



Just Security

AN ALTERNATIVE  
FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK

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This report was produced with generous support from the Arca, Atlantic, Colombe, Ford, Rubin & Town Creek foundations.



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# Executive Summary

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**C**urrent U.S. foreign policy is unjust and breeds insecurity for all. In seeking an alternative, we should not revive the failed policies of the past. Instead, we should chart a new relationship between the United States and the world.

Our common future faces daunting challenges. War, poverty, terrorism, loose nukes, and climate change make us all feel less secure than a decade ago. The Bush administration's foreign policy has brought U.S. popularity in the world to new lows. At home, it has generated widespread dissatisfaction across the political spectrum.

Such widespread public dissatisfaction offers an opportunity to transform the national conversation from the framework of fear that has prevailed since 9/11 to a broader response to global ills and injustices. The growing public awareness of the climate crisis, the need to address the Middle East in a comprehensive manner, the wasteful extravagance of military spending, the continued threat of nuclear proliferation and nuclear use, and the corrosive effects of global inequality have revealed the inadequacies not only of current U.S. foreign policy but the Democratic Party's 2006 "real security" doctrine as well.

With its emphasis on fighting wars, the Bush administration has insisted on focusing just on security. **We must focus instead on a just security, because there can be no real security without justice.** The United States should act as a global partner not a global boss. We must restore principles of fairness and equity into our international conduct.

This alternative foreign policy framework tells five different stories about our common future and the five principal challenges we face: climate change, global poverty, nuclear weapons, terrorism, and military conflict. We address five different sets of core misconceptions and offer five interconnected prescriptions for change. We then offer a Just Security budget that would cut roughly \$213 billion from the president's current defense budget request and yet make the United States safer and more secure. The concluding chapter puts the challenges facing the United States in a larger historical context and offers an integrated Just Security program.

Our Just Security program calls for:

- A reduction of \$213 billion in U.S. military spending, or one-third of the total "defense" budget.
- Dramatic cuts in U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals as a first step toward nuclear disarmament.
- An international process under the auspices of the UN to secure a viable peace between Israel and Palestine.
- A global carbon fee to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and generate funds to help countries transition to sustainable sources of energy.
- A large-scale, global plan to train four million new health workers.

What distinguishes this report from many alternative foreign policy proposals is an integrated approach that avoids the twin perils of hard power and global disengagement. We propose seven principles to guide U.S. engagement with the international community.

**The United States must advance rather than undermine international mechanisms and institutions.** We should move from a unipolar system presided over by the United States to a secure, multipolar system that is held in place by a latticework of international institutions and laws.

**We must support the rule of law, not the rule of the jungle.** The United States should spend less time talking about the rule of law and more time practicing the rule of law—by upholding international agreements such as the Geneva Conventions, ratifying the core labor standards of the International Labor Organization, and supporting new international institutions such as the International Criminal Court.

**We must lead by example, not by force.** The United States is No. 1 in several dubious categories—most powerful nuclear arsenal, largest greenhouse gas emitter, leading arms exporter—so if we want to change the world we have to start by changing ourselves.

**Global problems call for global solutions, but one size does not fit all.** The world is a varied place and what works in one place for one problem may not work the same elsewhere.

**We should support just policies abroad because they also encourage just policies at home.** Global inequality, unregulated arms sales, and weakened international agreements and institutions are not just foreign policy issues. They have tremendous impact on the U.S. economy and the security of the population.

**We need more public involvement in global affairs not less.** We can't leave it to the experts to solve the world's problems because, in many cases, the experts got us into the jam in the first place. As those who live in this country, we must use democratic means to close the gap between what the polls say and what our leaders are doing.

**Security is not just about the military.** When we speak of security, we are talking about freedom from military conflicts and terrorist attacks. But we also believe that security involves access to sufficient food and shelter, good health care and good jobs, a clean environment and well-functioning, accountable political structures.

The civil rights movement, the women's movement, and the peace movement have all transformed U.S. society. As a result, we have become a more just society, a more diverse culture, a more international country. It is time to change our foreign policy so that it looks more like America and also reflects American traditions of justice.

