



The "War on Terrorism" and the New Rules of World Order

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Well I'll say a few words about Iraq. But then I'll turn to more background issues, continuing issues that fly beyond what's going on now. Actually, we get lots of reports from Iraq, but they're very narrow in their character. Almost entirely, they come from inside the 'green zone,' the carefully protected zone inside Baghdad where the US forces are located, where the chosen government is, and where most journalists stay. And what doesn't come from there is usually controlled by the occupying army in some fashion or another. That's not because journalists are lazy or lack courage, it's just that it's far too dangerous to go outside of the protected area.

I'll read you an excerpt from a recent letter that's been circulating in major newsrooms by a Wall Street Journal correspondent, published in one of the internal journals. He says:

"Being a correspondent in Baghdad these days is like being under virtual house arrest in the protected Green Zone. Outside is raging a barbaric guerrilla war, the numbers of dead and injured are so shocking that the Ministry of Health has now stopped disclosing them. Insurgents now attack Americans eighty-seven times a day. If under Saddam, Iraq was a potential threat, under the Americans it has been transformed into an imminent and active threat, a foreign policy failure that is bound to haunt the Americans for decades to come, and the world. The genie of terrorism, chaos, and mayhem has been unleashed onto this country, and it can't be put back into a bottle. The cops are being murdered by the dozens every day, over 700 to date, and the insurgents are infiltrating their ranks. The problem is so serious that the US military has allocated \$6 billion to buy out 30,000 cops that they just trained to get rid of them quietly."

There's a lot of instructive material that comes from captured westerners who've been released. That includes recently a Canadian war correspondent who was released after several weeks in captivity in a Turkmen area. I'll read some of his remarks later if you'd like, but it essentially fills out the details of this story that we're not being told, not because journalists don't want us to tell us, but because it's virtually impossible for them to. One veteran British correspondent, Patrick Cockburn, who's worked in the area for decades, written many books and many articles about it, writes recently that "the occupation is one of the most extraordinary failures in history." And it is indeed an extremely surprising failure. The fact of the matter is that the Nazis had far less difficulty in occupying Europe, and they were in the middle of a major war.

I should stress that 'success' and 'failure' are not the same thing as 'right' and 'wrong.' Those are totally different dimensions. I'm keeping to the success/failure dimension, right and wrong you can figure out for yourselves. This is the dimension that has to do with the consequences that are likely to ensue. The best explanation that I've heard about the entirely unexpected and quite remarkable failure of the occupation was about a year ago from a high official of one of the leading relief organizations in identifying that he's had experience all over the world in the worst imaginable places. He came back, briefly, to the United States after several months in Baghdad trying to get hospitals organized and so on. He says he had "never seen such a combination of arrogance, ignorance, and incompetence." He was referring not to the troops on the ground, but to the civilian leadership in the Pentagon.

But in Iraq, they have achieved pretty much what they've achieved in the international arena very quickly, namely turning the United States into the most feared and often hated country in the world, which is not a small achievement. Polls in Iraq, [from] early this Spring, that's before the terrible fighting in April and before the Abu Ghraib exposures, polls then showed that the population regarded the American forces there, by about 10 to 1, as an occupying force. And the support for the occupying army was then in single digits. It's [been] reduced considerably since then. Rumsfeld, Cheney, and the rest of them have even succeeded in turning the young cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, who was previously a marginal figure, into the second most popular political figure in Iraq, right after the Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. And it's all much worse now. After the offensives that are now just getting under way, one hesitates to think what the situation will be like.

The effect on the world has been much the same. A recent international poll showed that in Muslim countries, large

majorities view the United States as a direct military threat. That's high numbers, like over 70% in countries like Indonesia, Turkey, Pakistan, and Nigeria. In Europe, considerable majorities in most of the countries regard the United States as a threat to world peace [such as] Holland, Britain, France, and others. In some countries, the dislike and the distrust of the United States has doubled or tripled just in the last year. In Latin America, which happens to have the most experience with the United States and its power, among the Latin American elite, who are the most pro-US element in their countries, about 90% are strongly opposed to Bush and his policies, It is 98% in Brazil, and almost as high in Mexico.

