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## September 11 and U.S Relations with Asia: Change and Continuity

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### September 11 and U.S Relations with Asia: Change and Continuity

The terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, most vividly demonstrated by the destruction of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, symbols of American economic and military power, have profoundly changed both the way Americans view themselves and their country's relationships with other nations.

John Lewis Gaddis, an eminent historian at Yale, claims that the post-Cold War era, which began with the collapse of one structure, the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, ended with the collapse of another, the World Trade Center's twin towers on September 11, 2001.<sup>1</sup>

Only time will tell whether the collapse of the World Trade Center towers will eventually prove to be as consequential as the fall of the Berlin Wall twelve years earlier. But one thing is certain: As Americans were relishing unprecedented *national security*, ten years after the end of the Cold War and the dissipation of Soviet nuclear threat, the horrific tragedies of September 11 and the painful aftermath of adjusting to

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<sup>1</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, "And Now This: Lessons From the Old Era for the New One," in Strobe Talbott and Nayan Chanda, eds., *The Age of Terror: America and the World After September 11* (Basic Books and Yale Center for the Study of Globalization, 2001), p. 3.

what a new book describes as “the age of terror,”<sup>2</sup> struck home the vulnerabilities of their *homeland security*.

Gaddis argues that the clearest conclusion to emerge from the events of September 11 is that “the geopolitical position and the military power of the U.S. are no longer sufficient to ensure its security.”<sup>3</sup> He points out that the very term “national security,” invented during WWII and used so frequently during the Cold War, always implied that both threats and vulnerabilities lay *outside* the country. However, in the aftermath of September 11, Americans have not only adopted the concept of “homeland security” -- it has become synonymous with national security.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Terror War: Globalization Gone Awry?**

President Bush called September 11 “the first war of the twenty-first century.” However, scholars call it the first war in the age of globalization.<sup>5</sup> Among the targets of the attacks was globalization itself. After all, as Strobe Talbott, former Deputy Secretary of State in the Clinton Administration, states, globalization is about integration and inclusion but the terrorists’ aim was partition and expulsion. They sought to reverse the benevolent dynamic of globalization and turn core American strengths -- openness and mobility -- into vulnerabilities.<sup>6</sup>

Barely a few years ago, the mainstream discourse on globalization focused on its benign aspects, particularly the seemingly unbounded opportunities globalization entailed, especially for Americans. Thomas L. Friedman of the *New York Times* hailed that globalization had contributed to the emergence of a global market place and the rise of a “homogeneous” global culture that is essentially “the spread of

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<sup>2</sup> Strobe Talbott and Nayan Chanda, eds., *The Age of Terror: America and the World After September 11* (Basic Books and Yale Center for the Study of Globalization, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, “And Now This: Lessons From the Old Era for the New One,” in Talbott and Chanda, *The Age of Terror*, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Gaddis, pp. 8-9.

<sup>5</sup> Kurt M. Campbell, “Globalization’s First War?” *The Washington Quarterly* 25(1)(Winter 2002): 7-14.

<sup>6</sup> Talbott and Chanda, *The Age of Terror*, pp. xii-xiii.

Americanization on a global scale.”<sup>7</sup> To Francis Fukuyama, the end of the Cold War irrefutably vindicated the triumph of free-market capitalism over all other ideological alternatives; hence, “the end of history.”<sup>8</sup> Friedman confidently proclaimed that the “globalization system” had replaced the Cold War system; hence, “the world is ten years old.”<sup>9</sup>

If anything, the attacks of September 11 painfully show that the very instruments of the new world order -- airplanes, liberal policies on immigration and money transfers, and multiculturalism -- can be turned horribly against it.<sup>10</sup> Paul Kennedy, another eminent historian at Yale, puts it succinctly: “Here was a weakness in our own defenses created by one of our social strengths, namely, the permeability of American borders and the mobility and openness of America itself.”<sup>11</sup>

Unfortunately, the U.S. is, and will remain the leading target of terrorists and its vulnerabilities are not limited to home. Using government statistics, Paul R. Pillar, one of the foremost authorities on the subject of terrorism and a former deputy chief of the Central Intelligence Agency’s (CIA) counterterrorism center, points out that one-third of international terrorist incidents recorded during the past two decades involved attacks on U.S. interests (either American property or American citizens).<sup>12</sup> The proportion has been rising, from 31 percent in the 1980s to 37 percent in the 1990s.<sup>13</sup> Pillar summarizes three main factors behind the terrorists’ often targeting U.S. interests.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1999), p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” *The National Interest*, 16 (summer 1989), pp. 3-16.

<sup>9</sup> Friedman, *The Lexus*, pp. 7 and xiii.

<sup>10</sup> Gaddis, “And Now This,” p. 17.

<sup>11</sup> Paul Kennedy, “Maintaining American Power: From Injury to Recovery,” in Talbott and Chanda, *The Age of Terror*, p. 64.

<sup>12</sup> Paul R. Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Washington: Brookings, 2001), p. 57.

<sup>13</sup> The kidnap and brutal killing of Daniel Pearl, the *Wall Street Journal* reporter in Pakistan, is only the most recent incident that supports Pillar’s “the superpower as target” thesis.

<sup>14</sup> These three points are summarized from Pillar, *Terrorism*, pp. 57-66.

