

Burning Down the House:

How the Iraq War Will Affect the International System

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I stir up and arm all Syria. I march on Damascus and Aleppo. As I advance, my army will increase with the discontented. I proclaim the abolition of slavery and of the tyrannical government of the pashas. I reach Constantinople with armed masses and overthrow the Turkish Empire. Perhaps I return to Paris by way of Adrianople, or by Vienna, after having annihilated the Habsburgs of Austria.

Napoleon Bonaparte, 1799, on the eve of the last failed assault on Acre¹

*For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind;
 it hath no stalk; the bud shall yield no meal;
 if so be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up.*

Hosea 8:7

The conventional phase of the battle for Iraq has been won at the cost of thousands of military and civilian dead and at least \$45 billion in wealth consumed or destroyed.² Now that the war is won, the issue of special weapons seems secondary. The hunt for weapons goes on and may be successful, but victory has opened the door on new difficulties in Iraq and beyond. This essay examines some of the repercussions of the war. It focuses specifically on its broader systemic effects -- that is: how the war will affect the functioning and evolution of the international system. The essay traces these effects to an increased US emphasis on unilateralism, coercive diplomacy, pro-active military operations, and regime change. (A forthcoming companion essay, *Toward a Bright and Shining Iraq?*, explores the requirements and difficulties of repairing and stabilizing Iraq, with special attention to the potential for post-Hussein civil and interstate conflict.)

The Bush administration's approach to the Iraq crisis has put the United States at odds

¹ Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne, *Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, Book II* (University Press of the Pacific, June 2001).

² This estimate covers US military costs in the current fiscal year, likely humanitarian costs, and damage to Iraqi assets from the war. The Pentagon estimated on 15 April 2003 that the cost of deployment and operations had been \$20 billion. It expects to spend another \$10 billion through September. The United Nations has estimated humanitarian costs to be \$2.2 billion through the end of the year. I have estimated damage to Iraqi assets from Operation Iraqi Freedom to be between \$15 billion and \$20 billion, based on a comparison to the 1999 Operation Allied Force in the Balkans and the 1991 Gulf War. For further details on reconstruction costs see: Carl Conetta, [Reconstructing Iraq: Costs and Possible Income Sources](#), PDA Briefing Memo #28, 25 April 2003. Also see: "Pentagon puts price tag on war, *Congress Daily*, 16 April 2003; UN launches massive \$2.2 billion appeal for humanitarian relief in Iraq, *UN News Center*, 28 March 2003.

with the framework and institutions of cooperative security that grew up during the Cold War and after. To the extent that these cannot be bent to the administration's agenda and methods, they are being cast aside and even vilified.³ In the administration's view, its prosecution of the Iraq war has given notice to adversaries and allies alike that a new, post-911 world order is taking shape.⁴

³ Richard Perle, "Thank God for the death of the UN; Its abject failure gave us only anarchy. The world needs order," *The Guardian*, 21 March 2003; Maura Reynolds, "Azores Summit Ends in Ultimatum to UN," *Los Angeles Times*, 17 March 2003, p. 1; David E. Sanger with Warren Hoge, "US May Abandon UN Vote on Iraq, Powell Testifies," *New York Times*, 14 March 2003, p. 1; David L. Greene, "Bush Implores UN to Show 'Backbone'; World Body Is Risking Irrelevancy If it Doesn't Confront Iraq, He Warns," *Baltimore Sun*, 14 February 2003, p. 1; James Traub, "Who Needs the UN Security Council?," *New York Times*, 17 November 2002, p. 17.

⁴ The new post-9/11 order will be characterized by more assertive US leadership and a greater US willingness to use its military primacy to full effect and in a proactive way. Informing this posture is the view that many of the constraints on the use of armed force that emerged during the past century no longer pertain. Thus, there is less reason to self-deter or practice self-restraint.

Although still supportive of international institutions and cooperation, the United States will now act more in accord with the actual distribution of strategic power in the world, which differs dramatically from the power balance during the Cold War, when many of today's international institutions took shape. To remain relevant, international cooperative institutions, regimes, and practices must adapt to the post-Cold War realities of power.

Where possible the United States will deal with serious security challenges by seeking to facilitate or coerce structural change at the nation-state level -- a tall order. With specific reference to the Arab and Muslim areas of the world: the ascendant US view is that the security problems that arise from and afflict these regions are predominantly due to the character and orientation of most of the states there. Although some Arab and Muslim governments have seriously partnered with the United States in the war on terrorism, a number of others must soon change. In the new US view, this is a prerequisite to making substantial progress on a variety of regional security issues, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the recent upsurge in international terrorist activity.

Sources on the new order:

Elaine S. Povich, "A Declaration on the Deck; Bush: Major military action in Iraq over, but job isn't," *Newsday*, 2 May 2003 p. 7;

"US Warnings, To Iraq and Iran," editorial, *New York Times*, 25 April 2003, p. 30;

David E. Sanger, "Viewing the War as a Lesson to the World," *New York Times*, 6 April 2003, p. 1;

Eric Black, "Who might be next? White House talks tough; Remarks from high-ranking Bush administration officials have fueled speculation that Middle Eastern governments are under significant pressure to change their ways or face the consequences," *Star Tribune*, 13 April 2003, p. 1;

John Hendren, "An Architect of War Draws Blueprint for Peace; Paul Wolfowitz says Hussein's fall can have a 'demonstration effect' on other gulf nations," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 April 2003, p.1;

David E. Sanger and Steven R. Weisman, "Bush's Aides Envision New Influence in Region," *New York Times*, 10 April 2003, p. 11;

Indeed, the Iraq war will transform the global strategic environment -- but not in the ways its proponents contend. In the short-term some nations may choose to “band-wagon” with a more assertive United States or acquiesce to it, as the Bush administration hopes. But countervailing trends are already evident:

- US allies, adversaries, and those in-between will increase their efforts to balance against US power and prerogatives;
- Multilateral cooperation in security affairs will suffer as will arms control and human rights efforts, insofar as these are conscripted to serve a broader, unilateral US agenda;
- The threshold for resorting to force in international affairs will be lowered for nations across the board; and,
- As a consequence of the above, global investments in the instruments of military power will increase generally.

Another global effect of the war will be a drain on funds for humanitarian and development assistance. With the world spending approximately \$4 billion per year on humanitarian assistance, the Iraq war could easily claim 30 percent of the total for 2003 and 2004. Reconstruction may require \$20 billion during the next three years -- a sum equivalent to about 12 percent of all Official Development Assistance which, apart from humanitarian assistance, runs about \$55 billion per year.⁵ In total, the wars fought by the United States and its allies since 1999 -- Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq -- are reshaping the distribution of aid worldwide, especially to the detriment of the poor

Philip Stephens, “Present at the Destruction of the World's Partnership,” *Financial Times*, 7 March 2003, p 19;

Michael R. Gordon, “Serving Notice of a New US, Poised to Hit First and Alone,” *New York Times*, 27 January 2003, p. 1;

George W. Bush, [National Security Strategy of the United States](#) (Washington DC: White House, September 2002);

Carl Conetta, [The Pentagon's New Budget, New Strategy, and New War](#), Project on Defense Alternatives Briefing Report #12 (Cambridge MA: Commonwealth Institute, 25 June 2002); and,

Office of the Secretary of Defense, [Quadrennial Defense Review 2001](#) (Washington DC: 30 September 2001).

