

# Terrorism: War of Ideas

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"Terrorism is a tactic used by individuals and organizations to kill and destroy. Our efforts should be directed at those individuals and organizations...long-term success demands the use of all elements of national power..." 9-11 Report

"This war cannot be won militarily. The gun will not win this one. This is a clash of ideas, an information war." General Peter J. Schoomaker, Army Chief of Staff, to Joe Galloway, Knight Ridder reporter.

"Traditionally, victory went to the country whose armies won. But in a global information Age, victory also depends upon whose story wins. In addition to hard military power, we need skill at winning hearts and minds with soft power - the ability to attract others with our values and culture." Joseph S. Nye Jr.

"We actually misnamed the war on terror. It ought to be the struggle against ideological extremists who do not believe in free societies who happen to use terror as a weapon to try to shake the conscience of the Free World." George W. Bush, August 2004

"Support for the United States has plummeted. Polls taken in Islamic countries after 9-11 suggested that many or most people thought the United States was doing the right thing in its fight against terrorism; few people saw popular support for Al Qaeda...by 2003, polls showed that 'the bottom has fallen out' of support for America in most of the Muslim world." 9-11 Report

The United States is facing a threat unlike any we have faced in the past. We are sailing uncharted, perilous seas. There are indications that we may not have accurately identified the nature of this threat and may be solving the wrong problem. Indeed, the phrase "War on Terrorism" is a misnomer that could indicate that we are on the wrong path - as President Bush recently acknowledged. As will be discussed below in more detail, terrorism is a means of violence for political ends; the ultimate purpose is to influence political decisions of adversaries. If we focus too narrowly on the violent acts - the symptoms - we will miss the target and exacerbate the problem. Indeed, Secretary Rumsfeld has raised an important question:

"Are we capturing, killing, or deterring and dissuading more terrorists every day than the madrassas and the radical clerics are recruiting, training, and deploying against us?" October 2003

Undoubtedly, recruitment into the terrorist ranks reflects a losing battle for the hearts and minds of the population from which these recruits come, primarily, if not totally, from the Islamic world. The 9-11 Commission Report, cited above, recognizes this fact. Actually, the situation has worsened since the Commission made that observation. A June 2004 Zogby poll taken in Arab States found negative views of the United States as follows: Egypt 98%; Morocco 88%; Saudi Arabia 94%, UAE 73%. The major reasons cited were: unfair foreign policy, e.g., support of Israel and the Iraq war. The same survey showed the most admired people to be: 1) Jacques Chirac; 2) Gamel Nasser, the martyred president of Egypt, 3) Hasan Nasrallah, the Hezbollah leader; and 4) Sadam Hussein and Osama bin Laden (tie). Other polls show the unfavorable view of the United States exists throughout the world, including Europe.

Some dismiss these negative views of the United States as nothing more than jealousy based on our wealth and power and maintain it has nothing to do with our policies. As Senator Zell Miller said at the Republican National Convention:

"In their warped way of thinking, America is the problem, not the solution. They don't believe there is any real danger in the world except that which America brings on itself through our clumsy and misguided foreign policy."

President Bush describes the problem in rather simple terms. "They hate us because we are free"; it is a war of "good versus evil." At the other extreme, some see it as a "clash of civilizations." Others see it as a religious war that is foreordained by God to end in Armageddon. Others see it in more specific terms commonly associated with historical international conflict. How can we explain these conflicting perceptions when our leaders see terrorism in such stark terms of good and evil? Naturally, people disagree on the nature of the conflict. Men of goodwill and comparable expertise can, and will, disagree on this matter, as you will see in the diverse views expressed in this symposium. I can only do my best to tell it like I see it; however, each of us perceives the complex world through our own perceptual lens and I am not free of this weakness.

