107TH CONGRESS
2d Session

COMMITTEE PRINT

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"WHAT'S NEXT IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM?"

A COMPILATION OF STATEMENTS
BY WITNESSES

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE

Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Chairman

FEBRUARY 14, 2002

Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate

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LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC, February 14, 2002.

DEAR COLLEAGUE,

As part of our series of hearings on the role of foreign policy in securing America's future, the Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on February 7, entitled "What's Next in the War on Terrorism?" The witnesses for this hearing were former National Security Advisor Samuel R. Berger, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander Gen. George A. Joulwan (Ret), and William Kristol, head of the Project for the New American Century. Because the topic of this hearing is at the forefront of public debate, we wanted to make it available to you and your staff.

Please let us know if you have any questions or comments regarding this hearing or the other hearings in this series.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., *Chairman.*
JESSE HELMS, *Ranking Republican Member.*

TESTIMONY OF

SAMUEL R. BERGER

FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

BEFORE THE

SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 7, 2002

"WHAT'S NEXT IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM?"

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

I welcome your invitation to participate in this important and timely series of hearings and to address, in particular, the next stages in the war against terrorism.

Let me begin with what we already have accomplished with decisive and courageous leadership from President Bush, skillful diplomacy and a military that has demonstrated superbly the strength it has gained and the lessons learned over the past decade. The Taliban regime is gone, its demise unlamented by the Afghan people, its first victims. An interim coalition, fragile but representative, has taken over in Kabul. Al Qaeda has been shaken and dispersed, for now disrupted as a functioning network.

September 11th was a watershed for our country and the world. It breached the boundaries of the unimaginable. A horrified world stood with us. The response by the United States was fierce and focused—directed at those who perpetrated the crimes and those who support them. This response thwarted bin Laden's fundamental objective: to provoke indiscriminate actions by the U.S. that would have further polarized the West and the Islamic world, collapsing not just the Twin Towers but governments linked to us from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia. We were not just the *object* of these attacks but also the potential *instrument* of the terrorists' purpose: to advance the vision of a radical pan-Islamic region from central Asia to the Gulf and beyond.

Americans, led by the President, have responded with unified purpose. We have known that our cause is both right and necessary, and so has the world.

So where do we go from here? We have an historic opportunity—if we show as much staying power as fire power . . . if we are unrelenting but not overreaching . . . if we exercise not only the military power necessary to protect our people but also the moral authority necessary to demonstrate that our strength serves a purpose broader than self-protection—to build a safer world of shared well-being.

Our first task, as the President has said, is to finish the job of destroying al Qaeda. That job necessarily involves getting bin Laden. We must not define him out of existence; we must dictate his destiny. After all, he is the man most responsible for the crime against humanity nearly five months ago. We cannot permit him to reemerge—in a month, or a year. We do not want the *legend* of bin Laden—a symbol of *defiance.* We want the *lesson* of bin Laden—a symbol of *defeat.*

It may take months or years. But the victims cannot rest in peace until that justice is done.

And we must continue to take down al Qaeda cells, and hunt down al Qaeda operatives elsewhere—in Asia, Europe, Africa, here and elsewhere in this Hemisphere. Disruption will be an ongoing enterprise—a priority that will require international intelligence, law enforcement and military cooperation for the foreseeable future. These cells of fanatics will reconstitute themselves. We must treat this as a chronic illness that must be aggressively managed, while never assuming it has been completely cured.

Where we can help our friends suppress terrorist threats, we should do so, as we are in the Philippines, Bosnia and elsewhere. We must be careful to distinguish that from suppressing their legitimate opposition. And where we see remnants of al Qaeda and its allies regroup in countries with virtually no governments, it may be necessary to act militarily, balancing the genuine security gains against potential allegations that we are assuming the role of world policeman.

As we move beyond al Qaeda and its allies, we need to be clear about our purposes, strategies, standing and capacities. In the State of the Union, the President dramatically expanded the battlefield. He redefined and expanded the war to embrace an "axis of evil." Implicit in the ultimatum, I believe, is the conviction that the threat of American power against radical regimes—and presumably its exercise—will create a new dynamic that causes these regimes to abandon activities that threaten us. It assumes that others will follow our clearly defined leadership and, if not, we will act alone if necessary.