I should say that this is not entirely new. The scale is new, but not the phenomenon. In fact in 1999, under Clinton, Foreign Affairs, the establishment journal, had an article by a leading American political scientist, Samuel Huntington of Harvard, in which he pointed out that "much of the world regards the United States as a rogue state, one of the greatest external threats to their existence." That was 1999 and it has escalated very sharply since. Within the foreign policy elite, similar views are now quite widely expressed, actually to a completely unprecedented level. I don't think there's ever been anything like this. To take a recent example, the very sober and respectable institution, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, publishes a regular journal not given to hyperbole. In their current issue, there's an article by two well-known strategic analysts, who discuss what's called the 'transformation of the American military.' That's the Rumsfeld-initiated program to rapidly increase the lethal offensive military capacity. They discuss this, and they say this policy is likely to lead to, in their words, "ultimate doom." Those are words you never hear in sober respectable circles referring to US policy. They actually go on to express the hope that China will lead a coalition of peace-loving countries to counter the US militarism and aggressiveness. We've gotten to a pretty pass when we hear that from the heart of the establishment. Notice that they didn't ask Canada to lead the coalition, and you might wonder why.

Well, part of the reason for all of this is, of course, the invasion of Iraq, which was carried out against overwhelming international opposition. It's worth remembering that this is the first time in the entire history of Europe that there has been a massive overwhelming protest against an aggressive colonial war before it was even launched. Nothing like that has ever happened before. In the case of the Vietnam war, for example, which was not that long ago, it was six or seven years after the war was launched before protests reached a detectable stage. That's the norm. Here it was before. That's part of the reason.

But a large part of the reason is the thinking that lies behind it. Recall that the invasion of Iraq was virtually announced in September of 2002 at the same time as Bush's National Security strategy, a "new imperial grand strategy," as it was called right away in a critical article in the main establishment journal, Foreign Affairs, which described it as a threat to the world and to the United States. It has since been subjected to a quite unprecedented critique from within the establishment. I'm not talking about the critics. The critique is very broad, but it's also extremely narrow in content. Typically if you read Foreign Affairs and the other sort of mainstream foreign policy journals, there's a tremendous amount of criticism, but on very narrow grounds. It's not that the substance is wrong, it's the style and the implementation that are a danger.

The critique was captured pretty well by Madeleine Albright, Clinton's Secretary of State, same journal, Foreign Affairs. She was also quite critical of the National Security Strategy and the implementation of it. But again, she pointed out that every President has had a similar strategy, but the President keeps it in his back pocket to be used if necessary. They don't smash people in the face with it, and you don't implement it in brazen defiance even of your allies, let alone others. That's just stupid. That's another example of "arrogance, incompetence, and ignorance."

Albright didn't mention it, but she was fully aware, of course, that Clinton had a similar doctrine, her doctrine. The Clinton Doctrine was quoted in saying that the US is entitled to resort to unilateral use of military power to defend vital interests, including uninhibited access to key markets, energy supplies, and strategic resources. And it's entitled to do that without even the pretext that Bush and Blair concocted. That's actually more expansive, considerably more expansive than the Bush imperial grand strategy, but it was issued quietly as a message to Congress, not brazenly, so others know about it, but they didn't have to regard it as a direct threat to their existence. Of course they know that American presidents are going to do that if they want to. It's one of the prerogatives of power in societies where the state power was under very limited popular control, or even knowledge. Albright, in the same article, pointed out that there are plenty of precedence for it. And that's true. There is a precedence in US history and elsewhere, including precedence in US history one might not want to think about exactly...

Well despite the precedence, the National Security Strategy was described right away as something new, very new. Henry Kissinger described it as a "revolutionary new strategy." He generally approved of it, like everyone else, in substance but also criticized it in style and in implementation, said you've gotta do it more sensibly. And he also added a crucial qualification. He said that the policy, while right, must not be universalized. That is, the right of aggression has to be reserved for the United States alone, sometimes delegated to its clients and allies. So we must reject forcefully one of the most elementary of moral truisms, namely [that] we apply the same standards to ourselves at least that we apply to others. Harsher ones if we're serious. It's to Kissinger's credit that he's honest enough to say this. Usually it's

concealed. We should thank him for telling us what we ought to know.