## The Superpower as Target

The first reason reflects not only the way in which the U.S. is stronger than anyone else, but one in which it is not: terrorism itself. U.S. strengths are revealed in so many aspects: With the largest economy in the world (about \$10 trillion), the U.S. accounts for one-third of all the defense expenditures of all 190 states.<sup>15</sup> Forty percent of all the internet traffic occurs in the U.S., and over 70% of all recent Nobel laureates work in American universities and laboratories.<sup>16</sup> However, America's defenses are not impregnable, as each successful terrorist operation against the U.S. (the Oklahoma City bombing, the bombing of the U.S. embassies in Africa, the World Trade Center attack, and so on) demonstrates. Offensively, the U.S. does not use terrorism at all. Since terrorism is one of those few areas in which the U.S. does not have an advantage, it is a promising tool for those who have strong grievances against the U.S. Terrorism, therefore, offers the allure of "asymmetric advantage" and becomes the one weapon with which the weak have a chance to be effective.

The second main reason the U.S. is a prime target of terrorism is the sheer number and accessibility of U.S. interests that can be targeted. The ironies of globalization include the vulnerability that starts at home, a large and open society. The U.S. has, with Canada, the world's longest undefended border, and a border with Mexico that is another 2,000 miles long. The U.S. also receives a disproportionate share of international travelers, in part a reflection of the appeal of its economic and cultural systems. For instance, in fiscal year 2000 there were 533 million admissions to the U.S., and 66 percent of the total admissions were aliens.<sup>17</sup>

The U.S. also exports more people than any other country. The official U.S. presence overseas includes diplomatic representation in 160 countries, dozens of consulates, delegations to international organizations, and other missions, for a total of 290 diplomatic posts overseas as of late 2000.<sup>18</sup> More than thirty U.S. government

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<sup>15</sup> A whopping Department of Defense budget of \$312 billion is authorized for FY 2002. Department of Defense, *Defense Almanac* (<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/almanac/> [2 March 2002]).

<sup>16</sup> Kennedy, "Maintaining American Power," p. 59.

<sup>17</sup> Immigration and Naturalization Service, *Monthly Statistical Report, September 2000 FY Year End Report* ([www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/aboutins/statistics/msrsep00/INSP.HTM](http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/aboutins/statistics/msrsep00/INSP.HTM) [2 March 2002]).

<sup>18</sup> State Department data, quoted in Pillar, *Terrorism*, p. 59.

agencies operate overseas, employing more than 14,000 Americans and about 30,000 foreign nationals.<sup>19</sup> In addition, as of 30 September 2000, out of the 1.38 million U.S. military personnel on active duty, about 258,000 were serving outside the U.S. and its territories.<sup>20</sup> Added to this official presence is the enormous overseas commercial presence of American companies and individual Americans traveling for business or pleasure. In a way, there seem to be too many American targets, and a terrorist needs only one good target.

Thirdly, the role of the U.S. as leader of the West entails a further reason for special resentment against it. The Islamic militants in many parts of the world wail against America's cultural contamination and other forms of imperialism.<sup>21</sup> U.S. policies have been equally unacceptable to them.

In sum, globalization has undoubtedly brought about positive benefits; yet, as the September 11 attacks demonstrate, it also changes the way war is fought. The problem -- the instruments of globalization -- may also hold key to the solution. The Bush Administration's policies toward other nations after September 11 reflect this paradoxical approach. Nowhere is this approach more evident than in the Asia-Pacific region.

### **“Everything Has Changed”**

In his address to the joint house of Congress on September 20, just days after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, President Bush made a point of internationalizing the nation's sense of outrage and resolve:

This is not...just America's fight. And what is at stake is not just America's freedom. This is the world's fight, this is civilization's fight, this is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance

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<sup>19</sup> Overseas Presence Advisory Panel, *America's Overseas Presence in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Government Printing Office, 1999), p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> Department of Defense, *Defense Almanac* (<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/almanac/almanac/people/serve.html> [2 March 2002]).

<sup>21</sup> See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (Touchstone Books, 1998).

and freedom.<sup>22</sup>

In portraying the anti-terror war as a global campaign against evil, the President also sought to exert international pressure on those states or entities that wavered or refused support. On the night of the attacks, Bush declared in his televised address to the nation: "The U.S. will make no distinction between those who committed these acts and those who harbor them." Signaling a shift in the Pentagon's policy of using precision bombing as its weapon of choice, Bush said that "the U.S. will be far more open to sending in ground forces to capture or kill terrorists or to punish regimes that aid or abet them."<sup>23</sup> That declaration, of course, defined the subsequent military operations in Afghanistan to rout the Taliban regime from power and destroy the al-Qaeda terrorist organization led by Osama bin Laden.

"Everything has changed" was, as some observers point out, the commonplace in Washington and elsewhere in the U.S. after the September 11 attacks.<sup>24</sup> The partisan bickering in Congress came to an abrupt halt in a show of national unity. The Bush Administration also invested considerable diplomatic skills in fostering a global coalition against terrorism -- in an apparent reversal of a foreign-policy style that was being criticized both at home and abroad as unilateralist.<sup>25</sup>

This strategy proved successful. America's allies saw the rare occasion of an attack on their protector (and one against innocent civilians at that) as an unusual opportunity to show their solidarity and loyalty. NATO responded immediately by

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<sup>22</sup> "A Nation Challenged; President Bush's Address on Terrorism Before a Joint Meeting of Congress," *The New York Times*, 21 September 2001, p. B4, from *Lexis-Nexis*.