These are profoundly important premises, which promise a far more interventionist global American posture. They deserve serious and open-minded discussion. I do not believe the President is engaged in empty threats or rhetorical bluff.

Each of the governments singled out by the President pose unmistakable dangers. Saddam Hussein was, is and continues to be a menace to his people, to the region and to us. He cannot be accommodated. Our goal should be regime change. The question is not whether but how and when.

Iran continues to pursue nuclear weapons and advanced missile systems and to support terrorist and rejectionist groups like Hezballah, Hamas and PiJ. Its involvement in arms shipments to the Palestinians is unacceptable.

North Korea's regime, a relic of the Cold War, is repressive toward its people and promiscuous in peddling its missile technology.

We ignore the risks these governments pose at our peril. But each of them, and their context, is very different. Merely labeling

them as "evil" does not answer hard questions about the best way to deal with them to effect needed change.

- How do we build support, in the region and among our allies, to intensify pressure on Saddam Hussein? Can the Afghan template be applied in Iraq, where Saddam's power is more entrenched and the opposition is weaker? Are we prepared to go-it-alone militarily? Is that feasible and what would it take?
- How does our role in the deteriorating Middle East conflict relate to a more aggressive posture toward Saddam? Do flames in Baghdad inflame the Middle East, or quiet it?
- Have we given up on the internal struggle in Iran, where majorities of over 70% have expressed their desire for change? Does branding Iran part of an evil axis strengthen those who want to engage the U.S. or those who seek to demonize us?
- Does disengaging from negotiations with North Korea, which produced a missile moratorium that has held since 1998 and a freeze on nuclear fuel production that has been continuously verified by outside monitors, make it more or less likely that we will gain restraint? Does it make war on the Korea Peninsula more or less likely? Does it matter that our ally, South Korea, believes that the policy of cautious engagement with the North has reduced tensions on the Peninsula to an all-time low?
- Do we lose focus in our war against terrorism, and the support of our allies for fighting it, when we redefine the conflict as a war against rogue states? From the beginning, the President described war against terrorism as a "monumental struggle between good and evil." But as our definition of evil becomes more expansive—from Baghdad to Tehran to Pyongyang—will our support in the world for the fight against terrorism become more diffuse?

I think the President is absolutely right to sound the alarm against the nexus between biological, chemical and nuclear states and terrorism. The discussion we should have, in a bipartisan and respectful way, is not whether we deal with these risks, but how. It must also include reducing the threat of loose nukes and inadequately secured nuclear material in Russia. It should include putting teeth in the Biological Weapons Convention, and, I would argue, ratifying the CTBT. And it must include stopping friends and allies from selling dangerous technology to hostile governments. The struggle against global terrorism is not a fight we can win alone; we need partners—coalitions built around us not against us.

The President was also right when he said we are usually better off in the world when we say less and do more. A great power threatens only if it is prepared to act if intimidation fails. In an effort to impose new world order, we must be careful not to contribute to new world disorder.

Let me make one other principal point about what is next in the war against terrorism. We have been focused since September 11th on the military dimension of this struggle. It is a necessary part, now and perhaps in the future. But this is not a war we can fight

with military power alone. Our objective must be not only to destroy the terrorist networks that have attacked and threaten us; we must do so in a way that makes the world more stable, not less—that isolates the *extremists,* not *us.*

- That means, as Secretary Powell has said, we must commit our resources to stabilizing and rebuilding Afghanistan, including the possibility of participating in an international security force.
- It means we must make sure President Musharraf succeeds. He has "bought the program"—that he must take on the terrorists within, or lose his country. If he fails, no one else in the Islamic world will try again. And it would be more than ironic if we defeated the militant extremists in Afghanistan only to see them prevail in Pakistan, and seize control of nuclear weapons.
- It means supporting the Administration's active role in defusing the crisis between Pakistan and India—where confrontation can easily lead to miscalculation and, with nuclear weapons on both sides, miscalculation can lead to disaster.
- It means that we must fight the terror, and seek to break the death grip, in the Middle East. Pessimism about the Middle East is an honest reflection of reality, but it cannot lead us to fatalism—the view that we are unable to make a difference. The situation will only get worse without concerted and sustained engagement led by the U.S.—on Arafat to defeat the killers and on the Israelis to respond as he does. The alternative is a destructive war of attrition and a radicalization of the entire region.
- It means that we must put as much energy into the Arab world as we take out—but of the diplomatic, political, economic and intellectual variety. We must act more purposefully to convince our friends in the region that pluralism and reform are not the enemies of Islam; they are the enemies of the extremists.
- Finally, we must put at the heart of the U.S. agenda efforts to enable the poor to reap the advantages of globalization and opportunity. This too is part of the war against terrorism—for unless we do so, the world will become a more divided and bitter place, and our power—unrivaled as it is—will produce as much resentment as respect.