"We all carry around with us a big lens, a big framework, through which we look at the world, order events, and decide what is important and what is not." Thomas L. Friedman, *Longitudes and Attitudes*, 2003, p. 3

The war of ideas that we are engaged in involves a whole range of beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust. People in all societies tend toward sociocentrism - the belief that their values and culture are the best, whether it is their economic philosophy, political philosophy, social organization, or religious beliefs. This includes a tendency to see the world as "us" and "them" in terms of these values and cultural traits. Moreover, we filter events in the world through the lenses of these belief systems. Most people would like to believe that they look at events through an impartial, objective lens, reflected in the saying that "seeing is believing." Unfortunately, research shows that most people turn this around and the guiding principle becomes "believing is seeing." This is a fundamental truth about how people usually view the world - they interpret events through the lens of preconceived convictions. The aim of objective thinking is to examine critically a situation before forming our beliefs (seeing is believing), but too frequently, we see what reinforces what we already believe (believing is seeing). This tendency is especially dominant when we perceive complex human behavior in which we have a vested interest. That people's definition of reality reflects emotional, individual needs should be obvious. Go to a sporting event, especially a youth event, where the spectators are mostly parents of the participants. Observe how the opposite sides interpret events on the field (e.g., fouls, referee calls). If you are a disinterested observer, you may wonder if the two sides are viewing the same game. Move this phenomenon to political, religious, or economic issues and the dynamics are similar. People perceive the world in incompatible ways, yet they may be ready to die to impose their version of "truth" on the rest of the world. It is important to understand where and how individuals get these perspectives. "Biased" perception is more pronounced when our beliefs about what is "right" and "wrong" regarding these behaviors are based on uncritical faith in the sources of those beliefs. Each of us is a product of our own experiences and thus we bring to a situation our own unique belief system that filters the "real world." Moreover, each of us has convictions that our beliefs are based on solid logic and critical thought - that we are seeing the world as it is, unfiltered through a biased perceptual system. How then, do we know what we know to be true? How confident are we that our most cherished values are true? In the "war of ideas" that will be discussed below, it is important to keep these principles in mind.

What, then, are the basic values and beliefs that frame Americans' view of the world? Let us look at the opening paragraph of the United States National Security Strategy:

"The great struggles of the twentieth century between liberty and totalitarianism ended with a decisive victory for the forces of freedom - and a single sustainable model for national success: freedom, democracy, and free enterprise. In the twenty-first century, only nations that share a commitment to protecting basic human rights and guaranteeing political and economic freedom will be able to unleash the potential of their people and assure their future prosperity. People everywhere want to be able to speak freely; choose who will govern them; worship as they please; educate their children - male and female; own property; and enjoy the benefits of their labor. These values of freedom are right and true for every person, in every society - and the duty of protecting these values against their enemies is the common calling of freedom - loving people across the globe and across the ages." The White House, September 2002

In broad terms, this tells the world that American/Western values are the values that must be adopted throughout the world. These values are sacred to Americans. In fact, it is often considered unpatriotic to question the universality of individualism, pluralistic democracy, and free enterprise. Some have gone so far as to declare that these values represent "the end of history." Francis Fukuyama, then with the State Department, wrote "We may be witnessing the end of history as such; that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government," "The End of History," *The National Interest*, Summer, 1989). He also included free markets as an end state for economic affairs. As we will see, not all accept this analysis.

There are several dimensions to the war of ideas; they involve economic, environmental, political, and religious beliefs and practices - as well as historical events in the Middle East. These are exceedingly complex and people have sharply differing views about the reality of conditions in the world today, reflecting the "lens" mentioned by Friedman. In a short essay, these complexities can easily be oversimplified. With this caveat, I will do my best to be objective in my approach, but my analysis will be through my unique perceptual filter, as are all analyses.

