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How East Asia Fits in U.S. Global Security Strategy

I. What Worries Americans?

In my opinion, Americans are worried mainly about two sets of issues: first, the economy and its implications for their jobs and savings; and second, terrorism.

On the first issue, the rapid economic growth of the late 1990s created expectations for prosperity and security that turned out to be unrealistic. These dashed expectations were compounded by unparalleled revelations of corporate fraud, abetted by some of our most respected auditing companies and financial institutions. Americans are angry about this mess and will demand accountability. Though this is mainly a domestic issue, the size and nature of the United States' economy make it a matter of global concern.

In terms of international issues, Americans are clearly most concerned about terrorism. We were shocked by the events of September 11th and are now only beginning to understand the causes and consequences of these attacks. This kind of worry is new for us, because it can directly affect anyone in the United States due to its random nature and targeting of civilians. While we are worried about terrorism, we have no doubt that we will survive as a nation of free people and come out stronger. This is the lesson of our history.

Now I want to elaborate briefly on how this emotional context affects U.S. national security thinking.

Terrorism

Images of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 are clearly imprinted on the minds of all Americans. The response was immediate and overwhelming in terms of Americans from across the country reaching out to victims and families. Donations of blood, money and support overwhelmed our capacity to handle it. And the rest of the world, including the political leaders of Japan, South Korea, China and other countries also responded with sympathy and offers of assistance. NATO invoked Article 5—an attack on one member is an attack on all members—for the first time in its 50-year history. Perhaps the most significant response was from Russian President Vladimir Putin, who set aside several differences and sided with the United States, fundamentally changing the character of U.S.-Russian relations.

Americans are aware of the international responses and identify with President Bush's notion that other countries are either "with us or against us" in this war on terrorism. Unfortunately, this kind of accounting does not adequately acknowledge the important, behind-the-scenes, contributions of countries who choose not to support the United States publicly due to domestic political concerns. Iran probably falls into this category.

Therefore terrorism provides an important context in which Americans now think about other countries. In addition to the responses of friends and others, Americans have been struck with the sophisticated, well-funded and global nature of the al-Qaeda network and its links with other terrorist organizations. In particular, we have become more concerned about safe havens, like Afghanistan, for terrorist groups. We now pay more attention to places where terrorist groups operate relatively freely, like the southern Philippines, Indonesia, Yemen, and Colombia.

WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction)

President Bush in his State of the Union address this year linked terrorism to weapons of mass destruction. This linkage resonated with the American people because of the anthrax attack delivered last year through the U.S. mail system. Although this attack yielded few casualties, the impact spread more widely than the specific public officials and others targeted by the anthrax letters. Several unintended people became victims because their mail was contaminated during postal processing. This attack also demonstrated that many of our estimates about the spread and lethality of chemical and biological toxins were wrong—the threat is more serious than we anticipated. We still do not know who is responsible, but law enforcement officials are leaning toward a domestic source.

Nuclear weapons also have become a major concern. During the Cold War we were drilled on

the devastating blast, heat and radiation effects of nuclear weapons. We sought to reduce these risks through the nuclear test ban treaty, arms limitation agreements and substantial financial assistance to Russia for cooperative threat reduction efforts. While these efforts have reduced the chances of a nuclear exchange among the major powers, concern has now shifted to the problem of “loose nukes” that could fall into the hands of terrorists or states that are staunchly anti-American. This helps explain the high priority the United States attaches to non-proliferation and the widespread support for missile defense in the United States. The past six administrations, including both political parties, have supported the need to provide for missile defenses, so there is almost no opposition to the need for missile defense. There is, however, some debate about rushing deployment before the technologies are proven.

II. New Security Framework

The goals of U.S. security efforts remain the same after 9/11—to promote peace, sustain freedom, and encourage prosperity—even though several policies and priorities changed dramatically.ⁱ Previously, terrorism was viewed as a unique, internal, law enforcement problem for various states. It is now viewed as a global problem—the “World Trade Center” was a target and citizens from 78 countries lost their lives.ⁱⁱ And the United States considers itself at war—a global war.

