

The Day the World Changed? Terrorism and World Order

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The return of history*

CHRISTIAN REUS-SMIT

Change in world politics is generally thought to be more momentous than incremental. The power of social, political and economic structures, combined with habit, routine and sunk costs, favours continuity over change, and practices can persist long after their purpose has declined. It usually takes major shocks to the system—cataclysmic events that expose the shortcomings of established practices—to license new forms of understanding, empower new sets of actors, and encourage new methods of ordering social, economic and political relations. The Great Depression and the Second World War were cataclysmic events of this import, as were the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union. The story of international relations is thus one of ‘punctuated equilibria’, not gradual evolution.

If the newspaper headlines following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC are to be believed, then the first momentous transformation of the twenty-first century has just commenced. Tuesday, 11 September was ‘the day the world changed’, a day that saw the first attack on the mainland of the United States since the war of independence, a day that launched a new type of world war, a war between states and anti-systemic non-state actors. Suddenly the world has been galvanised by new fears, new security imperatives and new patterns of identification.

Just how much has changed, though? The language of revolutionary change certainly sells newspapers, and it is a critical resource of politicians keen to demonstrate leadership and to legitimate new policy initiatives. It is also part of the psychology of adapting to massive social trauma, as it acknowledges the magnitude of what has been experienced and prepares societies for tough choices and bold initiatives. Yet no event, however cataclysmic, occurs outside of history; events are context and path dependent, and actors respond to challenging situations by drawing on established ‘mentalities’ and ‘frames of action’. In the following pages I briefly survey the events of recent weeks to sort out, albeit tentatively, the principal aspects of change and continuity evident in world politics after the tragic events of Black Tuesday.

THE DECADE AT THE END OF HISTORY

The end of the Cold War, the ‘velvet’ revolutions in Eastern Europe, and the collapse of the Soviet Union sparked a wave of liberal

* The arguments developed in this article are rehearsed in shorter form in *Dissent*, December 2001.

triumphalism in the United States and across much of the Western industrialised world. Democracy had defeated socialism, capitalism had outperformed the command economy, and the West's technological prowess had left the old industrialism of the Soviet Union and its allies lumbering in its wake. So momentous were these achievements that Francis Fukuyama could claim that the advanced industrialised democracies had reached 'the end of history', a temporal space in which ideological conflicts would be absent, peace enduring, and the politics of everyday life ascendant. Over the next ten years this self-confidence was further fuelled by notions of democratic peace, by the apparent capacity of the United States and the G8 powers to deliver sustained economic growth at home and abroad, and by the growing belief, demonstrated in the Gulf War and the NATO intervention in Kosova, that high technology warfare could solve political problems without Western casualties. By the turn of the century, liberal triumphalism had transmuted into liberal complacency, into the overriding sense on the part of Western leaders and their populations that they had created a self-sustaining zone of peace and prosperity.

Meanwhile, the plight of those still 'mired in history' fell further and further from the consciousness of politicians and citizens of advanced industrialised states. In much of Africa, Central America, the Middle East, Central Asia, Southeast Asia (after the financial crisis) and the South Pacific, endemic poverty, disease, increasing violence and institutional breakdown were the order of the day. Yet these crises registered little on the political radars of affluent countries, and Africa virtually disappeared off the map. With the New International Economic Order campaign long dead, ideas of political responsibility for global poverty were replaced by an abiding faith in the free market. To the extent that government was thought to have a role in development, it was the governments of developing states themselves which the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) expected to embrace principles of 'good governance'. The power of the free market and the weak taking responsibility for their own futures was thus the preferred formula. The principal form of pro-active engagement by the West was humanitarian interventions, but these were as notable for their inconsistency as effectiveness. Somalia rapidly turned into a disaster, nothing happened in Rwanda when it should have, Bosnia came too late, Kosova relied on high technology air power to minimise the loss of NATO lives, and in East Timor the international community allowed the violence to simmer and then erupt, only to arrive after the worst of the killings were over.

In a curious way, international relations scholarship has reflected and encouraged this end of history consciousness. The implicit lesson learnt from the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union was that Marxism no longer had anything to teach us. The

paradigm that spoke most directly to the sources of global political and economic inequality was thus cast into the dustbin of history. The principal axes of debate now lay between realism, resurgent liberalism, and constructivism, the new paradigm in town. Realists were as uninterested as ever in global poverty and social collapse, liberals so internalised the end of history consciousness that their gaze was almost totally directed toward the origins, virtues and proliferation of liberal institutions, both domestically and internationally, and constructivists, concerned as they were with the construction and diffusion of 'progressive' norms and rules, in areas ranging from human rights to arms control, had little to say about the world beyond the 'core' and addressed questions of global inequality and poverty only indirectly. The shift in the study of international ethics was even more dramatic. Ethical reasoning about international relations came to concentrate almost exclusively on humanitarian intervention, with issues of distributive justice receiving little if any attention.

THE RETURN OF HISTORY

It is against this background that the horrendous terrorist attacks on New York and Washington took place, and at first glance the change they wrought was dramatic. To begin with, the existential security and self-confidence of Americans, as well as peoples living elsewhere in the advanced industrialised world, was shattered. Vulnerability replaced security, with widespread fear of more attacks and with Muslim communities in the West fearing victimisation from their fellow citizens. Second, the attacks destroyed the grand illusion that liberalism was without challengers, that the collapse of communism had left the world without a comprehensive, universalist ideology that could challenge liberal democracy. If the terrorism of 11 September did nothing else, it heralded the rise of an extremist form of Islamic fundamentalism with all of the universalist ambition and militant ruthlessness of fascism and totalitarian communism.

Third, the United States and its Western allies have placed their societies on a war footing for the first time since the Second World War, preparing their peoples for the loss of soldiers' lives and curtailing civil liberties in the name of a national emergency. Fourth, there has also emerged a new symmetry of interests among the great powers, with the common threat of terrorism uniting them. The United States has dropped its criticisms of Russian actions in Chechnya, and President Vladimir Putin has suggested the possibility of Russia joining NATO. Fifth, the attacks have knocked the wind out of a world economy already on the brink of recession. The destruction of the four airliners immediately threw the airline manufacturing and transport industries into crisis, with the insurance and tourism industries following close behind. And, finally, after years of active support, followed by

blind neglect, Western governments have suddenly become concerned about the atrocities committed by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The magnitude of these changes should not be underestimated. The last time that advanced industrialised states experienced profound existential insecurity was during the Cold War, but then the cruel logic of mutually assured destruction provided a form of stability if not security. There is, however, no effective deterrent against international terrorism, which places current insecurities in a league of their own. The coincidence of such insecurity with possible economic recession is likely to produce novel responses. It is already apparent that governments, so long wedded to monetarist economics, are becoming more interventionary, with the United States pumping large amounts of cash into the 'war' economy, especially to underwrite the airline and insurance industries. On many fronts we are seeing the re-emergence of old reasons of state that are qualifying the neo-liberal state.

Launching a global war against non-state actors is also unique in modern history, though not in the history of the international system. Despite the focus on Osama Bin Laden, the Taliban, and Afghanistan, international terrorism is essentially a faceless and territorially unbound enemy. The use of military force and the curtailment of civil liberties that usually accompanies war are already evident, but this will be a war without fronts, in which the boundaries between military and policing becomes increasingly blurred, and where victory will be difficult, if not impossible, to recognise when and if it comes.

By these measures, Black Tuesday was indeed the day the world changed. Yet in the weeks since the attacks, striking elements of continuity have also been apparent. George W. Bush and his administration came to office with a unilateralist approach to foreign and defence policy and many of its senior cabinet members and staffers were weaned in the heady days of the Cold War, many having been implicated in Ronald Reagan's counter-insurgency activities in Central America. This was an administration committed to the pursuit of narrowly defined national interests, which understood the world in classical balance of power terms, was highly allergic to multilateral diplomacy, and was critical of the United Nations and international law.

Not surprisingly, the administration's early responses have reflected this broad orientation to world politics. Despite the fact that global terrorism has clear political roots—grounded in long-standing anti-colonial grievances, the failure to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and other issues such as the ongoing sanctions against Iraq—emphasis has again been placed on military solutions. Because these solutions require the cooperation of a broad and diverse coalition of states, the administration has been forced to engage in a 'thin' form of

multilateral diplomacy. It has sought agreement from traditional allies, former enemies, moderate Arab states, and even the Taliban's biggest supporter, Pakistan, to use their military facilities and airspace. But it has been careful not to bind its hand, and it has deliberately avoided using the United Nations as a focus for the multilateral effort, even when Security Council support would, in all likelihood, have been forthcoming.

One of the more disturbing aspects of the administration's response, and one that exhibits great continuities with the past, is its attitude toward the rule of law. Domestically, it moved rapidly to introduce legislation in Congress to restrict civil liberties to enhance domestic security and aid in the fight against terrorism, with critics noting that these same restrictions had long been part of a previously unsuccessful conservative legislative agenda. Simultaneously, Vice-President Richard Cheney declared that the war against terrorism would need to be 'a dirty war', one requiring the United States to 'walk in the shadows' and to work with otherwise unsavoury characters. What was once discredited in the Iran–Contra scandal, is now being resurrected as necessary to the prosecution of a just war. Finally, for all of the administration's talk of bringing the guilty parties to justice, extra-judicial punishment appears to be the preferred option. And one thing is certain: the administration has shown no interest in using available international judicial mechanisms, even when the soon to be established International Criminal Court would be ideally suited to the prosecution of those responsible for the Black Tuesday attacks.

