

# Progressive Action Plan

**T**he book *WITH ALL OUR MIGHT* proceeds from three premises: First, defeating Islamist extremism is America's top security imperative. Second, victory demands a new strategy that is both tough and smart. Third, progressives should stop reacting to President Bush and start leading on national security.

Here is a sampling of the book's key arguments and big ideas:

## ✓ Support Muslim modernizers.

The United States has not launched a war against Islamist terrorism so much as joined a war already in progress, argues **Reza Aslan**. It is a civil war within Islam—or *fitnah*, as Muslims call it—a fight between orthodoxy and modernity. Americans must work to tip the balance in favor of the modernizers. We must start by avoiding polarizing “us vs. them” rhetoric. And we should view Muslim Americans as an untapped national resource to be pressed into service to make the case for freedom and democracy in the Muslim world.

## ✓ Create a Grand Strategy for the Middle East.

Long a Cold War sideshow, the Middle East has become this century's main arena of conflict. **Kenneth M. Pollack** calls for harmonizing America's often contradictory Middle East policies in a new “grand strategy” that aims to foster a new stability in the region, based on the spread of liberal ideas, habits, and institutions.

## ✓ Seed liberal democracy.

Political Islam has flourished in opposition to the corrupt, despotic regimes that pervade the Middle East. To pacify the region and promote its long-term prosperity, argue **Larry Diamond** and **Michael McFaul**, the world's democracies must help local reformers create the building blocks of civil society and democracy. They propose, for example, a Middle East version of the 1975 Helsinki Accords, which created a network of international institutions and nongovernmental organizations that helped to peacefully undermine Soviet and Eastern European communism.

## ✓ Revive Muslim economies.

In addition to chronic misrule, the Muslim world faces a deepening economic crisis, writes **Edward Gresser**. From Morocco to Central Asia, populations have been exploding while trade has dwindled, unemployment has risen, and living standards have fallen. As it did during the Cold War, America should use trade to spur economic development and opportunity for people in the region. Gresser proposes a “Greater Middle East Prosperity Plan” aimed at doubling manufacturing and agricultural exports from the region by 2010.

## ✓ Shape the global battlefield.

Jihadist violence is a transnational phenomenon, but the United States and its allies lack a global counterterrorism strategy, argues **Daniel Benjamin**. Too many of the countries we rely on to track terrorist finances, communications, and travel lack the capacity and expertise to be reliable partners. What's needed is a new International Counterterrorism Agency that can help frontline countries strengthen their anti-terrorism capacity.

## ✓ Prevent nuclear terrorism.

The single most frightening threat to our national security is the prospect of a nuclear weapon in the hands of terrorists. The good news, according to **Graham Allison**, is that nuclear terrorism is preventable if we insist on three simple rules: no loose nukes, no new nuclear fuel programs, and no new nuclear weapon states. We must make Russia's unsecured nuclear weapons and materials as safe as the gold in Fort Knox. Second, we should use bigger carrots and sticks to prevent Iran from developing facilities for enriching uranium or reprocessing plutonium, and to hold North Korea to its pledge to shut down its fledgling weapons program.

## ✓ Strike a grand bargain with Pakistan.

When it comes to fighting jihadism, it's not yet clear whether Pakistan is part of the problem or part of the solution, argues **Stephen J. Solarz**. To ensure that Pakistan becomes a full-fledged partner, America and its allies



should offer it a major package of economic and military aid, coupled with a bilateral trade agreement. In return, President Musharraf's government should give the United States an ironclad commitment to hunt down Osama bin Laden and his henchmen, return Pakistan to free elections and democracy, and suppress terrorist groups launching attacks on neighboring Kashmir.

### ✓ Create a post-9/11 military.

America has the best military in the world for conventional warfare, but its forces were not designed for today's unconventional challenges of transnational terrorism, post-conflict stabilization, counterinsurgency, and counter-proliferation. **James R. Blaker** and **Steven J. Nider** propose a major military reorganization around these post-9/11 imperatives. Specifically, they recommend a new force structure that is geared toward three missions: preventing conflicts and humanitarian disasters; defeating enemies through sustained combat when prevention fails; and rebuilding civil order and basic infrastructure in failed states, as well as after disasters here at home.

### ✓ Reconcile Democrats and the military.

There is a large cultural and political divide between Democrats and the military. We must bridge that gap for the good of the Democratic Party and our country, writes Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran **Melissa Tryon**. In addition to offering a coherent vision for national security, this progressive action plan includes forging relationships with veterans groups and other organizations that represent soldiers; encouraging military service by political liberals and elite college students; and addressing the day-to-day challenges of the military community in policy debates.

### ✓ Don't fear a strong Europe.

America needs a strong and globally engaged Europe, argues **Ronald D. Asmus**. Achieving our key foreign policy goals—from modernizing the Middle East to managing China's rise to world power—will be nearly impossible without the help of our oldest and closest allies. We need to support Europe's successful economic and political integration, make the European Union a focal point of U.S. diplomacy, and modernize NATO so it can operate effectively in the Middle East and beyond.

### ✓ Reinvent the United Nations.

The United Nations faces a crisis of credibility and must be radically overhauled, writes **Anne-Marie Slaughter**. To reflect today's security threats, the world body's mission should be broadened to include not only protecting states from aggression, but also protecting the people within states from mass murder. Slaughter

envisions a new division of labor in which the United Nations focuses on economic and social assistance to weak and failing states, while a reinvented NATO assumes the burden of collective security.

### ✓ Put the economy on a wartime footing.

America's strength and security ultimately derive not from military power, but from a strong economy and vital society. The Bush administration has ignored this basic strategic insight, says **David J. Rothkopf**. Security now demands that we restore fiscal sanity in Washington, reimpose budget discipline, roll back irresponsible wartime tax cuts, and invest in America's future health and competitiveness.

### ✓ Spur a post-oil economy.

Forget about an energy "Manhattan Project" or "Apollo moon shot." What America needs now are concrete, near-term steps to break our dependence on oil. **Jan Mazurek** shows how a mandatory national cap on the greenhouse gas emissions that we produce by burning oil can be a policy lever that speeds diversification into homegrown biofuels and touches off a frenzy of innovation in the energy and clean technology markets.

### ✓ Tap the patriotic spirit of the 9/11 generation.

For Americans under 30 years old, 9/11 was a formative experience. But they do not easily fit into conventional liberal-conservative, hawk-dove dichotomies, argue **Rachel Kleinfeld** and **Matthew Spence**. They are generally more patriotic, confident in the military, and supportive of free trade than any other age group. Yet they also distrust large corporations and media spin. Many of them are making a home in the Democratic Party as Truman Democrats. Leaders can appeal to them if they espouse a worldview that is rooted in the principles of progressive internationalism. ♦