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**THE UNITED STATES,  
EUROPE AND THE MAJORITY  
WORLD AFTER 11 SEPTEMBER**

*September 2001*

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## **Executive Summary**

The appalling attacks on 11 September against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon came as a devastating shock to the United States and will have an impact that is likely to be felt for decades. This paper seeks to identify and draw out the contrasting world-views that form the backdrop to these tragic events. It traces the emergence of views that have shaped current United States international security policy, military posture and convictions concerning the globalised free market. It then explores how the majority world - 80% of the world's population that is not part of the North Atlantic system - views the global environment, economic justice and the US-led western consensus that we live in an era of pervasive global progress.

11 September brought this clash of paradigms into sharp focus. The paper explores how the cycle of violence epitomised by the atrocities may be broken in ways that relate both to the immediate situation and the longer term. The conclusion focuses on the potential role of Europe, especially the UK, in offering prospects for positive change.

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# THE UNITED STATES, EUROPE AND MAJORITY WORLD AFTER 11 SEPTEMBER.

## The Unilateral State

In August 2001, President Bush announced that the United States would withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) at a time of its choosing, whether or not an agreement had been reached with Russia. The announcement coincided with the start of work on a national missile defence facility at Fort Greely in Alaska that would, in due course, breach the treaty. It was made three weeks before the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, atrocities that killed over 6,000 people.

The decision was one of a long series taken both by the Bush administration and by the Republican-controlled Congress in the Clinton era, that demonstrated that the United States had developed an international security policy that was unilateralist in outlook, saw little value in arms control treaties and regarded itself as a fundamentally independent player acting in its own security interests rather than working with its allies in Europe and elsewhere.

The list of examples stretches over several years but increased markedly after Bush took office. Prior to the start of 2001, it had included opposition to the proposed International Criminal Court, antagonism to elements of the land mine treaty and the refusal of the US Senate to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Since then, and in addition to withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, it has included a markedly critical approach to the UN light arms negotiations, opposition to proposed talks to prevent the weaponisation of space, and withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocols on climate change. It has even extended to a failure to ratify UN conventions on the international control of terrorism and opposition to the strengthening of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

Within the new security outlook emanating from Washington, the treaties and proposals that the US opposes are all seen as a means of limiting the capacity of the United States to ensure its security, imposing an international regime in which cheats may well prosper but the good guys are constrained.

The US may not see it as a conspiracy as such but, in an obviously unipolar world, lesser states seem intent on tying it down with a series of treaties that persistently limit its capacity to defend itself and its wider interests. But the self-view goes further than this - much as Gulliver was tied down by the Lilliputians, so a mixed group of states seeks to limit a benevolent superpower in its efforts to ensure a peaceful world developing substantially in the American image. As Charles Krauthammer put it recently:

*“Multipolarity, yes, when there is no alternative. But not when there is. Not when we have the unique imbalance of power that we enjoy today - and that has given*

*the international system a stability and essential tranquillity it had not known for at least a century.*

*The international environment is far more likely to enjoy peace under a single hegemon. Moreover, we are not just any hegemon. We run a uniquely benign imperium. (1)*”

This view, which lies at the heart of Republican thinking on international affairs, contrasts markedly with the multilateralist outlook, widely held among America’s European allies, and by much opinion within the United States. This believes that co-operative international behaviour, codified in treaties, is the cornerstone of a more stable and peaceful world order.

Not that the United States is unilateralist in all things. As Krauthammer argues, where it is in US interests to have agreements, then they are acceptable. Thus, NATO may expand eastwards, the North American Free Trade Area is welcomed, and many aspects of world trade negotiations serve US interests. But the policy is highly selective and it fits a paradigm in which US security interests are paramount and that the only way to ensure peace and prosperity is for the United States to have freedom of action, whatever the effects on the world in general and its allies in particular. Criticisms are unwarranted and short-sighted, for what is good for the United States is necessarily good for the world.

That this has created major strains in transatlantic relations is clear enough, even if most of the criticisms from European political leaders have been expressed in private. Opinion formers and commentators across Europe have expressed much more open dismay and consternation, and their views have been exemplified in many areas of security and foreign policy where clear transatlantic differences are emerging.

Until 11 September, it would have been reasonable to predict that the unilateralist paradigm would lead to further tensions with Europe, contrasting increasingly with a European perspective putting far greater emphasis on multilateral co-operation being expressed in many different ways. There was considerable public concern over the US withdrawal from the Kyoto protocols and genuine if private anger at the opposition to the bio-weapon convention. A number of European states had severe reservations about missile defence and were also beginning to work towards preventing an arms race in space.