Well, there were other voices. Perhaps the most respected of living American historians, Arthur Schlesinger, the day the bombs started falling on Baghdad, published an article in the major press in which he recalled President Roosevelt's words right after Pearl Harbour. Roosevelt called it a "date that shall live in infamy." And Schlesinger said that Roosevelt that was right, today it is Americans who live in infamy, as we follow the policies of imperial Japan. That's an accurate description. He also warned that the global wave of sympathy for the United States after September the 11th is turning into a global wave of hatred of American arrogance and militarism. And that description was borne out, as we've seen, in the time that's followed.

It was also predicted right away that the invasion would increase the threat of terror. Those predictions came from foreign intelligence agencies, from independent analysts, and we just learned recently that the same prediction was made by the highest US intelligence analysts, the national intelligence estimate in January, 2003, just a few weeks before the invasion. That's what they predicted, and that's what happened. The following year, 2003, is the worst year on record for suicide bombings. The full figures aren't in for the following year. Iraq had its first suicide attacks since the 13th century. Harvard University's main terrorism specialist, Jessica Stern, wrote that the invasion turned Iraq into a 'terrorist haven.' A country which wouldn't have been thought to have been involved in international terrorism is now a terrorist haven, a center of terrorism. And that's gone on throughout the world.

On the anniversary of the invasion, railroad stations in the United States, Grand Central Station in New York and others were being patrolled by heavily armed police with submachine guns and flak jackets. That was an immediate reaction to the worst terrorist atrocity in Europe just a couple of days earlier, the bombing in Madrid which killed a couple hundred people. Shortly after the Madrid bombing, Spain had an election and the electorate voted out the government that had gone to war over the objection of most of the population... The Spaniards were very much condemned for having voted them out of office. They were [accused] of appeasement, giving in to terror, and so on. I didn't see anybody point out that the Spanish voters were voting for the position held at that time by 70% of the American population. And it had been the US majority opinion since shortly after the beginning of invasion. They were not for pulling out troops but that the UN ought to take the lead in security issues, reconstruction, and the transfer to a new government in Iraq. There's a difference between Spain and the United States. In Spain, people know what public opinion is. In the United States, you know it as long as you carry out a research project. Secondly, in Spain, you can vote on it. In the United States, it's inconceivable that issue will arise in an election, as you can see in the current electoral campaign. Those are important matters. They have to do with a significant deterioration of the democratic culture, not just in the United States, but in a good part of the west. The issues that are of prime concern to people are simply excluded from the political arena. Those people aren't supposed to be there, they're supposed to be obedient and quiet and everything else.

This is a striking example, but hardly the only one: There's a curious performance that's been going on in the last couple of months in Washington, in the media, in intellectual circles and so on. It was initiated by leaks from the Bush administration, Paul O'Neil, Richard Clarke, and the others, indicating that they had downgraded the war on terror in favour of a war on Iraq. That's supposed to be very surprising. The only thing that's very surprising about those revelations is that anybody's surprised by them. It's completely obvious. They invaded Iraq! That settles the question. They invaded Iraq knowing that it was very likely to increase the threat of terror, as it did. What more is there to discuss? I mean, that tells you what their priorities are.

Furthermore, those priorities are entirely rational. It's perfectly understandable. It's not hard to figure out why. It's been known for years, certainly since 1993, it's been known that there's a risk of serious terrorist acts in the United States that may kill thousands of Americans, maybe more. After all, in 1993, there was an attempt to blow up the World Trade Centre, which came very close to succeeding. Much more ambitious plans were just barely thwarted. These were carried out by people whose origins were in the Jihadis that were organized, trained, and armed by the CIA and its associates, and quite openly turned against the United States by the early 90's. Since then they went on to reach headlines. There was an awareness that this was a serious terrorist threat. The technical literature was full of discussions of it... Nobody could predict that something was going to happen on September 11th or that it would be exactly this, but that some major terrorist act was likely to happen was not a surprise, and that it might have very serious consequences just as it's anticipated today. It's just not important. It doesn't rank very high in importance as compared with establishing the first stable military bases in what they hope would be a dependent client state right at the heart of the world's major energy resources, a state which itself has the second largest oil reserves in the world. [These reserves] have been considered ever since the 1940's as what the State Department called a "stupendous source of strategic power and one of the greatest material prizes in world history." Ever since then a prime element of US foreign policy has been to maintain control over it. How could it be otherwise?