Many of the ideas and proposals in this report have broad support among the American public. Majorities of Americans believe that no nations should possess nuclear weapons, reject the notion that military force should be used to promote democracy, and want immediate steps taken to halt global warming. What was once considered radical has now gained some political support in Washington. Several architects of the Cold War are now calling for nuclear disarmament. The climate change skeptics are rapidly turning Green. Prominent politicians no longer believe in a "global war on terrorism."

We need leaders and social movements that can translate this broad American appeal and this growing political support into an integrated program for American renewal. We believe that this program must be founded on the principles of just security laid out in this report. Only a just security will make us all feel more secure.



# Misconceptions and Recommendations

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**W**ith its emphasis on military solutions, the Bush administration has insisted that we focus just on security. We must focus instead on a just security, because there can be no real security without justice.

## JUST CLIMATE POLICY

### MISCONCEPTIONS

1. Climate change can be fixed with only minor tinkering.
2. Technologies such as biofuels and tactics such as carbon trading can solve the crisis under the leadership of experts, dynamic corporations, and the World Bank.
3. India and China are the key problem nations on climate change.
4. U.S. citizens won't give up unsustainable, unhealthy lifestyles in order to solve the problem of global warming.

### REALITY

Global warming is a clear and present danger that requires a profound reordering of priorities. If we act quickly, and with industrialized countries bearing their fair share of the costs, we can use existing technologies to reduce the emissions that cause climate change.

### JUST SECURITY ALTERNATIVE

1. Give the poor control of their land, marine, and forest resources.
2. Start a managed resource transfer from rich to poor countries through climate-friendly global justice, trade, and aid policies. This would involve a border fee on "dirty trade" that would help developing countries shift to clean energy.

3. Governments and inter-governmental bodies will use regulation, carrots, and sticks to shift from supporting "dirty" energy to a transition to "clean" energy and energy efficiency.

4. Carbon taxes can be invested in a "Climate and Energy Security Fund" that will support a rapidly expanding Green sector of the economy to produce new jobs at home and abroad.

## JUST NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

### MISCONCEPTIONS

1. The United States is committed to reducing nuclear weapons.
2. It is technically impossible and politically risky to eliminate nuclear weapons.
3. Rogue states are the greatest proliferation threat.

### REALITY

There is overwhelming public support and key elite backing for nuclear disarmament. Moreover, disarmament is technically feasible. The chief obstacles are not rogue states but the largest nuclear powers.

### JUST SECURITY ALTERNATIVE

1. Cancel U.S. plans to upgrade its nuclear arsenal and resume negotiations with Moscow over further reductions in strategic arsenals.
2. Expand existing arms control mechanisms such as test bans and nuclear-free zones.
3. Strengthen international institutions that can create the groundwork for disarmament.

## JUST LIVELIHOODS

### MISCONCEPTIONS

1. Current free trade and free market policies help the poor.
2. Free trade policies promote democracy.
3. The private sector always does it better.
4. More aid is the panacea for poverty.
5. If we simply spend money on medicine to treat disease, we will improve global health
6. Immigration concerns can be addressed through domestic policies rather than by tackling root causes.

### REALITY

As barriers to trade have fallen in the last two decades, the rich have gotten richer and the poor poorer. Free-trade policies have pushed people off their land and across borders. Privatization has helped to widen the global divide further. Traditional development aid has not been effective in combating global inequality, nor has simply increasing spending on medicine improved global health.

### JUST SECURITY ALTERNATIVE

1. Overhaul trade and investment policies to set a floor for basic labor and environmental standards, while also giving governments sufficient policy space to pursue their own national economic strategies.
2. Expand debt cancellation deals to more impoverished countries, without onerous policy conditions. Further debt cancellation will allow governments to increase spending on basic services and fighting poverty and alleviate the pressure to attract foreign investment and boost exports by any means necessary.

3. Shift foreign aid for health from fighting specific diseases to a far more comprehensive approach emphasizing preventive care, health infrastructure, and a large-scale, global plan to train four million new health workers.

4. Make debt, trade, finance, and health reforms part of a broad agenda to address the root causes of immigration and strengthen developing country economies in ways that will benefit both their people and the people of the United States.

## JUST COUNTERTERRORISM

### MISCONCEPTIONS

1. Terrorism is the major threat to U.S. and global interests.
2. A “war” on terrorism is the only solution.
3. Terrorists are attacking “our” way of life.