There was a greater commitment to seeking a settlement on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the European Union moved rapidly to engage with North Korea in the wake of a diminished US interest. Russian sensitivities over NATO enlargement were more clearly recognised in Western Europe, and there was concern over the risk of elevating China to the status of a threat to western interests.

More generally, one of the effects of European enlargement has been to bring in countries such as Sweden, joining the Netherlands, Ireland and others that take a more progressive stance on a number of core international issues, not least climate change, the world debt

crisis and conflict prevention and resolution. This adds to a longer-term European culture of co-operation that has developed over more than five decades and results in a far greater salience for multilateral co-operation, even where agreements may not be to the short-term advantage of individual participants.

The paramilitary attacks on 11 September against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon came as a devastating shock to the United States and will have an impact that is likely to be felt for decades. The sheer traumatic effect of the destructive collapse of the world's largest and most significant financial complex and the damage to the core of US military organisation, will lead to many changes in the defence posture, stretching far beyond the military responses of the coming months.

The initial response from European governments, and indeed from many states across the world, was of shock, followed by genuine sympathy for the suffering caused and a willingness to work together to bring the perpetrators to justice. In the United States, the signs are that the attacks will confirm the administration in its dominant paradigm. In a rhetoric that raises Cold War memories, the leading state of the free world is now under attack, not from the Soviet Union but from international terrorism, and a coalition of freedom-loving peoples must be assembled to combat this global evil, waging wholesale war on the terrorists and their sponsors.

### **The View from the Republican Right**

This response is a natural reaction from within the current US security paradigm, a paradigm that has taken shape since the end of the Cold War. President Clinton's first CIA Director, James Woolsey, characterised the security transition of the early 1990s in terms of having slain the dragon but now living in a jungle full of poisonous snakes. A consensus then emerged from US intelligence agencies and security analysts that the United States faced just two potential rivals and two regions of instability, together with diverse threats from rogue states and terrorists. (2)

It is a view that pre-dates the Bush administration but was then embraced and enhanced by it, and is in the context of an attitude that was neatly expressed by President Bush during his election campaign when he contrasted the certainties of the Cold War era with the volatile world of the new century:

*...it was a dangerous world and we knew exactly who the 'they' were. It was us versus them and we knew exactly who them was. Today we're not so sure who the 'they' are, but we know they're there. (3)*

Of the two potential threats, Russia and China, the former is impoverished and unlikely to redevelop any serious military power base for at least a decade. China, on the other hand, is seen very much as a rising power. Its per capita income may be less than one twenty-fifth of that of the United States, but with four times the population, a rapidly growing economy and increasing defence expenditure, it is seen as perhaps the only state likely to challenge US hegemony.

Given the effect of crippling military spending in the Soviet Union of the 1980s, consequent in part on SDI, it is easy to envisage missile defence as a welcome way of forcing China to spend heavily on nuclear forces. This would thus divert resources and expertise from its civil economy, a useful outcome even if this does run counter to the view of sectors of the US business community who see China as an opportunity for trade and investment.

The two regions considered crucial for US interests, North East Asia and the Persian Gulf, are both seen to exhibit systemic instability not least through the behaviour of “rogue states” such as North Korea, Iraq and Iran. These all require containment, including the forward basing of substantial military forces, and, in the case of Iraq, this containment is an aggressive mix of military and economic instruments of action.

Even prior to the atrocities of 11 September, the Middle East was seen as pivotal to US security interests. In part this was due to the enduring support for Israel, but more significant is the increasing dependence on Gulf oil. With the Persian Gulf region holding two-thirds of world oil reserves, control of that region is seen as fundamental to US interests, requiring the presence of the Fifth Fleet in the Gulf itself and troops in most Gulf states, not least Saudi Arabia.

More generally, the category of “rogue state” is variable, but has included, at different times, Syria, Sudan, Afghanistan and Libya as well as Iran, Iraq and North Korea. Their significance to Washington lies partly in their refusal to accept US hegemony, partly through their geo-strategic location and partly as perceived sponsors of paramilitary and terrorist groups.

In one sense it is a perception that has been massively re-inforced by the New York and Washington attacks, primarily in relation to Afghanistan and, to an extent, Iraq, but it has been complicated by the need to develop a coalition, with this resulting in subtle changes of attitude towards Syria and Iran.