Notice what's important is "control" not "access." If the US was running on solar energy, the policy wouldn't change. The point is it's a stupendous source of strategic power. It gives what Ruginsky recently called a "critical leverage"

over the Europe and Asian economies. Those have been the primary economic rivals and threats to the United States since the Second World War. They have to be kept under control. Those are the major industrial societies and centres, even more so now. One of the ways of keeping them under control is by keeping your finger on the flow of energy to them. That's what most of the jockeying around Central Asia is about, where the pipelines will go and so on. Controlling roughly 2/3 of the world's energy resources, that's no small quest. Quite apart from its "stupendous source of strategic power" and the "critical leverage" it gives of others, it's perfectly true that it's an enormous imperial prize. One history of the oil industry describes it as a source of profits "beyond the dreams of avarice." And they're supposed to go to US companies, maybe some British companies if they play their role, but not to others.

Those are part of the reasons for establishing a major military presence right at the heart of the major energy producing region. Iraq happens to be particularly significant in this respect. For one thing, it happens to be the only known area of the world where there are enormous energy resources that are still untapped, in fact largely unexplored, and furthermore very easily accessible. You don't have to dig through permafrost, or figure out how to deal with the Alberta tar sands, or anything like that. You just stick your finger in the ground, and the oil practically bubbles out. There's nothing remotely like it. And furthermore, it was understood that others are getting ahead of the US and its British client in this. The French and the Russians had the inside track on dealing with it. They were beginning to develop and open up the unexplored oil fields. That won't do. That's finished. The invasion, the US and a few British companies will gain their "profits beyond the dreams of avarice" and the US will have "critical leverage" thanks to its control of this "stupendous source of strategic power." If Iraq can be brought under control, which is proving to be a surprisingly difficult task.

Well, there's plenty of other evidence that terror is not considered a serious threat, as compared to the more serious issues, compared with other priorities. All of this ought to be front-page headlines, in my opinion, every day. There's nothing secret or obscure or difficult to detect about any of this. Last December [congress] passed almost anonymously what they call the Syria Accountability Act, that threatens Syria with all sorts of penalties and so forth, unless it follows US orders. In fact those threats were implemented in policies that Bush implemented a couple of months later. Well, Syria is a major asset in the so-called War on Terror. It has been providing intelligence, getting information, helping to detect and identify Islamic radicals. But that has to be put off. It's not important. Technically, Syria is on the official list of states that sponsor terrorism, but it hasn't been accused by the CIA or anyone of sponsoring terrorism for about 15 years. And how seriously that's taken, you can tell very easily. Clinton made an offer to Syria that he would remove it from the list of states sponsoring terrorism if Syria agreed to US plans as to how to settle the Israel/Arab conflict. Well, Syria wanted its territory back so they didn't accept it. So they stayed on the list of states that sponsor terror. That tells you something about the priorities, that discipline and obedience are far more significant than reducing terrorist threats.

If Syria had been removed from the list, that would have been the first time anyone had been removed from the list since 1982. In 1982 the Reagan administration removed a country from list of states sponsoring terrorism, namely Iraq. They did that so that they could supply their friend Saddam Hussein with needed aid, including substantial dual-use technology technology which could be used to develop missiles, nuclear weapons, biological agents, and so on. And they continued to do that. We caught a little piece of the television news coming in, they found a mass grave up in Northern Iraq, which I think is probably Kurds massacred in 1988. That shows you what an awful guy Saddam Hussein was. But as usual, nobody pointed out that if he goes to trial for that, there will be some people standing next to him, like Ronald Reagan, George Bush, the British government, most of the New Labour, on and on. They knew about it, but they just didn't do anything about it because they didn't care. And they continued to supply him. That had nothing to do with the Iran war, it continued after the Iraq-Iran war was over. In fact they were kind enough to tell us why they were doing it. The George Bush administration explained to congress that we had to keep supplying our friend Saddam out of our responsibility to support US exporters, and because it increases stability in the region. Stability means following our orders. And they also added the usual political plate about it, how it improved human rights. And that went right up to the invasion of Kuwait. In fact it actually continued afterwards when the US and Britain supported [Saddam's] crushing of the Shi'ite rebellion.