### REALITY

Although a serious problem, terrorism is not the greatest threat to either U.S. citizens or other people around the globe. Treating terrorism with military means plays into the hands of al-Qaeda, which is an organization of international criminals and not warriors.

### JUST SECURITY ALTERNATIVE

1. Improve homeland security to protect the infrastructure and livelihoods of the U.S. population.
2. Strengthen international legal systems to apprehend and prosecute terrorists
3. Promote democracy and human rights to address the oppressive political systems that give rise to terrorism.
4. Address the socio-economic roots of terrorism by devoting resources to narrowing the gap between the global haves and have-nots.

## JUST PEACE

### MISCONCEPTIONS

1. The United States needs to spend over \$600 billion to keep the peace internationally.
2. U.S. weapons sales overseas are in the national interest.
3. The United States has played an even-handed role in the Middle East.
4. The United States has opposed Israel's policy of occupation of Palestinian territory.
5. U.S. policy in Africa focuses solely on peace and development.

### REALITY

U.S. military spending, global military presence, and international arms sales have increased global insecurity. U.S. military interventions, directly or through proxies, have thrown entire regions into a downward spiral of conflict. In the Middle East and Africa, in particular, the U.S. emphasis on military rather than diplomatic solutions has prevented regional peacemaking from moving forward.

### JUST SECURITY ALTERNATIVE

1. Reduce the global U.S. garrison and redirect the money to more effective defense and human needs.
2. Back the new Arms Trade Treaty to restrain the global sale and proliferation of armaments.
3. Work with the international community to upgrade UN peacekeeping, which is woefully underfunded and ill-equipped.
4. Shift funds away from a military approach to Africa and toward strengthening the capacities of communities to meet their own needs.
5. Stop supporting Israeli occupation and instead support an international peace process under the auspices of the UN.

## JUST SECURITY BUDGET

### MISCONCEPTIONS

1. The United States needs to maintain Cold War levels of military spending.
2. Spending on offense is the best defense.
3. Our foreign military posture makes us more secure.

### REALITY

The United States can reduce the proposed military budget by one-third. With such a reduction, the United States would still retain the largest military in the world and would still spend over eight times more than any of the next largest militaries. U.S. military presence overseas has made America an international lightning rod for anger and resentment.

### JUST SECURITY ALTERNATIVE

1. Reduce the 2008 fiscal year military budget by \$213 billion. This figure includes \$99.1 billion for the Iraq War, \$45.9 billion for overseas bases and personnel stationed afloat, and \$43.9 billion in unnecessary weaponry.
2. Reallocate \$15 billion to Homeland Security measures such as protecting transportation, safeguarding public health, and beefing up baggage and cargo screening.
3. Reallocate \$34.7 billion to preventive measures such as non-proliferation, peacekeeping, development assistance, and the promotion of clean energy alternatives.



# Introduction

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In 2003, after graduating from college, Lieutenant Ehren Watada voluntarily enlisted in the U.S. army. The September 11 attacks and a spirit of patriotism motivated him to serve his country. In the lead-up to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, he was prepared to give the administration and its rationale for the war the benefit of the doubt. He served in Korea and then returned to Fort Lewis, Washington to prepare for redeployment.

Only then, on the eve of going to the Middle East, did Lt. Watada truly begin to rethink the Iraq War. He read about the administration's deceptive case for invasion. He pondered the legality of the war and the subsequent occupation. His doubts grew. He wasn't a pacifist; he believed in some wars. But the war in Iraq began to appear unjust to him. He came to a difficult decision. In January 2006, Lt. Watada refused orders to deploy to Iraq. He asked to be reassigned to a different unit, even one in Afghanistan, and offered to resign his commission. The military said no. When he went public with his refusal in June 2006, Watada became the first commissioned officer to do so. The military immediately began court-martial proceedings against him.<sup>1</sup>

"It is my conclusion as an officer of the armed forces that the war in Iraq is not only morally wrong but a horrible breach of American law," Watada has said. "Although I have tried to resign out of protest, I am forced to participate in a war that is manifestly illegal. As the order to take part in an illegal act is ultimately unlawful as well, I must as an officer of honor and integrity refuse that order."<sup>2</sup>

The decision to invade Iraq in 2003 symbolizes everything wrong with the Bush administration's approach to the world. As Lt. Ehren Watada and so many others have subsequently learned, the U.S. government indeed manipulated the facts to make a case for war. The president's new doctrine of preventive war unraveled the very fabric of international law. Washington ignored the protests of allies and played on the fears of the American public all in an attempt to expand U.S. power in the world. The administration acted in the name of security, but its definition of security was both narrow and self-defeating, for both the United States and the world. Its actions have made the citizens of this and other countries less safe and secure.