## **Taking the High Ground**

In the face of this perception of multiple threats, of the “jungle full of snakes”, the United States has engaged in a remarkable transformation of its armed forces, with major new developments under way that will serve to maintain control in an uncertain world. While there have been substantial cuts in personnel in the Air Force, Navy and Army, all three services have shed much of their Cold War baggage while keeping and enhancing those forces suited to rapid deployment and long-range strike. It is notable that the US Marine Corps has retained almost all its strength, including forward bases such as Okinawa. (4)

More generally, many overseas bases have closed but key centres such as Guam, Diego Garcia and a few large bases in Europe and the Middle East have been retained. The navy has retained most of its carrier-based air power and supports this with cruise missiles, and the air force has developed a range of stand-off weapons, air expeditionary wings and

long-range power projection, including an ability to strike any place on the earth's surface from the continental United States. Meanwhile, the army places more emphasis on special operations, and counter-insurgency training has expanded to include more than fifty client states. (5)

For the future, two further forms of power projection are under way. One is the UCAV (uninhabited combat aerial vehicle), a pilotless plane that can deliver ordnance over long range while guided from a base that could be thousands of miles away. An experimental reconnaissance version recently flew across the Pacific to Australia, without human intervention. UCAVs are being developed with remarkable speed and could replace a large proportion of current air force and navy planes within a decade. (6)

Beyond that lie the directed energy weapons, lasers and similar that work at the speed of light. This area of research and development is receiving increasing finance and the first substantial example, the Airborne Laser, is within three years of its first test. After that will come the Space-Based Laser, ostensibly developed for missile defence but capable of attacking targets across the earth's surface with impunity. As with the Airborne Laser, this is receiving boosted funding and what was originally expected to be a system for the 2020s could be brought forward, at least on an experimental basis, by a decade. (7)

Directed energy weapons form key parts of the missile defence programme, but they also link in directly with the more substantive issue of the control of space. The appointment of General Richard Myers, former head of Space Command, as President Bush's Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff confirms this trend, with space seen as the next zone of military operations not least as a focus for an arms race that may need to be controlled by force.

Overall, current and future military developments involve the United States aiming for "full spectrum dominance", the ability to defeat any adversary in any kind of military operation anywhere in the world. As the Chiefs of Staff statement *Joint Vision 2020*, put it, US forces would be able:

*to conduct prompt, sustained and synchronised operations with combinations of forces tailored to specific situations and with access to and freedom to operate in all domains - space, sea, land, air and information. (8)*

If this is indeed the fundamental security paradigm of the United States, then it is inevitable that the response to the traumatic events of 11 September will be both substantial and extensive. But we also have to recognise that this security paradigm exists as one component of a much more general world view developed on the Republican Right, which while not shared by all sectors of American opinion, is increasingly dominating thinking on foreign relations.

At root, this comes from a deep-seated conviction that there is only one economic system, itself set in one particular political context. The system is the globalised free market and the context is liberal democracy. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and most



examples of centrally planned (communist) systems, there is an implicit belief that there can be no other way.

Furthermore, a significant element of the Republican Right attitude is that the United States has an historic mission to be a civilising force in world affairs. History is at an end in that, with the ending of the Cold War, the American way of life is predominant. This does not imply a direct neo-colonial control of the world, but more a shaping, through governmental, business and other processes, of a world economy and polity that is broadly in the US image.

As one of the most significant standard-bearers of the Republican Right, the *Project for the New American Century*, puts it in its statement of principles, “Does the United States have the resolve to shape a new century favourable to American principles and interests?” It believes that this is essential and that it is necessary “to accept responsibility for America’s unique role in preserving and extending an international order friendly to our security, our prosperity, and our principles.” (9)

But this underlying thinking goes further than this, with a refusal, in the more forceful business and political circles, to accept that there *can* be any legitimate alternative. It is simply unthinkable, not least because to accept the possibility of alternatives implies that the dominant model may not be fully valid. There is thus, in this world view, a cultural assumption that no other approach is acceptable, indeed that any other approach must at least be deeply wrong-headed if not malign.

It is for this reason, in particular, that the attacks of 11 September are so significant. It is not just that there was an appalling loss of life, that a key part of the US financial structure was damaged and that the Pentagon itself came under attack. What was also crucial was that the New York Stock Exchange was closed for four days, that the effects spread across many key US industries and that there was economic damage that could well induce a recession. Thus, the attacks represented a real assault on the whole political, economic and security paradigm that has become central to the Bush administration.

