The Imperial Presidency, the War on Terrorism, and the Revolutions of Modernity

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It is inherent in the concept of a terrorist act that it aims at an effect very much larger than the direct physical destruction it causes. Proponents of what used to be called the “propaganda of the deed” also believed that in the illuminating glare of terror the vulnerability of a corrupt order would be starkly revealed. Once corruption and oppression were stripped away, a sacred or natural order – the nation, the religious community, the people – would come into its own. The instigators of September 11 brought off a far more spectacular coup than any exponent of the propaganda of the deed: they threaten more than a dozen of the world’s most autocratic and corrupt rulers and aim to summon to arms a religious community of well over a billion people. The resources disposed of by this network transcend those traditionally associated with terrorism and are closer to those of a small state, but a state without boundaries whose headquarters hops from country to country.

Given the extent of the destruction wrought by the September 11 attack it is sobering to realize that the effect aimed at was qualitatively larger, namely that of reordering world politics around a “clash of civilizations,” urging the Islamic world to free itself of all infidel trammels. Whether the strategic director of the Al Qaeda network was Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, or someone else, their aim from the outset was not only to provoke the US into a reaction that would alienate Muslim opinion, but also to expose the hereditary and autocratic rulers of the Muslim world and create conditions in which Islamic jihad could seize or manipulate power in one or another of the larger or more significant Muslim states. The new Caliphates at which they aim might appear a medieval fantasy, but are to be equipped with the military and financial power resources of modernity. They ask believers to consider the awesome power of Muslim leaders equipped with Islamic virtue, oil, and nuclear weapons. Given the frustrated or desperate condition of much of the Muslim world, this is a message that has great resonance even among Muslims who are uneasy at, or repelled by, terror actions. The message targets the military actions and dispositions of the US and Israel, especially as they are deemed to encroach on Muslim holy places, but it is also aimed at the existing governments of the Islamic world, easily portrayed as pawns of the West. Since Islamic jihad is indeed a network, the overthrow of the Taliban and the dispersal of Al Qaeda’s Afghan bases will not end the threat it poses.

The US president responded to September 11 by proclaiming a global, US-led
“war on terrorism.” Washington sought every conceivable ally or partner, but insisted on retaining complete control of its “war.” The UN and the Security Council were asked to support the US effort, and each of their members to help in whatever way they could, but there was to be no formal anti-terrorism coalition and no supranational organization to embody it. On one side of this new war there is the world’s most powerful state, with its twentieth-century weapons systems and a global system of alliances. On the other there is a terror network of no more than a few thousand men, acting as a self-proclaimed “Muslim vanguard,” but occasionally able to ignite the resentments and frustrations of tens or even hundreds of millions in the Islamic world. Al Qaeda may have the economic and military resources of a statelet, but it aims to shape the thinking of a civilization. Its members are drawn from many nationalities and have been active in Central Asia, the Balkans, Europe, North America, Kashmir, China, Indonesia, and the Philippines as well as the Middle East and Africa. Its ideology appeals to a sense of injury and wounded pride rather than material aspiration. It is virulently anti-infidel and misogynist, anti-secular without being at all anti-capitalist, and egalitarian without being democratic. The neo-fundamentalism of the eighties and nineties, forged in a battle with godless Communism and in reaction to royalist bureaucracy and corruption, accentuated this legacy by appealing to Islamic business and faith-based charity. While prepared to work with a variety of Islamic political authorities, the project of Al Qaeda transcends such boundaries, aiming to unite the faithful against the infidels who have insulted and oppressed Islam.

In the postwar period the West feared a loss of control in the Middle East and so it allied with the most conservative forces in the Islamic world. The Saudi and Iranian monarchies were chosen as the strategic allies needed to protect vital Middle Eastern oil resources while secular nationalists like Mossadegh in Iran or Kassem in Iraq were destabilized and replaced. In fact, the Western system of alliances is not simply a relic of the Cold War but rather a palimpsest that reflects, layer on layer, a longer history and a colonialism that mummified an extraordinary collection of archaic or pseudo-archaic regimes. This embraces Saudi Arabia with its teeming, 30,000-strong Royal Family, the Shaikh of Bahrein and Kuwait, the Sultan of Oman, and the Emirates – boasting the world’s longest-serving head of state, Shaikh Sakir al-Qasimi of Ras al-Khaimah, who has been lolling on his throne since 1948. When we add to those the Sultan of Brunei in the South China Sea, it is as if oil were a pickling fluid akin to formaldehyde projecting into the twenty-first century simulacra of the anciens régimes of former times. Pakistan, with its notorious “feudals,” does not have oil but enjoys an intimate pact with the oil sheikhdoms. The paradox here for liberal, bourgeois, and nationalist forces in the Middle East was that the power that should have been their great ally, the US, actually blocked them at every turn and preferred to do business with pious royal absolutists.

The US-sponsored Arabian and Gulf regime associates the West with corruption, autocracy, and stagnation at a time when there is a yearning for a new start
in the Arab world. The dilemma of US policy is that it understandably wishes to avoid a “clash of civilizations” while being fearful of renewal within the Muslim world. It was a tribute to Washington’s diplomacy that its assault on Afghanistan aroused so little official censure in the Muslim world, but an indication of the fragility of this success that no Muslim state was willing to play an active and public role. If the United States endorses a new government in Afghanistan based on Northern warlords, “moderate” Taliban, obscurantists like Rabbani, feudal chieftains like Hamid Karzai, and mercenary tribal elders, all under the aegis of the former monarch, Zahir Shah, it will take a new risk. So far as the wider Islamic world is concerned, such a strategy simultaneously offends the Islamists and those who yearn for more democracy, autonomy, and self-respect. Religious fanatics and bourgeois or petty-bourgeois democrats are not natural allies – in Iran they are at loggerheads – but in the territories where the US has allied itself with feudal and autocratic reaction these two currents find a common antagonist. The White House may genuinely believe that the interests of global capitalism are best promoted by its pact with the petrol dynasties and their Pakistani and Egyptian hangers-on, but this is not true. The pact may deliver slightly cheaper oil and privileges to Western oil corporations, but it stifles the growth of an autonomous business culture and circuit of accumulation in the region itself. The resulting frustrations create conditions which politicize religious fanaticism, especially in those countries where it is one of the few officially-tolerated species of public activity.

Washington strives not to inflame Muslim opinion, or to allow the conflict to be defined as a war of religions. It hopes that the danger can be avoided by allowing its Muslim allies to adopt a low profile, or even to stand aside. The UN will be handed responsibility for occupied areas of Afghanistan but Iranian and Egyptian proposals that the UN should take charge of the anti-terrorism campaign were rejected. Given the UN’s long history of giving cover to US military campaigns, from Korea to Kosovo, entrusting it with nominal responsibility post facto would be of limited value in averting the danger of a “clash of civilizations.” The UN could sponsor an accord against terrorism and the creation of a supranational force to police it. But such an approach would have little legitimacy if credible governments from the Muslim world were excluded. An international and supranational approach would be far more effective at tackling terrorism than a US-led and -defined “war,” but will not easily be accepted in Washington, since it would challenge imperial ideology and control. The Bush team see themselves as champions of the American people and US capitalism, but in fact neither require direct US control of Middle Eastern or Caspian oil, as we will see below.

The most difficult thing for the strategists of empire to perceive, or explain to the American people, is that the best and perhaps only effective coalition against Al Qaeda and Islamic jihad would be one that they do not lead and do not control. The food drops in Afghanistan were accompanied by leaflets in English and Pushtu with the heading “The Partnership of Nations” – a hollow rubric which
could not conceal that this was a US and British action. Ejecting the Taliban from
the major centers was not difficult, but there may be continuing resistance and
fatalities. Prior to their withdrawal in 1989, the Soviet forces controlled most of
the country and all the main towns and cities. Najibulla’s Communist regime
survived for a further three years. So the real test of any military accomplishments
and political changes will be in the long term and will concern the legitimacy of
the new arrangements, the human cost of achieving and sustaining them, and
whether or not there is continuing Taliban resistance. The overthrow of the
Taliban will not necessarily diminish the influence of Al Qaeda and affiliated
forces of Islamic jihad elsewhere in the Muslim world. Isolating and defeating
these forces will require a political strategy that is willing to disengage from the
forces of reaction in the Islamic world and favors the forces of enlightenment,
reform, and democracy.

While I will focus on Washington’s sins of omission and commission, I believe
it would be wrong to slight the ability of the Bush administration to impose its
own definitions on domestic opponents, and on allies and even enemies abroad.
The US president has sometimes been presented as a figure of fun, but this has
not stopped him having the last laugh on those who ridiculed him. Unlike more
brilliant leaders, he surrounds himself with a capable and experienced team, and
sometimes heeds words of caution. The secret of his strength – and his fatal flaw
– may be the instinctive rapport he enjoys with those gripped by US national
messianism, the idea that only the US can tackle the really big global threats and
that whatever the US does is ipso facto favorable to freedom. These sentiments
are often accompanied by depreciation of international organizations, and an
unwillingness to consider global complexities or to contemplate any sacrifice of
US sovereignty.