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

While it is easy to stand on the sidelines and criticise those charged with making difficult decisions in times of crisis, the strategies adopted by the Bush administration are profoundly worrying. Nobody in their right mind would question the need for decisive action, but a strategy that prioritises military responses, confines politics to the coordination of a 'global posse', bypasses key multilateral institutions, and flouts the law to fight crime is unlikely to be an effective action.

For the global campaign against terrorism to be successful, political solutions must be given priority over military solutions. This is partly because military actions, such as a war in Afghanistan, will at best destroy Bin Laden's operations in one country, at the cost of further inflaming anti-Western extremism. There is a very real possibility that current American military operations will fail to kill or capture Bin Laden, bring peace or democracy to the Afghan people, or lower the risk of further terrorist attacks against the United States and its allies.

The only thing that can undercut Bin Laden's brand of global terrorism is a sustained political effort to address the issues that have fuelled extremism. Priority here must be given to finding a sustainable

solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, an issue that has become the *cause célèbre* of Middle Eastern discontent. The debilitating economic sanctions against Iraq should also be removed, partly because of their horrific humanitarian costs and partly because of their patent ineffectiveness. Ways must be found to combat chronic poverty and economic inequality in the regions of the world economy outside of the advanced industrial core, ways that avoid the creation of dependency traps and the enrichment of local elites. And, finally, the development of open and responsive political institutions should be fostered in these regions to encourage the pursuit of intra-institutional politics, not extra-institutional politics such as terrorism.

In short, the link that currently exists between historical grievances, contemporary political injustices, social and economic hardship, closed political opportunity structures, and politicised religion must be broken, and military actions are only likely to strengthen them. Sadly, beyond the Bush administration's passing reference to its support for a Palestinian state, and Tony Blair's inspiring but totally abstract call for a new just world order, there is little evidence that the United States and its allies are prepared to use their power to change the global order in ways that would fundamentally undercut extremist anti-systemic movements.

Strong commitment to political solutions will need to be matched by an equally strong commitment to a new form of 'thick' multilateralism. In contrast to Bush's 'thin' multilateralism, which does not even embody the reciprocal security commitments that normally characterise traditional alliances, combating global terrorism will demand multilateral cooperation that is both extensive and deep. It will need to encompass virtually all existing sovereign states, linking them in a web of reciprocally binding rules prohibiting the exercise of non-state violence and within a system of international judicial institutions to uphold such rules. More than this, such cooperation will require diverse states to adjust their legal and political relationships with their societies, reducing the freedom of movement that terrorists can exploit while simultaneously preventing the rise of surveillance states. Yet Bush's emphasis on military over political solutions, and his reduction of multilateralism to coalition coordination, is inimical to this task. Ineffective military action is the one thing that will quickly fracture cooperation among diverse states (even among America's traditional allies) thus undermining the capacity for extensive, let alone deep, multilateralism.

Placing political solutions before military ones, and pursuing thick rather than thin multilateral cooperation, is demanding indeed. It requires swift action to resolve festering conflicts and a fundamental reordering of political and economic relationships between the advanced industrialised states and the developing world so as to enhance democracy and reduce chronic poverty and inequality. Thick

multilateralism demands the construction of more effective international legal institutions and the harmonising of domestic legal and policing regimes, and all of this will have to be done in the context of enhanced democratic processes, as it is the unresponsiveness of political institutions that encourages non-institutional politics such as terrorism. Ambitious though these tasks are, it is difficult to see how the present order can be sustained, especially if one's measure is a durable decline in anti-systemic violence. And if Western populations are going to be asked to make sacrifices and support initiatives for the global campaign against terrorism, surely these sacrifices and initiatives should confront the key political challenges head on.

CONTENDING LORES OF HISTORY

In many respects, the gap between the strategies currently pursued by the United States and its allies and those recommended above reflect markedly different views about what history can or should teach us. For the Bush administration, the crucial lessons of history are those of Munich (that appeasing aggressors simply encourages them), Pearl Harbor (that attacks on the American homeland justify major war), the Second Cold War (that the weight of superior arms cowers enemies), and the Gulf War and Kosova (that advanced military technology, particularly air power, can solve political problems). With relatively few modifications—such as the realisation that war in Afghanistan would necessitate ground forces, and that military casualties are likely—these lessons have provided the cognitive framework conditioning Washington's response.

Whether these lessons are factually sound is, of course, open to question. But equally importantly there are other lessons that history can teach us. First, the endemic non-state violence that pirates, privateers, and mercenaries wreaked on early modern Europe was only eradicated when states stopped encouraging such violence for their own ends and when they engaged in sustained multilateral cooperation. Second, the Versailles settlement and its impact on interwar Germany suggest that harsh reparations or sanctions, such as those imposed on Iraq, encourage, not discourage, extremism. Third, as the record in post-war Europe indicates, stable democratic institutions were only secured when ambitious developmental strategies, combined with strong incentives for political, economic and social integration, undermined the material conditions that encouraged anti-systemic communism. Fourth, the American defeat in Vietnam and the Soviet failure in Afghanistan show that militarily powerful states are more likely than not to lose wars against entrenched local insurgent fighters. And, finally, we know from the history of the Cold War that when great powers pursue their security agendas outside of the framework of the United Nations and associated institutions, these institutions are weakened, and their capacity to deal

with a wide spectrum of issues, from threats to international peace and security to international criminality, declines.

In the wake of Black Tuesday, Fukuyama has vigorously defended his 'end of history' thesis, insisting that liberal democracy and capitalism remain the only viable forms of social, political and economic organisation: 'Modernity', he claims, 'is a powerful freight train that will not be derailed by recent events'.¹ This may or may not be true, but one thing is certain; the end of history consciousness that has prevailed in the advanced industrialised world over the past decade—a consciousness that disembeds that world from the wider fortunes and dynamics of the global system—has been shattered. The question is what sort of consciousness will replace it, and what sort of actions will it inform. Sadly, all of the evidence suggests that the prevailing consciousness in the United States, egged along by deferential allies like Australia, is that of an angry yet calculating cold warrior. The anger is entirely understandable, but a crude realpolitik response may well be counterproductive. The anger needs to be channelled instead into proactive political and institutional strategies that erode the ground that sprouts terrorism. As noted above, there is much in international history to support the sombre realism of such a response.

¹ Francis Fukuyama, 'History beyond end', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 October 2001, p. 15.

The Afghan tragedy and the US responses

AMIN SAIKAL

The crisis of international terrorism emanating from Afghanistan might have been avoided had Washington heeded the now-slain leader of the Afghan anti-Taliban forces, the legendary Commander Ahmed Shah Massoud, who repeatedly warned that a dangerous triangular alliance between the Taliban, Osama Bin Laden and Pakistan was turning Afghanistan into a major source of instability in world politics. Washington's failure to help Massoud to limit the menace eventually cost both the Commander and the US dearly. Massoud died on 15 September 2001 of fatal wounds inflicted on him in a suicide bombing by two Arabs, apparently organised by Bin Laden, only two days before the US fell victim to the worst apocalyptic terrorist attacks in history on 11 September. Why did the US fail to act earlier over Afghanistan, and is it now capable of acting effectively to address the root-causes of the present crisis?

TALIBAN–BIN LADEN–ISI ALLIANCE

The axis of Osama Bin Laden, Taliban and Pakistan (or more specifically Pakistan's military intelligence, Interservices Intelligence Directorate, or ISI) was not an overnight development. It dated from mid-1994 when Pakistan created the extremist Taliban militia, made up of mostly ethnic Pushtuns from both sides of the Afghan–Pakistan border, as the most appropriate force to secure a compliant government in Kabul. This followed a very turbulent and devastating decade and a half in Afghan politics. A pro-Soviet communist coup in 1978 had brought to an abrupt end the longest period of peace and stability in modern Afghan history from 1930 to 1978, during which time the Afghans had managed to create an unprecedented degree of national cohesion and stable political order. The failure of the communists, who were very small in number and highly factionalised, and lacked historical legitimacy, administrative experience and popular appeal, opened the way for the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. This in turn led to an American-led counter-interventionist strategy, implemented through Pakistan as the 'frontline state', in support of the Afghan Islamic resistance forces (the Mujahideen). The Soviets were forced to leave Afghanistan by the end of the 1980s, with their protégé regime collapsing in Kabul in April 1992. The United States consequently ended its involvement in Afghanistan with no due consideration to the post-communist management of the Afghan conflict. Afghanistan was left very much in tatters, lacking viable political, administrative and security structures and therefore vulnerable to Pakistan's regional ambitions.

The Mujahideen Islamic government that took over Kabul under President Burhanuddin Rabbani, with Ahmed Shah Massoud as its powerful commander, could not rapidly consolidate power, especially in the face of Pakistan's opposition to Massoud's independent stance. When Islamabad failed in its efforts to put its maverick Pashtun Mujahideen leader, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, in a position to head the Mujahideen government, the ISI capitalised on its close friendship with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) from the days of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan to generate a fresh and extremist Islamic fighting force, capable of purporting to occupy higher moral ground than the moderate Mujahideen Islamic government. That force was the Taliban, which burst onto the Afghan scene with Pakistan's human, military and logistic support, and Saudi and United Arab Emirates (UAE) financial backing. The latter states were traditionally friendly to Pakistan and wanted some anti-Iranian leverage in Afghanistan. The CIA and for that matter the US government quietly endorsed this development in an apparent attempt to let Pakistan fill the vacuum that Washington's neglect of post-communist Afghanistan had generated. They also showed no qualms over Bin Laden's move into Afghanistan in 1996, where he threw the weight of his wealth and Arab connections behind the Taliban. By now, Bin Laden was no stranger to American security agencies. He was one of the hundreds of Arab volunteers who had fought the Soviets in Afghanistan in support of the Mujahideen, but under the watchful eyes of the CIA and ISI. He was also already known for his stand against the United States: he had condemned America's strategic alliance with Israel and Israel's forceful occupation of Palestinian land, most importantly East Jerusalem (containing Islam's third holiest place after Mecca and Medina), and had denounced America's protection of what he had called 'the corrupt Saudi regime', and its domination of the Middle East. The deployment of US troops in Saudi Arabia—the holiest soil of Islam—to reverse the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait had marked a turning point in the growth of his anti-American convictions.