## **The View from the Majority World**

In relation both to this global paradigm, and in the more immediate reaction to the 11 September attacks, the attitude of states and peoples in the majority of the world has been significantly different to that of America’s closer allies. Indeed, the specific responses have almost always involved sympathy and human concern, but they have rarely extended to support for the kind of war on terrorism that is being planned from Washington. This can best be understood by exploring an underlying concern with global issues in the majority world that are considered central to any accurate analysis of global security, but differ fundamentally from the view from Washington.

Many middle ranking states among the 80% of the world’s population that is not part of the North Atlantic system have their own entrenched elites. Even so, they are frequently unwilling to accept a global polity shaped by a western political, military and economic

alliance dominated by the United States. China, India and Iran are all states who, in many ways, seek to challenge what they see as a US-led western hegemony, and many of their attitudes and outlooks are shared by numerous other states of the South.

Opposition comes to the fore in many arenas. The World Trade Organisation, together with the IMF and the World Bank are seen essentially as western instruments of international economic dominance, and there remains an abiding resentment at attempts to force through devices such as the Multilateral Agreement on Investments - widely regarded as disadvantaging weaker southern states in their dealings with trans-national corporations.

There is a deep and persistent antagonism to northern states over their attitudes to the global environment, with northern states seen as primarily responsible for the development of global environmental problems, yet not prepared to accept responsibility or take remedial action. In relation to arms control, western attitudes to controlling proliferation are seen very much as “do as we say, not as we do”. Thus the United States may tear up the ABM Treaty in the face of minimal long-term missile proliferation while maintaining an incredibly powerful offensive force of bombers and missiles that can strike anywhere on earth with impunity.

Beyond the roles and attitudes of states there lies an ill-defined yet very widespread suspicion of the west in general and the United States in particular in communities right across the world. In some regions, such as the Middle East, this is out in the open and systematic, frequently connected with US support for Israel, together with an endemic belief that the United States has no right to maintain military control of the Persian Gulf, the other side of the world from its own territory, merely because of its need for oil.

In much of the rest of the world, it is less clear-cut, and relates to a developing perception that the international economy has evolved for the benefit of a substantial elite minority, mainly but not entirely located in a small number of countries of the Atlantic and West Pacific communities. Put simply, the majority world does not readily accept the US-led western consensus that we live in an era of untrammelled and pervasive global progress.  
(10)

## **A Clash of Paradigms**

Independent analysis lends much support to this view - the world economy is now primarily a unimodal free market economy that has delivered patchy economic growth since the end of the Cold War but has singularly failed to deliver economic justice. Many critics in the South would argue that it has persistently delivered economic injustice. The result has certainly been the success of the few at the expense of the many. About a billion people, mainly in North Atlantic and some West Pacific states, are doing very well indeed, but well over two billion survive on less than two dollars a day, and most of the rest struggle to maintain a tolerable standard of living.

International wealth transfers over the last five decades have persistently gone from the poor to the rich through an international trading system dominated by the West and retaining many of the features of the colonial era, exacerbated by a long-term debt crisis originating in the mid-1970s. (11) The end result is a form of economic apartheid, with an increasing rich-poor divide that will continue over the next thirty years and may even accelerate as a global elite surges ahead of the rest.

One of the crudest measures is that the 300 or so dollar billionaires in the world are collectively as wealthy as the poorest 2.4 billion people. In 1960, the richest 20% of the world's people had 70% of the income; by 1991 their share had risen to 85% while the share of the poorest 20% had declined from 2.3% to 1.7%. Put another way, the ratio of global inequality had nearly doubled. It is also notable that the rich-poor gap widened at a faster rate during the 1980s, as free-market liberalisation increased. (12) There are indications that there was a further widening in the late 1990s, a consequence of the severe economic problems affecting first South East Asia and the South Asia, Africa and Latin America. If a global recession develops over the next year or more, those that experience the greatest hardship will certainly be the people of the majority world.

Yet there has been substantial progress in some aspects of development in the South, not least in terms of primary education, literacy and access to communications. An effect of this is that increasing numbers of people are aware of their very marginalisation, leading to a potential revolution of frustrated expectations.

A deeply divided world is also beginning to experience environmental constraints. One manifestation is an increasing dependency of advanced economies on strategic resources imported from the South, most notably oil, but including cobalt, tantalum and industrial diamonds. Oil fuelled the 1991 Gulf War and many other strategic resources feature in major conflicts.