<sup>23</sup> Lionel Barber, "America's War: This Week's Attack on the US Was Launched From Within, and George W. Bush's Fight Against Terrorism Will be Prosecuted at Home As Well As Abroad," *The Financial Times*, 14 September 2001, p. 14, from *Lexis-Nexis*.

<sup>24</sup> Douglas Paal, "President Bush's Visit to APEC in China: A Changed Agenda After September 11," October 2001 ([http://www.asiasociety.org/publications/update\\_bushapec.html](http://www.asiasociety.org/publications/update_bushapec.html) [13 November 2001]), p. 2; and Nicholas Platt, "September 11: The Impact on U.S. Relations with Asia," speech given to the World Affairs Council of Greater Richmond, 15 January 2002.

<sup>25</sup> Many countries had criticized the withdrawal of the U.S. under the Bush Administration from the Kyoto Protocol on global climate change and the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as the administration's determined effort to develop missile defense systems.

invoking, for the first time in its 52-year history, Article 5 of its founding treaty, declaring the attack on America to be an attack on the alliance as a whole, enabling America to call on its allies for military support.<sup>26</sup> Australia also invoked the ANZUS mutual defense treaty for the first time, making it possible for its navy to support the U.S. fleet and even deploy troops.<sup>27</sup>

The most remarkable performance was by Japan. Restricted by Article 9 of its Constitution (the so-called peace constitution), Japan had for years politely resisted the American call for the officially pacifist nation to assume a greater security role. Tokyo's decision to only provide financial support during the Gulf War in 1991 was widely criticized. Resolved to change its image of doing too little, too late, in an international crisis, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced seven steps Japan was willing to take to support the U.S.-led coalition against terrorism:

- dispatching a Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force squadron, including an amphibious airlift support ship, to the Indian Ocean;
- agreeing to lift supplies to Pakistan in Japanese Air-Defense Force cargo planes;
- providing Ground Self-Defense Forces to guard American bases in Japan;
- sending medical teams to the region
- providing AWACS aircraft to supplement U.S. air-control aircraft;
- increasing assistance for an anticipated flood of refugees;
- and downplaying Japan's reaction to Pakistan's nuclear-weapons testing and providing direct official development assistance to Islamabad.<sup>28</sup>

These measures were codified into the historic Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law on 29 October 2001. It will enable Japan's SDF to participate globally as a U.S.

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<sup>26</sup> "Allies in Search of a Strategy," *The Economist*, 22 September 2001, p. 13.

<sup>27</sup> John J. Tkacik, Dana R. Dillon, Balbina Hwang, and Sara J. Fitzgerald, "Preparing for the APEC Summit: Mobilizing Asian Allies for War," *The Heritage Foundation Background Executive Summary*, No. 1487 (4 October 2001), p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Paal, "President," p. 4.



military ally -- at least in the anti-terror war campaign.<sup>29</sup>

The shift in priorities was evident in the Asia-Pacific region. Before the attacks, America's focus in the region was to revive the economic vitality of this once vibrant region recovering from the 1997-99 financial crisis and to deal with an assortment of security issues, such as China's growing stature, the problem of weapons proliferation, and, more fundamentally, the continued viability of America's predominance in the region.

Non-allies, such as Pakistan and China, saw the U.S.-led effort to fight global terrorism as a magnificent opportunity to improve their relationships with the U.S., which had been deteriorating since the end of the Cold War. Other countries, such as India, concerned that their nemeses might be courted by the U.S. in the anti-terror war, also eagerly offered help to the U.S. so as not to be left out. All of a sudden, the world seemed united around the U.S. over the cause of anti-terrorism. Whether it was the appalling nature of the attacks that helped forge a new coalition against terrorism or the desire to appease the U.S. that caused unsavory countries to "rally around the flag" is impossible to tell. What is clear is that the great power consensus, withering after the end of the Cold War, was "back in place in expanded form: the U.S., the European Union, Russia, China, and Japan are all on the same side now – at least on the issue of terrorism."<sup>30</sup>

Also changed are American policies and the public perceptions of various countries. Table 1 is a succinct summary of some quick rewards various countries received from the U.S. according to *Arms Sales Monitor*, a watch-dog group.

(Table 1 about here)

As can be seen from Table 1, cooperation with the U.S. reaped huge benefits. Pakistan and India got the U.S. to lift the sanctions imposed after the two South Asian states had conducted nuclear tests in 1998. Several Central Asian republics of the Former Soviet Union with dubious human rights records now received military aid and training due to their strategic locations for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan.

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<sup>29</sup> Larry M. Wortzel, "Joining Forces Against Terrorism: Japan's New Law Commits More Than Words to U.S. Effort," *The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder*, No. 1500 (5 November 2001), p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> Gaddis, "And Now This," pp. 18-19.

Another change occurred in Americans' attitudes toward foreign countries, as demonstrated in Table 2.

(Table 2 about here)

Table 2, based on the Harris Poll, shows that Americans' attitudes toward foreign countries had become "kinder and gentler." Not only did more Americans see traditional allies, such as the U.K., Canada, and Australia as true allies, but Americans also gave such countries as Russia and China some credit for helping out. Conversely, although even fewer Americans badmouthed the U.K., Germany, and Taiwan, the drop in those that called Russia and China "unfriendly or enemy" was most spectacular. Apparently Americans were grateful to both "friends in need" and "friends of convenience."