In prosecuting this war, President Bush said “America will do what is necessary to ensure our security. We will be deliberate, yet *time is not on our side*. I will not wait on events, while dangers gather. I will not stand by, as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world’s most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world’s most destructive weapons.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Preemptive Action

This line of thinking has led to a basic change in security strategy that now raises the need to plan and develop capabilities for preemptive action. When dealing with a terrorist threat, if one waits until an attack occurs, it is too late. As Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld put it, *we have no choice*. We cannot defend every location all of the time and we cannot stop an attack by defense alone. We must take the battle to where the terrorists are to prevent terrorism.^{iv}

In dealing with terrorism, preventive intervention is fully consistent with the inherent right of self-defense and this has been recognized by the United Nations.

Preemption, therefore, is now an essential part of a U.S. security strategy that in the past placed more emphasis on deterrence and defense. President Bush indicated that these new times require new thinking. Deterrence played an essential role in Cold War security strategy, but it is inadequate to deal with terrorists. Deterrence relies on convincing a potential adversary that they will suffer unacceptable losses if they attack. But terrorists recruit believers who are willing to sacrifice their lives for their cause and the organization holds little of value that can be threatened by retaliatory strikes.

New Doctrine: Integration

In addition to the declining utility of deterrence, the Cold War doctrine of containment is no longer a useful approach because we are not dealing exclusively with states or a single threat.^v In place of containment, the United States is promoting global and regional integration.

Under this doctrine of integration, American foreign policy seeks to integrate other countries and organizations into arrangements that will promote peace, prosperity and justice as widely as possible. This involves building consensus around key ideas on how the world should operate for mutual benefit and translating these ideas into cooperative arrangements and institutions that reinforce and sustain a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.^{vi}

Global Threats

This approach recognizes that many of the security challenges are global and include such transnational threats as terrorism, crime, illegal drugs, disease, and environmental degradation, as well as the destabilizing consequences of failing states. Such problems cannot be handled sufficiently by single states—including the United States—acting alone. Therefore the need for multinational cooperation is increasing.^{vii}

Contrary to the image widely held overseas, the United States is more committed than ever to acting multilaterally. Ambassador Richard Haas, Director of the State Department’s Policy

Planning Staff, first articulated the change of U.S. foreign policy doctrine from containment to integration. The new doctrine is important because it provides strategic clarity, an overall direction to policy so that U.S. efforts work in concert, not in competition. It also can help establish priorities and influence the allocation of resources.^{viii}

The process of integration is difficult and President Bush committed the United States to assist other states by a 50 percent increase in the annual foreign aid budget by 2006. This represents a major change in U.S. views on foreign aid. Significantly, it was announced at the UN summit in Monterrey, Mexico and reflects the view that it is important for the United States to help other countries become more active in international trade, investment and technology transfer, while dealing with the problems associated with globalization. U.S. aid, however, will be conditioned on responsive and accountable government on the part of recipient countries.^{ix}

Transatlantic Integration

The initial focus of integration has been on Europe. The vision is to create a Europe that is whole, free and at peace. This vision is widely shared on both sides of the Atlantic and reflects strong desires to overcome the long history of conflict that has plagued Europe. To implement this vision, key institutions are adapting and enlarging, including NATO and the European Union.

In security affairs, NATO continues to be a key part of this integration process. Even as it adapts and enlarges, it remains the institution of first choice for Europe, Canada and the United States to deal with serious security threats. Accordingly, NATO is transforming itself so that it will be able to meet new challenges. In Afghanistan, for example, 16 of the 19 member states are involved, along with several of the Partnership for Peace countries. Such “coalitions of the willing” built around a NATO base are likely to characterize future security efforts.

Russia

Russia also is an important part of these efforts to promote integration. In addition to growing economic ties, the new NATO-Russia Council provides a forum for joint planning, decisions and actions in areas of common security concern. While important differences remain, the trends are encouraging. In May 2002, the United States and Russia signed the Moscow Treaty which requires that both reduce their deployed strategic weapons to less than 2,200 warheads each by the end of 2012. This confirmed earlier unilateral commitments announced last year by President Bush and President Putin to reduce their operational forces to between 1,700 and 2,200 deployed strategic warheads over the next decade. Implementation of the Moscow Treaty will be managed by a Consultative Group for Strategic Stability chaired by the defense and foreign ministers. The Treaty will use the verification regime established under the START treaties. The aim is to provide increased confidence, transparency and predictability in strategic relations.^x The Treaty codifies longstanding U.S. efforts to reduce the dangers posed by nuclear weapons that will lead to the *fewest weapons in the fewest hands*.