⁵ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *OECD DAC Countries Begin Recovery in Development Aid: 5% Increase in 2002* (Paris: OECD, April 2003); and, Overseas Development Institute, *International Humanitarian Action: A Review of Policy Trends*, ODI Briefing Paper (London: ODI, April 2002).

nations of Africa.⁶

The end of multilateralism

The American action in Iraq has shaken the foundation of trust and mutual restraint on which America's cooperative efforts with other nations depends.⁷ Among the war's

⁶ John Donnelly, "Iraq Aid Efforts Raise Africa Questions," *Boston Globe*, 15 April 2003, p 11.

⁷ Among the dissenting governments were important long-time and recent allies of the United States -- including France, Germany, Russia, and Canada. At the center of the dispute over Iraq was the dissenters' view that the war was manifestly unnecessary from a security perspective, given the strength of the West's deterrent capabilities and the progress of disarmament efforts in Iraq. (This theme is explored more fully in a companion piece to this essay: [What Colin Powell Showed Us: The End of Arms Control and the Normalization of War](#), PDA Briefing Report #14).

They also took issue with the types of pressure that the United States brought to bear in seeking to gain assent to its position and with the eventual US decision to undertake unilaterally acts of such profound import as war and regime change in a region as vitally important as the Persian Gulf.

Relevant to the dissenters' perspective is the fact that the costs, benefits, and effects of conflict distribute very unevenly among the involved nations, their neighbors, and the "global powers" (who, in fact, are more numerous than present American policy allows). For instance, the third-party nations who suffered the highest uncompensated costs of Security Council policy toward Iraq during the past ten years were Turkey and Jordan. (Turkey has claimed \$45 billion in losses due to UN sanctions). Those nations with the greatest security concerns regarding Hussein's Iraq were Israel, Iran, and the Gulf States. Those most likely to be affected by post-war instability are Turkey and the Gulf States. Those most dependent on the region's oil resources are Japan and Europe. And those with substantial economic claims against Iraq are Kuwait, the other Gulf States, Russia, and France. Thus, the war on Iraq critically engaged the interests of many nations in different ways -- although *only one* determined the decision to go to war.

The dispute between the United States and its dissenting allies over Iraq also reflected a fundamental difference in security strategy. The two sides disagree sharply about:

- What can be achieved generally by means of war and coercion;
- What can be accomplished by diplomatic means (including negotiated arms control);
- The true long-term costs of war to the international community;
- The true long-term benefits of cooperative, multi-lateral approaches to solving security problems, and whether relying on such approaches is a worthwhile end in itself.

Some US commentators see the European bias against war and for diplomatic solutions as deriving from Europe's current military weakness. (Robert Kagan, "Power and Weakness," *Policy Review*, June/July 2002.) But the European lag in defense effort, which is substantial, is best understood as a dependent variable -- a policy choice -- and not an existential condition. A better explanation of Europe's relative bias against war is the fact that, since 1770, it has suffered more than 20 times as many warfare deaths as the United States (relative to differences in population). During the 20th Century, it suffered 40 times as many warfare deaths, *per capita*. Enduring this, as well as centuries of bloody ideological divisions, may have led European populations to now prefer a "common home" approach to international affairs. And, despite the post-Cold War turmoil that has afflicted parts of Europe, it has made considerable progress in forging cooperative relations among its 47 nations, which together constitute one-quarter of the earth's total.

casualties will be the type of close multilateral cooperation carefully cultivated during the Cold War and expanded during the 1990s. The shock to multilateralism will have immediate negative implications for the war on terrorism and for stability efforts in and around Iraq. The latter is already evident in the disputes over UN sanctions and Oil-for-Food program resources, in Turkish behavior in northern Iraq, and in the efforts of other countries -- notably Saudi Arabia and Iran -- to influence the direction of Iraq's internal evolution.⁸

Although President Bush's "coalition of the willing" has been touted by the administration as "the largest coalition ever built", it is a weak shadow of the coalitions that formed to fight the 1991 Gulf War and the wars in Kosovo and Afghanistan.⁹ That

The choice between the two approaches is not merely a moral or philosophical one -- it also reflects and affects the interests of the two sides. Military power is America's area of greatest competitive advantage. Thus, giving way to American leadership or allowing America to set the action agenda often implies assuming a distinctly inferior place as America's partner -- as Great Britain's experience in Operation Iraqi Freedom attests. (In much the same way, choosing to play baseball rather than soccer would favor the American players on an international team.) Moreover, emphasizing military instruments and solutions in dealing with security problems will increase the value of armed force as a currency of power -- a currency that the United States holds in abundance. So the American approach to security problems tends to further enhance American influence. As example is America's postwar position in the Persian Gulf. Although both Turkey and Saudi Arabia opposed the US war on Iraq, neither nation can be really eager to see the United States rapidly withdraw now that Hussein has been toppled and the aspirations of Iraq's Kurds and Shiites unleashed.

⁸ Roueida Mabardi, "Syria, Turkey call for representative Iraqi," *Mideast Online*, 29 April 2003; "Turkey tried to smuggle weapons into northern Iraq: report," *Agence France Presse*, 27 April 2003; Robin Wright and David Holley, "Already, Postwar Iraq Is a Divisive Subject; France, Russia and Germany still disagree with the US on the role of the United Nations," *Los Angeles Times*, 9 April 2003, p. 1; and, Philip Dine, "US Worries That Meddling from Iraq's Neighbors Could Complicate the Conflict," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 2 April 2003.