Such a reservoir of popular sentiment, buttressed by official rewards brandished as inducements, undoubtedly facilitated anti-terror cooperation.

The first phase of the military campaign ended with the swift dislodging of the highly repressive and reactionary Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the destruction of the Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda organization in that country -- all with a miniscule number of American casualties. Afghanistan was liberated, and the international community got involved in rebuilding this war-torn nation. However, bin Laden's whereabouts have been unknown, and some suspect that he is still in hiding near the Afghan-Pakistani border.

Just as the 1991 Gulf War revolutionized modern warfare and established America's predominance in the "new world order" (George Bush senior's phrase), the 2001 Afghan War inaugurated a new type of warfare, combining air strikes, ground troops, and covert operations, and reconfirmed America as the undisputed singular superpower in the new era (so will George W. Bush junior coin a phrase?).

### **The Asia Nexus: Problem and Solution**

The importance of the Asia-Pacific region to America's foreign policy goals in general, and anti-terrorism in particular, cannot be overstated. The first obvious trend is that global wealth and military power are increasingly concentrated in the Asia-Pacific region. Table 3 shows that by 1998 Asia's share of world GDP had already

been 48 percent larger than that of North America and 61 percent larger than that of Europe. By 2015 Asia's share of world GDP will be projected to be 2.53 times that of North America's and 2.26 times that of Europe's.<sup>31</sup>

(Table 3 about here)

Furthermore, with Europe at ease, all the major flashpoints where great power rivalries may intersect -- the Korean Peninsula, the Taiwan Strait, the South China Sea, and India-Pakistan over Kashmir -- are in the region.<sup>32</sup> As two scholars on strategy argue, this is where the big powers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century reside and, hence, it is the region that commands an increasing portion of U.S. attention and energy across a wide set of issues.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, this is where over 100,000 U.S. troops are forward deployed to cope with any contingency.<sup>34</sup> This is also where the U.S. has long maintained a hub-and-spoke alliance system for years serving as the bedrock for the region's peace and stability.<sup>35</sup>

Beneath the surface calm extant in much of the region there are deep cleavages and long-time disputes that could undermine peace. The two most obvious examples: over the course of the next decade some strategists believe that there is a real danger that the U.S. could be drawn into war over the long-standing disputes between North and South Korea or between China and Taiwan. The anti-terrorism campaign has not changed any "strategic fundamentals" of these fissures.

Furthermore, strategically East Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East are linked, as the anti-terrorism campaign demonstrates. In fact, even before September 11,

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<sup>31</sup> For more statistics for each major Asian country, made available on interactive form online, see the website of *Strategic Asia* ([www.strategicasia.nbr.org](http://www.strategicasia.nbr.org)).

<sup>32</sup> Aaron L. Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry," in Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller, eds., *East Asian Security* (MIT Press, 1996), pp. 3-31

<sup>33</sup> Richard J. Ellings and Aaron L. Friedberg, *Strategic Asia 2001-02* (National Bureau of Asian Research, 2001), p. 7.

<sup>34</sup> The latest Pentagon figures (September 2000) show that the total number of U.S. troops stationed in East Asia and Pacific is 101,447. Japan is home of the largest contingent, with 40,159, followed by South Korea's 36,565, and 23,352 afloat. "Active Duty Military Personnel Strengths by Regional Area and by Country" (<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/almanac/almanac/people/serve.html> [2 March 2002]).

<sup>35</sup> Dennis C. Blair and John T. Hanley, Jr., "From Wheels to Webs: Reconstructing Asia-Pacific Security Arrangements," *The Washington Quarterly* 24(1)(Summer 2001): 7-17

many analysts had warned that the Pacific Rim would become the next battleground of global terrorism and yet the region is the least prepared region (save Africa) to combat extremists.<sup>36</sup> The biggest fear is that well-trained militants could possess fissile material within two years.<sup>37</sup>

A full discussion of the multitude of causes for this troubling development is beyond the scope of this paper. But a general picture can be given: Socioeconomic liberalization in East Asia has intensified the marginalization of some groups while breaking down control on these marginalized and potentially extremist sectors of society.

Given Asia's increasingly porous borders and rapidly improving communications, transport, and information infrastructure, these extremists now are able to develop closer political and financial links with militants, arms suppliers, drug dealers, and other shadowy forces in South Asia and the Middle East. This mix of socioeconomic marginalization, loosening political controls, and vanishing borders has created a worrisome situation in Asia.<sup>38</sup>

Southeast Asia, home to the largest Muslim nation (Indonesia) and two other countries with groups threatening to establish fundamentalist Islamic theocracies (Philippines and Malaysia), is surely an important front in the anti-terrorism war, as the main objective shifts to hunting down Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda network. This region has a large number of established Muslim fundamentalist groups sympathetic to Osama bin Laden. Therefore, the region is both an ideal safe haven for him and a potential base of operations from which he could launch terrorist counteroffensives against the U.S.<sup>39</sup>

No wonder the U.S. has quickly turned its attention to the region after the initial military victories in Afghanistan. Even though cooperation has been extended to the areas of criminal justice, money laundering, immigration control, the most important

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<sup>36</sup> Joshua Kurlantzick, "Fear Moves East: Targets the Pacific Rim," *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 1 (winter 2001), pp. 19-29.