Washington seemed to view the Taliban as beneficial to its interests. The militia's anti-Iranian character, and their purported ability to secure a direct corridor through Afghanistan into the newly independent but resource-rich former Soviet Central Asian Muslim republics appeared appealing. Just in the same way as Washington had failed to see the consequences of disengagement from Afghanistan after achieving its prime goal of defeating Soviet communism, it paid no attention to the possible medium to long-term consequences of these developments. Even when it became fully apparent after the Taliban takeover of Kabul in mid-1996 and the bitter complaint by Massoud and his supporters that an ugly and disturbing alliance was developing between extremist Arab and non-Arab groups in Afghanistan, Washington remained conspicuously silent. It tacitly, if not actively, endorsed various

American companies participating in projects that could allow them to access the energy resources of Central Asia through Afghanistan. The one consortium that attracted widespread attention because of its favourable disposition towards the Taliban was led by UNOCAL of the US and Delta Oil of Saudi Arabia, whose proposed project was to construct a US\$2.5 billion pipeline across Afghanistan to export gas from Turkmenistan to South Asia. Washington's concern was to deny Iran a role as an alternative route.

Meanwhile, Washington paid no more than lip service to the international outcry over what increasingly turned out to be the Taliban's brutal, medievalist rule, and their application of a highly discriminatory, extremist form of Sunni Islam, which has had no historical precedent in Afghanistan. It remained content to offer only occasional verbal criticism of the Taliban for instituting a theocratic reign of terror, involving massive human rights violations, especially against girls and women, who were even barred from receiving education and employment; and against the Shi'ites who make up 15 per cent of Afghanistan's population. Similarly, the US remained somewhat muted over growing reports that the Taliban were transforming Afghanistan into a major source of poppy growing, heroin production and drug trafficking, the proceeds of which were used to partly finance their relentless war against the opposition. It generally sidelined reports about ISI-driven Taliban training of Arab and Kashmiri militants to fight US hegemony in the Muslim world and India's control of Jammu and Kashmir. It refused to criticise publicly Taliban–Bin Laden extremism and Pakistan's support of it, and did not provide the Massoud-led armed opposition with the necessary help to combat a complete Pakistani–Taliban–Bin Laden takeover of Afghanistan.

AMERICA'S RESPONSE

Had it not been for Bin Laden's alleged masterminding of the bombing of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania at the cost of hundreds of casualties in August 1998, Washington would likely have been quite content to remain disengaged from developments in Afghanistan; it showed little concern about Pakistan's handling of them. However, the embassy bombings changed the situation dramatically. They brought the chickens home to roost for both the United States and Saudi Arabia, and indeed jolted Washington out of its slumber. It now viewed the developments in Afghanistan as damaging and found it imperative to act. In the first instance, Bill Clinton's administration promptly launched two cruise missile attacks—one on what the US described as a Bin Laden-linked chemical weapons factory in Sudan, and another on Bin Laden's training camps in eastern Afghanistan. The first target turned out to be a medicine factory, with no proven linkage to Bin Laden; the second missed Bin Laden and his top brass, although of the 24 people killed, several were Kashmiri trainees, which clearly estab-

lished the growing bonds between Bin Laden, the Taliban and Kashmiri militants. Since the ISI had been running Pakistan's Afghanistan and Kashmir policies since the early 1980s, providing patronage to both Kashmiri militants and the Taliban and their Arab supporters, it was now clear that the ISI had established close links between various client forces for a wider, multi-faceted regional network of armed activists.

America's missile attack did nothing to deter the Taliban and their Arab and Pakistani supporters from continuing their military push for the conquest of all of Afghanistan. Before the end of 1998, the Taliban succeeded not only in taking over most of Afghanistan, confining Massoud and his forces to the northeastern quarter and a few areas north of Kabul, but also consolidated their infrastructure of terror in Afghanistan beyond anyone's expectations. This infrastructure was critical in enabling Bin Laden to strengthen his *al-Qaeda* (The Base) network of Arab and non-Arab activists, with global reach, ready to strike at a wide range of American targets. Bin Laden's relations with the Taliban proved to be of such an organic nature that the latter owed him more for their success than Bin Laden owed the Taliban for providing him protection.

Meanwhile, the ISI rejoiced over the Bin Laden-Taliban alliance as a potent force for achieving Pakistan's regional objectives, most importantly a 'strategic depth' in Afghanistan against its arch-enemy, India. It accelerated its efforts to recruit more Pakistani and Arab Islamic radicals, Central Asian Islamic opposition elements, such as those belonging to the Uzbekistan Islamic Movement, and many Chechen Islamic fighters to boost the operational capacity of Bin Laden and the Taliban leadership beyond the borders of Afghanistan. While the Taliban castigated the secular rulers of the Central Asian republics, but declared their full support for Chechen independence from Russia and invited the Chechens to open a diplomatic mission in Kabul, the new recruits were trained, armed and commissioned for operations both inside and outside Afghanistan. Their number soon grew into thousands, with 3,000 to 5,000 Arabs forming Bin Laden's personal army alone.

To capture Bin Laden and break up the *al-Qaeda* network, Washington's approach now focused on three main objectives: to indict and put a bounty on Bin Laden and demand the extradition of the Saudi fugitive by the Taliban; to apply diplomatic pressure to Pakistan to lean on the Taliban to meet America's demand; and to pay more attention to Russia's complaint about the Taliban's Islamic threat to the former Soviet Central Asian republics and to India's outcry about the Pakistan-Taliban-Bin Laden sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. However, the approach did not include any assistance to Massoud's forces, which were holding out against the Taliban with very limited human and material resources

available to them. Washington insisted on a policy of 'no support to any Afghan faction', while knowing that Pakistani involvement, Bin Laden's money, and Arab and Pakistani recruits in their thousands were changing very rapidly the balance of forces on the ground against Massoud and what he now set up as the United Islamic Front for the Liberation of Afghanistan, representing the ousted Mujahideen Islamic Government which still occupied Afghanistan's seat at the United Nations. The US refused to name Pakistan as a state sponsoring terrorism or to maximise pressure on Pakistani governments to rein in the ISI and to close Pakistani territory as the only outlet through which Bin Laden, his associates and their Taliban protectors could get in and out of Afghanistan.

The Clinton administration seemed to have been gripped by the view that too much pressure on Pakistan, which was both bankrupt and nuclear-armed, could lead the country to implode, with the possibility of its nuclear weapons falling into the wrong hands. Washington failed to foresee the more grievous results that its inaction over Pakistan could produce.

However, by October 1999 the US appeared to have been having some success with the elected Pakistani government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, whom Washington had successfully pressured earlier in the year to withdraw ISI-backed, Taliban-aided militants from the Indian side of the Line of Control and thus halt what had become known as the Kargil military clash—a confrontation which was in danger of developing into a full-scale war between India and Pakistan. Sharif finally publicly accused the Taliban of destabilising Pakistan and contemplated a change in Pakistan's Afghanistan policy. But unfortunately he could not go any further than this: within days of his anti-Taliban postures he was toppled in a bloodless coup by the Army Joint Chief of Staff, General Pervez Musharraf—a supporter of the Kargil clash with India.

General Musharraf initially promised Washington to pressure the Taliban to change direction and hand over Bin Laden, but he soon reneged on the promise. As his regime became too dependent on the military and pro-Taliban Islamic groups, he was in no position to rein in the ISI. He publicly defended Pakistan's support of the Taliban on the grounds of 'national security interests'. He urged Washington to enter direct negotiations with the Taliban, and the world community to follow the example of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE in recognising the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, although Riyadh had formally frozen its relations from late 1998.

Frustrated with Pakistan, and alarmed by the discovery of more anti-American terrorist plots by elements allegedly related to Bin Laden, Washington resolved to up the ante on the Taliban. It decided

to respond more warmly to overtures by Moscow and New Delhi for closer policy coordination against international terrorism, a fact which gained wider potency following the successful hijacking in late 1999 of an Indian passenger airliner by Kashmiri militants in apparent cahoots with the ISI and the Taliban. In November 1999, Washington sponsored (jointly with Russia) UN Security Council Resolution 1267, imposing limited economic sanctions on the Taliban, which was followed a year later by Resolution 1333 to tighten the sanctions and this time also to subject the Taliban to an arms embargo—a measure which the Security Council complemented by adopting Resolution 1363 in July 2001, endorsing the stationing of monitors in neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan.