In short, Mr. Chairman, "phase two" in the war against terrorism—a long-term struggle as the President honestly has told us—must be defined not only by what we destroy, but by what we build, not only by what we stand against but what we stand for.

Thank you.

TESTIMONY OF

GEN. GEORGE A. JOULWAN (RET)

FORMER NATO SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER

BEFORE THE

SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 7, 2002

"WHAT'S NEXT IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM?"

Mr. Chairman. Thank you for inviting me to testify here today. At the outset I want to thank you Mr. Chairman and this Committee for your support during my time on active duty and for the important role you have played in the development and implementation of American foreign policy.

You have asked me to look at several questions as part of your effort to better understand what we are confronting in this war to defeat terrorism. Specifically, what are our next steps in Afghanistan, how do we "drain the swamp" of terrorism, and how do we foster better civilian and military cooperation.

Let me make some brief points then respond to your questions.

- First we are at war. But it is a different war than those we fought in the past. There are no front lines. The enemy is dispersed and operates in small cells. The underpinnings of this threat are in its religious radicalism and its hatred of the United States and the civilization that embraces freedom, tolerance and human dignity. It is an enemy willing to commit suicide of its young to achieve its aims and with little regard for human life. While the enemy may be small in number it would be wrong to underestimate the threat—or the depth of their convictions.
- Second, the al Qaeda Network has been in place for years if not decades. We as a Nation have been surprised at the number of countries from which al Qaeda operates and the "sleepers" who provide assistance and comfort to terrorist in many democratic countries including our own. Such is the pervasiveness of this threat. While it would be wrong to paint al Qaeda 10 feet tall, it would equally be wrong to dismiss the pervasiveness of the threat. I adhere to a very basic principle—*never* underestimate your enemy.
- Third, let me underscore what President Bush and his advisors have been saying—this will be a lengthy campaign not of months but years. We have bought some time in the disruption we have caused the al Qaeda terrorists but do not for a minute

believe we have eliminated nor greatly diminished the threat to our homeland and to our allies and friends. We have not. While we Americans are used to quick action and return to normalcy, the Congress, the media and our elected leaders must prepare our Country for a long struggle. During the Cold War we demonstrated a commitment and resolve for over 40 years. That commitment and resolve transcended political party and labels such as liberal and conservative. And we prevailed. In this fight we need that same resolve and commitment for *however long it takes*—and Mr. Chairman, we will prevail.

- Fourth point. The war on terror is being conducted on three fronts. One front is Afghanistan and the surrounding region. Another is here in our homeland. And the third is global in scope.
- In Afghanistan we acted swiftly to punish those who killed so many innocent people in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania. Indeed our military actions were out in front, at times, of the political decisions needed to provide clarity and direction for the campaign plan. We surprised al Qaeda, Bin Ladin and their supporters with the swiftness of our action and the resolve of the American people. The surprise attack on the United States was answered in weeks not months or years. The resolve of the American people to take the fight to this new enemy has been resolute and unwavering.
- When the Taliban and al Qaeda chose to stand and fight they were defeated. The union of Northern Alliance fighters and U.S. and British Special Forces has been extremely effective in bringing accurate, deadly air strikes on the enemy.
- But the war in Afghanistan is not over. The leadership of al Qaeda has still not been killed or captured. We have disrupted the enemy's activities but not rendered him ineffective. Without constant pressure the enemy can reconstitute and pose a threat to the new interim government and to our troops on the ground. Intelligence collection and sufficient U.S. ground troops are needed to ensure the al Qaeda and Taliban are not just disrupted but defeated.

This means staying in South Asia. It means developing a stronger relationship with Pakistan that is economic and political, as well as military. It means involvement in resolving the potentially dangerous dispute between India and Pakistan.