The imperial role is justified on the grounds that the US has a special destiny as
world leader and champion of freedom. These roles, it is believed, require
Washington to meet the threat of rogue states acquiring weapons of mass destruction,
to preempt “global competitors,” to secure sources of scarce raw materials (espe-
cially oil), and to guarantee the personal security of ordinary Americans. Yet the truth
is that the empire does not secure these goals, and actually makes “blowback” more
likely, as Chalmers Johnson so presciently argued.3 A healthier US polity could
dispose with the cumbersome and expensive apparatus of empire, set the scene for
a broader, more pluralistic global capitalism, and promote the competence and
authority of supranational agencies in the fields of disarmament, anti-terrorism, and
peacekeeping. But the vested interests which stand in the way of these goals are
those of a bloated military-industrial complex and supercharged presidency.

The Imperial Presidency

The extraordinary terrorist coup of September 11 set the scene for the resurgence
of an imperial presidency. This was initially concealed by Bush’s dithering on the
day itself. Yet his first words insisted that the nation was at war and that reprisals
would be visited not only on the perpetrators but on the states which had backed
them. It soon became clear that the Bush White House was taking advantage of the
shock at what had happened to demand global “war powers” and the financial and
constitutional means to employ them. In less than 48 hours NATO was persuaded
to invoke, for the first time ever, Article 5 and consequently to give the US
commander in chief huge scope to act in its name. It took only a little longer for the
Senate to unanimously back the President’s declaration of war against an unnamed
enemy and for Congress to place a $40 billion war chest at his disposal. When the
Senate and House of Representatives passed the anti-terrorism legislation requested
by the administration in October, many legislators complained that they had had no
opportunity even to read the complex legislation they were voting on.

The exact wording of the September 15 Congressional resolution made clear
the latitude extended to Bush:

the president is authorized to use all necessary and appropriate force against those
nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or
aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on Sept. 11, 2001, or harbored such organi-
zations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism
against the United States by such nations, organizations, or persons.

Bush can decide who is the enemy. The only hints at restraint are those words
“necessary and appropriate” and the residual implication that only those implica-
ted in September 11 should be targeted. For the moment these qualifications
carry little weight, though if things go wrong critics might invoke them. It was on
the day after this resolution that Bush vowed to “rid the world of evil-doers” and
cautioned: “This crusade, this war on terrorism, is going to take a while.” In the
truncated discussion that followed the speech, no member of Congress queried
the extraordinary new mandate.4

So the presidency came to enjoy almost complete freedom of action and was
able to give shape and direction to the widespread sense of shock, anger, and
alarm. Moreover, Bush repeatedly insisted that the campaign against international
terrorism would be a long one, presumably requiring indefinite extension of his
special powers. What has now happened raises the power of the president by a
quantum leap. It restores an imperial potency to the presidency equal to – or even
exceeding – that of the Reagan era. Bush’s authority and freedom of action today
is certainly far greater than that enjoyed by his father on the eve of the Gulf War.

The imperial presidency has been struggling to be born for some time. In a
book published in September 2001, Daniel Lazare anticipated this state of affairs
when he warned of the extraordinary power of a US president compared with
counterparts in other democratic states. In European democracies the head of
government has greater domestic power than a US president. But in external
affairs, Lazare argues, matters stand the other way around:
Lazare was here drawing attention to a powerful war- and Cold War-related trend in US government which witnessed a twentieth-century aggrandizement of the presidency that would have astonished the framers of the Constitution. But this trend was at least partly checked by resistance to the Vietnam War, by the impeachment of Nixon, and by the considerable public controversy over Iran-Contra, or even the Gulf War or Kosovo bombardment. Moreover, the post-Vietnam refusal to accept casualties also hobbled the US president and the war machine at his command. The opinion polls and talk shows now suggest that this restraint has weakened. Finally, US allies also constrained the White House during those episodes. Today matters are different and Lazare is simply stating the bare truth when he writes: “Short of total war, the US president has carte blanche to attack whom he pleases virtually anywhere in the world.”

If the imperial presidency legitimated by the resolution might astound the Founders, it is not therefore unconstitutional. As Lazare argues, the Constitution was forged for another age and with the purpose of rendering public power as circumscribed and divided as possible. The presidency has escaped these bounds because no state could respect them in modern conditions. Invoking the archaic features of the Constitution will not restrain the presidency. Once war powers have been conferred on the president, the executive’s already large competence is both increased and formally sanctioned. The White House later explained that this will extend to military tribunals which will dispense summary justice to those who are not US citizens. And it will encompass bilateral treaty-like agreements with Russia, which will not be submitted to the Senate’s scrutiny or approval.

When Americans say they want action against “those responsible” for the attacks, the sentiment is easy to understand. To expect the mass of US citizens simply to accept that they should be the target of such attacks would be ridiculous. Bush’s address to Congress on September 20 outlining his campaign against terrorism addressed these anxieties. Unfortunately, it also harnessed them to a boundless and unilateral, US-defined and US-led war against terrorism (the word “crusade” was avoided this time). For many reasons any repetition of September 11 is most unlikely, but the approach outlined by Bush, if adhered to, gets in the way of the strategies that are needed to inflict political defeats on Al Qaeda.

**National Messianism and Recharged Unilateralism**

In a controlled and polished performance on September 20, Bush underlined the limitless scope and long duration of the new mission which he would undertake on behalf of his wounded but unbowed country: “Our enemy is a radical network
of terrorists and every government that supports them. Our war on terror begins with Al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated. . . .” This new war against terror forced a choice upon every nation: “Every nation in every region of the world now has a decision to make. Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.” So the president not only commandeered US foreign policy, he sought to impose his definitions on every state in the world.

The Clinton administration also claimed and exercised a right of unilateral action against a variety of enemies. Madeleine Albright explained: “If we have to use force it is because we are America. We are the indispensable nation. We stand tall. We see farther into the future.” Yet the record of the indispensable nation in the nineties was not a good one. The issue of nuclear disarmament was neglected. The Russians were not engaged in this or any other positive way; instead NATO was enlarged to encircle it. In the absence of an agreement between Moscow and Washington, the secondary nuclear powers did nothing and India and Pakistan tested nuclear devices. Repeated bombardment of Iraq did more to weaken the US in the region that to weaken the regime of Saddam Hussein. Rwanda bled. The break up of Yugoslavia dragged on for many years and cost many lives. The failure to use Moscow and the OSCE structure to secure Serb withdrawal from Kosovo at Rambouillet lead to massive bombing of Serbia and Kosovo, but eventually the European allies insisted that Russian mediation to this end be obtained – and it was this rather than the bombing which secured a result. While Washington might ask the UN to rubber-stamp its own initiatives, it did not even bother to pay its quota. There were very few gains for the US go-it-alone method in the nineties (Haiti?), but an alternative was glimpsed when the UN successfully orchestrated, with the help of regional powers, the Indonesian military withdrawal from East Timor.

When Bush arrived in the White House, US allies were unhappy to discover that the new president, despite his own criticisms of the Clinton-Albright interventions, had an even more vigorous notion of America’s special destiny. He regarded international treaties as scraps of paper (ABM or Kyoto), spurned agreements on landmines, biological warfare, and terrorism, or simply exited when dialogue was required (Durban). Secretary of State Powell seems to have cautioned against some of these decisions, but without any success. Sustaining these positions was a determination not to yield an iota of US sovereignty while often expecting this sacrifice of other states.

Because the US was manifestly the injured party on September 11, the situation itself conspired to reinforce Washington’s habitual conduct and assumptions. Washington always insists on running the show, but this time virtually no one objected. Such was the shock at the events of September 11 that the European allies announced their prior willingness to back almost any action the US might launch, even before learning what it would be. Perhaps they thought that their swift support would earn them some influence at a later stage and that in its hour
of need the Bush presidency would discover the need to jettison the unilateral approach. In a way it has, but in the direction of a proliferation of bilateralism as the US Secretary of State and Defense Secretary engage in an unceasing round of consultations across several continents, not a new emphasis on NATO and the European allies.

In the weeks following September 11 both Powell and Rumsfeld undertook a wide-ranging diplomatic effort directed at key regional players, like Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan, Russia, and China. If one wishes this could be called a multilateral approach, especially since US policy evidently took note of reservations and problems raised by the governments of these states. But the choice of whom to approach, and what advice to accept, still lay with Washington. No attempt was being made to mount a collective operation using the UN or some other body. Thus, it is not so much Bush’s personality which should be scrutinized as the president’s new program and mandate, the situation and character of his machine, and the facilities it now enjoys, both domestically and abroad. Behind Bush stand more considerable figures like Cheney and Rumsfeld, and behind them a military-industrial complex which begins to see its prayers being answered.12

The laying down of the law to other states combined with the refusal to yield up a particle of US sovereignty establishes the principle of the new empire.13 The obsessively reiterated discourse of war directed attention away from what could have been an international police action. And its definition as a “new kind of war” allowed unilateralism to be raised to a new pitch. This was the unilateralism of imperial leadership, not that of isolationism or withdrawal. The attack had demonstrated “global reach,” yet had been aimed this time exclusively at targets on US soil. The fact that both attackers and victims were of many nations, and the worldwide revulsion at its devastating consequences, could have been used to mount a multilateral response. But that would have been contrary to the administration’s every instinct and inclination. That such an approach might be more effective in tracking down and punishing the network responsible for the attack would appear a crazy notion not only to the Bush White House but to the powerful jingoistic reflex articulated by liberal commentators, such as Thomas Friedman, as much as by conservative commentators like William Safire.