Samuel P. Huntington provides an excellent summary of the clashing ideas between the Islamic world and the "Western" world in his 1996 book, *The Clash of Civilizations: Remaking of World Order*. He discusses the historical, cultural, political, economic, and religious dimensions that make up "civilizations." Those who assume the Western World values and doctrine represent a universal civilization "...generally share beliefs in individualism, market economies, and political democracy..." Many also believe that the spread of Western consumption patterns and popular culture around the world is creating a universal civilization. He rejects the notion that these beliefs are shared

outside the West and states, "only naïve arrogance can lead Westerners to assume that non-Westerners will become 'Westernized' by acquiring Western goods."

In regard to the religious dimension, Huntington says:

"Of all the objective elements which define civilizations, the most important usually is religion. To a very large degree, the major civilizations in human history have been closely identified with the world's great religions; and people who share ethnicity and language but differ in religion may slaughter each other." P.42

Huntington goes on to warn against the resurgence of religious fundamentalism in all religions as a force that threatens world order.

Huntington sees the conflict between the West and Islam as primarily focused on weapons proliferation, human rights and democracy, control of oil, migration, Islamic terrorism, and Western intervention. Above all, he warns against the notion that the West can impose its values on the non-Western world. He says, "...Western belief in the universality of Western culture suffers three problems: it is false; it is immoral; and it is dangerous." That it is false is the central thesis of his book. It is immoral he says because what would be necessary to bring it about. It is dangerous because it could lead to a major intercivilizational war between core states and it is dangerous to the West because it could lead to the defeat of the West. (Pp. 310-311) In a like manner, George Kennan, in a 1985 article in Foreign Affairs, warned the United States against demanding that the world adopt our version of democracy and economic systems as we understand them. These are not necessarily the future of all mankind, nor is it the duty of the United States to insist that they become that. Moreover, he says, much of our foreign policy is the result of pressures from politically influential special interest elements within the society.

The economic dimension is perhaps the most universal of the issues that leads to discontent that can foster terrorism. Since WWII, the United States has been at the apex of economic well-being. No doubt this has caused envy from around the world. The industrialized world has prospered and has closed the gap considerably. Parts of the "third world," such as China and India, see hope. Other parts of the world have not been so fortunate. There is a widespread view among many people in these areas that wealthy nations, especially the United States, have been morally weak in the control of the global economy. How far a nation goes in considering morality in the conduct of foreign affairs is a difficult boundary to draw, especially in the area of economics. All moral theories include some concept of distributive justice, which includes the distribution of economic benefits. How far does a wealthy nation such as the United States go in sharing its wealth with less fortunate countries? In addition to foreign aid, trade policies affect the distribution of wealth. There is little consensus on what is just and unjust in these matters. Some argue that the duty of government is to meet the needs of its citizens without regard for the fate of others. Here again, one need not choose all or nothing in considering the moral dimension. Most would agree that the "Marshall Plan" at the end of WWII was not only a moral thing to do, but that it was a practical policy that was in the long-term interest of the United States.

Currently, the U.S. ranks at the bottom of industrial nations in the percentage of its GDP that goes to foreign aid. And even that small amount goes largely to two recipients - chosen for their strategic importance rather than on economic need. Critics of U.S. policy also claim that the policies of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund are dictated by the U.S. and favor the "haves" in the world. Based on "free market" ideology, conditions for economic aid from these agencies require recipient countries to structure their economies in a way that sometimes violates value systems and eliminates social safety nets. Perceptions of economic injustice are a fertile breeding ground for unrest and potential terrorist activity throughout the developing world.

The Middle East is a special case because of its oil resources and the U.S. dependency on that oil. The reader is assumed to be familiar with these circumstances. Suffice it to say that U.S. policy toward that region is dictated by the need to have access to oil - as well as our support for Israel (which will be discussed below). One of the rallying cries of bin Laden has been the perceived exploitation of the region by the U.S. Our support of corrupt regimes that keep oil at artificially low prices is viewed by many as economic imperialism. The use of oil wealth to benefit the royal families and ruling elites is seen by many as a by-product of U.S. policies. The fact that the region is Islamic is a contaminating factor, as will be discussed below.