Mr. Chairman, it was clear from the outset that the only way we were going to be successful in Afghanistan and beyond was to enlist global support. That support has been there from the beginning. The stand up attitude of the British confirms the special nature of our relationship and NATO's invoking of Article 5 for the first time in its history are two best examples. There are others as well. Australia has troops on the ground and Japan is supplying ships and aid for the war effort, which is unprecedented.

In addition, Russia, despite the ups and downs in our relations has been supportive. President Putin, to his credit, has decided to use this opportunity to seek common ground with the United States and broaden our relationship. As you know, Mr. Chairman,

I had a Russian Three Star General as my deputy for Russian forces in Bosnia. We do have common interests and can build a foundation for better relations in the future.

Also, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are providing bases for U.S. and Coalition forces. Part of the reason we have had such immediate access to bases in both these countries is because Americans have been training there since 1995 as part of the Partnership for Peace developed between NATO and the states of the former Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union. Engagement works, Mr. Chairman, and our allies and partners are important in this global fight against terror.

As I said before, Mr. Chairman, we should not be lulled into thinking we have "drained the swamp" of terrorism in Afghanistan or anywhere else quite yet. Afghanistan is still a dangerous place. The two priorities in the near term are clear. One is a combat mission to disrupt and defeat al Qaeda and the terrorists. The second is an international security force in Afghanistan to provide security for the interim government and the multitude of agencies committed to rebuilding Afghanistan after the devastating years of Taliban rule.

Both efforts are important. Both efforts need to compliment each other. And both efforts require U.S. leadership and direction. I believe there are some lessons from Bosnia that we can apply to Afghanistan.

We went into Bosnia in the winter of 1995 in the worst terrain in Europe and in six months accomplished all military tasks—separating 200,000 armed insurgents in 30 days, transferring land in 45 days and demobilizing all warring factions in 180 days. NATO did so with a coalition of forces from 36 nations including, for the first time, a brigade of Russian troops. Unlike the UNPROFOR—the UN protection force—we had clarity of mission, unity of command, and clear robust rules of engagement. The civilian side was not well organized or as successful. Six years later U.S. and NATO troops are still in Bosnia and the unemployment rate is higher than it was in 1995. We are better than that as a Nation and as an Alliance. Clearly the military can bring about an absence of war; but it is the civilian follow-on agencies that will bring true peace.

Therefore my fifth point is that we must have an effective integrated disciplined multinational team with clear objectives and milestones as the follow-on force in Afghanistan. This is not nation building but security building. We did not do so 10 years ago in Afghanistan. We must not make that same mistake again.

As we know, al Qaeda is not confined to Afghanistan. I uncovered an al Qaeda cell in Bosnia in 1996. It has a global reach. And President Bush is right; we cannot wait for the next attack in order to take the next step. We must anticipate. We must be proactive not reactive. We must take on those who support terrorist organizations with a global reach. But while doing this, we must take into consideration several criteria. What is the best allocation of our resources, what will it take to succeed, and what impact will this have on the international support we will need over the long term to defeat terrorism. We should not make threats we are not prepared to carry out. We must match requirements with re-

sources. And, while we cannot be tied to the wishes or judgement of the international community, we cannot ignore the very important support it has to offer.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me say that, the most difficult challenge will be that of Governor Ridge and Homeland Security. My prior experience as the Commander of U.S. Forces in Latin America reinforces how vulnerable we are to asymmetrical threats. While missile defense is important and should be pursued, a more daunting challenge is to develop a long-range strategy for the protection of our people here at home. We are vulnerable. We need to better organize the 40 agencies involved in homeland defense—particularly along our borders, which are extremely porous. If the narco traffickers can smuggle 200 metric tons of a chemical called cocaine through our borders every year, what other chemicals can be brought into our country? And make no mistake about it; there is a direct link between the narco traffickers and al Qaeda—not just in Afghanistan but also in South America.

I would also urge that the U.S. military play a key role in homeland defense. I support the idea of a homeland defense CINC. Intelligence collection and sharing is the key to success. We need to ensure that there is effective coordination between our military, intelligence, law enforcement, customs and immigration agencies. The military can help in this effort. In my view, law enforcement is in the lead, the military is in support. The military should serve as the operations coordinator, not the operational commander.