Engagement

An emphasis on integration has been an important characteristic of U.S. national security policy for several years. It is generally framed in terms of “engagement.” For example, the fundamental principle underlying U.S. national security strategy is that we will remain politically, diplomatically, economically and militarily engaged in the world to create new partners in peace and prosperity. The President’s National Security Strategy calls for the United States to retain the capability to act unilaterally when necessary, but recognizes that whenever possible the U.S. should act in coalition with partner nations.^{xi}

The current U.S. military strategy, first adopted in 1997, includes three types of efforts: shaping the international security environment; responding to the full spectrum of crises; and preparing now to meet the challenges of an uncertain future.^{xii} Indeed, “uncertainty” was the defining characteristic of the future security environment outlined in the most recent Quadrennial Defense Review. This means that the United States should expect surprise and thus be broadly prepared to deal with a wide range of threats.^{xiii} And, of course, the 9/11 tragedy confirmed that we must be prepared for surprise.

This strategy continues to rely on a robust set of alliances and other cooperative defense arrangements that facilitate multinational security operations. Such operations require that the

combined allied forces operate well together which is based on joint training and the forward deployment U.S. forces. At the same time, the United States is moving to become less dependent on overseas bases that may become targets of our adversaries. These efforts include developing longer-range precision strike capabilities and transformed expeditionary forces.

Homeland Security

Changes in threats and in security strategy are also leading to changes in responsibilities and resource allocations. Most notably, the United States is developing a new cabinet position for homeland security. While the details have yet to be worked out as of this writing, the purpose is to provide for the better integration of the many diverse efforts that are necessary to better ensure security of the homeland. Our military structure also has been changed by adding a new Northern Command with broad responsibilities for the land, sea and aerospace defense of U.S. territory. This command will also provide military support to civil authorities.

The cost of these efforts is high—defense spending alone has been increased by at least \$30 billion. Other costs are more difficult to measure and we are now in a process of calculating the priorities and trade-offs. At some point, the added value of security is not worth the extra costs, but at least in the short-term, the United States is willing to pay whatever appears necessary.

War of Ideas

In addition to the traditional military aspects of dealing with the challenges of terrorism and the new international security environment, more attention must be focused on the battle for peoples' minds—the war of ideas. This strikes me as an area where the United States is not competing very well and yet it may ultimately prove to be the most decisive front of the war. Osama bin Laden has been successful in convincing many people that this is a struggle between Islam and the West—principally the United States. Invoking Islam and inspiring hatred, he mobilized thousands of people to fight against the United States and Israel. He witnessed first-hand the defeat of Soviet forces in Afghanistan and he attributed the subsequent fall of the Soviet Union in large part to this defeat. This gave him confidence to take on the United States—which was in large part motivated by its close military cooperation with the Saudi Arabian government.

While attacks on the United States gain publicity and generate admiration in many Arab circles, the main objective of bin Laden and al Qaeda is to establish intolerant, fundamentalist Islamic regimes in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in the Arab world. Thus the war is not really about Islam or religion, but about who rules. If al Qaeda succeeds, we shall see more intolerant cleric regimes making the rules in the countries where they gain control. I doubt, however, that given a choice, people would choose to live under a Taliban-style government. In the war of ideas the United States encourages freedom of choice. We believe that all people should be free to practice or not practice any religion if they choose. They should have a choice in selecting those who govern and make the rules. If the people have a choice in leaders, then these government officials can be held accountable for their rule. Furthermore, to make wise choices, the people must be well informed. That's why we strongly encourage a free press.