However, all these measures proved quite ineffective, given the Taliban's defiance and Pakistan's blatant violations. They did little either to moderate the Taliban's behaviour or to make Pakistan change direction. If anything, the more the UN measure came into effect, the more the Taliban and their ISI minders reacted with provocative counter-measures to impress upon the international community that they were in charge of Afghanistan and that the West should deal with the Taliban directly. Their counter-measures included the destruction of all pre-Islamic statues, most importantly those of two ancient Buddhas, closing down UN-run bakeries which provided bread for numerous destitute families in Kabul, the requirement that the tiny Hindu minority in Afghanistan wear yellow badges of distinction, and finally the arrest of eight Western aid workers and 16 of their Afghan support staff on charges of spreading Christianity among the Afghans. These steps outraged the international community and yet at the same time forced it to interact with the Taliban. The Musharraf government played a dubious role at best in all this. While publicly calling on the Taliban to moderate their counter-measures, it kept criticising the UN measures and urged the international community to engage rather than isolate the Taliban. It rejected any criticism of Pakistan's role in Afghanistan, and maintained its façade of no military involvement in the country.

PROBLEMS WITH THE AMERICAN STRATEGY

The problem with the American strategy was that it mostly focused on judicial means, diplomatic pressure and a couple of attempted covert military operations for one and only one purpose: to capture Bin Laden and his top aides. It failed to see that Bin Laden and his *al-Qaeda* network were closely intertwined with the Taliban and the ISI, that Bin Laden virtually owned the Taliban by providing the militia with millions of dollars and thousands of Arab fighters, and that there was little chance of taking out Bin Laden and his *al-Qaeda* lieutenants without at the same time taking on the Taliban and the ISI. It also paid only transitory attention to the wider brutalities of these three forces

against the Afghan people. Massoud and his United Front partners could do nothing but suffer from growing frustration and disappointment over the narrow, and in many ways, futile approach of the United States. All his efforts in trying to make the Americans, and for that matter the international community, understand that the ISI was crystallising a dangerous situation in Afghanistan came to very little.

To Massoud, the only way to contain the Taliban and their Arab supporters was for the United States to deal with the source of the problem: Pakistan's ISI and military leadership. Disenchanted with what he regarded as the US's apathy towards the Afghan tragedy, Massoud found it imperative to continue and widen the resistance in whatever way possible. He considered the resistance to be the only means of pressuring the Taliban and Pakistan to opt for a negotiated settlement of the Afghan conflict, and to provide for the formation of a broad-based multi-ethnic government, removal of terrorist networks from Afghanistan and curtailment of Pakistan's 'creeping invasion' of the country. In the first half of 2000, he made relentless efforts to expand the opposition by incorporating more former Mujahideen leaders into the resistance, so as to open various fronts to prevent the Taliban-Arab-Pakistani forces concentrating against his fighters alone. He welcomed back into the resistance the former governors of the western province of Herat, Ismail Khan, who had escaped from a Taliban prison a year earlier, and the eastern province of Nangarhar, Haji Abdul Qadir, as well as General Rashid Dostam, a former Uzbek warlord of the northern province of Balkh, although he was aware of Dostam's human rights abuses in the past. While his United Front (or the so-called Northern Alliance) was and still is largely made up of non-Pushtuns, it contained at least two Pushtun Mujahideen leaders, Abdul Rasul Sayaf, and Haji Abdul Qadir, as well as a number of Pushtun commanders.

This, together with some financial assistance and arms that he received from India, Iran and Russia, helped him to frustrate his opponents. He had been the target of many Taliban-Pakistani assassination attempts, but finally at the time when he was ready to go on the offensive in the final weeks of the northern autumn (September-October) of 2001, his enemies succeeded in eliminating him not on the battlefield, but through an act of terrorism. His death constituted a major blow to his forces, but does not appear to have seriously affected their morale and fighting capability: Massoud left a number of excellent commanders and a solid military structure in place to ensure the continuation of the resistance.

THE AFGHAN PROBLEM AND WIDER REGIONAL ISSUES

Now that the US and other Western powers have finally come, in the wake of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, to share

Massoud's cause in support of freedom and against terror, they need to act prudently so as not to disappoint all those Afghans and other Muslims who applauded Massoud's stand either loudly or quietly. The Afghan opposition forces, now under the formal political tutelage of Burhanuddin Rabbani but under the command of Massoud's deputy and successor, General Qasim Fahim, have welcomed the opportunity to help the Americans and their allies to free the Afghans from Taliban rule and destroy the bases of terrorism in Afghanistan. In so doing, they have made a difficult choice between what they view as Taliban-Bin Laden Islamic medievalism and America's reputation for imperialism. The US owes it to the resistance to act in concert with it and assist its forces to achieve what is required. There can be no peace and stability in Afghanistan and no end to Bin Laden's kind of international terrorism unless the US and its allies ensure that they achieve four important political objectives.

The first is to secure a viable resolution of the Afghan problem by generating the necessary conditions in Afghanistan for the formation of a genuinely broad-based, multi-ethnic governmental system and by providing generous assistance for the reconstruction of Afghanistan in support of making this system work. The US and its allies could achieve this in conjunction with the United Front and the former Afghan King Mohammed Zahir Shah, who is a Pashtun himself and has also already reached an agreement with the United Front to head a transitional council to facilitate the establishment of an appropriate political order. They would need to do this through the United Nations as the body to function as the overall supervisor during the transitional period, but with a clear warning to Afghanistan's neighbours, especially Pakistan, not to interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs any longer.

The second is to help Pakistan in whatever way possible to restructure the ISI and make it a responsible security organisation with no powers to operate above the law either inside or outside Pakistan; to close down radical Islamic groups and madrassas (religious schools) which have been involved in violent cross-border activities in Afghanistan and Indian-controlled Kashmir; to generate rapid socio-economic stability; and to be returned to genuine democracy sooner rather than later.

The third is to achieve a viable resolution of the Palestinian problem, and alleviate the sufferings of the Iraqi people that the decade-long UN sanctions have created. These problems have been two constant sources of accumulated anti-American frustration and anger across the Arab and for that matter the Muslim world. Not only Bin Laden but many more like him can easily draw on these problems to recruit dedicated supporters and galvanise anti-American sentiment in the region because of the US's strategic partnership with Israel.

The fourth is to induce all the friendly Arab regimes to widen public participation in both policy-making and policy implementation processes within pluralist, responsible and transparent governmental frameworks. A failure in this respect can only ensure the continuation of those popular political and social frustrations that could make many people, especially the young, susceptible to Islamic radicalisation.

In short, a reshaping of Afghan, regional and international political and economic orders has never been more urgent. The removal of Bin Laden and his *al-Qaeda* activists and the Taliban regime on its own will not ensure the necessary changes. Nor would it necessarily eliminate the danger from those groups which are, or will be, gripped by apocalyptic missions, and such groups may well require further military responses as they pose challenges. The US and its allies will have to cast their net wider to address all the root causes that provide the motivation for such horrific acts as those committed against US targets on 11 September 2001.

Moving forward in Afghanistan

WILLIAM MALEY

The spectacular destruction of the World Trade Center and the attack on the Pentagon on 11 September 2001, blamed on the Afghanistan-based *al-Qaeda* organisation of Osama Bin Laden, threw into sharp relief a number of underlying political realities which had gone largely unnoticed. One was the vulnerability of even a wealthy superpower to low-technology terrorist strikes, dependent upon careful preparation and the suicidal commitment of the terrorist rather than upon technological sophistication. Martin van Creveld's warnings of the approach of low-intensity conflict in which weapons 'will become less, rather than more, sophisticated'¹ have been vindicated in the most shattering way imaginable. Another was the strength of the hostility directed towards the United States by certain circles in the parts of the world from which the terrorists originated, although whether the blame for this lay with specific US policies, or rather the US's symbolic role as a heartland of modernism of a kind repugnant to anti-modernist forces, remained hotly debated. But the third was the way in which Afghanistan, a remote land near the roof of the world, the classic orphan of the Cold War, had been allowed through the indifference of the West to lapse into a state of disorder from which the main beneficiaries were predatory neighbours, criminal networks, and finally a fanatically anti-Western terrorist organisation. It is with the future of Afghanistan that I wish to deal.

After years of neglect, Afghanistan is once again at the heart of international attention. Indeed, it stands at an utterly decisive moment in its modern history. The decisions to be made by the administration of George W. Bush and its allies in the global struggle against terrorism will determine whether Afghanistan and its region will at last be stabilised, or Southwest Asia will slide into a ruinous state of near-anarchy in which countless innocent people, Americans included, will be engulfed. More than ever it is important that the President choose wisely.

The path to this remarkable situation is a long one. The story is one of the decay of institutions and political structures, a decay of the kind which allows terrorist groups to flourish. In April 1978, a communist coup overthrew the republican regime of President Muhammad Daoud and replaced it with a revolutionary regime under the *Hezb-e Demokratik-e Khalq-e Afghanistan*, or People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. The new regime inherited a weak 'rentier state'—that is, one overly dependent on foreign aid and assets sales for its revenues—which was unequal to the demands of revolutionary transformation

¹ Martin van Creveld, *The transformation of war* (New York: The Free Press, 1991) p. 212.

which the new regime imposed on it, and the result was sharpening factional conflict within the regime, the development of popular resistance to its radical policies, and a decline in the capacity of the state to obtain revenues to fund its operations. In December 1979, the tottering regime then headed by Hafizullah Amin was overthrown by a Soviet invasion force. The new Soviet-backed regime—headed until 1986 by Babrak Karmal, and from 1986 by Dr Najibullah—was heavily dependent upon Soviet support, and the cessation of Soviet aid following the political changes brought about by the failed August 1991 coup attempt in Moscow led directly to the collapse of communist rule in April 1992.