Mr. Chairman, those are the points I wanted to make. In conclusion, let me say the terrorists who carried out the attacks of 11 September greatly miscalculated the resolve and resourcefulness of the American people. I can attest to the quality of our troops and their ability to carry out any mission assigned. And I can assure you those who died on 11 September did not die in vain. I truly believe it is a time for hope not despair. Optimism not pessimism. With the help of this committee and the continued resolve of the American people, we will prevail. Failure is not an option.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for inviting me here today. I look forward to your questions.

TESTIMONY OF

WILLIAM KRISTOL

EDITOR, THE WEEKLY STANDARD; CHAIRMAN, PROJECT FOR THE NEW AMERICAN CENTURY

BEFORE THE

SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 7, 2002

"WHAT'S NEXT IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM?"

Thank you, Chairman Biden, Senator Helms, and members of the committee, for inviting me to testify before you today. You have asked me to address the question, "What's next in the war on terrorism?"

The short answer is that Iraq is next. I am not simply saying that Iraq should be next—although I think it should be. I am rather drawing a straightforward conclusion from President Bush's State of the Union speech, and from the logic of the war itself. The president sees this war differently from our European allies and differently, I think, from the way his predecessor or even his father might have seen it. The president has chosen to build a new world, not to rebuild the old one that existed before September 11, 2001. And after uprooting al Qaeda from Afghanistan, removing Saddam Hussein from power is the key step to building a freer, safer, more peaceful future.

To explain my answer, let me address the basic questions about the nature of the war. Have the events of September 11 fundamentally changed the world? Is our aim to restore the status quo through limited actions or is it a broader attempt to reshape the Middle East and the other breeding grounds of terror? And how and when should we deal with our enemies who possess or will soon possess weapons of mass destruction?

Reviving the status quo would mean that we would be satisfied at having deposed the Taliban, and at having dealt with Osama bin Laden—presuming we eventually find him—and having crippled his al Qaeda network. We would not overly concern ourselves with who's in power in Afghanistan, or Pakistan, or in Central and South Asia. We would continue to try to keep Saddam Hussein "in his box" and similarly to contain Iran. We would return to the old Israeli-Palestinian "peace process." We would regard North Korea not as a Stalinist state organized for war but as an arms control problem amenable to an "agreed framework."

This has been the "post-Cold War status quo." It *has* been a period of unprecedented great-power peace. The great international questions of the 19th and 20th centuries, of Napoleonic France, imperial Britain and Japan, the Kaiser and Hitler's Germany, of

Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union, have all been largely settled. Indeed, the only real unresolved great-power issue is that of China.

Yet this has also been a violent time, especially in the region from the Balkans through the Middle East to Southwest and Central Asia. Even before the final collapse of the Soviet Union, Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. Though his army was defeated and driven back to Baghdad, the failure to remove the Iraqi tyrant left a problematic legacy.

Since then, the pace of major terrorist attacks—now directly aimed at America—has increased, as Norman Podhoretz has chronicled in the most recent issue of "Commentary" magazine. The initial attempt to bring down the World Trade Center was in February 1993; two months later, Saddam tried to assassinate President Bush when he visited Kuwait. In June 1996, nineteen U.S. airmen were killed and 240 wounded in the Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia. On August 7, 1998, the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were simultaneously attacked, killing 12 Americans and more than 200 Africans. On October 12, 2000, the USS *Cole* was struck while docked for refueling in Yemen, killing 17 sailors and wounding 39. And during the past decade, there have been dozens, if not hundreds, of smaller attacks—as well as untold numbers of foiled, failed or postponed assaults.

Despite these escalating costs, American policy has implicitly considered the costs of significant U.S. action against terrorists as higher still. As Podhoretz points out, this is a tradition that began during the Cold War. But it has persisted through the Soviet Union's final days and through the Clinton Administration. Even as terrorists and rogue regimes lost their superpower sponsor, they learned there would be few consequences from attacking America. President Clinton's policy was, as his first CIA director James Woolsey has said, "Do something to show you're concerned. Launch a few missiles into the desert, bop them on the head, arrest a few people. But just keep kicking the ball down the field." Maintain the status quo.

Is that the goal of this war?