We want to encourage a free exchange of ideas because nobody has a monopoly on good ideas. Competition of ideas is what characterizes the more successful countries—economically, socially and politically. Competition allows for ideas to contend and criticism to flourish. As you can tell from our press, nobody is more critical of the United States government than the U.S. public. Furthermore, we disagree strongly over key issues like abortion and the death penalty and each generation of Americans must revisit these issues and decide. So decisions in the United States—even our laws—are seldom final, but subject to continuous review and debate. We also reject one-person rule because collective decisions are nearly always wiser than those made individually—no matter how intelligent the decision-maker.

I think these ideas are sound, but in pursuing the war of ideas, the United States often fails to get the message across. For example, arguments for democracy probably fall on deaf ears in much of the world because it is reduced to calling for elections and elections in many countries are meaningless. I also attribute American failures in communications to not listening well to others, thus we fail to understand other's unique circumstances and concerns. Americans were shocked to learn, after 9/11, that we are so deeply hated in many parts of the

world. To be effective, communications must flow in both directions. These and the other issues I have noted constitute my understanding of the United States global security framework and strategy. Now I will turn to how East Asia fits into this framework.

III. East Asia

East Asia continues to be a high priority region for U.S. foreign and security policy. In terms of deployed armed forces—about 100,000—it is roughly on a par with U.S. forces in Europe. Many security experts, however, argue East Asia should command a higher level of attention because Europe is a relatively less dangerous place. In addition to 100,000 troops, about 400,000 Americans live, work and study in the Asia-Pacific region. The U.S. conducts more than \$500 billion worth of trade with the region and has investments totaling more than \$150 billion.^{xiv}

With such substantial stakes and growing interpersonal ties, the United States seeks a stable environment that is necessary to sustain economic growth and political development. Managing security is not easy in East Asia—each of the major powers have fought each other within the memory of many of their older citizens. These memories have resulted in a legacy of mistrust that is difficult to bridge. Nevertheless, the United States is seeking to reduce tensions and promote the peaceful resolution of disputes, along with stability and prosperity. Alliance relationships remain at the center of these security efforts. These security ties with Japan and South Korea were born of necessity during the Korean War, but they have endured and adapted. For example, security cooperation has been facilitated between Japan and South Korea by working through the bilateral alliance structures.

Bilateral alliances by their nature, however, are not useful in promoting regional security integration. In response to this need, Admiral Dennis Blair, when he was Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Pacific Command, expanded on the ideas of Karl Deutsch to develop a modern day security community in East Asia. Blair suggested that groups of nations who are willing to plan, train and exercise together develop habits of cooperation that build trust and confidence in each other and that will enable them to cooperate on future security matters. Participation is voluntary and based on common concerns without relying on international institutions and formal treaties. Admiral Blair developed this approach through yearly TEAM CHALLENGE exercises that focused on common missions, such as search and rescue, counter-piracy operations, disaster relief, noncombatant evacuations, and delivering humanitarian assistance. These functions can be greatly facilitated if several military forces in a region can work together. In addition, the Pacific Command's Asia-Pacific Center also plays an important role in developing a security community through its wide-ranging education efforts involving military forces throughout the region.

Such an approach promotes dialogue to increase awareness of the common interests that provides the basis for a security community. These efforts are desirable because they improve communications and understanding, provide coordination, and promote common values, such as transparency, that serve to enhance mutual security. They create a broader, more integrated sense of shared responsibility for regional security. They also serve to build a stake in policy consultation and coordination.

Now I will address some of the more specific U.S. security concerns and relationships in the region.

Korea

Korea remains a high priority security concern for the United States. U.S. forces in Korea serve beside South Korean forces under combined forces command and a United Nations mandate to deter another attack from North Korea. The North remains one of the most militarized societies in the world, despite its failing economy, and a large share of its forces remain deployed within short striking distance of Seoul. With more than a million-man army, North Korean forces greatly outnumber the combined South Korean and U.S. forces on the Peninsula. Moreover, North Korea is widely believed to have large stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons and perhaps even a few nuclear weapons.

In addition to defending South Korea should deterrence fail, U.S. security efforts seek to dissuade North Korea from further developing nuclear weapons and missiles. These efforts resulted in the 1994 Framework Agreement under which North Korea agreed to stop

producing fissile material in return for construction of two nuclear reactors by South Korea, Japan and the United States, with additional support from other countries. This agreement, along with a moratorium on North Korean missile exports and substantial foreign aid to relieve widespread famine in North Korea, have helped reduce tensions in Korea.