Saddam Hussein was a tyrant, and his rule was unjust. But, as Lt. Watada realized, there was nothing just about the U.S. rush to war. The Bush administration abandoned diplomacy and the mechanisms of international law. Thousands of U.S. soldiers and hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqis

have died in the resulting conflict. The country is in civil war, and the economy has collapsed. There is neither security nor justice in Iraq today.

The errors of U.S. policy in Iraq are not confined to the Oval Office or the Republican Party. The approach of the Democrats to Iraq has also been unjust. The most powerful Democrats by and large supported the decision to invade Iraq. Earlier, they supported a decade-long bombing campaign that took the lives of thousands of innocent Iraqis. Under the economic embargo in the 1990s, half a million Iraqi children died, to which Secretary of State Madeleine Albright could only say, "This is a very hard choice, but we think the price is worth it." Before that, both Democratic and Republican administrations helped to bring Saddam Hussein to power and then armed him against Iran in the 1980s. This ugly pragmatism, too, is far from a just foreign policy.

Today, the Democratic Party and an increasing number of Republicans want to end the Iraq War. But in Iraq and elsewhere in the world, neither the current administration nor its congressional opposition has advanced a satisfactory alternative to the arrogant foreign policy of the Bush administration. The approach of most Democrats calls for the same amount of money to be spent on U.S. military presence around the world. Throughout the 1990s, the Democrat leadership also showed scorn for international law. Their "a la carte multilateralism" relied on the advice and consent of other countries only when they didn't block U.S. policy.

This scorn for international law has reached its pinnacle with the current administration. It isn't simply that the Bush administration does diplomacy badly. It is fundamentally allergic to diplomacy. Instead of the open hand of negotiations, the administration has relied on the closed fist of military power. This emphasis on unilateral and military solutions has exploded in our faces. With half our discretionary budget going to the military, we are relearning the lesson that Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. taught us four decades ago. An unjust war leads to poverty and devastation in two nations. The costs of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq—in human lives, in money wasted, in post 9-11 good will squandered—have been immense.

The costs of distraction have been even larger. We have neglected the most profound challenges of our time. Global temperatures are rising and threatening the future of the Earth. There is enough nuclear material in the world for 300,000 bombs, and neither the nuclear club nor its aspiring members are doing much to reduce this amount. The

gap between the global haves and the have-nots grows wider every day, which threatens everyone's prosperity, security, and health. The Cold War is over, but hot wars continue to claim millions of lives in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. And terrorist organizations have only grown stronger in the wake of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

It is not enough to describe the failures of the past and present. We have the ideas and the resources to change our future. We must now find the courage to act. And we must construct a vision of a just future, a foreign policy with justice at its core, so that we know where we are trying to go.

## A JUST WORLD

We face a unique moment in U.S. and global history. We can either maintain an unjust and insecure status quo, return to the failed Cold War realism of the past, or chart a new relationship between the United States and the world. Our common future does not look promising. But if we redirect U.S. foreign policy, we can secure greater prosperity for our neighbors, our children, and ourselves.

Terrorism is not the only challenge facing the United States. War, poverty, loose nukes, and climate change all make us feel less secure than a decade ago. Over the last few years, the United States has addressed these issues with a blunt instrument. Like a fearful homeowner, we have stocked up on guns, added locks to the doors and windows, built higher fences around the property, and even taken over several of our neighbors' houses. Such an approach only increases the fear factor. More guns, higher walls, and more spending give us an illusion of security.