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict has to be high on any lists of controversial policies. Depending on which "lens" is used, the most critical issue in the main terrorist threat is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The subject is too complex to cover here, but opinion polls around the world show that the world perceives the U.S. to be biased in providing unqualified support for Israel. U.N. resolutions, e.g., 242 and 338, calling for Israel to return to the 1967 borders, have repeatedly been ignored. In the eyes of most of the world, not only has the U.S. supported the expansion of settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, it has indirectly financed them. This secular foreign policy has now

merged with religion. Fundamentalist Christian and Jewish groups have allied to support a "Greater Israel" of biblical prophecy. Jerry Falwell has called the Prophet Mohammed a "terrorist"; Pat Robertson called him a "wild-eyed Fanatic, robber, and brigand." Franklin Graham branded Islam "evil." These fundamentalists call for the "Greater Israel" so that biblical prophecy can be fulfilled to prepare for the "Second Coming."

Some in the current administration seem to endorse the concept of a "Greater Israel." Secretary Rumsfeld declared that he was tired of hearing about the so-called "occupied West Bank," asserting that it belonged to Israel. Tom Delay, the de facto leader of the House of Representatives, refers to Judea and Samaria and says they are Israel's. He told a Texas Baptist audience that God had made George Bush president to "promote a biblical worldview." From his own admission, Bush is a fundamentalist and some believe he holds these views.

Thomas Friedman, noted author and widely acknowledged expert on Middle East affairs, has this to say:

"American Jewish leaders, fundamentalist Christians, and neo-conservatives together have helped make it impossible for anyone in the U.S. government to talk seriously about halting Israeli settlement-building without being accused of being anti-Israel. Their collaboration has helped prolong a colonial Israel occupation that now threatens the entire Zionist enterprise.

"Either leaders of goodwill get together and acknowledge that Israel can't stay in the territories, but can't just pack up and leave without a U.S.-NATO force helping Palestinians oversee their state, or Osama wins - and the war of civilizations will be coming to a theater near You." *Longitudes and Attitudes*, p.151

I conducted a one-week seminar in Muscat, Oman in November 2001 for the senior officers of the Omani Royal Air Force. The commander said to me when I arrived, "when will the United States start asking why instead of who?" During the discussion of international terrorism, I asked the officers about bin Laden, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah. They universally condemned bin Laden and the Taliban; they considered the others as "freedom fighters." They estimated that maybe ten percent of Muslims supported Al Qaeda, and most of that support would vanish if the U.S. would force Israel to implement U.N. Resolution 242, which calls for return to the 1967 borders. Obviously this is not a scientific survey, but it corresponds to credible surveys that have been conducted. They emphasized that it would be a mistake to lump all "terrorists" together, since one person's terrorist, e.g., Hamas, is another person's "freedom fighter."

The Iraq war is another issue that creates resentment throughout the world. Surveys show that the only populations that support the war are the American and Israeli people. That support is on the wane in the United States. Even before the recent war, the U.S. policy toward Iraq was controversial. The economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations - at the urging of the United States - have been widely perceived to be unjust. Some estimates indicate some 500,000 people have died because of these sanctions. Osama bin Laden has cited the sanctions, and the presence of U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia, as prime motivations in his hatred of the United States. The fact that people in the region admire Saddam Hussein is cause for reflection. Surveys in Europe show that the majority of people view the United States, Israel, and North Korea as the primary threats to world peace. This is even more disturbing.