When Bush declared that states implicated in terrorism would be treated as enemies, he was announcing a new, and in some ways welcome, policy since too many such states have in the past been close friends of the US. The US president showed no awareness, for example, that the US had aligned itself with states that unleashed death-squads in Central and South America. In the days following September 11 the Senate ratified Bush’s nominee as Ambassador to the UN, John Negroponte, a man notorious for his failure to report large-scale violations of human rights by US-linked contra forces when he was ambassador in Honduras in the eighties. Thus the man who will represent the US case against terrorism to the major world forum will himself be someone who at best turned a blind eye to
the slaughter of many thousands, and whose complicity may well have been worse than that. 14

After the terrible events of September 11 any US president, it might be urged, would have reacted in much the same way. But some might have avoided the continued and strident unilateralism. They might have seen that the international revulsion already evident, and willingly given, made it clear the UN and its Security Council could play a crucial role in combating terrorism. In the aftermath of the two world wars US presidents did advocate supranational organization, in the shape of the League of Nations and UN. The aftermath of September 11 was a good moment to work out with other governments what was justified and effective in a campaign against terrorism, and what would merely feed it.

The unilateralist conclusions drawn by Bush were superficially at odds with one theme of his speech on September 20: “This is not, however, just America’s fight. And what is at stake is not just America’s freedom. This is the world’s fight. This is civilization’s fight.” Given this claim, it might seem strange that a world body, such as the UN, was not entrusted with conducting the fight. The explanation, of course, was the doctrine of national messianism. The US is the leader and representative of humanity and civilization, acting in their name.

The US Alliance with Militant Islam

In the weeks following September 11 an astonishing picture emerged of the extent to which Osama bin Laden, Al Qaeda, and the Taliban had been enjoying crucial support from supposed US friends and client states. It became clear that a steady stream of financial contributions from Saudi Arabia and the Emirates had furnished Al Qaeda and the Taliban with their lifeblood in the days, months, and years leading up to September 11. The US government itself tilted to the Taliban in 1996, notwithstanding their determination to impose on the whole of Afghanistan a direly repressive regime. Later in 2000, when no further doubt could exist, they paid the Taliban authorities $42 million in the “war against drugs.” 15 US courts had already established both Al Qaeda’s role in the East African embassy bombings in 1998 and the presence of the Al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan.

The US military and intelligence community has the most intimate relationship with the security services of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. These states, as we know them today, would not exist without US support. Saudi oil and Pakistani proximity to Afghanistan led Washington to confer great importance on them. And it was only Saudi and Pakistani support for the Taliban – including military units as well as lavish amounts of money, arms, and training – which allowed them to seize power in Afghanistan in 1996, displacing the fractious alliance of mujahedeen and military men which ruled the country from 1992. The Taliban movement received help from bin Laden and subsequently allowed his Al Qaeda network to set up training camps there. It was Prince Turki al Feisal, then head of Saudi intelligence,
who first recruited bin Laden to organize resistance in Afghanistan, with US approval. (He was removed from his post without explanation two months before the attack). For its part, the Pakistani military intelligence, the ISI, sponsors of the Taliban, welcomed the Saudi money which bin Laden continued to attract. The US charge against the bin Laden network was plausible partly because the ramifications of this claim were bound to be so awkward and embarrassing for the US authorities themselves. Another reason is that in an affair like this, the focus of so much attention, pinning the blame simply on a convenient but false target – say Castro, Chavez, Saddam, or Ghaddafi – would be risky and shortsighted. Unfortunately, that does not mean that it will not be attempted at a later stage.

While the execution of the September 11 action required comparatively modest sums, the extensive operational network and training camps of Al Qaeda certainly demanded deep pockets. This is where bin Laden’s supporters in Saudi Arabia and the Emirates came in. An editorial in the *New Republic* on September 24 hinted at this when it referred to Saudi Arabia’s “filthy secrets.” In an article in the same issue Martin Peretz explained that Saudi money has been flowing into the coffers of the bin Laden network: “Many Saudis – maybe even the monarchy itself – finance it, if only to keep it engaged and out of Riyadh.” Further details were vouchsafed by Seymour Hersh in the *New Yorker* in an article based in part on US intelligence transcripts of conversations among members of the Saudi Royal Family:

When the Saudis were confronted by press reports that some of the substantial funds that the monarchy routinely gives to Islamic charities may actually have gone to Al Qaeda and other terrorist networks, they denied any knowledge of such transfers. The intercepts, however, have led many in the intelligence community to think otherwise. The Bush administration has chosen not to confront the Saudi leadership over its financial support of terror organizations and its refusal to help in the investigation [of September 11].

Saudi Arabia maintains sixty Islamic Centers spread through the world which proselytize the unforgiving doctrines of the militant Wahabi sect. The supposedly charitable and educational trusts supported by huge amounts of Saudi cash have been used to fund madrassas, or religious schools, where the basic needs of poor students are met but nothing is taught except the Wahabi interpretation of the Koran and the need for jihad. Inside Saudi Arabia itself, hatred of the infidel and female subordination are also inculcated by the Wahabi-dominated educational system despite the fact that only a tenth of the population belong to the Wahabi sect. A *New York Times* report from Riyadh observes the paradox:

> [E]xtremism, born of the local, puritanical Wahabi brand of Islam, constrains life here, shaping the way people live and the way Saudi Arabia greets the world. The United States seeks to build a coalition against terror with the kingdom, long a Western business and military ally, and yet the country has revealed itself as the source of the very ideology confronting America in the battle against terrorism.
Despite its prodigious oil wealth, the Saudi kingdom has failed to achieve rounded economic or social development – indeed, its economy has recently been less buoyant than that of Iraq. As a result there are many frustrated and unemployed youths who aspire to a middle-class existence but are unlikely to obtain it. And there are upper-class youths who despise their parent’s complicity in a corrupt and arbitrary order. As an educational force, the Saudi autocracy not only diffuses Wahabism but also seeks to instill terror by judicial maiming and execution. Against this background, the fact that fifteen of the September 11 hijackers came from Saudi Arabia is not surprising. Other hijackers came from the Emirates and from the fundamentalist milieu in Egypt, where a stagnant and corrupt autocracy has also helped to make middle-class frustration and ressentiment a powerful force.

While Saudi and Pakistani authorities were scared of Al Qaeda and only dealt with it at arm’s length via “charitable” intermediaries, they were closely involved in the rise of the Taliban. Their support for this organization, itself linked to Al Qaeda, was given quite voluntarily and cannot be explained away as an attempt to buy off the militants. The Saudi security services supplied money and arms, the Pakistani ISI, training, officers, and military experts. The Saudis appreciated the Taliban’s ferocious Deobandi theology, while their seizure of power was one of the very few successes that could be claimed by Pakistani state policy. Without Pakistani and Saudi help, the Taliban would never have seized power and the bin Laden network would have had no haven for its training camps. Mullah Muhammad Omar, the Taliban leader, formed an alliance with Al Qaeda because it also could supply money and men, and because this somewhat reduced reliance on Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. No doubt the latter were not unhappy to see Al Qaeda drawn off to Afghanistan, but they also identified with the Taliban. A later report revealed that the ISI was also in league with Al Qaeda: “The intelligence service of Pakistan . . . has had an indirect but longstanding relationship with Al Qaeda, turning a blind eye for years to the growing ties between Osama bin Laden and the Taliban, according to American officials. The intelligence service even used Al Qaeda camps to train covert operatives for use in a war of terror against India.” The US was aware of such connections. Following the embassy bombings in 1998, a State Department official, Michael Sheenan, urged that the US should make isolating Al Qaeda its priority:

Mr Sheenan’s memo outlined a series of actions the United States could take toward Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen to persuade them to help isolate Al Qaeda. The document called Pakistan the key, and it suggested that the administration make terrorism the central issue in the relations between Washington and Islamabad. The document also urged the administration to find ways to curb terrorist money-laundering. . . . Mr Sheenan’s plan “landed with a resounding thud,” one former official recalled, “He couldn’t get anyone interested.”

Washington cannot have been unaware of the pitiless Taliban theology but had long grown used to the idea that Muslim fanatics were convenient and easily
manipulated allies and that the real enemy was secular authorities who don’t truckle to the US. Historically the US security establishment did not see the Islamic jihad and bin Laden terror networks as a negative phenomenon. In the eighties such networks were financed, trained, and armed so long as they were fighting against the Russian-supported regime in Afghanistan. Al Qaeda was established in 1989 at the highpoint of this effort. But in addition, and subsequent to this, Muslim jihad networks were often still seen as an ally or tool in former Soviet lands and in parts of the Middle East. Elements of the Al Qaeda network were active in Chechnya and former Soviet central Asia. They were also active in Bosnia and Kosovo. The Western press did not like to make much of it, but some of the Bosnian and KLA units resorted to terror tactics. Indeed, as a legacy of this, gangs of ethno-religious thugs still terrorize the populations of some of the Balkan statelets set up by NATO and act as a prime conduit for the thriving drug trade from Afghanistan to Western Europe.

Free market ideology combined with anti-Communism and suspicion of Russia to produce an extraordinary laxness when it came to US invigilation of the bin Laden network, even long after the 1993 World Trade Center bomb and the African embassy bombings. Clinton sought Congressional approval for checks on capital movements to make sure that they were not helping to finance terrorist activity. They were blocked by the Texas Republican Phil Gramm, who was then the chairman of the Senate’s Banking Committee, as well as by the banking industry. Gramm was reported after September 11, 2001 as standing by his previous opposition to any type of capital movement monitoring: “‘I was right then and I am right now’ in opposing the bill, Mr Gramm said yesterday. He called the bill ‘totalitarian’ and added: ‘The way to deal with terrorists is to hunt them down and kill them.’” The religious authorities in Saudi Arabia also uphold the absolute rights of property-owners and the secular authorities allow unlimited cross-border cash transfers. This is a country without capital gains tax, inheritance tax, or income tax. As Business Week explains: “While Saudi Arabia may seem like a tightly controlled society, its Hanbali system of Islamic jurisprudence puts great emphasis on the sanctity of private property. ‘What you do with your money is utterly up to you,’ says Michael Field, a London-based author of several books on business in the gulf.”