The Bush administration has insisted that we focus just on security. **We must focus instead on a just security, because there can be no real security without justice.** Current U.S. foreign policy unfortunately provides neither security nor justice:

- Is it just to demand that other countries dismantle their nuclear programs while the United States embarks on a program to build new nuclear weapons?
- Is it just to let the burden of global warming—and its prevention—fall on the shoulders of the poorest countries of the world?
- Is it just to address terrorism through military means instead of through law?
- Is it just to pursue trade, immigration, and health policies that widen the gap between the global haves and have-nots?
- Is it just to pour arms into military conflicts around the world and not address the underlying disputes over sovereignty and equity?

The answer to each of these questions is clearly no. An unjust foreign policy is ultimately an ineffective foreign policy that traps us in a cycle of fear, hostility, and decline. And it is also deeply unpopular. The Bush administration foreign policy has brought U.S. popularity in the world to new lows. At home, it has generated widespread dissatisfaction across the political spectrum.

We have an opportunity to transform the national conversation from the framework of fear that has prevailed since September 11 to a broader response to global ills and injustices. The growing public awareness of the climate crisis, the need to address the Middle East in a comprehensive manner, the wasteful extravagance of military spending, the continued threat of nuclear proliferation and nuclear use, and the corrosive effects of global inequality have revealed the inadequacies not only of current U.S. foreign policy but the Democratic Party's "real security" doctrine as well.<sup>3</sup>

Both parties support the preservation and expansion of U.S. military power abroad. They believe that somehow our global military presence makes us more secure. The United States annually spends nearly \$300 billion on this vast global undertaking. Let's be clear. This is no defense budget. This is offense, and it is offensive to the spirit of peaceful, international cooperation.

As President Franklin Delano Roosevelt realized more than 60 years ago, the future of the United States depends on our becoming a more responsible member of the global neighborhood. We demand accountability from others, but we must also be accountable ourselves. We must reduce our reliance on guns and back away from our global garrison. We must start playing by the rules and playing well with others. We must link arms to face the challenges that cloud our common future. We must treat others as we would have others treat us. **We will not feel secure until we all feel secure. That is the essence of a just security approach.**

## A JUST ALTERNATIVE

We are entering a new "multipolar moment." The most aggressively unilateralist phase in U.S. policy is receding, and new centers of power are emerging. There is China's mul-

tilateral diplomacy, Russia's *petropolitik*, India's economic leverage, and a new generation of Latin American leadership. Beyond governments, civil society has gained a new prominence as "the other superpower." With this new multipolarism, however, has come the potential for increased conflict in the Middle East, Africa, Northeast Asia, and Central Asia. International polling suggests that citizens throughout the world expect and demand greater global cooperation to resolve these conflicts as well as pressing issues of poverty, climate change, and energy security. Americans, too, are eager for a new foreign policy, both to prevent a return of unilateralism and to implement an effective alternative.

The examples of Iran and North Korea offer a stark contrast in how the current administration is dealing with the new multipolar moment.

With Iran, the U.S. government has ignored promising compromise, refused to look at regional solutions, and slighted the advice of allies. Keeping "all options on the table," which includes a preemptive nuclear strike, the administration appears eager to repeat all the mistakes of the Iraq debacle and then some. Iran is a much larger country, with much more diverse political actors and greater regional influence. Even the few allies the U.S. managed to finagle into the "coalition of the coerced" against Iraq have mostly expressed their distaste for attacking Iran. By advancing a war agenda, the administration threatens to perpetuate an even greater injustice.

With North Korea, on the other hand, the administration reversed course in early 2007 by taking negotiations seriously and compromising on the sequence of denuclearization. Not only have Washington and Pyongyang embarked on a process that could lead to diplomatic normalization but the countries in the region have also begun to discuss a regional peace mechanism. The negotiated solution to the U.S.-North Korean standoff respects international law, aims to raise the economic level of North Korean citizens, and addresses unjust practices of the past such as Japan's colonial control of the Korean peninsula. It is far from a done deal. But the negotiations show great promise for the future.

Here we have three scenarios. The United States has made grievous errors in Iraq. We are currently on a collision course with Iran. But there is hope that we will resolve our differences with North Korea in the future. Like Ebenezer Scrooge, we are visited by the ghosts of U.S. foreign policy past, present, and yet to come. Which path will we take? And what foreign policy principles are available to help us make these complicated decisions? Will we make the right decision and, like Scrooge, be invited to the table to celebrate peace and prosperity, or will we remain ungenerous and alone?