<sup>37</sup> Kurlantzick, "Fear Moves East," p. 28.

<sup>38</sup> Kurlantzick, "Fear Moves East," pp. 19-20.

<sup>39</sup> Dana R. Dillon and Paolo Pasicolan, "Southeast Asia and the War Against Terrorism," *The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder*, no. 1496 (23 October 2001), p. 1.

area has been military cooperation.

Since September 11, the U.S. has been rapidly expanding military ties in Asia. Most visibly 600 troops "advise" Filipino troops fighting Muslim extremists of the Abu Sayyaf, whose top lieutenants had ties with al-Qaeda.<sup>40</sup> The U.S. also has talked with Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia about increasing military cooperation to pursue members of al-Qaeda. The Philippines could be a test case because the problems in other countries (e.g., Indonesia) are more serious but the relation with the U. S. in these countries are also not as close. Congress passed a bill to establish counterterrorism training programs for SEA armies.<sup>41</sup>

The U.S. has maintained a military presence in Asia since World War II, anchored by the 40,000 troops in Japan and 37,000 in South Korea. However, starting in the Clinton Administration, the U.S. has begun using the military "as a vehicle for engaging with and managing relations with an increasing number of countries". Countries with ties to the U.S. military in turn get valuable help such as military training or access to equipment.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, the needs arising from the military campaign in Afghanistan and the desire of Russian President Vladimir Putin to improve relations with the U.S. combined to give the U.S. unprecedented access to bases in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf also allowed U.S. troops access to bases in Pakistan for humanitarian and logistic purposes. The Bush Administration says that the U.S. will remain engaged in Central Asia but is not seeking permanent bases there.<sup>43</sup> And it is preparing to conduct a realistic engagement policy with the five Central Asian republics that emphasizes improvements in human rights and the expansion of democratic processes, rather than a strictly base-for-aid

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<sup>40</sup> In a reversal of the "people power" -- democratization that forced the U.S. to close its bases in the Philippines in 1991, a recent rally in Zambonga called on U.S. troops to stay. Raymond Bonner, "'Yankee Don't Go' Is the Message in Philippines Antiterror Rally," *The New York Times*, 25 February 2002, p. A13, from *Lexis-Nexis*.

<sup>41</sup> Sally Buzbee, "Counterterrorism Moves to Southeast Asia," Associated Press, in *The Washington Times*, 18 February 2002.

<sup>42</sup> Buzbee, "Counterterrorism."

<sup>43</sup> David Sands, "U.S. Bases in Asia Said Vital, Transient," *The Washington Times*, 12 February 2002.

relationship.<sup>44</sup>

### **America's Gains, China's Worries**

All these initiatives have served to improve America's diplomatic and strategic positions in the Asia-Pacific region. The U.S. has made military inroads into Central Asia for the first time, and American troops are making a return to Southeast Asia, a region that they vacated after the Vietnam War in the 1970s.

The geopolitical realignment and U.S. gains may be deeply unsettling to China. Beijing is concerned that U.S. military presence in South Asia may exceed the proverbial "short duration" and become a permanent one on a backyard that is strategically crucial to China. The area where the strategic landscape could transform borders China's largest province, Xinjiang, which makes up one-sixth of China's land mass, with restless Muslim populations, and potential oil reserves. Moreover, Beijing feels that the race by several Central Asian republics to court favor with the U.S. may have also done irreparable harm to the six-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which China painstakingly put together in 2000 mainly aimed at cutting off the Islamic militants in Xinjiang.

On the southwestern front, the U.S. has Pakistan's complete cooperation. China has hitherto been Pakistan's staunchest ally and arms supplier. Although it is unlikely that the U.S. can successfully lure Pakistan away from China (Pakistan feels that a return to its role as a trusted intermediary between China and the U.S. can maximize its role and interests), America's simultaneous upgrading of relations with India, Pakistan's sworn enemy who often considers China as its major security threat, cannot be comforting.

On the eastern front, China has reasons to be concerned. Japan's alliance with the U.S. has been upgraded. Bush is willing to talk tough vis-à-vis North Korea, China's ally, on behalf of South Korea. While cooperating with China, the U.S. has not made concessions over Taiwan. The U.S. has reinvigorated military and other relationships with the major members of the ASEAN. The U.S.-Australian alliance is stronger than ever.

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<sup>44</sup> Editorial, "Securing Central Asia," *The Washington Post*, 18 February 2002, p. A22.

But most importantly, U.S.-Russian relations have improved greatly, so much so that Bush invited Putin to his Texas ranch in a demonstration of cordial ties. Russia has been helpful on the question of Central Asian bases. Its opposition to NATO expansion and America's determination to build up its missile defense system has also softened. Indeed, its reaction to Bush's withdrawal from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty was uncharacteristically mild. The improving Russian-American relationship stands to offset the Sino-Russian relationship, which Beijing has assiduously cultivated for years as a counterweight against American "hegemonism."