At this point, there was a powerful moral case for the international community to engage with Afghanistan as never before. But this was not what happened. Although a million Afghans had died during the war against the Soviets, and the Afghanistan resistance had been vocally supported by Western powers, especially the United States, with the collapse of the Soviet Union surviving Afghans discovered that they were expendable. Pakistan, which aspired to dominate Afghanistan for its own reasons, was effectively given a free hand to pursue its interests, and the results were disastrous. The modernist forces in Kabul led by Ahmed Shah Massoud came under rocket and artillery attack from the Pakistan-backed *Hezb-i Islami* of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Rather than standing by the victims of these attacks, the international community fled: UN staff were evacuated, and foreign embassies withdrew their personnel. Hekmatyar, for all his firepower, proved unable to occupy and hold territory, and in 1994, Pakistan promoted the emergence of a new force: the ‘Taliban movement’ (*Da Afghanistano da Talibano Islami Tahrik*).

The Taliban were a pathogenic force rather than a natural outgrowth of Afghan society, and this shaped their approach to politics. While some observers initially regarded them with favour,² and one State Department official even said ‘You get to know them and you find they have a really great sense of humour’,³ there were good reasons to regard them with the deepest disquiet. Contrary to popular mythology, detailed analysis showed that rather than being widely welcomed, they had used military force to exercise control over most of the areas which they had subjugated.⁴ The ‘security’ they brought to Afghanistan was welcomed by smugglers and drug traffickers, who

² See, for example, Nancy DeWolf Smith, ‘These rebels aren’t so scary’, *The Wall Street Journal*, 22 February 1995.

³ See Richard Mackenzie, ‘The United States and the Taliban’, in William Maley (ed.), *Fundamentalism reborn? Afghanistan and the Taliban* (New York: New York University Press, 1998) pp. 90–103 at p. 97.

⁴ See Anthony Davis, ‘How the Taliban became a military force’, in William Maley (ed.), *Fundamentalism reborn? Afghanistan and the Taliban* (New York: New York University Press, 1998) pp. 43–71.

found roads easier to use, but fell far short of amounting to human security in any meaningful sense of the term. And on issues such as gender, personal behaviour, freedom of speech and music, and respect for cultural property, they adopted positions so extreme as to make themselves untouchable from a political and diplomatic perspective. Only in the area of humanitarian relief was there significant interaction between the Taliban and international agencies, and the relationship was marked by ongoing tension. It was this combination of institutional decay and anti-modernist politics that Osama Bin Laden was able to exploit.

After the events of 11 September, the US was presented with three levels of possible action: Bin Laden, the Taliban, and Pakistan. Bin Laden was the most obvious target, but also the most elusive. After the bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in August 1998, the US had fired Tomahawk cruise missiles at Bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan, but they had done little more than make the rubble bounce. Furthermore, sanctions imposed on the Taliban through UN Security Council Resolutions 1267 and 1333 had not shifted the Taliban's attitude towards their noisome guest. Thus, while Bin Laden might remain the ultimate target, the circles supporting him were easier to engage. Yet from Washington's point of view, it was better to have Pakistan as an ally in the hunt, rather than an enemy: a nuclear-armed, destabilised Pakistan was not obviously in anyone's interest. Washington in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks presented a demand to Pakistan that it choose which side to support: America or its opponents. Not surprisingly, given Pakistan's massive economic problems, President Pervez Musharraf opted to support the US. This made the Taliban movement a natural focus for US action. But what *kind* of action should America take? Here, it is vital to distinguish measures that would lead to catastrophe from measures which have some prospects of real success.

If the US administration opted for an indiscriminate use of force against targets in Afghanistan, and no more than a 'short, sharp' campaign to strike at Osama Bin Laden and his associates, then the result would most likely be a region set ablaze. The Taliban would be internally relegitimated, the Musharraf government could well face massive street demonstrations, and regimes as distant as that of Saudi Arabia could be imperilled. On the other hand, if the US took an unduly low-key approach, declining to address Afghanistan's underlying situation of crisis, and allowing Pakistan a veto over the composition of any post-Taliban regime in Afghanistan, then the word would rapidly spread that Bush was a paper tiger, and it would only be a matter of time before Bin Laden struck again. There would be few long-term winners from either of these courses. There is, however, a realistic alternative. It has six elements.

PARTNERSHIP

The people of Afghanistan must be partners in any operation to remove terrorist groups and the circles which nurture them. Across ethnic and sectarian boundaries, there is an overwhelming desire for peace and reconstruction—not the peace of a prison, but a real peace in which the rights of ordinary people are respected, the young can be educated, and Afghans can observe the tenets of their Islamic faith. Any intervention in Afghanistan should not be a punitive venture, but a rescue mission. Specifically, the United States must work with two particular forces. One is the ‘Islamic State of Afghanistan’, known colloquially as either the ‘Northern Alliance’ or the ‘United Front’. The Islamic State of Afghanistan occupies Afghanistan’s UN seat, and is thus well-placed to help ensure that any transition to a more inclusive set of political arrangements runs smoothly. Despite the assassination of Ahmed Shah Massoud, the military leader of the Islamic State, the morale of these forces has remained high, in part because of the sense that the Taliban’s days are numbered. The other force to be included is not military but symbolic: Mohammed Zahir Shah, King of Afghanistan from 1933 to 1973, who is the most prominent Durrani Pushtun of Afghanistan, and whose support for a transition would signal to his co-ethnics that they were not being marginalised for the benefit of non-Pushtuns. Zahir Shah in an interview with the BBC on 25 September 2001 took a strong stand: ‘The intervention of foreign troops in any country is something that’s not easy to accept. But if it’s an intervention such as we witnessed in Europe with the Second World War when the British, the Americans and the Canadians came down in France to get rid of the Nazis, this is different’.⁵ A partnership between Zahir Shah, the ‘Islamic State’, and the US could prove very strong, and attract support from significant Pushtun circles.

HUMANITARIANISM

There must be a recognition of how profound and immediate is the emergency by which ordinary Afghans are faced. On 27 September, the UN Secretary-General launched an urgent ‘Donor Alert’ appeal for US\$584 million to help 7.5 million vulnerable Afghans over the period from October 2001 to March 2002. However, this represented only the tip of the iceberg, since Afghanistan’s capacity to absorb resources in the short-term is limited. Two decades of warfare, combined with repression and drought, have created a mood of utter despair, and a looming humanitarian catastrophe. An intervention force in Afghanistan is likely to be besieged by almost unimaginable numbers of desperate people looking to it to provide humanitarian relief. If plans are not made to meet their needs, the political

⁵ ‘Today’, BBC Radio 4, 25 September 2001.

and military objectives of an intervention will be fundamentally compromised.

INSULATION

It should be made absolutely clear to Afghanistan's neighbours that the days in which they could determine who should rule Afghanistan are over. It is above all Pakistan which needs to absorb this message. The 25 September warning by Pakistan's Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar that any move by foreign powers 'to give assistance to one side or the other in Afghanistan is a recipe for great suffering for the people of Afghanistan'⁶ displayed quite breathtaking effrontery, given that this was exactly what Pakistan had been doing through its backing for the Taliban: Human Rights Watch in June 2001 reported that

Of all the foreign powers involved in efforts to sustain and manipulate the ongoing fighting, Pakistan is distinguished both by the sweep of its objectives and the scale of its efforts, which include soliciting funding for the Taliban, bankrolling Taliban operations, providing diplomatic support as the Taliban's virtual emissaries abroad, arranging training for Taliban fighters, recruiting skilled and unskilled manpower to serve in Taliban armies, planning and directing offensives, providing and facilitating shipments of ammunition and fuel, and on several occasions apparently directly providing combat support.⁷

In the last two decades, few countries have suffered more than Afghanistan from the belief of adjacent states that they have a right either to promote or to veto Afghan rulers. For too long, Afghans have been told which leaders they must accept, not asked which leaders they would like. This must change.

POLITICAL RECONSTRUCTION

The United Nations must play a major role in managing the transition to a new set of political structures in Afghanistan, and must be properly resourced to do so. The UN can provide assistance to the Afghan people to enable them to determine their own future. For stability to be assured, the people of Afghanistan must have good reason to believe that the international community is committed, substantially and for the long-term, to see Afghanistan put back on its feet. The UN provides the appropriate framework for such guarantees, and once Afghans see that they will not again be cast adrift, they will hasten to turn swords into ploughshares. It is not for the UN to impose any particular set of institutional arrangements upon the people of Afghanistan. However, it can provide specialist assistance to the Afghans should there be a clear wish at the elite level for elections as a means of legitimating new institutional arrangements in the long

⁶ See R. W. Apple, Jr., 'Issue now: Does US have a plan?', *New York Times*, 27 September 2001.

⁷ *Afghanistan—Crisis of impunity: The role of Pakistan, Russia and Iran in fueling the civil war* (New York: Human Rights Watch, July 2001) p. 23.

run, and it can also provide expertise on the issue of institutional design, which is increasingly recognised as a crucial dimension of efficient political transition. This must go beyond the mere organising of voting: there is much more to the generation of long-term stability than simply mechanisms of popular choice.