No. Since September 11, President Bush has been clear—and increasingly detailed and articulate—that there has been a fundamental shift in U.S. policy and strategy. On the evening of the attacks, he vowed to bring to justice "those who are behind these evil acts." Yet by September 20, when he addressed a joint session of Congress, he had determined that we were at war not only with a group of terrorists directly responsible for the attacks but with "every terrorist group of global reach" and with the "nations that provide safe haven to terrorism," as well.

Over the past few months, the president's views of "our mission and our moment" have progressed further still. On November 6, he assured the Warsaw Conference on Combating Terrorism that the United States would wage war on terror "until we're rid of it." He also saw the potential threat of terrorists armed with chemical, biological, radiological or even nuclear weapons: "We will not wait for the authors of mass murder to gain the weapons of mass destruction." And shortly afterward, the president shifted his emphasis from terrorist groups to terror-loving states: "If you develop weap-

ons of mass destruction [with which] you want to terrorize the world, you'll be held accountable."

The State of the Union address marked the maturation of the Bush Doctrine. This war, according to the president, has "two great objectives." The first is defeating terrorism. The second objective, marking the most significant declaration by an American president in almost 20 years, is an unequivocal rejection of the international status quo. "The United States of America," said President Bush, "will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons."

And President Bush singled out three regimes, North Korea, Iran and Iraq, as enemies; they constitute an "axis of evil" that poses "a grave and growing danger." Nor will he "stand by, as peril draws closer and closer." Time, he said, "is not on our side." The president is thus willing to act preemptively and, if need be, unilaterally. This is a matter of American self-defense.

The Bush Doctrine seeks to eliminate these weapons and the dictatorial regimes that would use them. The president also seeks to challenge tyranny in general. "No nation is exempt," the president said, from the "true and unchanging" American principles of liberty and justice. Moreover, our role with respect to those principles will not be passive. According to the president, "America will take the side of brave men and women who advocate these values around the world, including the Islamic world," and will do so because it is the only lasting way to build "a just and peaceful world beyond the war on terror." This is now a strategic imperative as much as a moral one.

The president's words augur a fundamental departure from the U.S. policies of the past decade, from the pseudo-sophisticated "realism" of the first Bush Administration or the evasive "multilateralism" of the Clinton years. The Bush Doctrine rests on a revived commitment to the principles of liberal democracy and the restoration of American military power.

If the president has defined a new goal—or reminded us of what Americans have always regarded as our true purpose in the world—how do we get there? The president and his lieutenants have suggested answers to what the next steps should be.

Since September 11, we have all understood that this will be a large and long war. Already it is being waged on a variety of fronts. The campaign in Afghanistan is far from complete. The Taliban has been routed, al Qaeda's safe haven destroyed. But while bin Laden is on the run, he is still on the loose. The initial battles have been successful, but true victory in Afghanistan will be measured in the long-term effort to create a viable and stable state that protects individual liberties and promotes justice. Nor can victory in Afghanistan be ensured without securing Pakistan.

The campaign against al Qaeda now is taking American soldiers into Southeast Asia. More than 600 troops have been deployed to the Philippines to help the government of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in its war against the Abu Sayyaf group of Muslim extremists. Singapore and Malaysia both have arrested terrorists with al Qaeda connections and the Bush Administration is stepping up pressure on the Indonesian government to do the same. The trail is also likely to lead into Somalia and elsewhere in Africa.

The presence of North Korea in President Bush's "axis of evil" underscores his larger view of this war. The administration previously has taken somewhat contradictory stands on North Korea, first suggesting it would overturn the Clinton Administration's policy and then to maintain it. North Korea may be impoverished and isolated, but it is extremely dangerous. American policy must be to change the North Korean regime, not simply to contain it and coexist with it.

The president also makes it clear that he regards the Middle East as occupying the central front in this war, and that the problem is political, not religious. What links Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, and the mullahs in Tehran is a common hatred of America and a desire to drive America out of the region. President Bush wishes to promote the principles of liberty and justice especially in the Islamic world.

The principal obstacles to that goal are the regimes in Iran and Iraq. Ever since the revolt against the shah, experts have been arguing that eventually shared interests would create a rapprochement between Washington and Tehran. "Openings" to Iran are like the first blooms of spring. But they are just as ephemeral. Iran's offer to rescue American aviators hit in Afghanistan has been more than offset by the discovery of its arms shipments to the Palestinian Authority. The character of this Iranian regime is obvious, and implacable.