A second and even more significant feature is the recognition that global climate change has massive security implications. While advanced economies in temperate zones may have the resources to adapt to climate change, the progressive drying-out of large areas of the tropics will have fundamental implications for the well-being of the majority of the world's people, with further marginalisation leading to social instability and pressures on mass migration. (13)

Socio-economic divisions are already reflected in many parts of the world in terms of high crime rates and premiums on personal security for the wealthy, but they are also apparent in the development of anti-elite rebellions and insurgencies. Sendero luminoso in Peru, FARC in Colombia, the Zapatistas in Mexico, maoist rebels in Nepal and insurgencies and separatist movements in many states in Asia, the Middle East and Latin America are all indicators of these trends.

There may not be open conflict with major Southern states unwilling to accept a western-dominated world, but there are innumerable ways of responding, not least in different

forms of support for states facing direct confrontation and for many different kinds of paramilitary and insurgent movements, as well as developing forms of deterrence based on missiles and weapons of mass destruction. In other words, there are many ways in which “the weak can take up arms against the strong”, and an apparent US military superiority, with all its force projection, stand-off weapons and advanced technologies, may not be as certain in maintaining the status quo as it might at first believe.

There is abundant experience in recent years to support this view and this long pre-dates the attacks of 11 September. In October 1983, a bomb killed 241 US Marines in Beirut, leading to a rapid US withdrawal from Lebanon. The Gulf War evicted the Iraqis from Kuwait but the regime survived, not least because it already had a force of missiles armed with chemical and biological warheads that it could have used if the security of the regime itself was threatened with destruction.

In 1996, the bombing of a barracks in Dhahran killed 19 Americans and injured hundreds of people, with the US Air Force responding by building a new air base in a remote part of Saudi Arabia at a cost of \$500 million, and now with 10% of the entire personnel on the base focusing on perimeter security. In October 2000, a bomb crippled the USS Cole, one of the world’s most powerful warships, in Aden harbour, killing 17 sailors. Since then, the US Navy has been likened to a *Flying Dutchman* navy, restricting itself to only the most secure of foreign ports. The United States learnt to its cost the problems of security in the embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania but it escaped a much greater disaster when the first attempt to destroy the New York World Trade Center failed in 1993.

To Washington, 11 September was an assault on America that must be met with force; from a southern perspective it is one disastrous incident in a potentially endless war. One recent analysis condemns it as horrific, despicable and unpardonable, but cautions against an automatic “iron fist” response that ignores the underlying context. (14) It points to the frequent use of indiscriminate force by the United States, not least in Korea and Vietnam, and to the bitter mood throughout much of the Middle East and South West Asia, directed partly at the United States because of its perceived dominance of the region but also against autocratic states dependent on continuing US support. The analysis concludes:

*The only response that will really contribute to global security and peace is for Washington to address not the symptoms but the roots of terrorism. It is for the United States to re-examine and substantially change its policies in the Middle East and the Third World, supporting for a change arrangements that will not stand in the way of the achievement of equity, justice and genuine national sovereignty for currently marginalized peoples. Any other way leads to endless war. (15)*

Such a view will find virtually no favour in Washington, representing as it does a quite fundamental contradiction to the current paradigm. Yet it represents a view that is

widespread right across the majority world away from the North Atlantic states, even if it will have little or no effect in the immediate aftermath of the recent attacks.

Instead, the reaction will be driven very much by the current security paradigm. Over the next months, and probably years, military action will seek to destroy the people and supporting network of those presumed responsible for the atrocities of 11 September, and will probably seek also to destroy the Taliban regime in Kabul. In the view of the more hard-line security advisers in the Bush administration, action should also be taken against Iraq and other supporters of anti-American terrorism.

For the Bin Laden network and its associates, such a strong military counter-reaction will have been anticipated and will almost certainly be welcomed. The groups themselves will have dispersed, probably retaining a capability for further attacks on the United States or its allies. They will anticipate very forceful military action and they will expect it to lead to civilian casualties and huge movements of refugees, to instability in Pakistan, to an increasing anti-American mood in the Middle East and to more support for their own cause.

Further complications are the potential for the Saddam Hussein regime to seek a renewed confrontation, and for attempts to gain an Israeli/Palestinian cease-fire to fail. In short, the United States will engage in a sustained war against the paramilitaries, who will see this as one more stage in a cycle of violence that will serve their longer-term strategy of forcing the United States from the Gulf region and bringing about the collapse of the elites of the regime that they so bitterly oppose.