⁹ **Sources on Iraq war coalition:**

Glenn Kessler, "United States Puts a Spin On Coalition Numbers," *Washington Post*, 21 March 2003;

Richard Beeston, "Critics deride US claim of a broad coalition," *The Times*, 20 March 2003;

Andrew Roche, "Most World Leaders Condemn U.S. Attack; Britain, Kuwait and Others Rally to War," *Reuters*, 20 March 2003;

Robin Wright, "30 Countries Listed as U.S. Allies in Conflict; Few heavy hitters are on the official roster, although Washington says 15 more nations unwilling to be named would assist an invasion," *Los Angeles Times*, 19 March 2003, p. 20;

Col. Dan Smith (Ret.), "A Militarily Limited Coalition," *Foreign Policy in Focus*, 14 March 2003;

Sarah Anderson, Phyllis Bennis, and John Cavanagh, *Coalition of the Willing or Coalition of the Coerced? How the Bush Administration Influences Allies in its War on Iraq* (Washington DC: Institute for Policy Studies, 26 February 2003); and,

Cory Oldweiler, "Allied Farces: The Coalition of the Sort of Willing and Not Very Important," *American Prospect*, 25 March 2003.

the war marked a watershed in post-Cold War global relations is evident in the dogged opposition to it by three permanent members of the Security Council (plus Germany) and the inability of the United States to sway a majority of the Council, despite all manner of inducements, threats, and hectoring. Not even Turkey, tottering on the edge of financial crisis, could be brought usefully into line. The extent and intensity of Security Council and allied opposition to the US initiative was unique in the post-Cold War period.¹⁰

Reinforcing this state-level opposition was an upsurge of anti-Americanism on a scale not seen since the Vietnam era -- and the "Arab street" was not the half of it.¹¹

¹⁰ Karen DeYoung and Colum Lynch, "Bush Abandons Bid to Win U.N. Backing for War; Failure to Garner Support Seen as Historic Setback for U.S. Diplomacy in International Body," *Washington Post*, 18 March 2003, p. 16.

¹¹ Millions of citizens in dozens of countries marched against the war during January-March 2003. As significant, polls showed a precipitous decline in favorable views of the United States. Notably, a March 2003 poll by the US-based Pew Research Center showed a 2002-2003 decline in favorable attitudes toward the United States in Russia and seven European NATO countries ranging between 18-36 percentage points. Measured against 1999-2000, the change in attitude has been remarkable: In 1999-2000, large majorities of citizens in five of the countries and simple majorities in two others held favorable views of the United States. By mid-March 2003, these numbers had been sliced in half or a third. Although some of this decline had occurred before the Iraq crisis, most of it occurred during the 2002-2003 period. See, *America's Image Further Erodes, Europeans Want Weaker Ties But Post-War Iraq Will Be Better Off, Most Say* (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 18 March 2003).

Other sources on demonstrations, official statements, and other opinion surveys:

Angelique Chrisafis, et. al., "Millions Worldwide Rally for Peace," *Guardian*, 17 February 2003; Salman Rushdie, "Anti-Americanism has taken the world by storm; The US has an ideological enemy harder to defeat than militant Islam," *Guardian*, 6 February 2002;

Richard C. Paddock, "Indonesia Sees the U.S. as a Tyrant," *Los Angeles Times*, 9 April 2003, p.16;

"200,000 Muslims march for peace in Jakarta," *The Advertiser*, 31 March 2003, p. 4;

James Rupert, "Arab War Protests Grow; Violent rallies erupt across Middle East," *Newsday*, 22 March 2003, p. W21;

Erik Eckholm, "Tens of Thousands Stage Pakistan's Biggest Protest," *New York Times*, 3 March 2003, p. 12;

Scott MacMillan, "What 'New Europe'? The Europeans are divided, but not over Iraq," *Slate*, 19 February 2003;

Angelique Chrisafis, et al, "Millions worldwide rally for peace: Protests: Huge turnout at 600 marches from Tasmania to Iceland," *Guardian*, 17 February 2003, p. 6;

Glenn Kessler, "Forceful Tactics Catch Up With U.S.; Efforts to Build Support on Iraq Stymied by Two Years of International Resentment," *Washington Post*, 16 February 2003;

Todd Richissin, "Millions march for peace; Protests around world oppose attacking Iraq; Largest in British

International polls showed that the balance of opinion outside the United States strongly opposed the option of going to war *even if sanctioned by the United Nations*. Except in a handful of countries, only small minorities favored the option of a quasi-unilateral war conducted by the United States and its allies.¹² This will weigh against those

history," *Baltimore Sun*, 16 February 2003, p. 1;

John Vidal, "10 million join world protest rallies," *Guardian*, 13 February 2003, p. 3;

Todd Richissin, "In Europe, a rising tide of anti-American feeling," *Baltimore Sun*, 28 January 2003, p. 1;

Barbara Slavin, "In Cairo, intense ambivalence toward," *USA Today*, 23 January 2003, p. 15;

Susan B. Glasser and Peter Baker, "Kuwaitis' Gratitude to U.S. Gives Way to Resentment," *Washington Post*, 22 January 2003, p. 9;

"Peace march largest since Vietnam era Bush Iraq policy stirs day of dissent," *Seattle Times*, 9 January 2003, p. 1;

Amberin Zaman, "Iraq War Remains Unpopular in Strategically Located Turkey," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 December 2002, p. 13; and,

Mark Matthews, "Anti-American attitudes on rise, global poll shows; Majority in most nations still view U.S. favorably, but numbers dropping," *Baltimore Sun*, 5 December 2002, p. 18.

¹² A poll of 30,000 people in 40 countries conducted by Gallup International associates between 12 and 28 January 2003 showed that majorities or pluralities in 32 of the 40 countries opposed the war whether or not it was UN sanctioned. In no countries did majorities or even pluralities support a war "conducted unilaterally by the United States and its allies." (Majority support in the United States did develop in the weeks immediately before the war as did majority support in Great Britain once the war commenced.)

- In 22 out of 40 countries straight majorities opposed the war under any circumstance, with or without UN support. In 10 others, pluralities opposed the war under any circumstances.
- In 3 countries straight majorities favored war given UN sanction: Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, and Netherlands. In 4 others, pluralities supported attack given UN sanction. Canada and the United States were in this group.
- The "unilateral" option won no where -- not even a plurality. In 34 out of 40 countries, 10 percent or less supported this option. In 5 countries between 11 percent and 20 percent supported it. In the United States, 33 percent supported it -- which was close to plurality.

Thus, majorities or pluralities in 32 countries opposed the war in any form. Majorities or pluralities in 7 countries supported it if UN sanctioned. In one country, Switzerland, the population was divided evenly between these options. And in no countries did majorities or pluralities support a "unilateral" war (ie. the United States plus its allies).

In the United States the distribution of opinion was 21 percent opposing attack under any circumstances, 34 percent supporting it only if UN sanctioned, and 33 percent supporting it even if "unilateral". For the United Kingdom (excluding Northern Ireland) the distribution was: 41 percent opposing under any circumstances, 39 percent supporting only if UN sanctioned, and 10 percent supporting even if unilateral (with allies).

governments, especially in the Arab world, that backed or accepted the US initiative.¹³ We should expect Islamic parties to score further electoral gains in those Islamic and Arab countries with parliamentary systems -- continuing the trend that began after the Afghan war in both Turkey and Pakistan.¹⁴ To the detriment of counter-terrorism efforts,

Not included in the 40 nation poll were Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. However, other polls showed that, under any arrangement, Hungarians opposed the war by an 82 percent margin, Slovaks opposed it by 80 percent, and Czechs opposed by 67 percent. The Polish poll, conducted by Ipsos, showed 75 percent of Poles opposed to a war without UN sanction.