In his important study, Islam and Capitalism, the French scholar Maxine Rodinson explained Islam’s compatibility with mercantile and financial accumulation. The first years of the Iranian revolution saw the state given some importance in Islamic economics but, as Olivier Roy explains, this unusual feature was to be explained by the tradition of Shi’ite Islam in Iran, which was originally state-sponsored, and by Khomeini’s need to compete with nationalist and leftist ideologies. It was eventually to be “supplanted by a less state oriented and more liberal image, at least with respect to the economy, in Iran as in the rest of the Muslim world.” This author adds: “This evolution goes hand in hand with Islamism’s shift towards neo-fundamentalism and with the diffusion of the
Islamist message to a wider audience (businessmen, students of economics, and others).”28 In the summer of 2001 the Bank-e-Eqtesadi Novine became the first private bank to be set up in Iran since the revolution, with many likely to follow. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are well supplied not just with financial institutions but with proudly Islamic banks. While Islamic investors have to be careful not to enjoy the fruits of “usury,” they are able to claim quarterly or annual “bonuses” and they can invest in stocks and shares because such instruments allow them to share profits and losses. As Roy explains, the type of mercantile and financial capitalism endorsed by Islamic ideology in Saudi Arabia, taking mainly parasitic and rentier forms, has failed to stimulate or diversify its economy. Straddling the latter are giant “state-owned” corporations, notably Sabic, Saudi Airlines, and Saudi Aramco, the latter with revenues of some $80 billion annually. The Islamist view that these instruments of princely patronage should be broken up and turned over to honest Islamic businesses is gaining ground.

The Al Qaeda group has had access to the most sophisticated banking services but it combines this with the ability to use an informal network of paperless cash transfers, constituted by the facilities of hawala or trust brokers. These brokers regularly transfer large sums from the Middle East or the Indian subcontinent to North America or Europe leaving only the most cryptic records (a telephone remark or an e-mail saying “Abdullah to receive twelve crates of mangoes”). Bin Laden himself has specialized in finance and banking, and in commissioning and monitoring large-scale construction projects. Even in his Afghan cave, bin Laden was accompanied by mobile generators, computers, and communications equipment. A visiting Arab journalist explained: “The mujahideen around the man belong to most Arab states, and are of different ages, but most of them are young. They hold high scientific degrees: doctors, engineers, teachers.”29 While it is likely that major Gulf state businesses do not speak with one voice, and spread their bets, some of them contributed to Al Qaeda and its campaign against a petrified social order. Jane Mayer in a study of the bin Laden family for the New Yorker reports that several people close to the family believe that Osama continued to receive help from this quarter long after he was formally stripped of Saudi citizenship in 1994. She also points out that the Binladen Family Group had stakes in such US investment concerns as the Carlyle Bank and the Fremont Group, and that the family had played host in Jedda to such representatives of these companies as Frank Carlucci, George H.W. Bush, James Baker, and George Shultz.30

The bond between Washington and Saudi Arabia is based on oil, shared anti-Communism, free market ideology, and the fact that Saudi Arabia, holding a fifth of US government foreign debt, is, as it were, a shareholder. These were strong enough to render Saudi tyranny, religious hatred, and oppression of women invisible and to cast a mantle of protection over even their wayward protégés, the Taliban. If an ethnic group had been treated as women were by the Taliban, they would surely have attracted censure more swiftly. Now that the Taliban have been
reassessed, it will be interesting to see whether there will be a strategic review of the value of the Saudi link. Washington needs credible partners in the Islamic world if it is to head off the danger of a “clash of civilizations” and the alliance with Saudi Arabia is part of the problem, not part of the solution.

**Coming to Terms with the Revolution in the Islamic World**

Before addressing alternatives to the Bush approach, it is necessary to assess the capacity of the governments of the region to meet the aspirations of their peoples. The Middle East and the Muslim world are caught up in the maelstrom of modernity and democracy, as are all parts of the world. Their peoples crave a better life, a degree of respect, and a say in how their countries are run, and have done for a long time past. Autocratic, monarchical, and traditionalist regimes were often set up to bar the road to the sort of secular progress that was promised by Arab nationalism or by such figures as Prime Minister Mossadegh in Iran until his overthrow in 1953, President Kassem in Iraq until his overthrow in 1963, or Prime Minister Bhutto in Pakistan until his overthrow in 1977. The progress promised, still less achieved, by these leaders was, of course, in various ways incomplete and uneven. But compared to their rivals and successors, they offered hope and a way forward. Generally the West accommodated, or actually sponsored, the forces of reaction, counter-revolution, and military overthrow, with their dismal train of corrupt, wasteful, and vicious dictators, sheikhs, kings, and princelings. It should not therefore surprise that, as Said Aburish flatly asserts: “There are no legitimate regimes in the Arab Middle East.”31 Often the nearer a regime is to the West the more discredited it is, and the more hostile to the US its population. Saudi dependence on the US military and Mubarak’s dependence on US aid are powerful agents of delegitimization. Washington’s countenancing of Israeli settlement and repression in the occupied areas, its support for the blatantly unfair Oslo accords, and the televised images of Palestinians being beaten and killed further discredited all pro-Western governments.

In a context where secular politics failed to generate progress, political Islam became a growing force. Compared to secular nationalists and the left, the Islamists had the considerable advantage that their activity could for a time proceed in the shadow of the mosques and seminaries. And even once they faced repression, Islam gave them communication with a large following. In some countries, notably Iran at the time of the overthrow of the Shah, the Islamist movement became, for better or worse, intimately associated with a popular upheaval against autocracy. The Iran of Ayatollah Khomeini might appear, and in some respects be, a throwback to the past. But the constitution of the “Islamic republic” was in fact a novel confection, quite unlike the autocracy of a Caliph.

While the analogy is no doubt a limited one, we should consider the outlook of Puritan revolutionaries in the early modern period when assessing developments in Iran. Michael Walzer, in his book *The Revolution of the Saints*, explains how
Puritanism, with its fixation on the need to fight a this-worldly Satan, gave rise to new ways of waging war and conducting politics. Puritan militancy and organization had an egalitarian appeal in a decaying feudal order and laid the basis for secular citizenship. Such an outlook led some English Puritan soldiers to rid themselves of monarchy – and some to massacre the Irish or persecute witches. The overthrow of the Shah and the rise of the Islamic republic, both sponsored by an alliance of clerics and bazaar merchants, witnessed similar contradictory tendencies. Women kept the vote but were policed and subordinated. The war with Iraq led to a horrendous loss of life and elements of a war economy. But gradually a more vigorous civil society emerged. The hardline clerics lost ground from 1990, opposed by bazaar merchants who had tired of their populist experiments. A more pragmatic leadership resorted to a program of privatization. In the 1997 presidential election the more moderate and tolerant, but cautious, cleric Khatami won, to be re-elected with even more support in 2001. This whole process resumes the trajectory of the interrupted bourgeois revolution in Iran.

Today political Islam still has an egalitarian resonance in feudal societies like those of Pakistan and the Arabian Peninsula. The first bourgeois revolutions came into the world animated by Puritan righteousness, hatred of Satan, and a belief that the Elect must prove themselves in purifying and terrifying deeds. The Enlightenment and the French Revolution, the defeat of fascism, decolonization, and the Russia and Chinese revolutions opened up different paths to modernity in succeeding centuries. But apparently, because of the defeat of secular revolutionary forces in the Islamic world, we now witness a throwback to the dawn of the bourgeois epoch. If the Puritans represented a kind of progress in the seventeenth century, could the same be said of today’s hardline Islamic clerics? The answer is no. The secular spaces of the modern world create other possibilities (and weapons of mass destruction create other dangers). Indeed, even in the seventeenth century there were proto-secular currents, like the Levelers, to which Walzer gives too little attention. Anyway, it would be wrong to exalt the Puritans above such counter-currents as humanism and the baroque, as reflected in, say, Montaigne and Shakespeare, which also made a contribution to modernity and civility. However, where radical Islam has become a mass force, as it did in Iran, its evolution may bear comparison with that of the Puritans. Those Iranian clerics who wish to keep a theological straitjacket on Iranian society, and who mystify political realities with pseudo-religious categories like the Great Satan, are losing ground. Over two decades after the overthrow of the Shah, some of the processes noted by Walzer seem to be at work in Iranian society, with student revolts, the assertion of women’s civic rights, a flourishing Iranian cinema, and the tussle between elected officials and hardline clerics. In these we see some rays of light in a darkening landscape. Iranian developments are closely followed by the Al Jazeera TV station, which projects them to the Arab world. The fact that the Iranians are Shi’ite and the Taliban are Sunni apparently does not lend the latter greater...
authority in the eyes of the Sunni majority in the Muslim world, because of the manifest excesses and failures of Taliban rule.

