, and neither neo-conservative nor neo-liberal ideology can help. Moreover, America's think tanks and media are going to have to move beyond sound bites and simple solutions, just as will America's politicians and military planners. Put differently, it not only is going to be a very tough year, it is going to be a very tough decade.