NEW REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE

There must be a full recognition that the dire situation in Afghanistan is not just a product of internal factors. There is a need to address in a comprehensive fashion the interlocking security dilemmas in South, Central, and West Asia which have promoted destructive rather than constructive patterns of behaviour. As Barnett R. Rubin has repeatedly emphasised, the Afghanistan conflict is neither an interstate war nor a civil war but a *transnational* conflict. If it is to be brought to a conclusion, it must be through measures that recognise the complexities arising from regional interconnectedness. Pakistan's manic desire to dominate Afghanistan is partly a result of a dysfunctionally hubristic culture within the Pakistan military, but also of Pakistan's sense of existential vulnerability, which the loss of East Pakistan three decades ago massively aggravated. While Pakistan's meddling in Afghanistan should win it no plaudits, many of Pakistan's problems are the result of misjudgments by earlier rulers for which today's ordinary Pakistanis bear no responsibility, and there is a good case for helping Pakistan to overcome the burden of its past.⁸ A Pakistan rent by civil strife is not in the interests of Afghanistan, of India, or of the wider world. Since Pakistan is the only regional state that has been a proactive actor in Afghanistan, it is possible that the elimination of the Taliban as a ruling force would trigger a certain degree of disengagement by other regional powers, especially if America's commitment to long-term engagement were credible. But there is still much to be said for an overarching framework to address the security concerns of Iran and the Central Asian republics. If the Bush administration moves with care and sensitivity to support new architecture for regional cooperation and dialogue, including even states with which America's relations have been difficult, the long-term benefits could be enormous.

A NEW MARSHALL PLAN

Such a plan should be implemented for Afghanistan and its region. This argument was first put over a decade ago by Dr. Ashraf Ghani, now of the World Bank, and it is a great pity that his words of wisdom were not heeded at the time.⁹ The Afghan economy has been seriously

⁸ See Barnett R. Rubin, Ashraf Ghani, William Maley, Ahmed Rashid and Olivier Roy, *Afghanistan: Reconstruction and peacebuilding in a regional framework* (Bern: KOFF Peacebuilding Reports no. 1/2001, Swiss Peace Foundation, 2001) pp. 39–43.

⁹ Ashraf Ghani, 'Impact of foreign aid on relations between state and society', *WUFA: Journal of Afghan Affairs*, 5(4), October–December 1990, pp. 117–33 at p. 128.

damaged both through the effects of war, and through the perverse incentives derived from Afghanistan's open borders, which allowed smuggling and drug trafficking to flourish. On top of this, the devastating effects of the post-1999 drought on individual wellbeing are increasingly being grasped by the wider world. It is, of course, vital not to foster dependency, or disrupt the local markets and norms of reciprocity in Afghanistan on which the survival of many Afghans through dark times have relied. But without substantial international assistance, these mechanisms will face tremendous stresses anyway. General George C. Marshall's far-sighted commitment to the post-war recovery of Europe helped divert an historically fractious continent into an era of unparalleled peace and prosperity. Afghanistan faces an economic plight at least as dire as post-war Europe's, and arguably much worse, since the baseline from which Afghanistan's slide to ruin commenced was also at a lower level than Europe's in 1939. While no one seriously expects external aid to address all of Afghanistan's problems, the low level of domestic savings means that substantial investment from local sources is unlikely. International assistance, carefully targeted, can help break the cycle in Afghan domestic politics, and indeed the wider cycle of militarised distrust which has so poisoned the politics of Southwest Asia for more than half a century. In the famous 5 June 1947 speech in which Marshall outlined the proposal for a European Recovery Program, he declared that the program would be directed 'not against any country, but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos'.¹⁰ There could hardly be more appropriate measures in contemporary Afghanistan.

Would these measures offer a comprehensive solution to Afghanistan's problems? No. Even where some kind of intervention is imperative, it is a blunt tool for the rectification of complex problems, and should be carried out, if at all, only with a trembling hand. The actions of the international community will benefit some groups and disadvantage others, and the losers will be disappointed. Some may even become spoilers. Interventions do not abolish politics, and ongoing political strife may raise questions about whether intervention was worthwhile in the first place. New political actors, some of them unappetising, may take shape and seek to play a role in public affairs. And one can never be sure that intervening powers will remain committed to the aims of their mission, especially if the going gets rough. But sometimes situations become so desperate that there is no easy alternative to some kind of international intervention, and that is where Afghanistan finds itself now. If we wait until we can solve all of Afghanistan's problems, we will never do anything. After more than two decades of sorrow and misery, the Afghans deserve better.

¹⁰ Quoted in Henry A. Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994) p. 454.

Is it right to respond with military attacks?

RICHARD PRICE

Are the US-led military strikes in response to the terrorist attacks of 11 September a justified response worthy of support? In order to answer the question, we must consider what constitutes a defensible use of deadly military force, and then consider whether the military responses taken by the US are able to avail themselves of any such grounds.

SELF-DEFENCE

The most widely accepted legitimate justification for the use of deadly (military) force is self-defence. The principle is, on the face of it, simple: one is entitled to hurt an attacker until the attacker stops hurting you. This is the classic paradigm of war: make Nazi Germany stop hurting you by inflicting unacceptable damage upon it. Self-defence has often been invoked as the justification for the US use of military strikes against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in response to the terror attacks. It was, among other occasions, the rationale evoked by the US Ambassador to the UN to galvanise support for a US military response. It is also the principle that, in theory, lies behind NATO invoking Article Five of the NATO Charter for the first time. The principle is a powerful one, for it is in extreme cases of self-defence that appeals to override ordinary constraints are their most persuasive—thus the argument that killing in self-defence is not murder, or, on a grander scale, that Allied bombing of German cities in the Second World War was a justifiable response to a dire emergency.

While self-defence would be a most powerful justification for the use of deadly force, its invocation in this case is not appropriate as it would require stretching the concept of self-defence beyond recognition. There are already enough problems inherent in the notion of self-defence as it is (does it include pre-emptive attacks?); stretching the concept to justify military strikes in response to terrorist attacks would evacuate the concept of any utility in serving as a moral guide for action. This situation entails a different set of circumstances: the primary purpose of the use of deadly military force in this case is not primarily to physically stop or intercept an active attack that is actually in process. To allow self-defence to serve as a justification to kill those suspected of being involved in planning further attacks is to invite the concept to justify virtually any killing, and would leave us without any reasonable guide as to when military strikes should reasonably garner broad acceptance.

PUNISHMENT

A second way in which the use of force is often justified is punishment. But the purposes of punishment are not self-evident, and must themselves be further defined. One justifiable aim served by punishment at the international level is to reverse aggression. A classic example is Michael Walzer's defence of the legitimacy of Operation Desert Storm to reverse Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. But in this case of responding to the terror attacks, the US cannot attack those who physically carried out the aggression: they are no longer there, occupying territory; they are dead.

Is punishing others involved in the attacks adequate grounds for a military response? We must consider who it is that should be punished, and what form of punishment is acceptable. The oft-cited objective by supporters of the US military action is to attack the terrorist networks—other planners, trainers, financial backers, and so on. In and of itself, this may constitute a worthy objective, but its application in this case is fraught with problems. First, such action cannot reverse an aggression in this case, thus removing the primary rationale for punishment. Second, as a general rule, attacking terrorist installations with the traditional tools of state to state warfare—in this case, bombs and cruise missiles—is too likely to be akin to using tanks to eliminate violent fugitives holed up in a housing project. The stateless face of most terrorism means military style strikes in the territory of other states could only be appropriate in the narrowest of circumstances—namely, against appropriate targets when conducted with the permission of the state in whose territory the attacks are made, or when a justifiable war is being waged against the state where the terrorist sites are located. Otherwise, as a general rule police action is the appropriate tool and criminal justice the paradigm. Deadly force can be justifiably employed in the course of resistance to apprehension, and such situations may often amount to levels of violence more akin to war as occurred in firefights in Bosnia or Somalia. But that significant restraints on the justifiable punishment of terrorist collaborators are necessary becomes especially apparent when we consider that carrying out this objective means conducting such 'missions' in places like Florida and Germany every bit as it does in Afghanistan. Punishment in this sense cannot serve by itself as an adequate rationale for *military* attacks. That is, unless attacking the harbouring state itself in the process can be justified.

What do we make, then, of the objective of punishing states who support, harbour, or otherwise offer sympathy to terrorists who have committed acts including those on 11 September? To assess the legitimacy of this rationale, we again need to consider additional rationales for punishment. Throughout human history, one all-too-common reason for the resort to violence in innumerable contexts

around the world is the desire for punishment as pure revenge. It would be difficult to deny that the impulse for revenge is a powerful impetus behind the US-led military strikes, but it does not provide an adequate justification for the use of such force. If morality is the answer to the question of 'how shall we live?', revenge is the answer to the opposite question.

DETERRENCE

Another and better candidate is punishment for the purposes of deterrence. The prevention of future terrorist attacks is unquestionably a justifiable objective. The problem, however, is whether we are in a situation for which deterrence strategies are appropriate, or whether such strategies are likely to set off a spiral of conflict. This is the classic dilemma faced by decision-makers in potentially hostile situations: are we in a deterrence situation, where appeasement encourages aggression and aggressive policies are needed (the Second World War is the paradigmatic example)? Or are we in a spiral situation, where aggressive policies can backfire by encouraging a response in kind, leading to a spiral of conflict (the First World War is the classic model)? The dilemma of the current situation is that the answer is both.