The 9-11 Commission correctly recognizes that terrorism is a form of violence used by individuals and groups for political goals. The first hurdle in coping with terrorism is coming to a consensus on a definition. The simple solution is to define all terrorism and counter-terrorism in moral terms of good against evil, but this does not do justice to the complexity of the phenomenon. In the most general sense, terrorism can be defined as "the use of violence against a non-combatant civilian target when the intended effect is the psychological impact on a wider audience in order to achieve political goals." In the past, different agencies of the U.S. have used approximations of this definition. If one accepts this definition, the carpet-bombing of cities in WWII, by both sides, can be classified as terrorist acts. All participants in WWII used such measures. They were routinely morally justified as avoiding greater violence. The use of atomic bombs on Japan was, in fact, deliberately designed to terrorize the Japanese into surrendering. President Truman's diary and the planning minutes attest to this. Undoubtedly, the atomic attacks avoided the costly invasion of Japan, which most analysts agree would have resulted in millions of deaths, both civilian and military. Before development of the atomic weapons, plans existed to use chemical weapons on civilian targets that would kill millions. The same rationale was used to justify their use. Thus, we considered a range of "Weapons of Mass Destruction" to terrorize the Japanese, all morally justified in our eyes.

The rationale that the greater good is served by terrorism may in fact suffice as a moral justification of the acts, but it does so by arguing that the ends justify the means. Some ethicists reject the notion that ends can justify means when the act in itself is immoral. This is not universal, however, and experience shows that most people often justify acts that are immoral per se, but where the consequences of the act can justify it. Thus it becomes a decision calculus that weighs the pros and cons to determine if the consequences can be shown to further a "just cause." Those who

bomb civilian targets, as well as those who justify the use of weapons of mass destruction, follow this reasoning. Terrorists who use specific civilian targets, including assassinations, use this rationale for moral justification. This includes suicide bombers.

If a belligerent wishes to brand acts of terrorism against it as immoral, it must find a definition that distinguishes the type of terrorism used by it and its allies from that of its adversaries. In the case of the current "war against terrorism," declared by President Bush, this presents problems. It is useful to rally the American people by stating the effort in moralistic terms of good versus evil and rejecting any suggestion that terrorism is any way morally justified. Another way to isolate the Islamic terrorists is to define terrorism to exclude actions of nations or their military. Recent definitions by U.S. Government Agencies in fact offer such definitions, restricting the label to non-nation activity. This has the convenience of putting our use of military force outside the bounds of terrorism. This restricted definition, of course, denies legitimacy to the only means of violence available to the weak and takes away the reciprocal advantage. Terrorism is the force of choice for domestic dissidents and the militarily weak in international affairs because it gives them an asymmetrical advantage, especially if they cannot be readily identified. Non-nation groups conduct much of international terrorism such as the 9-11 acts. While they may have the support of governments, these connections are difficult to prove. This limits the counter-terrorist efforts because over reaction against broad targets can generate more hostility and lose moral legitimacy for the counter terrorism effort. More will be said on this regarding the Iraq war.

Word-smithing to exclude one side's use of terrorism may appeal to the militarily powerful and their followers, but non-nation terrorist groups may argue that the ends justify the means if their terrorist acts result in a change in policies that they label as unjust. Moreover, the current enemies of the United States may argue that U.S. policies themselves involve a form of economic and military terrorism - economic sanctions against Iraq from 1991 to the recent invasion, sanctions against Cuba, etc. and militarily against the Palestinians (through Israel as a proxy), Nicaragua, etc. It all depends on whose ox is being gored; one person's terrorist is another's freedom fighter. Surveys consistently show that much of the Islamic world views terrorists against Israel as "freedom fighters." President Reagan labeled the Islamic terrorists fighting the Russians in Afghanistan in the 80s (including the Taliban, a member of which was Osama bin Laden) as "freedom fighters." They are now "terrorists." Again, it depends on whose ox is being gored.

In all conflicts, each side is convinced of its moral high ground. It then becomes a contest for convincing target audiences that you have the moral high ground. In the current war, the audiences include the American public, the populations in which the enemy operates, and the world community. Thus, the task in the current "war on terrorism" is to convince these target audiences that ours is the moral and just cause. In order to keep support among the populations in which they operate and draw their recruits, the terrorists will have to win the moral argument. The evidence so far is that the terrorists are winning except in the United States and Israel.