Japan

The security relationship between Japan and the United States remains indispensable to both partners. The alliance continues to perform important functions that no other institution can provide. It fills an enduring need for a stable security environment by providing insurance against a wide range of threats in a still heavily armed region with a recent history of war and unresolved conflicts. Furthermore, it promotes important values shared in common.

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 provided a key test for the alliance and the responses were positive. The government of Japan reacted quickly and decisively, making not only important and early political statements of support, but also dispatching maritime forces in support of U.S. operations in Afghanistan. Clearly, Japanese leaders and the general public learned important lessons from the Gulf War in which Japan's very substantial financial contribution was not appreciated in the United States. Americans were disappointed that Japan did not join with the other allies and coalition members and put its forces in harms way, but instead dispatched minesweepers after hostilities.

Other important developments in East Asia also contributed to increasing awareness of the inseparability of Japan's defense and contingencies in its "surrounding areas." In particular, the 1998 North Korean missile tests over Japan and suspicious intrusions of ships suspected to belong to North Korea have had a strong impact on Japanese strategic thinking. These and other security developments led to important changes in authority for Japan Self Defense Force (JSDF) operations. They include the enactment of the peacekeeping operations (PKO) law and the subsequent participation of the JSDF in UN peacekeeping efforts in Cambodia and elsewhere for the first time. Other important responses include the new Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), the revised Guidelines for Defense Cooperation between the United States and Japan, and enactment of legislation regarding the "Surrounding Areas." The cumulative effect of these initiatives produced fundamental changes in the Japanese outlook on security issues and Japan's role in national defense and international security. Without these changes, Japan's quick response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks would not have been possible.

The international efforts against terrorism may lead the alliance to undertake important new frontiers for cooperation. In this struggle, traditional distinctions between the front lines and rear areas are no longer appropriate. Furthermore, linkages among terrorist groups, combined with the global interests and vulnerabilities of Japan and the United States, require a new strategic framework with a global scope which is more appropriate for an alliance between the world's two largest national economic powers.

China

U.S. relations with China have improved since 11 September 2001, although they got off to a difficult start during the early days of the Bush administration during which China was often characterized as a potential "peer competitor" and support for Taiwan was on the rise. The collision between the American EP-3 reconnaissance plane and the Chinese fighter further exacerbated the problem and resulted in a reduction in military contacts.

Relations improved after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. President Jiang Zemin was among the first to call President Bush and express sympathy. China also supported a strong UN resolution condemning the attacks and did not pose objections to the deployment of U.S. forces to Central Asia, not far from China's sensitive Xinjiang province with its ethnic separatists. However, China and the United States may have significantly different views on specific terrorist groups, so this issue, by itself, will not be sufficient to sustain the more cooperative strategic relationship that is in the interests of both states.

Economics

A firmer basis for cooperation is the strong interest of both China and the United States in the stable environment that is necessary for economic growth. China has set an ambitious goal to abolish poverty within 10 years. This requires doubling the GDP in a decade and sustaining 7% annual growth. Also, to achieve these economic objectives, China has a large stake in the

rapid recovery of the U.S. economy because of substantial and increasing trade links. Thus, we are becoming increasingly interdependent and this has important political and security implications.

Military Security

Military-to-military contacts between China and the United States are a good indicator of the state of the relationship. These contacts were discussed during Hu Jintao's visit to the United States and they are likely to resume soon. They should be reciprocal, transparent and mutually beneficial. Cooperation in locating the bodies of U.S. military personnel missing in action from World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam conflict is another indicator of the relationship that appears positive in recent months.

Opportunities and Obstacles

Nevertheless, there are several areas of concern in the U.S.-China security relationship. For example, a recent report by the bipartisan Congressional U.S.-China Security Relations Commission, warned that China is a one of the world's leading sources of proliferation of missile and nuclear weapons technology, particularly to terrorist-sponsoring states in the Middle East and South Asia. The report concludes that "despite repeated promises [China] has not kept its word."^{xv} This 200-page report, which paints a skeptical picture of China, is important because it is bipartisan and is the product of nine Congressional hearings that included 115 witnesses.