But, as Charles Krauthammer wrote in the "Washington Post" last Friday, the good news is that Iran "is in the grips of a revolution from below. We can best accelerate that revolution be the power of example and success. Overthrowing neighboring radical regimes shows the fragility of dictatorship, challenges the mullahs' mandate from heaven and thus encourages disaffected Iranians to the rise. First, Afghanistan to the east. Next, Iraq to the west."

This summarizes the strategic implication of President Bush's war aims. We may never definitely know, for example, whether Saddam had a hand in the events of September 11; the relationship between Mohamed Atta and Iraqi intelligence may be lost in the mists of Prague. But Iraqi involvement would come as no surprise. After all, Saddam Hussein has remained at war with the United States since 1991. Every day, his air defenses target U.S. and British aircraft enforcing the no-fly zones over northern and southern Iraq. He flouts the UN resolutions agreed to following the Gulf War. And we know that Iraqi-sponsored terrorists have tried to kill an American president and Saddam's agents were likely involved in the effort to bring down the World Trade Center in 1993.

And Saddam's efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction have ruled out a return to the status quo strategy of containment. President Bush has asked himself how this man will behave once he acquires these weapons. The delicate game of nuclear deterrence, played with Saddam Hussein, is an unacceptable risk.

A military campaign against Iraq is also something we know how to do. Other than the Euphrates River and Saddam's palace guard, nothing stood between the U.S. VII Corps and Baghdad in March 1991; the Army even developed a plan for encircling and reducing the city in one move. Despite the weakness of the sanctions regime over the past decade, and Saddam's care and feeding of his army

at the expense of the Iraqi people, the Republican Guard is probably less formidable now than it was then.

Moreover, as operations in Afghanistan show, the precision-strike capabilities of U.S. forces have improved. While the Iraq campaign would be far larger and would demand the immediate and rapid commitment of substantial American ground troops—and though we should not underestimate the lengths to which Saddam will go once he understands that the goal is to remove him from power or kill him—the military outcome is nearly certain.

The larger question with respect to Iraq, as with Afghanistan, is what happens after the combat is concluded. The Iraqi opposition lacks the military strength of the Afghan Northern Alliance; however, it claims a political legitimacy that might even be greater. And, as in Kabul but also as in the Kurdish and Shi'ite regions of Iraq in 1991, American and alliance forces will be welcomed in Baghdad as liberators. Indeed, reconstructing Iraq may prove to be a less difficult task than the challenge of building a viable state in Afghanistan.

The political, strategic and moral rewards would also be even greater. A friendly, free, and oil-producing Iraq would leave Iran isolated and Syria cowed; the Palestinians more willing to negotiate seriously with Israel; and Saudi Arabia with less leverage over policymakers here and in Europe. Removing Saddam Hussein and his henchmen from power presents a genuine opportunity—one President Bush sees clearly—to transform the political landscape of the Middle East.

Conversely, the failure to seize this opportunity, to rise to the larger mission in this war, would constitute a major defeat. The president understands "we can't stop short." But imagine if we did: Saddam and the Iranian mullahs would be free to continue their struggle for dominance in the Persian Gulf and to acquire world-threatening weaponry. Our allies in the region who have truly stood with us—like Israel, Turkey and now Pakistan and Hamid Karzai's nascent government in Afghanistan—would feel a lonely chill. And our allies in Europe, who may enjoy a moment's smugness at the defeat of the U.S. "hyperpower," would soon begin to worry about their own prospects in a world in which terrorists and terrorist states have acquired weapons of mass destruction. Very shortly, for lack of confidence in America's willingness to preserve and shape a global order, our friends would start appeasing our adversaries, and our adversaries' ambitions would grow even greater. Whether we want it or not, we are at a crossroads. We can either take up the task the president has laid out before us, or we can allow the development of a world that will soon grow far more unstable and dangerous.

In short, even if we wished to, it is now impossible to recover the world of September 10, or to find a stable balance of power with the likes of Iraq, Iran and North Korea. Nor can we afford, as the president said, to "wait on events, while dangers gather." And while there are risks involved in carrying out the president's strategic vision, the risks in not doing so are all the greater.

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