But Iraq was indeed removed from the list of terrorist states in 1982 for those reasons. When they were removed, there was a gap. So Cuba was added to the list of states sponsoring terrorism, presumably in recognition of the terrorist war, that the United States has been carrying out against Cuba since Kennedy, had escalated in the late 70's to a real peak, with major atrocities such as shooting from airplanes, killing 75 people, and all sorts of other things. The terrorists responsible for that are living happily in places like Florida. Remember, a core part of the Bush doctrine is that states that harbour terrorists are the same as terrorist states and must be treated accordingly. In any event, it still goes on. Cuba was added to the list of terrorist states to replace Saddam, who was removed, and Syria was kept on because Syria refused to accept Clinton's demands about how to deal with the problems with Israel.

Well, there's plenty of other evidence right in front of our eyes that matters such as discipline, following orders, are ranked far higher than terrorism. In fact, a couple of months ago, the Treasury department gave congress its regular

information about one of its offices, the office of Foreign Assets Monitoring. That's an office that is devoted to monitoring suspicious transfers of funds internationally. That's a core part of the so-called war on terror. And indeed, they do have officials who report to congress who are monitoring fund transfers that are suspected of being related to Al-Qaeda or Saddam Hussein. There are four employees. There are almost six times that many devoted to inspecting possible invasions of the US embargo against Cuba. That tells you something about priorities. And it's an illegal embargo, it's been declared illegal by every imaginable body.

But it doesn't make any difference. And it's not Bush, this goes way back. But they also gave figures on the monitoring of suspicious fund transfers since 1990. From 1990-2003, they said that there had been 93 investigations of terrorist-related or Iraq-related fund transfers, with \$9000 in fines, and 11,000 investigations with \$8 million in fines for suspicion of evading the US embargo against Cuba. That tells you something about priorities.

We know the reasons for that. The US is a very free country, there are plenty of documents available, and we know very well from the Kennedy and Johnson years that the main problem posed by Cuba, as the State Department and the CIA described it, was the "successful defiance" of US policies, going back to the Munroe doctrine of the 1820's. That was the policy that the US will dominate the hemisphere. And we don't tolerate any defiance of that. So, forty years of terrorist war, legal and economic embargo, massive inspection of attempts by others to evade it, all of that is far more important than inspecting funds that might be involved in financing Al-Qaeda, as these numbers illustrate.

The fact that the Reagan administration downgraded the threat of terror in favour of their higher priorities was nothing new. The threat of successful defiance is a very serious one. If you don't understand it, ask your favourite mafia don how he reacts if some local storekeeper doesn't pay his protection money. You don't just take the money. You make an example of it. Successful defiance is extremely dangerous in a system of order that's run like a Mafia. In fact it's not a bad description of world order, I'm sorry to say.

Well, turning to terror, there's a very broad consensus among intelligence agencies, including the government intelligence and independent experts, on how to deal with this problem of terrorism, how to reduce it. Incidentally I should mention that I'm using the term of 'terror' here in its most technical sense, the sense in which it's universally used in Western discourse, meaning the terror that they carry out against us, not the terror that we carry out against them. That's not terror. I'll keep to that conventional usage. And there is a consensus on how to react to it if you want to increase it, or if you want to deal with it somehow.

Actually, the Iraq invasion is a perfect example of what to do if you want to escalate the degree of terror. As I mentioned, it was undertaken with the expectation that it would increase the threat of terror. And that's pretty normal. Violence quite typically elicits violence in response. Everyone understands it, including intelligence agencies. Take Al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda and bin Laden were virtually unknown. In fact Al-Qaeda is not even mentioned in US intelligence records, and bin Laden was considered some minor financier until 1998. What put them on the map was Clinton's bombing of Afghanistan and the Sudan. That led to a very rapid increase in recruitment and financing for Al-Qaeda, and it made bin Laden into kind of a symbol for Muslims of the world. The bombing of Sudan, in particular, established close relations between Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, which had previously been cool in comparison. The bombing in Sudan is completely ignored in the west. If you said that Al-Qaeda bombed half the pharmaceutical supplies in Canada, somebody would probably notice. And if Canada was a poor country under embargo, so that people couldn't get drugs, so maybe tens of thousands of people die, people might notice it even more. And to us it doesn't matter because we're doing it to poor Africans so who cares? But it does matter to other people. Not everyone reacts the same way the privileged and the powerful do. In fact you can learn a lot about ourselves from the null reaction of these events in the West, as well as the hysterical denials and tantrums if they're brought up. It tells us a lot about ourselves that is useful to know.