It should be clear to the reader that the central theme of this essay is that victory in the "war on terrorism" will be achieved only if we win the hearts and minds of several target audiences. To date, we appear to be losing that battle among some audiences. A crucial question is: are we losing the battle because of our failure to communicate effectively, or must we reexamine some of our policies? This question is best answered by looking at specific target audiences. In doing this, we must keep in mind that borders between these audiences are porous. Unlike wars of the past, where nations could more or less separate these audiences, what is said to one audience is likely to be available to the others. The message that appeals to one may alienate another. Truly, this is the age of global communications.

The domestic target is critical. The greatest strength of any group is not its military might, but its will to make sacrifices and cope with adversity, often referred to as morale, esprit, or national will. Research shows such cohesiveness depends on several factors: leadership, a sense of equity, trend of recent experiences, and crises generated by external threats are among the most important. In the aftermath of 9-11, the American public was in a state of shock. This was the crisis that galvanized the people. They looked for a concrete target against which they could retaliate. By and large, this was left to the leader - the President - to define. Polls showed that the people were ready to follow his leadership. When it was determined that al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden were responsible, the people gave overwhelming support to retaliate with whatever force was deemed necessary. The president had the complete trust of the vast majority of the public. Surveys showed that support and trust extended throughout the world, including the Islamic world. This carried into the war in Afghanistan, where the Taliban refused to hand over bin Laden. A reluctant Pakistan, which had helped put the Taliban in power in the 1980s (with the support of the United States), provided critical support for this effort.

The President then made the case to the American people that Iraq was a central player in the terrorism that had struck us, and was capable of, and intent on, providing weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to bin Laden. He

persuaded Congress to pass a resolution to authorize force if Saddam did not allow weapons inspectors to verify that Iraq had no such WMDs. The United Nations endorsed that resolution and sent an inspection team into Iraq. The UN resolution specified that if the Iraqi government were in a material breach of that resolution, that is, if Saddam refused to allow the inspections, it (the UN) would authorize the use of force. In early 2003, the United States declared that Iraq was in material breach. They made the case to the UN, but were unable to get a resolution to use force. President Bush went to war without the UN resolution. He claimed the first resolution gave the U.S. that authority; most of the rest of the world, including major allies, disagreed. Thus, we went to war without legitimacy conferred by the world community. Rightly or wrongly, the United Nations is the institution that can best confer such legitimacy.

Polls showed that 77% of the American public supported Bush's decision to go to war. Morale was high as the military phase went quickly. The trend of recent experience was good. The president's ratings were extremely high. However, events in Iraq have not gone as predicted by the administration. No significant amounts of weapons of WMDs have been found and ties to al Qaeda have been found to be dubious at best. The torture scandals dealt a deadly blow to our moral standing in the world. In short, the occupation has not gone well, i.e., the trend is bad. (As mentioned earlier in this paper, people have different views on this. Some claim events in Iraq are very positive). Approximately 50% of the American public now believes the war was justified. While the majority of Americans still believe the president is handling the war on terrorism well, support has eroded.

Rationale for the war has shifted to the theme that Saddam was an evil man that needed to be removed. This "moralistic" theme has been fairly effective with certain segments of the population, but has received increased criticism as casualties and costs have mounted. Fast, few-casualty wars, such as the 1991 Gulf War, are popular and good for morale. Quagmires, such as Vietnam, are not. The jury is out on how long the administration will be able to maintain the necessary support of the American public. Moralism sells to the domestic audience; it sells less well to the rest of the world.