The Alternative to the Taliban

The Taliban were never a deep-rooted, popular force. They were brought up abroad and indoctrinated in madrassas, or religious colleges, sponsored by the ISI. Their movement would not have prevailed without foreign backing and was undone once that backing was withdrawn. Their rule was baneful for most of the population. This is why indigenous forces, supported by regional powers, are best placed to replace them and prevent remaining Taliban from being seen as victims of crusader aggression. This would also be the best way to minimize the continuing threat posed by Islamic jihad.

Allowing Iran to play a leading role within a genuinely international anti-terrorist coalition would be quite different from the stance the US has maintained. Washington could regard such a course as embodying a Kissingeresque realism – like the recognition of “Red China,” but without the cynicism and in a better cause. The Iranian government and state, whatever its divisions, has far greater legitimacy than most others in the Islamic world. Over the last decade there has been a real, if still incomplete, democratization of Iranian society. All Iranian groupings are strongly opposed to the Taliban. There are some two million Afghan refugees within its borders, most of whom would like to return. The Iranian government has links with parts of the Northern Alliance and an interest in improving conditions for the Afghan people, since that will allow a million and a half Afghan refugees in Iran to return. But Teheran obviously will not aid or abet a US occupation.

Unfortunately, Washington so far declines to normalize relations with Iran. The administration’s response to the Iranian government will supply a litmus test, since Iran could play a critical role in helping to reconstruct Afghanistan and in delegitimating the Islamic jihad terrorist network. The Economist informs us that the US State Department has cold-shouldered Iranian overtures: “On September 16th a State department official said that Iran’s help in the campaign against terrorism would be welcomed only if it withdrew support from Hizbullah – hardly a realistic demand, not least because few countries, apart from America and Israel, consider Hizbullah to be a terrorist organization.”

On September 30 the Iranian assistant foreign minister gave an interview to the New York Times in which he explained the critical failings of US diplomacy and strategy:

“No single nation can take up this fight,” Mr. Zarif said. . . . “This is a global fight. And a cold warrior mentality against the global menace of terrorism is not going to produce the results necessary to eradicate terrorism.” He said the coalition must both be inclusive and authorized by the United Nations. “Everybody has to be in,” he said, “you can’t pick and choose the members.” Mr. Zarif extended his condolences to the
American people. “The magnitude of this attack has been unprecedented,” he said, “it is difficult for the world to comprehend that in a few seconds so many people have been lost. Certainly in Iran we understand the trauma that the American people are suffering and will continue to suffer for many years to come.” While expressing sympathy for the victims of the attacks, Mr. Zarif criticized statements by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell about Iran’s possible inclusion in an American led coalition. . . . “The notion that you are either with the US or with the terrorists is problematic. People are not in line to join the coalition. There is no queue. In the Iranian psyche the United States is not the center of the world,” he said, “so it would be advisable if the American people look at themselves from the perspective of others.”

While the US is reluctant to allot a leading role to Iran, it will strive for, and probably achieve, a covert understanding. Unlike the governments of most other large Muslim states, the government of Iran is not financially or militarily dependent on the US. It has a long border with Afghanistan and many ties with its population. Washington knows that Iran will not wish to see another hostile government formed in the neighboring state. But any tacit understanding will always be limited by Washington’s insistence on its own determining role.

If the Northern Alliance had not been kept going by Iran, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, the US would have had no allies to take on the Taliban. Of these Iran alone has standing within the Muslim world and is thus better placed to win Muslim opinion to the need to replace the Taliban by a government that does not discredit Islam. The best that can be said about the regimes in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan is that they have a broadly secular character, and could allow secular Afghan refugees to return to their homeland. Uzbekistan has a functioning state which has permitted a modicum of economic and social development. But because of their autocratic and brutal character, past subservience to Moscow, and ethnic links, the support of the Uzbek and Tajik governments will not lend much appeal to any Afghan regime. The Northern Alliance itself is an uneasy front of warlords and of political and religious leaders who had responsibility for the misrule of 1992–96. The US will try to broaden the new government to include the king and feudal leaders such as Hamid Karzai. But the new administration seems unlikely to include significant secular and civilian forces, such as RAWA, the Revolutionary Association of Afghan Women. The US successfully leaned on the Pakistani military to help turf the Taliban, but the effect of this is that former Taliban, and those close to them, still have power. Pakistan’s influence in Afghanistan would be healthier if it was itself democratized.

The formation of a government in Pakistan committed to holding elections, and incorporating the main political parties on an interim basis, would help to weaken the Islamic jihad network and prevent backsliding in Afghanistan. Pakistan’s civilian forces were not committed to the Taliban, though they failed to prevent the ISI from sponsoring them. Islamist parties have never been able to demonstrate electoral support in Pakistan. Notwithstanding the main parties’
hostility to the Taliban, they will see good reasons to make sure that a post-Taliban government has friendly relations with Pakistan. The ISI remains strongly attached to its “ex-Taliban” Afghan protégés and the problem this poses is increased by the fact that, like other intelligence services, it has sources of revenue stemming from the drug trade that are not controlled by its government.\textsuperscript{38} Pakistan’s previous civilian governments had little or no control over the intelligence network, but they have been scared to challenge it. But public opinion and the aspiration to be free of military misrule also count for something in the country. As Robert Fisk explains: “Corrupt, drug-ridden, and inherently unstable Pakistan may be, but General Musharraf allows a kind of freedom of speech to continue.” The public opinion to which this allows expression is not favorable to the ISI or the Taliban, but neither does it like the US and Musharraf. Fisk notes: “Aqil Shah put it very well when he wrote in Lahore’s Friday Times last week that, by allying himself with America’s ‘War on Terror,’ General Musharraf had secured de facto international acceptance for his 1999 coup.”\textsuperscript{39} Musharraf has promised elections and should be held to his word. A civilian government formed now would have a far better chance of tackling the ISI than was ever previously the case.

Thus a regional solution should centrally involve Iran, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan, and is linked to the prospects for democratization in those countries. Outside powers can mainly help by offering a really large aid package to reward cooperation between them. The West expended huge sums in prosecuting a proxy war in Afghanistan, and the US and Britain are currently engaged in very costly military operations. If similar sums were available for reconstruction and development in the region, this would powerfully assist the chances of a joint approach in Teheran, Tashkent, and Islamabad. And only such an approach would offer the hope of an Afghan settlement that does not store up new conflicts by enshrining the rule of an ethno-religious faction or giving a new lease to discredited and oppressive Islamist practices.

It is interesting to note that Robert MacFarlane, a former National Security adviser to Ronald Reagan writing in \textit{The Wall Street Journal}, argued that it would be better if the overthrow of the Taliban were accomplished by the Afghans themselves since “the undoing of the Taliban by Afghans would remove any claim of martyrdom from Osama bin Laden, as well as reduce the risk of losing our Muslim coalition partners. The alternative is for much larger U.S. forces to do the job. They would surely succeed but at a much larger cost in lives.”\textsuperscript{40} The same applies to a campaign to quell remaining Taliban resistance.

Clearly the UN should have a crucial role to play in the future of Afghanistan, as the Iranian Foreign Minister observed, and as the Northern League itself requested. The Taliban were not recognized as the Afghan government. The Security Council adopted a strong resolution against terrorism on September 28, but no UN police body was set up to enforce it. Instead, each member state was asked to take its own measures and to report back within 90 days on its success.
in identifying and stamping out terrorist support networks. While seemingly multi-
lateralist, this approach allows Washington to retain control of all cross-border
initiatives – and to act as judge in 90 days of the adequacy of the measures reported.
Under UN auspices a so-called “two-plus-six” group comprising the US and Russia
(the ‘two’) and Afghanistan’s neighbors (Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan,
Tajikistan, China, and Pakistan) helped to furnish support for the onslaught on the
Taliban, but the grouping was not given any formal responsibilities. Instead of
fostering a regional UN body, Washington took care to retain all the initiative.

The US approach was clear from the explanations of the Secretary of Defense.
In an article entitled “A New Kind of War,” Rumsfeld explained that this “will not
be waged by a grand alliance united for the single purpose of defeating an axis of
hostile powers.” Instead of such an alliance, in which the US would have to
compromise with allies, there will be “floating coalitions” adopted or discarded
at will by the directing center: “Countries will have different roles and contribute
in different ways. . . . In this war the mission will determine the coalition, not the
other way round.”\textsuperscript{41} And the mission will be set by Washington.

The US is compromised by the fact that its cause is still yoked to Saudi Arabia,
the Emirates, and Egypt, as well as Israel. For Bush to imagine that the US stands
for liberty and justice in the Middle East is a strange delusion. It could only ever
be seen in this light if it broke with the Saudi monarchy and obliged Israel to with-
draw completely from the occupied territories, something that would obviously
require a complete revolution in its policy and priorities in the region. This is not
about to happen, but Washington does now see that American interests would be
better served by curbing Israel. The US has already insisted, overruling Sharon,
that Israel resume talking to the Palestinians. In an answer to an Iranian journal-
list the British Foreign Secretary went considerably further, observing: “I under-
stand that one of the factors that helps to breed terrorism is the anger which many
people feel at the events over the years in Palestine.”\textsuperscript{42}

The need for Arab and Muslim allies drove the Bush administration to redefine
its Israel policy and offer some concessions to Arab opinion. The oil and indus-
trial interests so linked to the Bush regime could perceive the need for a fresh start
in the region and the president is now so strong that he doesn’t need to fear even
the hostility of AIPAC, the influential pressure group which backs Israel. But the
alliance with the “moderate” Arab states – and the sort of token sops that might
satisfy them – will not help since these are autocratic, repressive, and discredited.
So a replay of the Gulf War coalition will not work even on its own terms. An
attempt simply to restart the flawed and discredited “peace process” would not be
convincing even to most “moderate” Arabs. The minimum should be compliance
with UN Resolution 242 and willingness to discuss a territorial settlement that
gives both Israelis and Palestinians contiguous land and reasonably defensible
borders.\textsuperscript{43}

The militants of Al Qaeda and Islamic jihad have some very unattractive,
indeed repellent, beliefs and there is no need to respect or compromise on any of

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these. Islamic jihad believes in a draconian subordination of women and the drastic curtailment of cultural and intellectual life. They are willing to pitilessly destroy believers and non-believers alike, since the believers will go to paradise and the infidels deserve to die anyway. This was already evident before September 11: the East African embassy bombings wounded and maimed 400 people. But Al Qaeda and its allies also try to gain support by appearing to champion causes which are popular and justified. Al Qaeda is manifestly a threat to the cause of democracy and progress. But to oppose measures simply because they are supported by Al Qaeda plays into their hands.