Well, the next major contribution to the growth and expansion to Al-Qaeda was the bombing of Afghanistan, which led to a sharp increase in the recruitment and financing, and made bin Laden even more of a major figure. The bombing was undertaken without any real pretext. In fact eight months after the bombing, the head of the FBI testified to the Senate, after the most intensive intelligence inquiry in history, that they still didn't know who was responsible for 9-11. They said they believed that the plot might have been hatched in Afghanistan, but was probably implemented and financed in the United Arab Emirates and in Europe. That was eight months after the bombing. The bombing was also undertaken over the strong and vocal objections of many of the most important Afghan opponents of the Taliban, including the US favourites. And it did lead to a sharp increase in recruitment and enthusiasm for what's called the "cosmic struggle between good and evil." That's the rhetoric shared by bin Laden and Bush.

Actually, in the last couple of minutes I've been mostly paraphrasing closely the best book on Al-Qaeda by Jason Birk, British journalist/analyst. He points out, correctly, that every use of force is another small victory for bin Laden. And that is the general conclusion very widely shared among intelligence agencies and specialists. We see it right in front of us all the time. The case of Muqtada Al-Sadr, which I mentioned is a clear example. Or take, say, Fallujah. There's

another attack in the works, in fact it's been under bombardment for the last number of months, but last April there was a major marine assault on Fallujah, which killed...thousands of people. That practically set off a conflagration all over the country. That attack was an example of how violence elicits violence. The attack on Fallujah was in reaction to the brutal murder of four US military contractors four days earlier a couple of days earlier. Another case of violence eliciting violence. But that's not the end of the story either. Those four military contractors were killed by a previously unknown group called the Brigade of Martyrs of Sheikh Yassin. They were avenging the murder of a quadriplegic Muslim cleric a couple of days earlier, right outside of a mosque in Gaza, by what's called in the West an "Israeli attack." But it's not an Israeli attack. It's a US-Israeli attack. It's an attack by US airplanes, US helicopters, piloted by Israeli pilots. The US sends them helicopters knowing full well that they are not for any defensive purpose, they are for the purpose of actions like the carrying out assassinations, like the assassination of Sheikh Yassin and half a dozen or so bystanders who just happened to be there. In the previous six months, according to Israeli press reports, there have been 50 such murders, murders of suspects by mostly US-supplied equipment bought for that purpose, along with 80 or 90 bystanders.

Well, none of this enters the annals of state terrorism. But that's because we are agents of it. Since we're doing it, our clients are doing it, it's not terrorism. But others don't necessarily look at it that way. In this particular case, the assassination of Sheikh Yassin lead directly to the killing of the four military contractors, which lead in turn to the attack on Fallujah, which threatened to blow up the country.

Well those two examples are unfortunately quite typical. It's true that violence can still elicit greater violence. As to reducing terror or the threat of terror, there's also a broad consensus on that. It's a two-pronged affair. The terrorists themselves are carrying out criminal acts, there's no doubt. And they should be dealt with like people are dealt with when they carry out criminal acts, and that's with police work. Police investigations, police apprehensions, international if required, and fair trials. That's the way you deal with criminal acts if you care about them.

The terrorists themselves regard themselves as a vanguard. They're trying to mobilize the population which may dislike them, in fact they hate them, they fear them. But [the population] does recognize that there's something just about their cause and therefore the population can be mobilized. And we can help the terrorist vanguard mobilize their reservoir of support by doing what they want, namely carrying out violent acts which will help them mobilize the sympathy, support, recruitment, and financing by demonstrating that their message is correct and reliable. That's the way to escalate it if it's in our interest.