To be sure, China has not been without rewards. To start off, the anti-terrorism cooperation arrested the further deterioration of U.S.-China relations -- caused by, among other factors, Bush's campaign rhetoric calling China a "strategic competitor" (in contrast to Clinton's formula of "strategic partner"), the EP-3 incident, and Bush's remarks that he will do "whatever it takes" to help Taiwan defend itself against Chinese attacks. Bush traveled to Shanghai in October 2001, one month after the September 11 attacks, to attend the APEC meeting. In February 2002, after his stays in Japan and South Korea, Bush went to visit Beijing, on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Nixon's historic visit to China in 1972. All in all, even though the atmosphere improved, no substantive progress was made on issues dividing the two powers, such as nuclear proliferation, Taiwan, human rights, and religious persecution.

China's attitude toward the U.S.-led anti-terrorism war is ambivalent. On the one hand, Beijing clearly cherishes the opportunity presented by this war to restore the strategic glue in the bilateral relationship. The common goal of countering the Soviet Union had been an important bond in the U.S.-Chinese relationship during the Cold War. The end of the Cold War and the dissipation of the Soviet threat eroded the strategic rationale behind the relationship. The American reaction to the Tiananmen crackdown further diminished the domestic political support for "business as usual." Many analysts therefore pin their hope on anti-terrorism cooperation's possibly forming a new glue that bonds the two countries together.

However, many anti-American elements exist in China today, making total accommodation with the U.S. unlikely. China also does not feel as much the need for

revenge as the U.S. does since the attacks occurred on American soil. But most importantly China is afraid of being virtually encircled as a result of a series of reinvigorated relationships that the U.S. has fostered with China's neighbors. China is especially concerned about the long-term impact of the anti-terrorism war: it may consolidate America's preeminent position in the Asia-Pacific region at the expense of China's aspirations to play a larger role in regional and global affairs.

China's ambivalent attitude toward the U.S.-led effort also belies the fact that China is not a crucial partner of the U.S. in the anti-terrorism war. If nations could be ranked in a series of concentric circles in terms of their importance to the U.S. in the war effort and the degree of congruence of their interests with America's, China is not located at the core, which includes America's staunchest traditional allies such as NATO and Japan; nor does it belong in the second ring, which now includes such nations as Pakistan whose cooperation the U.S. eagerly seeks. China is probably somewhere in the third or fourth circle -- a sphere for those countries whose cooperation is desirable but not essential from the U.S. standpoint. The U.S.-Chinese relationship since September 11, to use David M. Lampton's words, is one of "small mercies."<sup>45</sup>

### **Why Wide Support of the U.S.?**

Undoubtedly certain nations decided to support the U.S. out of outrage and sympathy. Yet a more plausible understanding should focus on national interests in explaining the wide support enjoyed by the U.S. A brief overview is in order.<sup>46</sup>

#### ***South Asia***

The balance of power in South Asia compels Pakistan to risk further domestic instability in its effort to cooperate with the U.S. The war on terrorism presents Pakistan with an opportunity to rekindle good relations with the U.S. Pakistan is important, because should it disintegrate or be taken over by Islamic extremists, an

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<sup>45</sup> David M. Lampton, "Small Mercies: China and America After 9/11," *The National Interest* (winter 2001), pp. 106-113.

<sup>46</sup> This part is based on Ellings and Friedberg, *Strategic Asia*, pp. 6-16.



extraordinary new level of instability would rock the region.

America's new cooperation with Pakistan is unlikely to jeopardize closer US relations with India. If anything, the crisis seems to accelerate the movement toward a closer US-Indian relationship.

### *Russia*

The attacks on the US creates a common bond between Russia and the U.S., one that serves to soften friction arising from NATO expansion, NMD, etc. Russia wants to frame the Chechen problem as one of terrorism but Chechnya is a broader national movement. However, a political solution is imaginable.

There has been a convergence of interests among Russia, India, and even Iran with respect to the Taliban (Russia was the main supporter of the Northern Alliance). But Russia will prevent its cooperation with the U.S. against the Taliban from eroding Russian predominance in Central Asia.

### *China*

The government under Jiang Zemin seems sincerely willing to help the U.S.-led effort against terrorism, but it is not unlikely this support will endure very long. China has its own reasons to cooperate -- (1) militant Islamic groups in Xinjiang with ties to al-Qaeda, (2) to prevent further erosion of ties with the U.S., (3) China wants to be a respected great power.

Beijing can provide assistance: It has experience in countering Islamic extremism (useful intelligence, influence over Pakistan, in turn Afghanistan; Central Asia). Such cooperation is not new (occurring during the Cold War Soviet war in Afghanistan).

Potential roadblocks to long-term PRC cooperation include: (1) a longer and broader anti-terror campaign (setting a precedent), (2) China's nervousness about military cooperation with India, a revitalized US-Japan alliance, and permanent bases on China's periphery; (3) possibly the PRC's cooperation with the U. S. not leading to any quid pro quo over Taiwan.

### *Japan*

The Japanese were unprepared to take a leading part in a multinational campaign against terrorism. The norm has been to meet terrorist demands. Japan is resolved to avoid a repetition of the embarrassment in the Gulf War. Public opinion is divided. America's economic slowdown as a result of the crisis will worsen Japan's economic troubles.

In the short run, Japan will scramble to avoid being isolated and embarrassed. In the medium term, the war on terrorism will prove to be a milestone in advancing politico-military realism.

### *Korea*

The September 11 attacks have done little to alter the strategic fundamentals on the Korean Peninsula. Immediately, the attacks beg the question about Seoul's "sunshine" diplomacy with the North. Kim Dae Jung sought to enlist Pyongyang in the signing of a joint North-South declaration against terrorism.