## **Cycles of Violence**

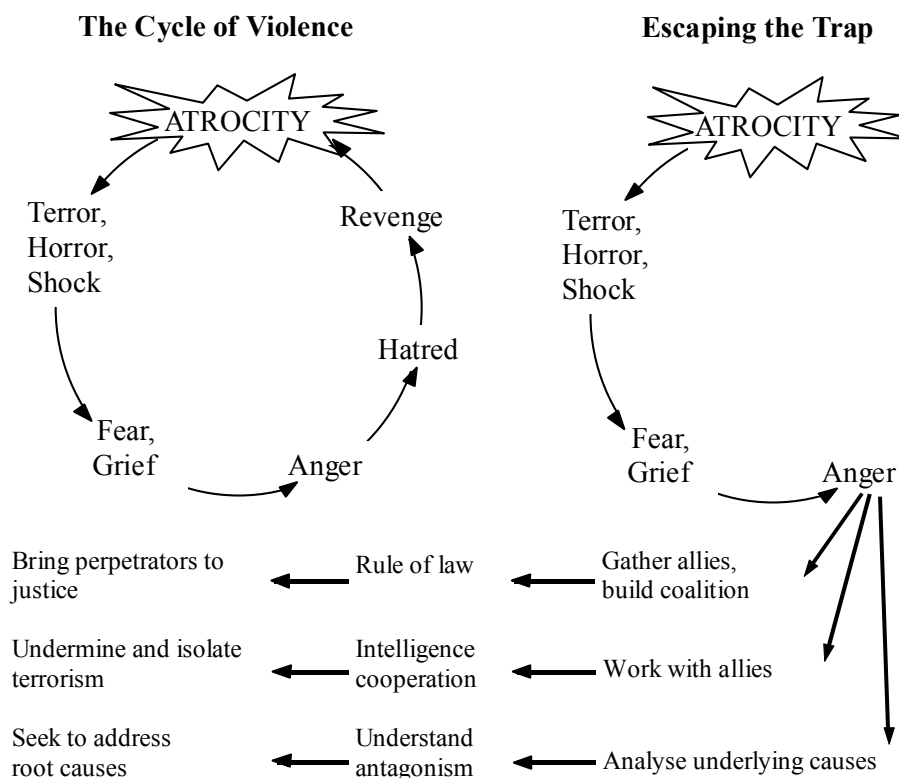
The classic cycle of violence, which ensures that conflict follows conflict, has roughly seven stages: an atrocity is committed resulting in shock and terror, fear and grief follow, and then anger, hatred hardening into bitterness, followed by revenge and retaliation, resulting in a further atrocity. In recent times this cycle has been evident in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in Rwanda and repeatedly in different regions of former Yugoslavia.

It is nevertheless possible for the cycle of violence to be halted. To do this requires a combination of determined powerful leadership, imaginative action, and adhering resolutely to some key principles. In the case of South Africa, Nelson Mandela became convinced while in prison on Robben Island that non-violence, negotiation and reconciliation were the only ways to prevent mass killing on the route to independence and equality. In insisting absolutely on these principles he is widely viewed as having saved millions of lives. Gandhi was the first major exponent this century of the power of a non-violent response to violence, whereby he achieved the expulsion of the British from the jewel in the crown of their empire by leading millions of unarmed illiterate poor people in a sustained campaign of 'satyagraha' or soul-force. Martin Luther King intervened equally effectively in the violence of segregation of the American South, coining the phrase which has circled the world via the internet since 11 September 'an eye

for an eye leaves everyone blind'. Countless other leaders including Aung Saan Suu Khi and the Dalai Lama have shown recently how cycles of violence can be stopped.

The anger felt in the US and elsewhere after the attacks of 11 September is entirely understandable. Nevertheless it would be unwise if it were allowed to result in retaliation causing yet more innocent victims, playing into the hands of the perpetrators and destroying the remarkable coalition of nations willing to support the US. Western leaders have the opportunity to convince those segments of public opinion in favour of revenge attacks that more powerful alternatives are available. The coalition can follow the rule of international law in bringing the perpetrators to justice, setting up the necessary legal instruments to do this, as has been done in the case of former Yugoslavia. The coalition offers an unprecedented opportunity for intelligence co-operation on a global scale to undermine and isolate terrorist activity - physically, financially and in terms of preventing acquisition of weapons of mass destruction.