While apparently secular objectives are proclaimed in its videos, these are wrapped up in a religious worldview. The ability of Al Qaeda to attract sympathy and support in the Islamic world could certainly be undercut by initiatives favorable to democracy, economic development, self-determination, and respect for the peaceful exercise of religious rites (and rights). Although, in current circumstances, it is dangerous to underestimate Al Qaeda’s appeal, it is not a mass force anywhere in the Muslim world. It is a network of several thousands, not millions or even hundreds of thousands. There is evidence of bickering, factionalism, and disorganization within it. Without continuing subventions its finances would be strained. So for all these reasons the network could shrivel if the peoples of the Muslim world saw real opportunities to achieve recognition, justice, and progress.

Islamic jihad has a political logic which feeds off the need for revolutionary transformations in the Islamic world and the failures of existing regimes, whether conservative or nationalist. The excessive and “symbolic” dimensions of the September 11 action could further its political objectives if it drives Washington mad, if it makes the custodians of global capital forget how much they have to lose, and if it plays to the Manichean phobias still evident in US political culture.

The Belgian Marxist Ernest Mandel used to say that the hugely prosperous American bourgeoisie had no rational interest in blowing up the world in a nuclear conflagration. Once again bourgeois America is in a like situation and does not have an interest in, say, promoting the fundamentalist network in the Pakistani armed forces. But this does not mean that American political leadership can find within itself the wisdom, imagination, and patience to see that the main role must now be played by others. The Islamic warriors who immolated themselves in the World Trade Center and Pentagon were armed only with knives and cardboard cutters. They turned their opponent’s civilian airliners into devastating instruments of destruction. They are also ready to turn American belligerence into their ally.

Even “rational” capitalists, however, may favor belligerent action – say against Iraq or to shore up the Saudi monarchy – if they come to believe that this could secure future control of Middle Eastern oil. The US way of life owes much to cheap oil and gasoline, but the real interests at stake are easy to over-pitch. In recent years the Middle East has been supplying only about fifteen per cent of total US oil imports. Even if the US government and oil companies lost all privileged
leverage in the Middle East, they would still be able to buy some supplies from the region. The advocates of radical Islam urge that better prices should be obtained for oil and that Islamic banks and corporations would make better use of oil revenues than the hereditary states: they speak of raising prices or using oil revenues differently, not keeping the oil to themselves. The prices which eventually prevail will before long reflect supply and demand in what is an internationally competitive market. Mercantile activity, as we have pointed out, has always been compatible with Islam. It could be that average prices would be a little higher, but this would scarcely be a disaster for the US. Indeed, if it encouraged greater efficiency and economy in the use of fossil fuels, it would be a good thing. On the other hand, the risks entailed by allowing Islamic jihad to gain substantial state power are of a quite different description and Mandel’s argument applies.

Cosmopolitics versus Terror

The flaw in the US proclamation of itself as the arbiter of global terror is not only its past record, but also its continuing imperial disposition and the readiness of US leaders to discount political and social considerations in favor of a stark opposition of good and evil. The British government has, in my view, been far too subservient to Washington. But as an ex-colonial power it knows that terrorist movements can be undercut by political initiatives. It knows that the irreconcilables can be isolated by acts of decolonization and negotiations with those formerly regarded as terrorists like Jomo Kenyatta, Archbishop Makarios, and Gerry Adams. It is true that the White House has many times welcomed Yasser Arafat and was at one time willing to turn a blind eye to Saudi support for terrorists. But such pragmatism is no good unless informed by a willingness to accept structural change. The British did eventually accept decolonization, but it is less clear that the US understands that the time has come for a new type of empire, a network empire of many centers.

Instead of decolonization, the Palestinians were offered besieged and fragmented enclaves. In Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, decolonization would mean the withdrawal of US and UK troops. A campaign against terror in the region would have to base itself on dismantling regimes that are based on terror rather than popular consent, whether in the occupied territories or in the motley retinue of monarchies and sheikdoms that have been the buttress of empire. The species of bourgeois revolution now stalking the Islamic world threatens to sweep all these regimes into the dustbin of history. In the Gulf a large immigrant workforce could assert its presence. If the West insists on further supporting the old order, it will ensure that this process is more bloody and dangerous than would otherwise be the case – and less likely to find a relatively more democratic, secular, and pacific outcome.

A campaign against terrorism will be far more likely to succeed if it is genuinely international in character, if implementation is entrusted to a supranational agency, if it is even-handed and consistent, if it is equally intolerant of state
terror, if political and social injustices are resolutely addressed, and if it pays attention to all the destructive potentials that have appeared as by-products of modernity.

President Bush’s inclinations today are as anachronistic as were those of President McKinley when he led the US to victory over Spain in 1898 but then did not know what to do with it. His instinct was to use Spain’s defeat to acquire pieces of imperial real estate (the Philippines, Guam, Cuba, and Puerto Rico). He did not realize that territorial empires had peaked and that it was America’s mission to embody the non-territorial variety that was to count in the twentieth century. Under pressure from an impressive anti-imperialist movement, Cuba was given its independence in 1902, but with a Platt amendment that was long to rankle: it enshrined a US right of intervention in the island. Today Bush aspires to be a second McKinley exercising a sort of global Platt amendment in the war against terrorism. But the time for this type of imperial governance is over; a more plural capitalist world requires supranational agencies that do not only reflect the “Washington consensus.”

Terror networks with “global reach” will not be suppressed or minimized without a new and more authoritative network of institutions at a global and supranational level. This means abating US national messianism together with the willingness of its allies to defer to Washington on a string of crucial issues for global governance. The US is tempted to play the role of global gendarme because everyone knows that the UN, as it is, lacks the resources and capacity to fill this role. The weakness of the UN was cited by Richard Falk in *The Nation* as the reason for supporting Bush’s go-it-alone strategy. But the same argument could be deployed to argue for giving the international body specified supranational powers and for its decision-making powers to be enhanced. Obviously those would have to be accompanied by juridical restraints and democratic accountability such as have anyway been urged by writers like Daniele Archibugi. The situation created by September 11 created conditions where such issues could be urgently addressed and an anti-terrorist taskforce quickly assembled. Indeed, even prior to September 11, Saul Mendlovitz and John Fousek had already urged the need for such a force to combat crimes against humanity.

The crisis unleashed by September 11 shows that even in a case where the US began with a moral right to act alone in defense of its citizens, this has not been the best way of acting. Of course the UN could be far more effective if it were not continually bypassed and slighted by the US. But it also needs, as it has since its inception, new authority and resources. Already in 1944 some argued for the UN to have its own armed force (World Guard) with its own budget and commanders (i.e., one not formed by contributions from existing national armies). This is still a distant prospect today. But a supranational agency to deal with “global terrorism” is another matter, requiring fewer resources and implying a smaller derogation of sovereignty. And if the principle can be won in this area, this could be of great help in tackling nuclear and germ-war disarmament and persuading the
United States to support and accept monitoring and inspection, without which international accords are useless.\textsuperscript{48} The fact that there is no Islamic country as a permanent member of the Security Council while there are two European states is unfortunate. The inclusion of, say, Indonesia might help to boost the standing of the UN in the Islamic world. It is interesting to reflect that when William Penn and Abbé Pierre first proposed an international league to suppress war and piracy they urged that the Ottoman Empire should be bound into it from the outset.\textsuperscript{49} Three centuries later we still haven’t caught up with these bold thinkers.

An international accord against terrorism could be positive so long as there was the opportunity for each state’s self-interested approach to be qualified by the need for a genuine international consensus. The latter would itself not be perfect, of course, but it would be better than encouraging each state to prosecute its own war against global terrorism. There are already international agreements which it could have invoked and which the UN Security Council could see were more vigorously enforced.

The succession of treaties and agreements aimed at suppressing first piracy and then the Atlantic slave trade, with the latter often seen as legally equivalent to the former, furnish interesting precedents. At the Congress of Vienna in 1815 there was an international accord to equate slaving with piracy. But Washington would not agree. The US government had suppressed legal slave imports in 1808, but rejected effective international action against the Atlantic slave trade since this required a mutual right of inspection, which was deemed to be an infringement on US sovereignty. As a result, the Atlantic slave trade to Cuba continued and the building of ships destined for the slave trade was a major New York industry in the 1850s. It was only in 1862 that Lincoln and Seward accepted the need for the US to cooperate in suppressing the Atlantic traffic – and it was only then that the bans on Atlantic slaving became effective.\textsuperscript{50}

Other than the US, the permanent members of the UN Security Council are ready for joint police action against terrorism, even the establishment of a supranational agency. The Chinese and Russian governments may use terror themselves but are sincerely opposed to the freelance variety, especially when connected to Islamic fundamentalism. At one point in Bush’s 20 September speech, when he was listing the failed twentieth century doctrines comparable to Al Qaeda’s fundamentalism, he mentioned fascism, Nazism, and totalitarianism but left out, in deference to China and Russia, a specific mention of Communism. Evidently someone in the Bush entourage was already aiming at an entente with Beijing and Moscow.