More fundamentally, September 11 forces a reexamination of the Bush Administration's nascent "military reform," -- doing away with "two war" military capabilities in favor of a new, smaller, more mobile international force.

### *Southeast Asia*

Leaders and media responded with shock and sympathy. Bin Laden's network may have operatives in Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines (the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Abu Sayaff).

### *Ballistic Missiles*

A long-term, US-led campaign against global terrorism could lead to the US's diminishing significantly the amount of attention and resources it devotes to the threat of ballistic missile proliferation, as well as the development of a ballistic missile defense system. These shifts could encourage proliferators, prompting some in the Bush Administration to further push for missile defense.

Possible instabilities in South and Central Asia arising from U.S.-led anti-terror

war could increase tensions among Pakistan, India, and China, and instability in Pakistan could exacerbate the proliferation problem.

### **What Has Not Changed or Has Remained?**

The next phase of the anti-terror campaign will encounter several thorny problems: some are old, some are new.

The military and diplomatic strategies that helped undergird the successful war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda began to show their strains, as the U.S. grappled with devising strategies to *sustain* the anti-terrorist campaign and revisiting those grave matters that had been swept under the rug for the sake of forging cooperation.

The first issue that will test the administration is “what next?” and whether or not there is an “end game”. After defeating the evil Taliban and al-Qaeda, President Bush sought to lead the global coalition to fight other evils. In his first State of Union address to Congress, Bush said that North Korea, Iran, and Iraq belonged to an “axis of evil.”<sup>47</sup> Although denying that the President’s putting these three states on notice signaled imminent attacks against them, the administration’s tough stance reflected its ultimate concern about a deadly combination that would be highly injurious to U.S. interests and those of its allies: rogue states developing weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. There was considerable opposition from various corners. Some criticized Bush’s remarks as a foreclosing on the opportunity for rapprochement with either North Korea or Iran -- both have sent signals in recent years that they seek to improve relations with the U.S. South Koreans were concerned that Bush’s characterization of North Korea would undermine President Kim Dae Jung’s “Sunshine Policy” of engaging with their recalcitrant northern neighbor.<sup>48</sup>

In addition, as attention shifted to hunting down entities with ties to al-Qaeda in those Southeast Asian countries with restive Muslim populations, the diplomatic task became trickier and the military task more complicated.

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<sup>47</sup> David E. Sanger, “A Nation Challenged: The Rogue List; Bush Aides Say Tough Tone Put Foes on Notice,” *The New York Times*, 31 January 2002, p. A1, from *Lexis-Nexis*.

<sup>48</sup> Editorial, “Reviving Korean Diplomacy,” *The New York Times*, 18 February 2002, p. A14, from *Lexis-Nexis*.

The second test is the nettlesome issue of proliferation. Both China and Pakistan, two nations currently enlisted by the U.S. to help combat terrorism, have close a military relationship with one or more members of Bush's "axis of evil." In fact, from the U.S. standpoint, no amount of good will extended to it by these nations in the war against global terrorism can compensate for the inordinate injury done to US interests caused by these nations' continued proliferation of weapons. President Bush's recent trip to China ended on the disappointing note over Beijing's continued shipments of missile components and technologies to North Korea, Iran and Pakistan,<sup>49</sup> a dispute which<sup>50</sup> Secretary of State Colin L. Powell described as "remaining an irritation in the relationship" between the U.S. and China.

A third challenge is the legitimate concern expressed by many in the human rights community that the anti-terror war may undermine the cause of human rights, because some governments may now define anybody who is opposed to the government as a "terrorist" and seek international support for the government's positions. Russia attempted to frame the Chechen problem as one of terrorism, but Chechnya's is actually a broader national movement.<sup>51</sup>

China argued that the Xinjiang Uighurs, who had struggled with China to restore their Republic of Eastern Turkistan, were linked to the al-Qaeda terrorist organization, and sought to gain international sympathy on Beijing's positions on other

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<sup>49</sup> David E. Sanger, "China Is Treated More Gently Than North Korea for Same Sin," *The New York Times*, 21 February 2002, p. A8.

<sup>50</sup> Mike Allen, "Powell Says China's Sales of Arms Technology Still Hinder Relations," *The Washington Post*, 23 February 2002, p. A13.

<sup>51</sup> According to Rajan Menon, the Chechens never accepted their incorporation into the Russian/Soviet empire and have repeatedly tried to break free -- sometimes violently. Central Asian states gained independence because they were union republics within the Soviet federal system that collapsed. But who decided that Uzbeks would be in a union of republics whereas Chechens would not? Josef Stalin. Thus the Chechen claim to independence is "illegitimate" only to the extent that Soviet constitutional precepts are accorded legitimacy and Chechen resistance to Russia ignored. Richard J. Ellings and Aaron L. Friedberg, *Strategic Asia 2001-02* (National Bureau of Asian Research, 2001), pp. 9-10.