Eastern European countries included in the Gallup International poll were Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, Former Macedonia, Romania, Russia, and Yugoslavia. Of these, all but Romania and Yugoslavia showed majorities opposing the war in any form. The other countries included in the 40 nation Gallup International poll were: Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, Iceland, Switzerland, Norway, Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Columbia, Ecuador, Uruguay, the United States, Australia, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Cameroon, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda.

Another poll conducted 10-16 March 2003 by the Pew Research Center confirmed the findings of the Gallup International poll in Russia and seven European NATO countries -- Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, and Turkey.

Sources: *America's Image Further Erodes, Europeans Want Weaker Ties But Post-War Iraq Will Be Better Off, Most Say* (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 18 March 2003); *Gallup International End of the Year Poll 2002* (London: GIA, 2003); available at <http://www.gallup-international.com>; Scott MacMillan, "What 'New Europe'? The Europeans are divided, but not over Iraq," *Slate*, 19 February 2003; and, "Citizens Decry Leaders' Decision on Iraq; Backing of Washington's Iraq Policy Among Eastern European Nations Has Some Cracks," *Associated Press*, 13 February 2003.

¹³ David Lamb, "War Underscores Deep Schism among Arabs; Divide Between the Public and Leaders Whose Policies Are Pro-US Even as They Back Iraq Leaves Their Regimes Vulnerable," *Los Angeles Times*, 7 April 2003, p. 9; and, V.K. Malhotra, commentary, "Consequences of War: Arabs' Anti-American Sentiment Rising as U.S.-Iraq War Looms," *ABC News*, 27 November 2002.

¹⁴ **Sources on electoral gains of Islamic parties:**

Mike Williams, "Turkey at Religious Crossroads after War; Secular Government Pressured to Allow Islam," *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 27 April 2003, p. 12;

Helena Smith, "New breed of Islamic politicians start to find their feet," *Guardian*, 10 March 2003, p. 16;

Jane Perlez, "With Indonesia Politics up for Grabs, Islam's Role Grows," *New York Times*, 30 April 2002, p. 3;

Carlotta Gall, "Anti-US Parties Take Power in Strategic Pakistan Province," *New York Times*, 30 November 2002, p. 4;

Julie Chao, "Islamic Schism Tears Malaysia; Fundamentalist Muslim Party Gains Ground," *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 17 November 2002, p. 1B;

"A Startling Vote; Islamic Success in Turkey Bears Watching," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 6 November 2002, p. 14B;

James Dorsey, Marianne Kearney, and Tim Cornwell, "Islamists in Line for Power World-wide," *The Scotsman*, 16 October 2002, p. 12;

the decision to attack Iraq has dissipated much of the goodwill gained in the aftermath of 11 September 2001 and it has given terrorist organizations a new recruiting tool.¹⁵ We may now see something that has been absent since the United States first achieved sole superpower status in the early 1990s: other nations routinely coalescing to balance against US prerogatives.¹⁶ Of course, America's relative power and wealth is presently too great for others not to seek some accommodation with it. This is apparent in the eagerness of war opponents to mend fences with the United States and find common ground -- as though the rift over Iraq were an aberration. To the extent that the United States stays its present course, however, leaders will be thrown back again and again on the differences over means and ends that produced the Iraq impasse.¹⁷ Victory in the war seems only to have fed the Bush administration's penchant for strong arm diplomacy, which is being stoked by the neo-conservative policy community.¹⁸

Zahid Hussain, "Islam Gains Power in Pakistan Election," *The Times* (London), 12 October 2002, p. 18;

Farhan Bokhari, "Success for Islamists Rebounds on Musharraf," *Financial Times* (London), 12 October 2002, p. 10;

Luke Harding, "Pakistan Election Result Creates New Islamist Heartland: Anti-US Parties Take Control in Afghan Border Area," *The Guardian* (London), 12 October 2002, p. 15; and,

Isambard Wilkinson, "Islamic upsurge in Morocco poll," *The Daily Telegraph*, 30 September 2002, p. 16.

¹⁵ Faye Bowers, "Al Qaeda may be rebuilding; US has captured key operatives, yet the war in Iraq may spawn a new army of recruits," *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 May 2003; Chuck Murphy, "Compassion for America Curdles Abroad," *St. Petersburg Times*, 1 April 2003, p. 6; Edward Luce and Farhan Bokhari, "US invasion pushes Pakistani elite closer to hardline Islam: Concerns about America's intentions catapult mullahs into the limelight," *Financial Times* (London), 28 March 2003, p. 22; "Al-Qaeda steps up recruitment drive," *The Straits Times* (Singapore), 18 March 2003; Dan Murphy, "Moderate Muslims fear fundamentalist backlash from war; Terrorist leaders recruit with claims of a global, US-led 'crusade' against Islam," *Christian Science Monitor*, 18 March 2003; and, Don Van Natta Jr. and Desmond Butler, "Anger on Iraq Seen as New Qaeda Recruiting Tool," *New York Times*, 16 March 2003, p. 1.

¹⁶ Howard LaFranchi, "Postwar, old allies jostle for position," *Christian Science Monitor*, 29 April 2003, p. 1; and, Hugh Williamson, "Germany to oppose 'new US world order'," *Financial Times* (London), 25 March 2003, p. 5.

¹⁷ John Tagliabue, "U.S.-Europe Discord Rocks the Shared Economic Boat," *New York Times*, 29 April 2003, p. 10; Andrew Grice and Paul Waugh, "Blair and Schroder Try to Heal Wounds at Awkward Summit," *The Independent* (London), 16 April 2003, p. 6; Shelley Emling, "Beyond Baghdad: Rift with Europe Likely to Fester," *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 13 April 2003, p. 13E; Robin Shepherd, "Anti-war trio warn of endless conflict," *The Times* (London), 12 April 2003; Robin Wright and David Holley, "Already, Postwar Iraq Is a Divisive Subject; France, Russia and Germany still disagree with the US on the role of the United Nations," *Los Angeles Times*, 9 April 2003, p. 1; Barbara Slavin, "Nations in tug-of-war over post-Saddam Iraq," *USA Today*, 7 April 2003, p. 7; and, David Osborne, "US and Allies at Odds over Secret Plans to Rule Iraq," *The Independent* (London), 7 April 2003, p. 8.

¹⁸ **Sources on diplomacy:**

Rupert Cornwell, "Bush on a Revenge Mission; America Prepares to Retaliate Against France," *Independent*, 26 April 2003, Pg. 1;

Washington seems intent on exercising extraordinary prerogatives in pursuing a unilateral vision that presses hard against the vital interests and concerns of other nations. So, accommodation by other nations can be only tactical and temporary. In the future, we should expect more nations to move on a parallel track -- seeking and developing ways to counter-balance American power. Except in a few cases, the goal will not be to pose a security challenge to US interests. Instead, the goal of most counter-balancers will be to retain their relative power position and compete with the United States for influence.