The US-led military response is an appropriate strategy to contribute to a decrease in state support for terrorism by ratcheting up its consequences to unprecedented levels. This is very important, because among other things it addresses a key dimension of the current situation now suddenly of utmost concern: the spectre of the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in attacks by terrorists. A widespread and devastating use of chemical (CWs), biological (BW) or nuclear weapons is very difficult to accomplish without at some point the aid of the kind of infrastructure and resources brought to bear by states, though it is not impossible. The Florida anthrax cases illustrate this: in the absence of the kind of identifiable large-scale attack by a state (with warheads or aircraft, for example), it has all the earmarks of the kind of BW attack that in most circumstances could be expected: a relatively rudimentary attack with limited effectiveness. Of course, the use of highly infectious agents or more effective means of delivery could rapidly make a similar attack into a major catastrophe. A vigorous military response of the kind undertaken by the US in the wake of 11 September will make it unmistakably clear that the US (and other members of the international community) will not hesitate to severely punish any state support of such activities. Saddam Hussein, to cite the most worrisome example, has more than enough scores to settle with the US, and he has a formidable biological weapon arsenal to do it. He will not use it in traditional battle, but the prospects of his making it otherwise available especially against US targets is chilling indeed.

Does this mean the US would be justified to launch a pre-emptive attack on Iraq or others to destroy their biological warfare capabilities? Far from it. Indeed, to the extent that the deterrent objective is to be realised, it will only be in conjunction with very broad multilateral support in conjunction with other initiatives. The use, production and possession of BWs is prohibited by the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). The international community must now go much further: not only must the use of BWs be designated as a crime against humanity, but even the preparation of such weapons must be deemed utterly beyond the pale of tolerance. While this may seem unobjectionable to many, especially those who fear such attacks, such a commitment would translate into fundamental and far-reaching changes in US security policy. The US would need to reverse its opposition to the International Criminal Court (ICC), and push for the designation of BW use or possession as crimes against humanity in the ICC statute. Short of that broader instrument, the decision by George W. Bush's administration to pull out of talks to add a compliance regime to the Biological Weapons Convention must be recognised for the incredible shortsightedness that it was, and must be reversed as a highest priority. Only once the international community has given its assent to a regime to verify the prohibition on the possession and production of BWs could the question be approached of what could appropriately be done as a military response to a potential or actual violation.

Successfully accomplishing this will not likely be done without rethinking some of the fundamentals of US defence policy. The reason BWs were not included in the original ICC statute was because many states argued (as they have for years) that it is unjust for the international community to ban their potential weapons of mass destruction (chemical or biological) while permitting the nuclear powers to retain their WMD of choice. Perhaps the shock of 11 September will provide the impetus for some serious inward reflection on the wisdom of what most of the world understandably sees as the double standard in United States' WMD proliferation policy. This is a hard choice that United States decision-making elites have simply not confronted in any frank sense. In the aftermath of the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests in 1998, for example, the entire public debate among foreign policy elites and media in the United States revolved around the intelligence failure of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to foresee the tests. There simply was not any evidence of reflection, in such forums as the *New York Times*, of the role of US policy in the Indian's insistence that if the nuclear powers persisted in its 'nuclear apartheid' it may eventually feel forced to deal in the going currency of great power status. If the United States rightly recognises that nuclear weapons are unusable in conflicts such as the Gulf War or the current situation, so much so that their use is not even seriously countenanced, then why have them if the price is such a steep increase

in US insecurity? In short, the deterrent aim of an aggressive military response to the terror attacks—deterring future state support for WMD terrorism—cannot by itself and at this time justify military strikes. At best it is a hoped-for spinoff, but its realisation will remain elusive if it is twinned with a continuation of contradictory deterrent and non-proliferation policies that cannot but frustrate those goals.

While military attacks could conceivably be justified over time as part of these deterrence objectives—but only in conjunction with fundamental changes in commitments mentioned above that would demonstrate the seriousness of that deterrence objective—at the same time such strikes are destined to provide more fuel for further terrorist acts. The US must recognise that it is exactly this form of behaviour—the repeated use of military force for its multifarious foreign policy objectives—that engenders the most intense antipathy towards it. Far less inciting of such reactions was the model offered by the response to the terrorist destruction of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. The eventual surrender of the two prime suspects by Libya's Qaddafi and their subsequent trial simply does not provide the kind of galvanising grounds for a widespread intensity of hate and revenge against the US or UK.

Not responding militarily will not have the effect of stopping all terrorist attacks either, but this does not therefore justify military force. All other things being equal it is impossible not to conclude that for those committed to personal self-sacrifice for their cause (and there have always been and will always be individuals who can manufacture some maniacal cause for themselves) deterrence remains an impotent tool: simply, such individuals cannot be deterred. Deterrence, then, while it seems to be an intuitively appealing reason for numerous supporters of a US military response, on further examination provides little justifiable grounds.

TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE?

There is a final, and more novel purpose evoked by this situation: is it appropriate to use deadly military force in the transnational pursuit of suspects of such monstrous crimes? The answer is yes, but only in certain circumstances. The domestic analogue is the use of deadly force in the process of attempting to capture a serial killer, but only if necessary in self-defence in the process of apprehension. These qualifications do not permit the bombing of a housing project, nor extra-judicial killing (such as using the occasion to kill some suspected drug-dealers in the process). Nor in the transnational context would they sanction the destruction of civilian infrastructure, nor the violation of another states' territory without permission. The international model here for the insertion of military force for such purposes—though certainly imperfect—would be operations like the

arrest of war crimes suspects in Bosnia. The risk of using military force in the absence of the territorial state's cooperation—that is, with a unilateral definition of the terrorist—lies the well-worn saying that 'one person's terrorism is another person's heroism'. That is, the aggressive transborder military pursuit of suspects unilaterally defined as terrorists can only invite reverse designations of 'terrorists' targets. And that after all is in effect what the attackers of 11 September declared in their actions: namely that the US is a 'terrorist state' and its citizens legitimate targets. As such, we could begin to think of the use of military force in the pursuit of terror suspects as legitimate if, first, it is undertaken with the blessing of the territorial state (so long as it does not unreasonably violate other restrictions as above). But what if such a blessing is not forthcoming?

Is it right to use military force against a state to capture or compel the extradition of suspects of crimes against humanity? Again, the example of former Yugoslavia is instructive. The pursuit of suspects indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) as war criminals has often involved military force by NATO troops, but only in territories under their control. It has not involved the military pursuit of indicted criminals in Serbia. Other means of pressure, however, have been employed in Serbia and Croatia, with some success—if neither complete nor immediate—as did the sanctions against Libya to surrender the Lockerbie suspects.

What was crucial in these cases, however, was the broad multilateral sanction given to the indictments by the UN Security Council and, in the case of Yugoslavia, the ICTY created by the Security Council. In the case of terrorism and the suspected involvement of Osama Bin Laden, the UN Security Council Resolutions since 1998 have stated that Afghanistan's failure to stop providing sanctuary for terrorists constituted a threat to peace; demanded the transfer of Osama Bin Laden; and put sanctions in place (Resolutions 1214 of 1998; 1267 of 1999). Further, with Resolution 1373 of 28 September 2001 the Security Council decided that all states shall 'take the necessary steps to prevent the commission of terrorist acts', including denying safe haven for those who commit or support terrorist acts. This language is very close to Resolution 678 of 1990 by which the Security Council was understood to have authorised the use of 'all necessary means' to restore international peace and security in the wake of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Does this Security Council support adequately legitimise the use of military force against suspected terrorists involved in the 11 September attacks? Given the intransigence of the Taliban regime, actual implementation of the obligations of Resolution 1373 would require outside forces on the ground, and preparatory strikes in advance to enable such incursions. Arguably, the Security Council Resolutions do

sanction such action, and as such military force can be justified in this case for such purposes given that it has such broad multilateral support. It must be recognised, however, what an exception to the rule this case will likely be. The Security Council did not finally resolve the question of how to define terrorism such that we can expect frequent and uncontroversial sanction of such action against terrorism in the immediate future. The approach of the Council members was essentially that 'we know terrorism when we see it, and this was it', an approach that occasioned few dissenters indeed. But it was made possible by the unprecedented isolation of Afghanistan, a failed state whose ruling Taliban regime is no longer recognised by any other members of the international community. The use of military force under these conditions must be recognised as an exception given the unanimous ostracism of the Taliban regime by the international community; it is not the rule that is to be broadly interpreted as providing the US permission to attack other suspected state supporters of terrorism without such multilateral support.

Even with the limited and carefully circumscribed justification that can be attached to the use of military strikes in response to the terror attacks of 11 September as delineated above, the danger of the use of military force is that it imparts upon the situation the increasingly obsolete paradigm of warfighting rather than crimefighting. As such, in the hands of a practitioner still too enamoured with the illusory attractions of airpower with impunity, it will inevitably prove to involve the use of a dull saw that can only cut off a leg in operations where a scalpel is needed to excise a localised infection. Crucially, thinking in terms of the paradigm of warfighting tends to engender greater acceptance of excess harm (civilian casualties) than would be tolerated if the response was thought within the paradigm of crimefighting (the police apprehension of suspects). In numerous jurisdictions, even high speed chases of suspects by police forces are no longer tolerated as they have been deemed an unacceptable threat to innocent bystanders. While we cannot of course expect that the threshold of tolerance for civilian casualties will be that high for the case at hand, neither is this a case where whole societies are at war such that an emergency ethic of overriding precautions against civilian harm is to be invoked. Such excesses will not be tolerated by Arab or Muslim states, and the delicate deferral of condemnation of the US military strikes by those states and even of more traditional US allies would quickly and rightly evaporate should civilians be unduly harmed by military attacks, whether accidental or not. Excessive risk and harm to innocents would evacuate the justness of the limited use of military force outlined above, and cannot be tolerated. After all, it is precisely such outrages against innocents that was the original outrage in the first place.

Australia's response

STUART HARRIS

It was appropriate that, in response to the horrific 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on America, Australia should close ranks with our deeply wounded and psychologically shocked American friends and allies and offer our full support.