“separatists” in Tibet and Taiwan<sup>52</sup> and Falun Gong followers. As Ross Terrill states, “Most Americans see the war against terrorism as a fight against broad forces opposed to freedom. Beijing sees the war as a defense of the unity and security of authoritarian China. There is a fine line between authoritarianism and imperial authority.”<sup>53</sup>

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell assured the American public and Taiwan that no deal over Taiwan had been cut for Chinese cooperation.<sup>54</sup> National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice maintained, “We continue to draw a line in all of our discussions between legitimate dissent or legitimate movements for the rights of minorities and the fact that there may be international terrorists in various parts of the world.”<sup>55</sup>

More fundamentally, some are concerned that the US is cozying up to unlikely new bedfellows as it forms a coalition to battle terrorism. But its actions could backfire down the line and create new instability.<sup>56</sup>

To sum up, September 11 has profoundly changed America’s relations with Asia, but not America’s interests in the region -- securing peace, maintaining an open economy, and the advancement of freedom and the rule of law. The exigencies of the war call for an emphasis on congruence on *interests* above congruence on *values*. However, in the long-run cultivating congenial values goes a long way in eradicating some sources of terrorism in the distant future. This is a much better strategy than retaliation.

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<sup>52</sup> John Pomfret, “China Also Wants U.S. Help Against ‘Separatists,’” *The Washington Post*, 19 September 2001, A11; Joe McDonald, “Anti-Terror Campaign Gives U.S., China New Common Ground,” *The Associated Press*, 17 October 2001, from *Lexis-Nexis*.

<sup>53</sup> Ross Terrill, “China, the Uncertain Ally,” *The New York Times*, 19 February 2002, p. A19, from *Lexis-Nexis*.

<sup>54</sup> Ellings and Friedberg, *Strategic Asia*, p. 12.

<sup>55</sup> David E. Sanger, “Bush’s New Focus Requires a Shift in His China Policy,” *The New York Times*, 18 October 2001, p. B5, from *Lexis-Nexis*.

<sup>56</sup> Murray Hiebert, “A Flawed Policy,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 25 October 2001, p. 30; Michael Vatikiotis, Ben Dolven, and David Murphy, “Terror Throws Us Together, For Now,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 1 November 2001, p. 36.

Table 1: A Quick Guide to Anti-Terror Rewards

<p>Pakistan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nuclear-test and military coup related sanctions lifted</li><li>• \$73 million worth of military aid approved</li><li>• \$600 million in Economic Support Funds approved</li></ul> <p>India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nuclear-test related sanctions lifted</li></ul> <p>Philippines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$92.3 million of additional weapons promised</li></ul> <p>Tajikistan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Military aid and weapons sanctions dropped</li><li>• Border control aid planned</li></ul> <p>Azerbaijan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arms sanctions lifted</li><li>• Border control aid given</li></ul> <p>Armenia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$4.3 million in military aid and training</li></ul> <p>Uzbekistan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Equipment and training</li></ul> <p>Turkey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional weapons and training pledged</li><li>• Military debt forgiveness being negotiated</li></ul> <p>Colombia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More aid planned to fight “narco-terrorists”</li></ul> <p>Kenya</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Weapons and combat training planned</li></ul>
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Source: *Arms Sales Monitor*, No. 47 (January 2002), p. 2.

Tables 2: How Has September 11 Changed the Way Americans View Other Countries

Biggest increases since last year in those saying "a close ally" (%)				Biggest declines since last year in those saying "enemy" or "not friendly" (%)			
Country	2000	2001	Change	Country	2000	2001	Change
U.K.	63	80	+17	Russia	50	33	-17
Mexico	28	40	+12	China	64	49	-15
Russia	5	17	+12	Chile	29	17	-12
Canada	63	73	+10	Germany	20	10	-10
Germany	29	39	+10	Argentina	25	16	-9
Italy	27	37	+10	Taiwan	25	18	-7
China	3	11	+8	Brazil	23	16	-7
Israel	31	38	+7	U.K.	8	1	-7
Australia	42	47	+5	Japan	29	24	-5
Japan	23	26	+3	Australia	10	7	-3
Taiwan	19	22	+3	India	--	29	--
India	--	8	--				

Notes: According to *The Harris Poll*, the 2001 poll was "conducted within the United States between 17-22 October 2001 among a nationwide cross-section of 1,011 adults. Figures for age sex, race, education, number of adults and number of voice/phone lines in the household were weighted where necessary to align the sample with their actual proportions in the population. In theory, with a probability sample of this size, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus three percentage points within what they would be if the entire adult population had been polled with complete accuracy."

The comparative polls of 2000 and 2001 consist of respondents' opinions about twenty-two countries. For comparison, the first eight countries in each column are ranked by the biggest increases or biggest declines from 2000 to 2001, respectively, followed by the remaining Asia-Pacific countries in the poll.

Source: Compiled from *The Harris Poll* #54 (31 October 2001), "Events Since September 11<sup>th</sup> Have Changed the Way Many Americans View Other Countries," available online at [http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris\\_poll/index.asp?PID=265](http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/index.asp?PID=265).

Table 3: Percentage Shares of World GDP

	1820	1870	1913	1950	1973	1998	2015
Asia	59	38	25	19	24	37	43
Europe	27	38	38	30	29	23	19
North America	2	10	22	31	25	25	17
Russia	5	8	9	10	9	3	3

Sources: Figures for 1820-1998 are from Angus Maddison, *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective* (Paris: Development Center of the Organization for Economic Development and Development, 2001), Table B-18; projections for 2015 are from Angus Maddison, *Chinese Economic Performance in the Long Run* (Paris: Development Center of the Organization for Economic Development and Development, 1998), p. 97.