- “Old Europe” will become a more self-consciously defined cluster and the core opponents of the Iraq war -- France, Germany, and Russia -- will seek ways to better coordinate their interests. One barometer of the continental appetite for counter-balancing will be the resources invested in the new 4-nation plan for defense cooperation involving Germany, France, Luxembourg, and Belgium.¹⁹

Matthew Lee, “US determined to punish France for its anti-war stance,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 April 2003;

Brian Knowlton, “Defiant, Paris Rejects Warning By Powell,” *International Herald Tribune*, 24 April 2003;

Richard Simon and Nick Anderson, “Mixed Success for Retaliation Efforts in Congress; One chamber votes to punish 4 nations for declining to support the war,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4 April 2003, p. 26;

Guy Dinmore, “Ideologues Reshape World Over Breakfast,” *Financial Times*, 22 March 2003;

Dana Milbank and Jim VandeHei, “When the Strong Arm Comes to Call; With Allies and Foes, Administration Accused of ‘Bullying’ Tactics to Reach Goals,” *Washington Post*, 20 March 2003, p. 4;

Laurence McQuillan and Tom Squitieri, “Arm-twisting on U.N. resolution intensifies,” *USA Today*, 12 March 2003, p. 4;

Howard LaFranchi, “Power plays at UN,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 12 March 2003, p. 1;

Catherine Belton, “America Resorts to Economic Blackmail,” *Moscow Times*, 6 March 2003;

Ed Vulliamy, Peter Beaumont, Nick Paton Walsh and Paul Webster, “America the Arm-Twister,” *Observer*, 2 March 2003;

Martin Bright, Ed Vulliamy, and Peter Beaumont, “US Dirty Tricks to Win Vote on Iraq War,” *Observer*, 2 March 2003;

John Authers, Richard Lapper and Mark Mulligan, “US Twists Arms in Attempt to Persuade Allies Mexico and Chile,” *Financial Times*, 26 February 2003, p. 10;

“US Warns France in Struggle Over Iraq,” *Reuters*, 25 February 2003; and,

Peter Beaumont, David Rose and Paul Beaver, “US to Punish German ‘Treachery’,” *Guardian*, 15 February 2003.

¹⁹ Elaine Sciolino, “4-Nation Plan For Defense Of Europe,” *New York Times*, 30 April 2003.

- China and Russia, too, should be able to find more common ground now, with US troops firmly lodged at their Central Asian backdoor. US military activism -- or, more accurately, *pro-activism* -- should add true urgency to their efforts at economic stabilization and military reform.
- India also is troubled by the American advance and by America's decision to continue favoring Pakistan. Notably, a January 2003 Gallup International poll found 59 percent of Indians opposing the option of an Iraq war even had it been conducted under UN auspices -- and merely 8 percent supporting a war conducted by the United States and its allies.
- In the Islamic Mideast and South Asia: Turkey, Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan suddenly find their environs swept by the bounding vision of an unchecked superpower. The 19 April 2003 summit of foreign ministers from eight Arab and Muslim nations, which challenged post-war US assertions against Syria and sternly called for a quick end to the US occupation of Iraq, suggests that more concerted action is possible.²⁰ However, while the US bull in their midst may serve as a unifying factor for the eight, a consistent united front among them is not likely. Instead, a series of mutually reinforcing bilateral relations may evolve among them with the aim of strengthening their positions on a variety of issues *vis a vis* the United States.²¹ Iran is already on a path of *détente* with Saudi Arabia and is developing closer cooperation with Turkey, Syria, and Pakistan. And Turkey, under its new Prime Minister, is seeking closer relations with its Arab and Islamic neighbors, including Syria.

What may presently divide the Saudis and Iranians is the prospect of a Shiite fundamentalist Iraq. Conversely, what pushes them together is the challenge posed by America's crusading vision, which includes disabling OPEC. If they can reach a condominium with regard to Iraq, they may be able to significantly complicate American plans for the region. One possibility was suggested by the Iraqi Sunni leader Ahmed Kubeisi, who called for an Islamic united front of Iraqi Sunnis and Shiites at a mass rally

²⁰ Kim Murphy, "Iraq's Neighbors Warn U.S. on Long-Term Presence; The nations seek a swift pullout by 'occupying' forces. They take issue with Washington's allegations against Syria," *Los Angeles Times*, 19 April 2003, p. 8.

²¹ "Ankara attaches importance to expansion of ties with Tehran," *Daily Times* (Pakistan), 3 May 2003; Thanaa Imam, "Syria, Turkey meet over Iraq," *UPI*, 29 April 2003; "Envoy: Iran, Turkey, Syria to cooperate to guarantee regional security," *IRNA*, 11 April 2003; Samir Atta Allah, "The New Turkish Visitor," *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* (Saudi-owned), 7 January 2003; "Iran's Khatami seeks expanded economic ties with Pakistan," *AFP*, 25 December 2002; Qudssia Akhlaque, "Pakistan, Iran to explore defence cooperation," *Dawn* (Pakistan), 2 August 2002; David B. Ottaway and Robert G. Kaiser, "Saudis May Seek U.S. Exit; Military Presence Seen as Political Liability in Arab World," *Washington Post*, 18 January 2002, p. 1; and, Akhtar Jamal, "Pakistan, Iran Ready for New Strategic Cooperation," *Eurasia Insight*, 7 December 2001.

in Baghdad on 18 April 2003.²² Along these lines, Saudi Arabia and Iran might support the emergence of an Islamic movement and state in Iraq that is more pluralistic than either might otherwise prefer. Such a move might aim to reassure secular Kurds and Arab nationalists, while focusing popular concern principally on the American presence.

The end of arms control

A second casualty of the war will be arms control efforts -- especially those having to do with weapons of mass destruction.²³ This, because the recent UN disarmament effort in Iraq was crudely conscripted to serve a broader unilateral US agenda -- one that allowed little room for any outcome other than the war. As discussed in a companion piece to this essay, [What Colin Powell Showed Us](#), Washington sought to set impossibly high standards of progress for UNMOVIC, while employing low standards of evidence in making its case against Iraq. When neither stratagem seemed likely to win a judgement to immediately impose "serious consequences" on Iraq, the United States sought to sway Security Council members by means of threats and inducements.²⁴

²² Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Sunnis in Iraq Protest U.S. Occupation; Cleric Calls for Muslim Unity; Hussein Aide Caught," *Washington Post*, 19 April 2003, p. 1.

²³ Joseph Cirincione, [How Will the Iraq War Change Global Nonproliferation Strategies?](#) *Arms Control Today* (April 2003); and, Jonathan Dean, [Saving the Non-Proliferation Regime: The Post-Iraq Situation](#) (New York: Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, March 2003).