It is just possible that international action against terrorism, often a comparatively small-scale threat, could pave the way to international accords which remove the far greater – but now not entirely unrelated – terror of nuclear war. It could furnish a positive precedent. The pre-September 11 international order was based on the effective exclusion of Russia and China from any real role in global
governance. That was the logic of Clinton’s NATO expansion policy and of Bush’s characterization of China as a “global competitor.” Russia and China not only have nuclear weapons, but also the means to deliver them. Washington’s policy of maintaining its own nuclear arsenal and blocking supranational inspection also made it very difficult to tackle the most dangerous type of proliferation, as seen in the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan. New Delhi and Islamabad were censured for developing their nuclear capability, but nobody could suppose that these powers would renounce such weapons so long as others possessed them. The US, Britain, and France are theoretically committed to eventual nuclear disarmament, but nobody takes this seriously since the governments concerned evidently do not do so themselves. Nuclear disarmament would only be acceptable to existing nuclear powers if carried out as part of a common agreement entered into by all and backed up by international inspection. Willingness to accept any such sacrifice of national sovereignty was very remote on September 11. During the Cold War nuclear dispositions were at least inserted into an overall strategy of control. But the anarchic dispositions which now reign constitute the perilous legacy of that “unfinished twentieth century” about which Jonathan Schell has written.  

A UN secretariat against terrorism should have its own professional staff and should be able to prompt and require compliance from the police in any member state. Anything less than this would not be serious. A UN convention against terrorism could be based on its existing articles and protocols. Inevitably governments would try to invoke it to suppress legitimate opposition, but in such cases they might find it difficult to get a quorum to support them and would have to work through an agency, and submit to a court, they did not control. There should be habeas corpus and judicial safeguards against wrongful arrest, with the opportunity for representations to be made by social movements as well as states. The sanctions available to the international court should include imprisonment but not capital punishment.

Israel and its friends will no doubt claim that Al Fatah and the PLO are terrorist organizations. The Russian government will claim that the entire Chechen movement is terrorist. The Indian government likes to brand as terrorist any aspiration to Kashmiri independence. The Chinese government will brand Tibetan aspirations as terrorist. The US, France, and Britain might seek to indict organizations at work in Puerto Rico, Northern Ireland, or Corsica. Indeed, the British “antiterrorist” legislation is framed broadly enough to target non-violent direct action by “eco-warriors.” For these reasons, progressives, liberals, and anybody who cherishes civil liberties and rights of national self-determination will argue strongly against accepting accusations at face value or the setting up of an organization responsible to individual governments.

What should count as terrorism? Obviously actions aimed at sowing terror by killing civilians, or seriously harming them, or threatening them with death or disfigurement. Such actions are supposedly illegal everywhere. Similar attacks or
threats directed only against military personnel in time of peace are a more awkward case. If the government served by those personnel is autocratic and oppressive, this could justify armed resistance rather than terrorism. According to circumstances such armed resistance might be ill advised or wrong, but it would not be terrorism. We should bear in mind that the US would not exist if its Founding Fathers had not taken up arms. There will, of course, be dispute about whether such and such a regime is repressive or autocratic, or whether an act really harmed civilians, but in practice it is often not so difficult to reach agreement. The aim of an anti-terrorist accord would be to identify and suppress clear cases of terrorism. It might even make sense to confine the competence of the agency to terrorist activity that crossed borders. Where the anti-terrorist agency could not decide, governments would formulate their own response. The attempt to reach agreement, and the supranational character of an anti-terrorist agency, would be quite different from bilateral deals whereby the US forgets about the Chechens in return for Russia accepting NATO expansion.

The existence of such a supranational agency would hopefully tend to preempt and contain terrorist activity. But governments would still retain the ability to deal with terrorist threats as they saw best within their own borders. Likewise, political or religious movements would no doubt still contrive to evade the reach of the agency. There would have to be sanctions for governments which flouted the accord or sabotaged the agency. Much would depend on the quality and authority of those in charge of investigations and operations; hopefully it would be possible to attract men like the Italian prosecutor Di Pietro, the Spanish judge Garzón, or the Israeli scientist Vanunu.

The US has insisted that state-backed terrorism should be outlawed. Distinguishing between state-backed terror and state-backed acts of war will not be easy, but the challenge is a good one. Since state-backed terror often causes greater loss of life, it is eminently worth identifying and opposing. Once again independent investigators and jurists, with their own staff and budget, will be needed if such identifications are to be made with any credibility. The resources misspent on suppressing drug trafficking could be used to coordinate police action against terrorism. Indeed, the link between drug trafficking and terrorism means that a policy of decriminalizing drugs would fit well with a strategy for minimizing terrorism. In the nature of any anti-terrorism agreement, it should not be possible for one state to impose its criteria of terrorism on another; states which themselves practiced or condoned terror will destroy their own legitimacy. Realists may say that Washington and Moscow will covertly support terrorist groups in the future as they have in the past. Perhaps this is true. But in this case they will risk being arraigned before a supranational body and an aroused world public opinion. If the supranational body refuses to arraign powerful states, as may well happen, then this itself will prompt further protests and campaigns. Stopping powerful states from colluding with terror is not going to be easy, but that is not a reason for not making the effort and making sure that there are supranational guarantees.
So moves to an accord against terrorism would furnish opportunities to combat false accusations with the international secretariat developing its own criteria and tests. There remains the uncomfortable fact that not all such accusations will be false. Obviously good causes can be championed by bad methods. But when that happens it usually weakens those causes.

The term terror entered the political lexicon with the guillotine when the French revolution was hurling itself against the counter-revolutionary offensive of the European ancien régime. Much of the legislation of that time – freeing the slaves, establishing secular education, and proclaiming universal social rights – represented a huge step forward for humanity. But the terror weakened the Jacobin republic and hastened its overthrow. Stalin’s much more extensive terror in the thirties weakened the Soviet Union at a critical time, contributing to early Nazi advances. Likewise, the Western allies’ “terror bombing” in 1944 had negligible impact on German output while actually boosting civilian morale.53

If all movements of political or social liberation were induced to abandon terrorist methods, there would be a gain and more space would be created for mass opposition to injustice. The tactics of guerrilla war, as elaborated by Guevara, Mao, and Ho Chi Minh, aimed at cultivating civilian support, winning over enemy soldiers, and isolating the opposing governments, not terrorizing the population. In the early labor movement, Marxists, social democrats, and most syndicalists opposed terrorist methods; it was those movements that clung to this restraint which generally survived and flourished. The practice of terror by the early Soviet republic during the civil war was defended on the grounds that it helped to win more time, but was probably a factor of demoralization both then and subsequently.54 In any military conflict violence is deployed in ways that aim to destroy, immobilize, or capture the opponent, but it is usually much better to surprise than to terrify. Recently in Lebanon some observers detected a shift in the policy of Hizbullah when it moved away from indiscriminate attacks against all Israelis and concentrated instead on attacking occupying military personnel in southern Lebanon – a move to a political focus which led to Israeli withdrawal. If there was an international agreement against terrorism, some Palestinians organizations might feel the need to abandon terror tactics that do them no good anyway – in the process they could isolate the Israeli state and throw into proper relief the ethnic cleansing which it continues to practice.

So long as there is oppression in the world there will be resistance, and where political systems are autocratic or alien this will often produce violent resistance. But progressives have learned to distinguish between resistance which uses just and effective means to challenge and overthrow intolerable conditions, on the one hand, and acts of indiscriminate and exemplary violence, targeted against civilians and whole communities, on the other. Sometimes it may seem instrumentally effective to countenance torture or terror, but movements that employ such methods begin to stultify, deaden, and demoralize themselves and to poison the cause for which they are fighting.

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President Bush’s notion of a “war on terrorism” does have one advantage over the alternative notion that bringing terrorists to book is just a matter of law enforcement against criminals. As noted above, the British discovered in India, Cyprus, Kenya, Malaya, Palestine, and Ireland that it was better to treat resistance, even terrorist resistance, as political, since this was a way of controlling it. Sometimes British withdrawal was seen as completing the military effort (e.g., Malaya), while in other cases there were direct negotiations with political leaders linked to terrorist movements, leading to a handover of power to them. If there were an international accord against terrorism, it would be necessary and advisable that it should try to bring out into the open any genuine political and social injustices that might motivate, or lend credibility to, the terrorist group. A moralistic refusal to negotiate with terrorists in such a situation is rarely effective and merely serves to perpetuate hatred and injustice.