The cycle of violence can be broken at a deeper level by an analysis of the underlying causes. An intelligent understanding of the antagonism that lies at the root of such atrocity, coupled with a willingness to address its causes, is the only long-term method to prevent its recurrence.



## Shifting Paradigms

The return of the Republican Right and the early policies of the new Bush administration indicate an American view of the early 21st century that is far removed from such an understanding. Instead, they envisage a Pax Americana, a global system in which US political, economic and social power, in concert with its allies, but clearly and unequivocally led from Washington, maintains dominance of the world system. It does so in a manner that ensures peace and stability for elite states, and the necessary control and policing of potential threats.

At root is the view of the benevolent hegemon. It may act in its own interests, it may follow a studiously unilateral attitude to arms control and other agreements, and it will certainly maintain all the military force required for near-total security. Yet this is simply predicated on an underlying assumption that has attained the status of an article of faith - what is good for America is good for the world.

It follows that it is essential to respond to the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks in a vigorous and sustained manner, seeking to defeat the attackers as well as any other sources of political violence and terrorism that threaten global peace and security. It is entirely inappropriate to seek to address the motives of the groups responsible, or to examine those aspects of US foreign and security policy that may be connected to their development.

Much of the rest of the world is operating in a quite different paradigm. At the global level, the United States and its allies actually represent the dominant problem - the principle obstacle to a more just and peaceful world. Within this context, the attacks of 11 September are seen as despicable and are wholeheartedly condemned, with a common desire to bring the perpetrators to justice. But a response centred on a "war on terrorism" that does not even begin to consider the root causes of such terrorism will not only fail, it could even make the problem worse.

European opinion is divided. The support for the United States is very strong, and there remains an abiding and proper horror at the events of 11 September. There is also support for action against the perpetrators, though the extent of that action is hotly debated. There is, furthermore a developing unease at the military response now taking shape, an unease that is fuelled by the rhetoric from Washington, building on the prevailing view of the Bush administration, before 11 September, of a deeply unilateralist administration that was notably disinterested in international co-operation.

Within the much more global context, European political opinion is partially if tentatively more ready to consider the alternative analysis. It shows in a more open attitude to debt, to international development assistance, to the problems of climate change and to the need for conflict prevention by civil means. This was exemplified in the 'mainstreaming' of conflict resolution practice at the European Union summit at Gothenberg in June 2001. European leaders have stressed the need for reinforcement of multi-lateral instruments of arms control, for example hosting a conference on non-proliferation and disarmament

with Russia in March 2001. There is now a Europe-wide Convention on Small Arms and many other instances of co-operative approaches to international security.

There is also in Europe a certain unease at the effects of the globalised free market. This comes to the fore in reaction to the sudden yet substantial demonstrations against global capitalism, first at Seattle in 1999, and then in Washington, Prague and especially Genoa. While antagonism to the violence of the protests may be forcefully expressed, it hides a growing concern that post-Cold War progress has not been as expected, and that there may possibly be deep structural problems with the workings of the global economy.

It follows that there is a stronger prospect for arguing for a new security paradigm in Europe, one that embraces policies that go far beyond conventional attitudes. It would be based on the belief that redressing global inequalities and responding to environmental constraints are the core requirements for a stable world order. The former would entail wholesale debt cancellation, a re-ordering of trade policies in favour of the South, and a sustained programme of economic assistance for gendered programmes of sustainable development aimed at the poorest communities. It would also involve radical action on issues such as climate change as part of a move to sustainable economies in elite states, and a sustained commitment to arms control, conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict peace-building.

While most of this is a long way from current policies within the European Union, the climate for influencing opinion and offering an alternative paradigm is increasingly receptive, and this provides a real opportunity for those with such an analysis to offer. It is, though, radically different from the “benevolent hegemon” view that is now dominating US security policy, but even this may not be entirely disadvantageous.

The policies and outlook of the Bush administration are a throw-back to the Reagan world-view of the 1980s but applied to a much more complex world. They offer simple solutions, based finally on military power, but they are increasingly viewed as extreme, not just outside the United States but within the very active channels of political debate in the US itself.

In other words, the very extremism of the policies is demonstrating in a very clear way the nature of the choice for the next decade or more. On the one hand is a view that the globalised free market is producing a world made in the civilising American image and that the United States has an historic mission to promote security, by whatever means that are necessary, in the interests of itself and of like-minded people everywhere.