In looking at Australia's subsequent actions I want to make only brief comments on what Australia has done: notably invoking the ANZUS treaty, relaxing links with Pakistan, offering military support, and foreshadowing tougher domestic security measures. Although important, these are either simply following the US lead or largely pro forma responses. I shall concentrate here primarily on the gaps in Australia's response and the silences in Australia's articulation of the policy issues—issues where one might have expected genuine Australian leadership.

STEPS TAKEN

But, first, the steps taken. Australia's decision to invoke Article Four of the ANZUS treaty was symbolically significant, if not formally necessary. Australia's decisions to lift sanctions on Pakistan, imposed after its nuclear tests, and to restore military links, were largely inevitable when the US relaxed its own sanctions. President Pervez Musharraf, in backing the US, needed support for confronting his own extremists.

The offer of military assistance to the US in its actions against the terrorists demonstrated the support our alliance implies, although whether the offer of troops, including 150 Australian Special Forces is more than a political token will continue to be debated. More important is the implication in the Australian, and perhaps the US, approach that the 'war' against terrorism is a basically military operation.

The tightening of various laws regarding counter terrorist activity that involves giving greater powers to the security organisations may be unavoidable. The balance between effectiveness and democratic processes is always difficult to strike but there must be some concerns that a hasty reaction to a particular crisis is likely to weigh the protection of individual rights and civil liberties insufficiently—yet these are, after all, what constitute the common values of international society that we want to protect from terrorist threats.

GAPS IN THE RESPONSE

What then are the silences that would have required real leadership and not just followership, from the heads of our major political parties?

The first concerns the role of the United Nations. Prime Minister John Howard said that the UN Security Council Resolutions of 12 and 28 September justify the US action. There is little question that those Resolutions support US action against Osama Bin Laden in terms of self-defence. It is not so clear that they support unilateral action against the Taliban, although the UN, by way of several Security Council Resolutions, has had its sights on Taliban activities for some time. But some lawyers, including those advising Britain's Prime Minister, Tony Blair, have argued that since the Taliban has not threatened the United States, the self-defence argument could be in doubt and the action possibly against international law. While the initial actions in Afghanistan are unlikely to be challenged in the UN, circumstances might change—and the question would be pertinent were Australia's Special Forces to be involved in fighting Taliban government forces.

More importantly, however, the Australian government has not addressed publicly the broader United Nations' role. As well as a mandated UN role in Afghanistan, UN involvement in sustaining a global coalition would seem essential to avoid a West versus Islam divide. Indeed little mention has been made of the need for a global coalition, the emphasis continuing to be on 'America's allies'. Yet apart from the danger of creating a self-fulfilling conflict between the West and Islam, there is no way international terrorism can be tackled without the support of the majority of Muslim countries.

Like the US, Australia had not signed the two UN conventions on terrorist bombings or terrorist finances at the time of the attacks. In practice, this may not have been significant given laws already in place in Australia. Symbolically, however, this was unfortunate.

Second, Australia has a large and peaceful Muslim community that feels threatened. In reply to a question at his 12 September press conference, the Prime Minister urged Australians not to judge those of Islamic faith in Australia by the deeds of the few involved in the attacks of 11 September. The Australian Parliament's motion of condolence called for tolerance and inclusion by and for all Australians. The Prime Minister at that time seemed unwilling to link the issue with that of the asylum seekers. Regrettably but characteristically, that was not the position of many talk back radio hosts. Sadly, nor was Defence Minister Peter Reith willing to discourage that linkage in his interviews on talk back radio.

While this was the only direct parochial politicisation of the tragedy, it was particularly unfortunate given the mindless reactions against innocent Muslims by some 'red neck' elements of Australian society, although there have been some positive spontaneous responses of community support.

The Prime Minister, however, has not taken positive steps towards the Muslim community. Foreign Minister Alexander Downer made a publicised visit to an Islamic College but Howard has not reached out actively towards the Muslim community as a whole, nor so far has he sought a public consultation with Islamic community leaders.

Third, the massive humanitarian tragedy likely to unfold in both Afghanistan and in the refugee camps in Pakistan, Iran and elsewhere was predictable even before 11 September. Australia's response, an aid donation of A\$13 million, with a promise of a further A\$10 million, is hardly generous. Not only does Australia's treatment of a small number of Afghan refugees look increasingly mean spirited, unlike our earlier response to refugees from the Vietnam conflict, but our limited response to the need for urgent food and other aid to Afghan refugees in Pakistan and elsewhere compares unfavourably with our readiness to provide military support. Apart from the evident humanitarian need, given the unfavourable international response to Australia's refugee policies, a more generous aid offer would have been politically advantageous internationally.

Fourth, there has been criticism that the Prime Minister's statements appear to have given a blank cheque to the US. Certainly, the early days of this tragedy was not a time for qualifications and leading journalist Paul Kelly has stressed that, in any case, this was not a blank cheque since the Prime Minister said that Australia's support would be 'within our capabilities'. In one sense he is right. In another sense, however, the question extends to policies still to be articulated, so whether it is a blank cheque has yet to be determined. For example, how far will Australia support the mooted extension by the US of its military action to other areas, such as Iraq?

Fifth, while Australia's influence in US councils at this time is not large, it is important nevertheless that Australia should have its own view and that that view should be put to the US. We would be more likely to be consulted rather than simply briefed, however, could we have talked on a basis of trust and confidence with our regional neighbours, many of whom have substantial Muslim populations. When visiting Australia recently, Amien Rais, Speaker of Indonesia's Parliament, pointed to the need for regional collaboration to fight international terrorism. The *Jakarta Post*, however, simply reported Australia's response as noting that bilateral military links with Indonesia have so far 'run well'. Indonesian reactions are particularly

critical in the long as well as short-term but also important are those of other countries with Muslim populations in the region who have not opposed the action against Bin Laden but are cautious and worried about what might be the US coalition's future actions.

Indeed, a major task for the US, with which Australia could have helped, is reassuring public opinion in the Muslim world, a task Tony Blair is pursuing vigorously. Australia has a large Muslim neighbour greatly concerned about avoiding Islamic terrorism. And it could have been talking at leader level to other regional leaders to canvass views, to reassure the region about our own objectives and, more importantly, to understand their views and concerns and to ensure that the outcomes were factored into our discussions with the US.

Sixth, although discussion has largely been about military action, any military action will need to be short and to have an exit strategy. Afghanistan will be a political quagmire when the conflict with Bin Laden and the Taliban is over, but the Defence Minister has said that our troops, if involved, could be involved well beyond the immediate conflict.

More generally, the term 'war on terrorism' reinforces the idea that action will be largely military. Howard's initial use of the term 'war on terrorism', following President George W. Bush's use of the political rallying call, was unavoidable. The continuing military emphasis, however, suggests that this is a war, even if different to those of the past. Basically, however, we are faced with an international law and order and counter terrorism issue and one that will require not simply an international coalition for the immediate purpose but international cooperation in intelligence, policing and counter terrorism activities on a continuing basis. Wrapping ourselves in the flag suggests this is simply a campaign with a finite time span, whereas it is a permanent structural change. Talking of a war not only suggests the possibility of an ultimate victory but makes it less important to look for causes. It also militates against an understanding that compromise might at times be a useful tool, as was shown in North Korea. Terrorism has been with us for a long time and it will continue into the future. Since a convincing victory is not possible, the essential question is how to manage terrorist threats and to minimise their effects.

Seventh, the ultimate silence has been the absence of reference to the sources of terrorism and the implications. No act such as that of 11 September is defensible, but the depth and extent of hatred that was behind it for various reasons need explaining and responding to. That is immensely complex. The US, often with our support, has inserted itself into many places, not only in the Arab-Israeli conflict but also in supporting Middle East states that Bin Laden hates. The US has made

many friends but, often, also many enemies. Understanding and responding will not necessarily prevent terrorism—good and evil are present in all societies. But they will make it easier for the governments of a wider range of countries to share in the continuing international effort that will be needed in the future. The foreign policy implications, including the consequences of undertaking policies against terrorism, are also complex. Yet terrorism has to be increasingly factored into foreign policy formation, involving an intensified degree of multilateral cooperation.

Eighth, the silences that will become increasingly important are those concerned with future policies, once we are passed the immediate actions against Bin Laden's terrorist networks. It is our responses here that will indicate whether we have given a blank cheque or not to the US. Those silences include the failure to indicate what we envisage should occur when Bin Laden and the Taliban have gone.

Terrorism is a foreign policy, as much as a domestic, security issue for Australia as well as for the US. We, like the US, appear to have an Osama Bin Laden policy. What is not clear is whether we have an Afghanistan policy or whether we will simply follow the US. Do we have a Middle East policy? Indeed, do we have an anti-terrorism policy that is not just any of the above? Is it limited to those terrorists targeting the US? Or are we to be involved in actions against those who some see as terrorists elsewhere—the Kurds? the Uigurs? the Chechyns? the Tamil Tigers? Even if the policy is directed, more sensibly, to acts of terrorism rather than to the terrorists themselves, how are they to be defined?

More generally, does Australia's policy include addressing the sources and causes of international terrorism and not just tightening domestic defences? Do we really understand that, to misquote John Donne, 'no island (including Australia) is an island' that can isolate itself anymore from threat?

The issue is whether the emphasis of both John Howard and Kim Beazley on the leadership question has substance. In other words has what Australia done required leadership or simply followership? I would argue that in the light of the silences in Australia's response so far, followership is the more applicable term.

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