Or we can reduce the terrorist threat by the obvious means by paying attention to the grievances of this mass of people who they are trying to mobilize. If you look, those grievances are often quite legitimate and ought to be dealt with totally independently of any connection to terror. If you happen to be interested in reducing terror, that's the way you reduce the threat. Again, there is overwhelming consensus on this from intelligence agencies, independent experts and by the recent 9-11 commission. If you read this report carefully, they point out, kind of quietly, that bin Laden's calls reach an audience because of anger over US policies ranging from Iraq to Palestine to America's support for their repressive regimes. That's correct. That's how it finds an audience. The 9-11 report isn't telling us anything new. In fact they're just repeating what the National Security Council told President Eisenhower in 1958. It was then a secret, it was classified for years. Eisenhower raised the question of why there is what he called "a campaign of hatred against us" in the Arab world. And the answer had in fact been supplied by the National Security Council analysis back then. It said that there was anger in the Arab world because they perceive us of supporting brutal and repressive regimes and blocking democracy and development, and doing it because of our interest in controlling their energy supplies. And they said that perception was correct, you have to believe them because that's important. In later years, a number of other things were added, like Israel/Palestine, or like the Iraq sanctions which were killing hundreds of thousands of people. [Those] were a huge issue in the Arab world. So yes, the 9-11 commission is correct. There is an audience, and bin Laden's calls find receptive years even among people who hate and fear him....

The transformation of the American military, now that's a major threat, in this case a threat to survival. The military analysts that I was quoting in the Journal of the American Academy were not exaggerated when they said it might lead to "ultimate doom." We can see it happening in front of our eyes. Early this year, the Russians had their first major military exercise in about 20 years. They displayed newly developed offensive weapons, nuclear-typed missiles, and more sophisticated weaponry aimed at the United States and they pointed out exactly why. They said that this was in response to an increase in US aggressiveness and militarism, which they regarded correctly as a threat. So they're going to react to it. They'll react to it in the only way they can, by increasing their armaments and military capacity. According to US analysts, they've now tripled military expenditures since the Bush administration came in, in response to the transformation. They've officially adopted Bush's first strike policy, they're placing their weapons on automated response, which means computer controlled response. But we know our own systems have given hundreds of errors every year. Our systems allow three minutes for human intervention if a computer analysis warns that a missile attack is coming. It happens all the time, false alarms. Three minutes warning. Three minutes time to intervene and stop it. And there have been plenty of such cases, literally hundreds each year. The Russian systems are far less sophisticated; they're also deteriorating with the collapse of the Soviet economy. It's virtually asking for an accidental nuclear war,

which will be the end. Once that happens, it will in fact escalate.

Furthermore, the US is forcing the Russians to move missiles all over country, to transfer them from one place to another over its huge territory as its systems deteriorate quickly. And they're travelling in trains, un-guarded trains right across Central Russia. It wouldn't take much for Chechen rebels to pick them up sometime. And then you have the ultimate catastrophe. And they're doing that and US strategic analysts warn about this publicly in reaction to the increasing threat. Now partly this is the increasing threat of new nuclear weapons programs, we call them low yield, which they see as aimed at Russian command bunkers hidden deep in the mountains just like the US ones are, which would destroy their deterrent capacity.

[The Russians] are also reacting to the militarization of space. The one component of the National Security Strategy, which is much more dangerous than those that have been discussed, has not been much discussed. Right after the National Security Strategy was announced in September 2002, the air-force space command came out with its plans for the coming years, and they proposed a plan of implementing the National Security Strategy by moving from, in their words, "from control of space for military purposes to ownership of space for military purposes." That's consistent with the National Security Strategy. No potential threat ever can be tolerated. It has to be destroyed right away. So they have to own space for military purposes. Actually the UN Atomic Commission has been deadlocked for years because of the US refusal to go along with the rest of the world, lead in this case by China, to live up to the Outer Space Treaty, which limits Space for peaceful purposes. Clinton wanted control of space for military purposes, we've now moved up to ownership, which means instant engagement anywhere with highly lethal weapons attacking, with virtually no notice, anywhere in the world, which will be under tight surveillance. So, you can tell from US command bunkers that a car is crossing the street in Istanbul or whatever.