"We must be careful about what might be called the histrionics of moralism at the expense of its substance. By that is meant the projection of attitudes, poses, and rhetoric that cause us to appear noble and altruistic in the mirror of our own vanity, but lack substance when related to the realities of international life." George Kennan, "Morality in Foreign Affairs, Foreign Affairs, 1985

Another factor in the eroding support is the question of equity in the sacrifices being made in Iraq. Criticism has surfaced regarding the composition of the military, i.e., that it comes disproportionately from the poor and minority segments of the population. Similarly, the reliance on the Reserves and National Guard has come under attack, as has the "stop loss" policies and recall of retirees. While rational arguments can be made that these are unjustified criticisms, the fact is that they are factors that must be considered.

The support of the American people will depend in a large measure on the belief that the sacrifices being made are indeed necessary to protect them from a threat. The polls show that the president has lost some credibility in that regard, largely due to the Iraq war. I have no suggestions for changing the message to the domestic audience unless things turn for the better in Iraq. That, I suspect, will occur only if we are able to enlist the assistance of the wider world community in the effort in Iraq and/or the situation in Iraq improves dramatically. So far, the administration has not been successful in enlisting significant support from major nations who have the resources to make significant contributions. In the absence of such support, or dramatic progress in the stability in Iraq, we are faced with a Hobbesian choice. We can stay in Iraq indefinitely, with the continuing consequences of alienating most of the world and eroding support among the American public, or declare victory, pull out, and leave the situation to evolve in whatever fashion unforeseen forces dictate. Both alternatives have dire consequences for the war on terrorism. Further elaboration of these choices is too complex to address in this essay.

Islamic extremists are not going to be persuaded by words. Moreover, they will not be mollified by policy changes. Even if we were able to settle the Israeli-Palestinian issue, withdraw all forces from the Middle East, allow them to establish Islamic Theocracies throughout the region, etc., this would not abate their implacable hatred for the United States. The only way to deal with this element is to shrink its support base, isolate it, and eliminate it. Unfortunately, the extremists have metastasized into splinter groups spread around the world. The task is becoming more difficult. The longer we lose the war of ideas the harder this task will be.

Islamic moderates are a crucial target audience. Immediately after 9-11, there was apparently a great deal of sympathy for the United States and little support for al Qaeda. This attitude has shifted dramatically since the Iraq war (see quotes of the 9-11 Report, cited above). Unfortunately, the conflict of ideas between the Islamic world and the United States and its coalition partners, has evolved more and more into a conflict of religions. If this continues on its path, it will be difficult to reverse. The president initially used some unfortunate terms such as "crusade" to define the conflict. This evoked some deep-seated memories among Muslims. Compounding this problem are the inflammatory

statements of some of the leaders of Christian fundamentalists, cited above. Bush also reduced the problem to simplistic terms of "you are either with us or against us" and "all terrorism is evil." This sells well to the American audience; it does not to the rest of the world. When this is intertwined with the Palestinian issue, it is a volatile mix (see above). The fact that Bush emphasizes his fundamentalist beliefs compounds the problem. Our perceived bias toward Israel's security as opposed to justice for the Palestinians - by both political parties - is an obstacle. There is little likelihood this will change, however (see Friedman comments, above), so we will have to live with that and pay the price.

We need to diffuse this trend toward polarization of the Islamic world on one side and Christian and Jewish fundamentalists on the other. This trend is pushing moderate Muslims into the radical base from which the terrorist organizations are drawing support - both recruits and sympathy. I don't believe this is going to be accomplished by improved propaganda techniques or restructuring of our television and radio organizations. Nor will it be accomplished by exporting democracy and market economies, as the administration seems to believe. Rather, this will require a reexamination of our entire foreign policy toward the Middle East.