While the critique of terrorism should not be skipped simply because of the misdeeds, including complicity in terrorism, of the USA, the number and extent of the misdeeds should induce a more chastened American approach to the question. US presidents have sanctioned the assassination of foreign leaders like Lumumba, Allende, and Castro. They have connived with death squads, carpet bombed Iraq, and fostered the terror sown by RENAMO and UNITA in Southern Africa. So some contrition on their part is in order. Even in the current campaign there are voices urging the brutal assertion of US power, willingness to inflict large-scale civilian casualties and to work with “unsavory allies” (as if that was unprecedented). Consider Senator John McCain’s bluster:

Only the complete destruction of international terrorism and the regimes that sponsor it will spare America from future attack. . . . American military power is the most important part. When it is brought to bear in great and terrible measure, it is a thing to strike terror in the heart of anyone who opposes it. No mountain is big enough, no cave deep enough to hide from the full fury of American power.55

But if Washington allows itself to be swayed by such overwrought counsel then firestorms in the Hindu Kush will only encourage further “blowback.”

There are those in the Muslim world who find something positive in the democratic aspects of US culture. But if they see the US president propping up autocracy and monarchy in their lands, the influence of US culture will undermine US state policy. The terror network has already shown the autonomy of these far-flung exile chains and of the new alliances they make possible. Democratic, radical, and secular nationalist currents are also present in this milieu, including in the Saudi, Afghan, and Pakistani diaspora, and their mobilization could help to head off the “clash of civilization” danger. But these people will not be rallying behind generals, sheiks, and kings, even comparatively decent ones like the ex-monarch of Afghanistan.

If the US does not commit itself to a genuinely democratic solution, under UN auspices and supported by credible Muslim states, it risks strengthening Al Qaeda and, as has been starkly clear from the outset, could help them to seize power in
Pakistan, a nuclear state – a country as unstable as former Yugoslavia and with a deep grudge against India, another nuclear state. The transnational structures so far proposed by the US are even more dangerous and deficient than those of the Cold War era. It would also involve spurning the opportunity to make a reality of the UN Security Council and to bring in Russia and China from the diplomatic limbo to which they are currently condemned. Since these two powers are also armed with nuclear weapons, the potential gain from an internationalist approach is genuinely epochal. But international nuclear disarmament – and parallel agreements covering other weapons of mass destruction – will require that the major powers are also covered and that they will permit international inspection and verification. Only this would make it impossible for medium and smaller states to stand apart from the process. A genuine campaign against terrorism could thus actually help the world to face up to the much worse threat of the tens of thousands of nuclear warheads which still menace our species and planet. Terror weapons cannot be kept in sealed and self-contained compartments. If terrorism itself proliferates and escalates, it will be more difficult to insulate weapons of mass destruction – biological as well as nuclear – from terrorist appropriation.

Since 1945 no nuclear bomb has exploded in a populated area. The destruction of Lower Manhattan on and after September 11 was terrible enough, but only a fraction of the devastation that a single nuclear weapon would cause if dropped on a city in the Indian subcontinent. But because it has happened, September 11 could help us to grasp the importance of the still greater – if less palpable – calamities that current global arrangements still menace.

NOTES

4. In her October 8 interview with The Nation, Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA) tells us many legislators shared her fears. They just lacked the courage of their convictions.
11. Washington squelched Russian mediation at Rambouillet because, if successful, it would have given Russia an ongoing role in former Yugoslavia. In the end Russia had to be given a minor role anyway. Russia had great leverage in Belgrade because Yugoslav forces were highly dependent on Russian oil and military supplies. Washington regarded the Primakov government as a throwback to the Soviet era. In fact his fall and eventual replacement by Putin led to bloody Russian aggression in Chechnya, with only token Western protests. The unspoken agreement was that if you let us bomb Serbia, we’ll let you bomb Chechnya. Also note that mass opposition to Milosevic, including street demonstration by hundreds of thousands of citizens maintained for months took place in 1996–7 and in 2000 but not in the period of Western bombardment. On all this see my “The War of NATO Expansion,” in Ali, Masters of the Universe.

12. It is astonishing to recollect that as recently as September 2 the New York Times ran a headline: “Dogfight for Dollars on Capitol Hill: The Winnowing Begins on Contracts for Planes, Ships and All Things Military.”

13. The US response to the challenge is, as explained by Hardt and Negri, to evoke the false universality of the US as the ultimate custodian and guarantor of all that is valuable in human civilization. But these authors are wrong to equate “imperial sovereignty” with an imperial network, as they define it, since the latter would tolerate and encourage a multiplicity of centers within a capitalist world. Instead the US sees itself as the sole center. See Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, Empire (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).


18. Raad Alkadri writes: “today it is not Israel but Iraq that is emerging as a regional trade hub.” “The Iraqi Klondike,” Middle East Report 220 (Fall 2001).

19. “Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence directorate, or I.S.I. [was] responsible for channeling large amounts of military and financial aid to the Taliban. Until the attacks in New York and Washington, that support had been quietly tolerated by the United States, despite the bitter opposition to the repressive forms of Islamic rule imposed by the Taliban.” John Burns, New York Times, 18 September 2001. See also Tariq Ali, “Muslim Coup in Pakistan?” Independent, 14 September 2001.


21. Ibid.


23. “When police in Oslo made Norway’s largest-ever heroin seizure, they discovered that former fighters from the Kosovo Liberation Army controlled the distribution chain.” “War and Drugs,” The Economist, 20 October 2001. Of course neither the terrorism nor the drug running of some KLA justifies Milosevic’s repression of the Kosovan people, which was of long standing. See Branka Magas, “Yugoslavia: the Spectre of Balkanisation,” New Left Review 174 (March–April 1989). At this time the US State Department had a soft spot for Milosevic and did nothing to avert the disintegration of a country that was seen as a “neutral” and “socialist” power by many in the West. Because of the demands of Western creditors, the Yugoslav government swept aside by Milosevic was unable to pay the salaries of its soldiers, a circumstance which greatly increased its vulnerability.


28. Ibid.

29. Yossef Bodnansky, *Bin Laden: the Man who Declared War on America* (Roseville, CA: Forum, 2001), 198. For bin Laden’s financial operations and construction work see pp. 40–7, 307–336. The interpretations offered by this author should be treated with caution. He rarely supplies references even to secondary sources and is inclined to postulate a seamless conspiracy linking Middle Eastern political and religious currents that are often at odds with one another. Bodansky is the director of a Congressional task force on terrorism. His account of Osama bin Laden’s financial and commercial undertakings seems plausible. But he does not draw attention to the Saudi Bin Laden Group’s stake in the Carlyle Group (see next note).


32. Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints* (New York: Atheneum, 1968). Walzer’s argument can be seen as developing an aspect of Max Weber’s famous argument concerning the Protestant ethic and the rise of capitalism. The broadly Marxist account of the role of the Puritans in the English Civil War – as advanced by Christopher Hill and Robert Brenner in *Merchants and Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) – is compelling. But the logic and passion of Puritanism as a religious current contributed to the momentous secular outcome. It is here that some parallel with Islamic radicalism today may be worth exploring. As in the seventeenth century these Islamic radicals are often dealing with the problems of traditional tribal or feudal social relations in societies where capitalist modernisation has taken hold but is very incomplete.


35. The path of “bourgeois democratic revolution” has always been complex and uneven, yoking together new freedoms with new and old slaveries. Perry Anderson’s essay on “Bourgeois Revolution” in *English Questions* (London & New York: Verso, 1992) insists on the variety of social forces which have historically sponsored the revolutions that constitute capitalist modernity. The actuality of the bourgeois or bourgeois-democratic revolution in world history used to be a Marxist theme but is now also encountered in non-Marxist authors, as witness work in the last decade by Gordon Wood, John Markoff, and Francis Fukuyama. The classical notion of capitalism and democracy advancing in lockstep certainly needs to be revised, but the conceptual field remains indispensable. See Eric Hobsbawm’s *Age of Revolution* (New York: New American Library, 1964) and Barrington Moore’s *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon, 1966).


38. According to the *Economist*, “The one country that all drug traffickers try to avoid is Iran. Some 204 tonnes of opium and 29 tonnes of heroin and morphine were seized in Iran in 1999 by a combination of army battalions and police units. . . . (In Turkey by contrast, only one third of a tonne of opium was confiscated in the same year).” *The Economist*, 20 October 2001.


42. James Bennet, “Muddle Over Arafat-Peres Meeting is Frustrating for Bush,” *New York Times*, 25 September 2001. Challenged to withdraw these remarks by the Israeli government Straw explained: “There is never any excuse for terrorism. At the same time, there is an obvious need to understand the environment which breeds terrorism. That is why the whole of the international community is so concerned to see lasting peace in the Middle East.”

43. See the article by Perry Anderson on the background and the detailed proposals of the French General Guy Mondron for one possibility, in *New Left Review* II:10 (2001).


47. See the contribution by Saul Mendlovitz and John Fousek to Neal Reimer, ed., *Protection Against Genocide: Mission Impossible?* (Westport: Praeger, 2000).

48. The US government refused to sign a UN protocol against germ warfare supported by 144 other states in August 2001 because it opposed inspections, a position it maintained in essentials even after September 11, on the grounds that it would prejudice US bio-defense programs and “risked loss of proprietary information.” Elizabeth Olson, “U.S. Calls for Global Action to Counter German Weapons,” *New York Times*, 20 November 2001.


52. It would undoubtedly be easier to confine an antiterrorist accord in the first instance to “unofficial violence” of a terrorist character, leaving aside for the time being terror actions undertaken by governments. Perhaps a separate structure would be required for the latter.

53. For a good discussion of the history of bombing see Trevor Corson’s review of a book on the topic by Sven Lundquist, *The Nation*, 29 October 2001. He makes the point that bombing has rarely been effective unless closely tied into the action of ground troops.