²⁴ **Sources on UN vote:**

Hector Tobar and Marla Dickerson, "Mexico and Chile Walk a Tightrope," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 March 2003;

Laurence McQuillan and Tom Squitieri, "Arm-twisting on U.N. resolution intensifies," *USA Today*, 12 March 2003, p. 4;

Howard LaFranchi, "Power plays at UN," *Christian Science Monitor*, 12 March 2003, p. 1;

Catherine Belton, "America Resorts to Economic Blackmail," *Moscow Times*, 6 March 2003;

Scott Shane and Ariel Sabar, "Alleged NSA memo details U.S. eavesdropping at U.N.; Leak may complicate Bush's diplomatic effort to gain votes for Iraq war," *Baltimore Sun*, 4 March 2003, p.1;

Ed Vulliamy, Peter Beaumont, Nick Paton Walsh and Paul Webster, "America the Arm-Twister," *Observer*, 2 March 2003;

Martin Bright, Ed Vulliamy, and Peter Beaumont, "US Dirty Tricks to Win Vote on Iraq War," *Observer*, 2 March 2003;

Michael Wines, "Putin Again Rejects US Calls for Support of a War, Fearing Effect on the Mideast," *New York Times*, 1 March 2003;

"The arm-twisting overrides the arms inspections," *Houston Chronicle*, 28 February 2003, p. 40;

When this failed, it abandoned the process altogether and did as it pleased -- demonstrating that its interest in the process was narrowly instrumental from the start.²⁵ In light of the Iraq case, those nations who have an adversarial relationship with the United States are likely to see little benefit in appeasing Washington's desire that they disarm. From their perspective, the disarmament process in Iraq only enabled Iraq's eventual defeat by clipping and disrupting those capabilities that might have deterred a US drive on Baghdad. Certainly, this is North Korea's assessment, and it has led Pyongyang to boldly exit the Nonproliferation Treaty and accelerate its drive for nuclear statehood.²⁶ Turning to America's allies: they also are likely to be put off by their differences with Washington over arms control goals, means, and processes.

Speaking more generally: nothing could be worse for arms control prospects than the impression that military activism and unilateralism are on the rise. This puts a premium on re-militarization, not de-militarization.

Impact on Human Rights cooperation

The experience of Operation Iraqi Freedom will likewise weaken international cooperation on human rights issues.²⁷ Support for such efforts depends on their being clearly separated from attempts to advance the unilateral interest or agenda of any particular state.²⁸ Their legitimacy depends on the consistent application of explicit

John Authers, Richard Lapper and Mark Mulligan, "US Twists Arms in Attempt to Persuade Allies Mexico and Chile," *Financial Times*, 26 February 2003, p. 10;

Thalif Deen, "Dollar Diplomacy and UN Votes," *Asia Times*, 25 February 2003;

"US Warns France in Struggle Over Iraq," *Reuters*, 25 February 2003; and,

Peter Beaumont, David Rose and Paul Beaver, "US to Punish German 'Treachery'," *Guardian*, 15 February 2003.

²⁵ Karen DeYoung and Colum Lynch, "Bush Abandons Bid to Win U.N. Backing for War; Failure to Garner Support Seen as Historic Setback for U.S. Diplomacy in International Body," *Washington Post*, 18 March 2003, p. 16; James Rosen, "U.S. says it may forgo new U.N. vote on Iraq," *Star Tribune*, 14 March 2003, p. 1; Marc Sandalow, "Bush Leaves Little Room to Avert War; 'We Don't Need U.N. Approval,' He Tells National Audience," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 7 March 2003, p. 1; and, Hilary Mackenzie, "I'll Act Alone, Bush Warns, Iraq, UN: 'Those Who Choose to Live in Denial May Eventually Be Forced to Live in Fear'," *Ottawa Citizen*, 17 October 2002, p. 7.

²⁶ Peter S. Goodman, "North Korea To Expel U.N. Inspectors; Vow to Reopen Nuclear Plant Escalates Confrontation," *Washington Post*, 28 December 2002, p. 1.

²⁷ "Iraq: UK government dossier on human rights abuses," *Amnesty International News Service*, 2 December 2002; and, Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Khan, "Human rights in the balance," *Amnesty International News Service*, 25 September 2002.

²⁸ *State Department Fails to Designate Partners as Violators of Religious Freedom* (Washington DC: Human Rights Watch, 5 March 2003); and, Jean-Christophe Peuch, "Human Rights Ignored as US

standards, some guarantee of due process and proportionality, and the existence of an authoritative institutional framework. Otherwise, human rights campaigns can too easily become just another form of power politics and interstate competition -- just another pretext for war. Movement in this direction tends to delegitimize the process overall.

Today, at least 48 countries in the world lack the rudiments of democratic government. More than 60 are guilty of gross, systematic human rights abuses; in 40 cases this includes routine torture and extra-judicial killings.²⁹ During 2001, mass killings of civilians occurred in more than 30 countries. And 19 countries presently occupy significant portions of their neighbors' lands or face popular self-determination challenges by minorities within their own.³⁰ From among this catalog of abuse the Iraqi case was chosen for forceful intervention not because there was a broad consensus that it was the worst case (with war the best antidote), but because it suited other American objectives. Indeed, US official interest in Iraqi human rights abuses has been opportunistic, ebbing and flowing with the drift of US regional policy. Also, while Human Rights Watch charges that the Hussein government murdered or disappeared 225,000 Iraqis during its two-decade tenure, most of this abuse occurred prior to 1992.³¹ The Iraq case was not the obvious top priority for intervention today.

For all these reasons, the US mobilization of human rights rhetoric in the Iraq crisis debases the discourse and practice of human rights campaigning. Apart from bending the practice to suit a unilateral agenda, the US action also lifted the practice outside any broader institutional legitimation or constraint, thus establishing a precedent for international vigilantism.

Lower war threshold

The Iraq war has dangerously lowered the threshold for conflict in several ways:

- First, with regard to what constitutes sufficient reason to go to war;
- Second, with regard to proportionality between a war's objectives and the transgression it is meant to correct;

Increases Military Ties," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 12 February 2002.

²⁹ *Human Rights Watch World Report 2003: Events of 2002* (New York: HRW, 2003); and, *Freedom in the World 2001-2002: Essay, Tables & Charts* (Washington DC: Freedom House, 2002).

³⁰ Monty G. Marshall, *Peace and Conflict 2003: A Global Survey of Armed Conflicts, Self-Determination Movements, and Democracy* (College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, 2003); Taylor Seybolt, "Major Armed Conflicts," *SIPIRI Yearbook 2002* (New York: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and Oxford University Press, 2002); and, Gregory H. Stanton, *Genocides, Politicides, and Other Mass Murder Since 1945, With Stages in 2002* (Washington DC, Genocide Watch, 2002).

³¹ Kenneth Roth, "Give Iraqis real justice -- not a U.S. puppet show," *Globe and Mail*, 10 April 2003.

- Third, with regard to what constitutes sufficient evidence of a transgression; and,
- Finally, with regard to the need for international institutional legitimation.