The world community is also a critical target audience. My thesis is that we can only succeed in the war against terrorism if it is a coordinated international effort. This administration has alienated much of the world by its go-it-alone policies. It has shown outright contempt for allies and international institutions that do not uncritically support the United States. In a more general sense, this includes our rejection of protocols on such issues as global warming, international courts, and law of the seas. The National Security Strategy announced in 2002, which some critics have labeled Pax Americana, is manifest in the war in Iraq, and lends credence to the perception that we have contempt for international institutions. Policies that do not have international legitimacy may satisfy the public's jingoistic, chauvinistic sentiments, but they do not serve our long-term interests. The people applauded when President Bush said, "if no one joins us, we will go it alone...after all, this is America." Those who dissent are called unpatriotic at best, and often labeled as traitors. While there has been some shift in rhetoric regarding the UN, the address by Bush on 21 September 2004 showed no fundamental change in his attitude toward that organization.

It has become popular in some circles to dismiss the United Nations and other international institutions as debating societies that serve irresponsible demands of Third World countries. Admittedly, working toward international moral order based on shared values requires a great deal of patience. However, we cannot expect to have our way on every issue. It is difficult to achieve agreement on other than abstract values and rules that lend themselves to a wide variety of interpretations, but the effectiveness of these moral concepts depends to a large measure on the voluntary response to world opinion, usually expressed through the international institutions involved. Few of these institutions have the ability to enforce their judgments. In the case of the U.N., the Security Council must take action if a resolution is to have teeth, and each of the five permanent members has veto authority. When one of these permanent members vetoes a resolution passed overwhelmingly by the body, it implies a rejection of moral consensus. Used sparingly when one's vital interests are involved is understandable; flagrant use reflects disdain for multilateral approaches to world order and an arrogance of power. By its repeated flouting of world opinion, the United States has gained the reputation of being arrogant.

Winning the protracted war on terrorism will require national cohesion and a willingness to make sacrifices for years to come. And yet we are a deeply divided nation in regard to how best to wage the war against extremist individuals and groups who have no apparent limits on the use of terrorism. While some look for the answer in more use of military force, it comes down to a "war of ideas," which we now appear to be losing. More extensive and sophisticated communication techniques will not solve the problem unless we face up to the reasons why the hatred is so intense. Some reasons may be illegitimate or contrary to our national interests. Other factors are amenable to change, though some will be politically difficult.

It will take courageous statesmen in leadership positions to make some of the necessary changes, since the current political climate in the United States is inclined toward jingoistic, self-righteous, moralistic, unilateral solutions. Ideological rigidity that favors unilateralism and pre-emptive wars without regard to international opinion, mixed with religious fundamentalism will be a big hurdle. We need to use more "soft power," as Joseph Nye and Samuel Huntington have suggested. The time to strengthen international moral order is when one is on top. Henry Kissinger comments at the end of his book, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy*: "America's ultimate challenge is to transfer its power into a moral consensus, promoting its values not by imposition, but by their willing acceptance." In his classic article "Morality in Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, 1985, George Kennan warned the United States against demanding that the world adopt our version of democracy and economic systems as we understand them. He says these are not necessarily the future of all mankind, nor is it the duty of the United States to insist that they become that.

How important is it to have legitimacy in the eyes of the world community? An article in the *Ethics and International Affairs* (Vol. 9, 1995) was titled "The United Nations and Global Security: The Norm is Mightier Than the Sword." In essence, the author concludes that working through international institutions is more effective in the long term than the use of force. A similar point was made by another article in the same publication, "Beyond Coalitions of the Willing: Assessing U.S. Multilateralism" (Vol. 17, 2003).

Vice President Cheney appeals to American hubris and jingoism when he declares "we will not ask for a permission slip from the UN to protect our interests." Clearly, the Bush administration places little weight on the value of the United Nations when it comes to moral legitimacy. He seems to believe that self-righteous moralizing will accomplish the goal. The majority of the American public seems to buy his rhetoric; the rest of the world does not. The choice of working through international institutions or "going it alone" is a stark choice. The American people have a choice on 2 November as to which road they want to take. Polls show the majority lean to Cheney's position. This is a decision with long-term consequences because four more years on this path will likely make it impossible to reverse course.