Another recent report, this one by the Pentagon, also highlights U.S. security concerns. The Defense Department's annual report to Congress on China's military power notes that sustained increases in China's military spending are resulting in "an increasing number of credible options to intimidate or actually attack Taiwan." The report goes on to note that China's military spending is the second-largest in the world after the United States. It concludes that China's military training exercises "increasingly focus on the United States as an adversary."^{xvi}

China's military modernization includes strategic forces and will probably lead to the deployment of mobile intercontinental missiles with multiple warheads in large numbers. At some point, such trends will become incompatible with the reductions in nuclear weapons being undertaken by the United States and Russia and will have to be addressed. This suggests that China should enter into strategic arms limitations talks with the United States and the other nuclear weapons powers.

Clearly both sides have important security concerns and this points out the need for careful management of the relationship. A high-level bilateral commission is needed to ensure strategic stability, along the lines of those between the United States and Russia. This commission would address how to manage the full range of security concerns of both sides. These issues include missile defense, proliferation, Taiwan and strategic nuclear forces.

IV. Conclusions

Because of the clear and present danger posed by terrorists, security concerns now clearly trump other U.S. foreign policy issues, such as human rights and democracy. Proliferation of WMD also has taken on a higher priority because of the potential linkage with terrorists. As a result of these changes in the way Americans view threats to their security, certain countries are now afforded much higher priority in U.S. security planning and operations. Afghanistan and Pakistan, for example, are now the focus of attention, followed closely by Iraq.

We also understand the linkage of the problem to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The administration is now fully committed to achieving a settlement that has proven so elusive. Both sides in that conflict understand what is needed for peace, but efforts to close the deal are easily upset by rejectionist factions on either side.

For the longer term, the United States is orchestrating a global response that involves a wide network of intelligence sharing, military training and international cooperation to disrupt financial flows, recruiting and other vulnerable parts of terrorist organizations.

These developments have created a fundamental geopolitical realignment in which all of the major world powers are on the same side, instead of the more traditional balance-of-power alignment. If, in fact, trends and developments consolidate these relationships among the United States, Europe, Russia, China, Japan, India and other powers, then the prospects for a stable, peaceful, just and prosperous world will be greatly enhanced.

Endnotes

- ⁱ See, for example, U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 30 September 2001, p1.
- ⁱⁱ U.S. State Department, “The Network of Terrorism,” October, 2001, p. 6.
- ⁱⁱⁱ President George W. Bush, “State of the Union Address,” 29 January 2002, p.4.
- ^{iv} Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, television interview, 4 February 2002.
- ^v President George W. Bush, graduation speech at West Point, NY, 1 June 2002.
- ^{vi} Ambassador Richard N. Haas, Director of the Policy Planning Staff, U.S. Department of State, in a speech “Defining U.S. Foreign Policy in a Post-Post Cold War World,” 22 April 2002.
- ^{vii} *Ibid.*
- ^{viii} *Ibid.*
- ^{ix} “Present at the Creation: A Survey of America’s World Role,” in the *Economist*, June 29th-July 5th, 2002, p.5.
- ^x “Letter of Transmittal and Article-by Article Analysis of the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions,” in *Arms Control Today*, July/August 2002, pp. 28-30.
- ^{xi} U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Report to the President and Congress*, 2001, p.4.
- ^{xii} *Ibid.*
- ^{xiii} U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 30 September 2001, p.iii, p. 11.
- ^{xiv} Derek J. Mitchell, “U.S. Security Strategy for the Asia-Pacific Region” in *Asian Affairs*, Fall 2001, vol 28, issue 3, p.160.
- ^{xv} “Panel: Toughen China Policy,” in the *Washington Post*, 12 July 2002, p. A18.
- ^{xvi} “China Buildup Said to Target Taiwan, U.S.,” in the *Washington Post*, 13 July 2002, p. A18. Also see Greg Jaffe, “China Buildup is a Threat to Taiwan, U.S. Says,” in the *Wall Street Journal*, 15 July 2002, p. A11.