It is a view of the world, in 2001, not unlike the British outlook exactly 100 years ago, when Pax Britannica was seen from Britain as providing civilised values of relevance to the whole of humankind. The problem was that the majority of humankind did not see it that way, just as the majority world does not and will not accept the era of the New American Century. (16) It took Britain more than half a century to learn to live without its imperial role, to begin to understand the extent of resentment and opposition towards



what we regarded as our benign and civilising imperium. Perhaps our current role may be to support the US in progressing more speedily and at less cost than we did.

Today the majority view is of a world dominated by an elite that acts primarily in its own interests, seeking to maintain a global economic system that is deeply flawed, singularly failing to deliver economic justice, and demanding of radical change. In the context of the Bush administration, Western Europe lies somewhere in between, troubled by the seeming extremism of the current US approach, and just possibly receptive to an alternative view. It may not be a fundamental difference but it offers real prospects for positive change and certainly is the most important feature of the current transatlantic divide.

What is undeniable is that the disasters of 11 September are bringing this whole clash of paradigms to the fore in a wholly unexpected and specific form, giving it an immediacy that is quite remarkable. There is little doubt that the outcome of the efforts of the United States and some close allies to regain control after the recent traumatic events will affect international security for years to come. It is also clear that the present situation offers an opportunity for understanding the profound issues of our age, for wise action and for international political leadership of a high order.

## Notes

1. Charles Krauthammer. "The Bush Doctrine: ABM, Kyoto and the New American Unilateralism", *The Weekly Standard*, 4 June 2001, Washington DC.
2. Statement by James Woolsey at Senate Hearings, Washington DC, February 1993.
3. A comment made during a campaign speech, early in the 2000 Presidential Election campaign, January 2000.
4. The air force personnel were cut from 579,000 to 361,000 during the 1990s, for the navy it was from 584,000 to 370,000 and the army's cut was of 300,000, about 40% of its strength. The Marine Corps, by contrast, lost barely 10% of its strength.
5. In 1998, some 2,700 special operations troops were involved with training the armed forces of every one of the 19 Latin American states and nine Caribbean states, including armies in Guatemala, Colombia and Suriname that have been widely criticised for human rights abuses. See: Douglas Farah, "Shadowy U.S. Troop Training Operation Spreads Across Latin America", *International Herald Tribune*, 14 July 1998.
6. According to a recent report:

...Boeing has discussed with the Air Force the prospect of employing directed-energy weapons on the UCAV, since there will be ample power generation capability on board. These could be lasers or high-powered microwaves, which would be used to "cook" the sensitive electronics of ground-based systems.
- See: John A. Tirpak, "Send in the UCAVs", *Air Force Magazine*, August 2001.
7. Robert Wall, "Killing Missiles at the Speed of Light", *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, 13 August 2001.
8. *Joint Vision 2020*, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense, Washington DC, 2000.
9. The Project for the American Century was set up in 1997 with the aim of promoting American global leadership in order to shape a new century favourable to American principles and interests. Many of the signatories of its *Statement of Principles* went on to become significant players in the Bush Administration, including Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. See: Thomas E. Ricks, "U.S. Urged to Embrace An 'Imperialist' Role", *International Herald Tribune*, 22 August 2001. Details of the Project for the American Century are available at <[www.geocities.com/newamericancentury/](http://www.geocities.com/newamericancentury/)>.
10. Two examples of alternative analysis are to be found in the magazine *Third World Resurgence* <[www.twinside.org.sg/twr.htm](http://www.twinside.org.sg/twr.htm)> and the non-governmental organisation Focus on the Global South <[www.focusweb.org/](http://www.focusweb.org/)>.
11. Belinda Coote, *The Trade Trap*, Oxfam Publications, Oxford, 1996.
12. Figures from Bimal Ghosh, "Glaring Inequality is Growing Between and Inside Countries", *International Herald Tribune*, 24 January 1997.
13. David Rind "Drying Out the Tropics", *New Scientist*, 6 May 1995.
14. Walden Bello "Endless War?" Focus on the Global South, Manila, September 2001, available at <[www.focusweb.org/publications/2001/endless\\_war.html](http://www.focusweb.org/publications/2001/endless_war.html)>
15. Ibid.
16. A West African joke of the late colonial era was: "The sun never sets on the British Empire because God doesn't trust the British in the dark".