That essentially puts the world, or any part of it, under the threat of instant destruction. Foreign intelligence agencies can read these studies just as well as you can or I can, right on the internet. It doesn't take any great genius to find them. And they react. The Russians are reacting, and the Chinese are now reacting. China is the one country with nuclear weapons that has not yet developed an offensive nuclear capacity. A very tiny one, about twenty vintage, 1970's-era missiles. They've just announced that they're upgrading their missile force, making them more advanced and lethal. They will be planning a high tech offensive nuclear capacity within the next couple of years. And they also say just what the Russians do, that this is a reaction to US aggressiveness and militarism.

One of the threats that concern them greatly is what's called Missile Defence. Defence sounds polite. But on both sides, strategic analysts agree that Missile Defence is a first-strike weapon. That's the way it's understood. In fact, US analysts describe it in the same words. They say it's a sword, not a shield. It provides space for aggressive military reaction on the assumption that they will not face retaliation. That's exactly how it's understood and they respond to it in exactly the same way as every analyst predicts. In fact how they're going to react is well known in the way the US reacted in the documents that have recently been declassified about a year ago about how the US reacted when Russia put up a very small missile defence system around Moscow, a very tiny missile defence system. The US reacted by rapidly increasing its offensive nuclear capacity, not only to destroy that system but to overwhelm it, to wipe out the radar systems anywhere, and so on. Are the Chinese going to react any differently to what they regard as a major threat, which Canada may help participate in?

These things are going on right now. The first stages of the so-called missile defence system are supposed to be in place right about now. Well, if China increases its capacity, then we will too. Pakistan will react to that. We're off and running. There's also a huge threat from West Asia.

I'll just get back to Iraq for a moment. As you know, all the pretexts for the war have collapsed so nobody talks much about them anymore, except Fox news and Wall Street Journal editorials. As they collapsed, new pretexts were put in place. And the most recent one, which is now considered the standard, is what the liberal press calls Bush's "messianic vision" to bring democracy to Iraq and the Middle East. That was announced with great fanfare about a year ago. And the reaction is very instructive. It tells us a lot about ourselves. The reaction was virtually 100% acceptance that this was the goal. What's the evidence for it? Well, I'll leave that as a research project for you. You'll find that the sole evidence for it is that our leader declared it. That became the reason. There are plenty of critics. The critics say it's a noble and inspiring vision, but it's beyond their reach, they haven't got the means for it, Iraqi culture is too backward to be able to make this dramatic advance, and we ought to be more realistic. And that's the critics [in the mainstream press].

Actually there's one sector of opinion that disagrees, namely Iraqis. At the same time that Washington released this messianic vision, the Washington Post did happen to release a poll of people in Baghdad, quietly in the back pages, in which they were asked why they thought the US invaded Iraq. And there were some who agreed with approximately 100% of western intellectual opinion, namely 1%. 1% said the goal was to bring democracy. Most of the rest said the opposite, to take our resources, to use Iraq to organize the region in their interests, and so on. Actually their reaction

was a little more sophisticated. If you look at the whole poll, 1% said the goal was to bring democracy. 60% said US wants democracy in Iraq. But they explained that that's not a contradiction. The US wants democracy, but will not allow Iraqis to make their own choices.

And that's correct. That's the way democracy is imposed on the world. You guys can have democracy as long as you do what we tell you.

And they don't need instructions in US history to learn about that. They see it enough in their own history...Notice that Iraqis aspire to the same "messianic vision" that's lauded here. And the Iraqis agree with about 100% of western opinion that there is a cultural problem in achieving it. But they see the problem here, not there. It is a western problem. Westerners will not permit such a dramatic change as a democratic, sovereign regime in Iraq. And they've got plenty of evidence of that, unfortunately.

Well, if the Iraqis are right, and the primary problem is here, not there, then that's actually a hopeful sign, because here we can actually do something about it. We happen to be free and very privileged, which means there are plenty of opportunities. We don't have to wait for China to lead a coalition of peace loving states to stop the violent and aggressive western power...It will require a re-analysis and indeed a sharp change in global policies that are very deeply rooted in the institutions along their historical record. If that's the direct conception, in my opinion it basically is, it is a hopeful sign. But it means that we have choices and those are fateful choices, not just for the fate of Iraqis, but far beyond.

And at this stage in human civilization, the choices reach as far as literal survival.