That nations have an inherent right to defend themselves by force against military aggression is a bedrock principle of international law. Without this guarantee, no nation would accept the constraints of law. But “defense against aggression” must be clearly and narrowly defined, lest nations simply recast offensive acts as “defensive” ones -- a persistent problem ever since international covenants and treaties (such as the 1928 Kellogg-Briand pact) began weighing generally against “aggressive war”.

With some important reservations, the 1990-1991 Gulf War can serve as a good illustration of an appropriately defensive war.

- First, the focus of the war -- Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait -- was a manifest and gross violation of international law and national sovereignty. The basic facts of the case were clear for all to see: eight Iraqi Republican Guard divisions, comprising approximately 800 tanks and 100,000 troops, had crossed into Kuwait, crushed indigenous resistance, and taken possession of the country.³²
- Second, coalition efforts to destroy and remove the invading forces conformed to the necessity of defeating the present aggression and deterring future aggressive acts. (This is not to say, however, that all of the coalition’s actions in the war conformed to international law or the necessities of defense. Notably exceeding the necessity of defense were attacks on Iraqi political and infrastructure targets, which had little demonstrable impact on the battlefield.)³³

It is also noteworthy that the 1990 war was conducted under the auspices of the United Nations, conformed generally to Security Council resolutions, and reflected the balance of opinion on the Security Council and among the Security Council’s permanent members. Moreover, the 1990 coalition was truly multi-*lateral* in nature, reaching across several relevant political divides to include Arab states, former Warsaw Pact states, and Western states such as France and Germany whose adherence to US leadership was not a given.

Pre-emption

In international law and custom there also is an allowance for pre-emptory self-defense -- so that nations need not passively await victimization when an attack is imminent.

³² General Robert Scales, Jr., director, Desert Storm Study Project, *Certain Victory: The United States Army in the Gulf War* (Washington DC: Office of the Chief of Staff, US Army, 1993), pp. 44-45.

³³ Alan Bloomgarden and Carl Conetta, “The Promise of Air Power and U.S. Modernization Trends After Operation Desert Storm,” *Hawk*, annual publication of the Royal Air Force Staff College, 1994; and, Thomas Keaney and Eliot Cohen, *Gulf War Air Power Survey: Summary Report* (Washington DC: Department of the Air Force, 1993), pp. 64-90: “Strategic Attacks”.

But this is governed by a tough standard set out in 1837 by US Secretary of State Daniel Webster. The case at hand involved a British incursion on US territory and a subsequent attack on a US commercial vessel that had been privately aiding Canadian rebels. The attack came at night, while the ship was at anchor and its crew sleeping aboard. Writing to British Ambassador Henry Fox, Webster argued:

It will be for [British] Government to show a necessity of self-defence, instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means, and no moment for deliberation. It will be for it to show, also, that the local authorities...did nothing unreasonable or excessive; since the act justified by the necessity of self-defence, must be limited by that necessity, and kept clearly within it.³⁴

The constraints are strict because, otherwise, preemptive attacks would rapidly multiple, encompassing low probability scenarios and marginally prospective threats -- an eventuality that would vitiate the goal of limiting the resort to war. This concern reflects a recognition of the "security dilemma", whereby nations routinely seek security in ways that others find threatening. Given this, there would be no end of pretexts for war should nations adopt permissive criteria for justifiable preemption.

Applied to the case of the 1990-1991 Gulf War, Webster's criteria would have permitted an attack on Iraqi forces as they accumulated near Kuwait's border -- had Iraq refused a clear US demand to stand down and back off. (As early as mid-July there had been significant indications of a possible war. These were preceded by months of rising political tension between Iraq and Kuwait. Between July 24 and 25 both the US Defense Intelligence Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency warned the senior Bush administration that war was probable and could begin at any moment.)³⁵

With regard to the recent concerns about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, Webster's criteria would have allowed pre-emptive action:

- if Iraq was known to have the capability and inclination to attack,
- if Iraqi policy toward the United States or its allies had evinced a growing bellicosity,
- if Iraqi preparations for an attack were clearly underway, *and*
- if there were good reasons to believe that deterrence would not hold.

Given this intersection of conditions, Webster's criteria would have allowed the United

³⁴ Daniel Webster letter to Henry Fox, 24 April 1841, cited in Neta Crawford, "The Best Defense," Boston Review (February/March 2003); available at: <http://bostonreview.mit.edu/BR28.1/crawford.html>

³⁵ Michael Gordon and General Bernard Trainor, "War by Miscalculation," Chapter 1 in *The Generals' War* (Boston: Little Brown, 1995), pp. 3-30.

States to conduct a *powerful counterforce strike* -- targeting those Iraqi capabilities essential to the imminent threat of attack.³⁶ Anything more than this, however, would have violated Webster's precept that "the act justified by the necessity of self-defence, must be limited by that necessity, and kept clearly within it."

The precedent set by the recent war against Iraq is at odds with all the criteria set out above regarding either preemptive attack or defensive war. Notably, in Operation Iraqi Freedom, the United States responded with force not to *acts* of aggression, nor to manifest *preparations* to commit such acts soon, nor even to a general *capability* to conduct such acts, but instead to a *suspected capability*. Following this example, many nations might initiate preemptive wars against many others.

War for Human Rights

As noted above, the United States partly based its rationale for war and regime removal on Iraq's abysmal human rights record and its failure to fully or faithfully abide by UN resolutions. Although these rationales stand outside the discourse on defensive war, the UN charter does make some provisions for broader rationales in the use of force. Under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Security Council can prescribe forceful action to deal not only with an "act of aggression" but also (and more generally) with a "threat to the peace" or a "breach of the peace". This, with the aim of maintaining or restoring "international peace and security" -- which is a more diffuse goal than the one of defending against aggression.

Chapter VII has provided the framework for several military interventions that were meant to address genocide, other gross human rights abuses, serious breakdowns in civil order, and humanitarian crises exacerbated by civil conflict. While these exceeded the goal of self-defense narrowly defined, they were related to critical collective security and stability goals. Importantly, the Charter gives the authority for ordering such interventions to the Security Council. Thus, while options for the legitimate resort to force are expanded under Chapter VII, the authority to order or allow such exercises of force is embedded in a global institution and process. This is meant to insure against individual states assuming an expanded right to use force unilaterally. It is meant to constrain the temptation of states to forcibly pursue their national interests under cover of "universal" principles. In sum: every state has a legitimate right to self-defense, but only representative international agencies are empowered to order broader police actions.

³⁶ For a discussion of criteria for preemptive counter-proliferation strikes see Charles Knight, [First Strike Guidelines: the case of Iraq](#), Project on Defense Alternatives Briefing Memo #25 (Cambridge MA: Commonwealth Institute, 16 September 2002).

War for all seasons

If the example set by the American resort to force in the Iraq crisis were followed generally we would expect to see an increase in the frequency of wars as nations sought to extinguish low probability threats or took it upon themselves to protect or advance “universal” values, as they defined them and saw fit. Indeed, the Iraq war might have as easily been undertaken by Iran “in defense of the faithful” or even in defense of “popular democracy” (insofar as either might result in an Iraq dominated by Shiite fundamentalism). Protecting the rights of ethnic kin in neighboring countries or, conversely, stemming foreign support for insurgencies that inflict one’s own country are common war rationales that play on concerns about human rights or terrorism. These rationales will gain greater strength from the American action.

The precedent set by the United States will weaken the public moral constraints on employing war as an instrument of national policy. This is a gift to government and parliamentary war factions wherever and whenever they may arise. Practically speaking, however, the increased impulse to war flowing from Operation Iraqi Freedom (and Operation Enduring Freedom before it) has most immediately affected those conflicts occurring on the periphery of the US war on terrorism: the war in Chechnya, the Kashmir conflict, and the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. All three suffered escalation following the launch of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001. Borrowing on the language and logic of US actions, and trading on their status as allied powers in the war on terrorism, Russia, India, and Israel all pursued paths of escalation opposed by the United States.³⁷

³⁷ Sources on India-Pakistan conflict:

John Lancaster, “Mulling Action, India Equates Iraq, Pakistan; Pre-Emption Cited in Kashmir Conflict,” *Washington Post*, 11 April 2003;

“Both India and Pakistan Have Sought to Leverage the US War Against Terrorism in Their Hostilities,” *Financial Times* (London), 4 January 2002, P. 9;

Serge Schmemmann, “Caution: this Weapon May Backfire,” *New York Times*, 30 December 2001, p. 1;

Mike Allen and Peter Slevin, “Bush Presses India, Pakistan to Ease Conflict,” *Washington Post*, 29 December 2001, p. 1;

Bob Deans, “Calm Urged on India, Pakistan; Angry Neighbors Trade Fire Across Kashmir Border,” *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 29 December 2001, p. 3;

Robert Pear and Celia W. Dugger, “Powell Tries to Ease Tension as Kashmir Pressure Builds,” *New York Times*, 27 December 2001, p. 1;

Scot Lehigh, “A Double Standard in War on Terrorism?,” *Boston Globe*, 24 October 2001, p. 7D; and,

Luke Harding, “Kashmir Shelling Mars Visit by Powell: Indian Attack Worsens Tension amid Flurry of Diplomacy,” *The Guardian* (London), 16 October 2001, p. 8.

Turkey, too, will become less constrained in the use of force to contain its Kurdish separatists and to limit the influence of Iraqi Kurds. Similarly, the former-Soviet Central Asian republics, China, Indonesia, and the Philippines will resort to force more readily in contending with local insurgencies and anti-government movements, whether or not they are terrorist in nature. Finally, some of the nations who feel threatened by US counter-proliferation efforts will adopt a more bellicose stance, depending on their strategic position. For other nations, the principal lesson of Operation Iraqi Freedom is that the utility of raw military power is once again on the rise. While in most cases this will not immediately translate into increased military activism, it will generally stimulate military modernization efforts.

Re-balancing the world military system

Operation Iraqi Freedom and the general conduct of the war on terrorism has rehabilitated armed force as a currency of state power. In addition, US military activism creates practical pressures for more military investment worldwide. Through military buildups nations will variously seek to become:

- Less dependent on US power -- thus less subject to US leadership;
- Better able to manage the regional instability that attends US military activism; and,
- Better able to compete with US power or, if closely allied with it, better able to influence its application;

Today the United States enjoys a profound advantage in military capability, indicated

Sources on Israeli-Palestinian conflict:

Holger Jensen, "American Policy Toward Israel under Attack as Hypocritical," *Rocky Mountain News*, 27 October 2001, p. 7;

"Threat to US War Aims Grows Stronger in Mideast," *USA Today*, 25 October 2001, p. 17;

John C. Henry, "Bush Urges Israeli Retreat; Tensions May Threaten Arab Stability, Support," *Houston Chronicle*, 24 October 2001, p. 1;

Scot Lehigh, "A Double Standard in War on Terrorism?," *Boston Globe*, 24 October 2001, p. 7D;

Ben Lynfield, "Israeli Attacks Push Ceasefire to Edge," *The Scotsman*, 19 October 2001, p. 6;

Alan Sipress and Lee Hockstader, "Sharon Speech Riles US; Bush Offer to Palestinians Spurs Remarks on Appeasement," *Washington Post*, 6 October 2001, p. 1; and,

Jane Perlez and Katharine Q. Seelye, "The Rift; US Strongly Rebukes Sharon for Criticism of Bush, Calling it 'Unacceptable'," *New York Times*, 6 October 2001, p. 3.

approximately by the fact that it presently accounts for 43 percent of world military expenditures (which exceed \$900 billion per annum).³⁸ Its closest competitors in this regard -- China, France, Great Britain, Germany, Japan, and Russia -- individually spend between nine percent and 20 percent as much. Collectively they spend less than two-thirds as much. Judged in terms of expenditures per person in uniform -- a rough measure of quality -- America's nearest competitor (and closest ally), Great Britain, spends only 57 percent as much: \$155,000 per person in uniform versus \$270,000. Other nations lag far, far behind.

Despite America's large margin of superiority, many nations have considerable latent capacity to narrow the capability gap between themselves and the United States -- if they become so motivated. The present global disparities in military power and investment do not reflect the global distribution of economic resources. While accounting for 43 percent of world military spending, the United States accounts for only 21 percent of the global economic product. While the United States today spends about 3.5 percent of its GNP on defense, the world outside the United States allocates only 2.2 percent of its available product to this end. By comparison, in 1985, the United States spent 6.5 percent of its economic product on defense while the rest of the world spent 4.8 percent. Thus, the disparity in effort is significantly greater today than it was 18 years ago: presently the percentage of GDP that the United States allocates to defense is 59 percent greater than the percent allocated by other nations on average; in 1985 it was only 35 percent greater.

Part of the reason that the United States enjoys such a large margin of superiority today is that the aggregate defense effort of other nations has receded more than America's since the Cold War's end. The greater slippage in defense investment outside the United States is partly a matter of choice and partly a matter of necessity. The pressure to change priorities will grow if the apparent importance of military power in international relations grows.

As for other nations' freedom to change priorities: the economic constraints on their defense spending will relax if these countries -- Russia, China, Brazil, India, and Indonesia, for instance -- can recover from their recent difficulties or, in some cases, simply continue on their current paths of development. Although the United States has enjoyed a good decade of growth relative to other nations, the long-term trend favors a slow decline in America's relative position.

Twenty years from now several countries are likely to be able to give the United States a good run for its money -- on a regional basis, at least. This outcome is not preordained, however. It depends on a convergence of capacity and motive. A broader, more energetic exercise of US military power may provide the latter.

³⁸ *The World Fact Book* (Washington DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2002); Martin Walker, "World Military Spending On Rise After Sept 11," *Reuters*, 13 June 2002; and, International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2001-2002; 2002-2003* (Oxford: IISS and Oxford University Press, 2000, 2002).

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