In the following vision of a just security future, we will tell five different stories about our common future and the five challenges we face: climate change, global poverty, nuclear weapons, terrorism, and military conflict. We will address five different sets of core misconceptions and offer five interconnected prescriptions for change. The concluding chapter will put the challenges facing the United States in a larger historical context and offer an integrated just security program.

We cannot turn back the clock and rewrite what happened in Iraq. Like Lt. Ehren Watada, we must deal with the reality confronting us and make difficult and courageous decisions. But it is not too late to act. We still have time to arrest global warming and move toward nuclear disarmament. We can bridge the terrible gaps of wealth and poverty in the world. We can help bring peace to countries and regions torn by war. And we can radically reduce the impact of terrorism on innocent lives. On these five critical challenges, we can still change the script and come out on the side of justice.

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 Material on Ehren Watada drawn from Sarah Olson, "First Officer Announces Refusal to Deploy to Iraq," *Truthout*, June 7, 2006; and, Ryan Elsey, "Lieutenant Watada—American Hero," (Silver City, NM and Washington, DC: Foreign Policy In Focus, February 21, 2007).
- 2 Jeremy Brecher and Brendan Smith, "Lieutenant Watada's War Against the War," *The Nation*, June 26, 2006.
- 3 See the Democratic Party's Real Security program at: <http://www.democrats.gov/BK.html>.





# Just Climate Policy

**T**opon Mondal doesn't drive a big car. The temperature inside his home often rises above 100 degrees, but he never runs an air conditioner. In fact, living in a hut and laboring by hand, the Bangladeshi farmer doesn't contribute very much at all to global warming. Still, climate change has already transformed his life. He used to grow rice and vegetables, as his father did, in the village of Munshiganj, about 55 miles from the Bay of Bengal in the southwestern corner of the South Asian country. Then the sea levels began to rise and salt leached into the groundwater beneath Topon Mondal's village. The rice and vegetable harvests—which had helped to feed his family, his village, and his country—began to decline. Mondal switched to shrimp farming. Virtually all the shrimp harvest, however, now goes overseas. “The shrimp are far too valuable for us to eat,” he says.<sup>1</sup>

The switch from rice to shrimp by the country's coastal farmers is not the only effect of climate change for Bangladeshis. In 2004, the country suffered devastating floods that left hundreds dead and millions homeless. It was the worst flooding in years, and climatologists predict even worse to come. Most of Bangladesh occupies plains that are just above sea level. A few inches rise in ocean waters will cause damage and death to dwarf the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina. Bangladesh is a poor country and does not have the means to protect itself from the rising tide. Even if it embarked on a radical plan of energy conservation, it wouldn't matter. The average Bangladeshi emits less than 1% of the amount of carbon dioxide produced by the average American (392 pounds versus 21 tons).<sup>2</sup> The fate of millions of Bangladeshis, then, lies in the hands of other people—the hands that steer SUVs, turn up air conditioners, and refuse to sign significant legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Bangladesh is not, of course, alone in feeling the heat of global warming. Island nations like the Seychelles watch as the oceans shrink their territory. The residents of low-lying coastal countries like The Netherlands peer fearfully over their dykes. The shrinking Arctic ice cap, the spread of malaria to higher altitudes, drought in the U.S. southwest: the warning signs are there for all to see.

Climate change is now finally getting some of the attention it deserves. Al Gore's film *An Inconvenient Truth* won an academy award. Huge “Live Earth” concerts this summer will feature the biggest bands in the world. Wal-Mart and the Pentagon are embracing energy efficiency out of their own institutional self-interest. Even journalist Thomas Friedman, the guru of globalization, has officially gone green.<sup>3</sup> And a sheaf of new international studies has overwhelmed the

skeptics and confirmed our worst fears. We have a very limited amount of time to change course, the costs of avoiding change are enormous, and radical action is necessary.

But so far, the Bush administration has not shown any leadership on this critical issue. Even though the United States signed the Kyoto global warming agreement in 1997, the Bush administration has opposed the agreement and turned its back on the other 160 signatories. In March 2007, the administration submitted its “climate action report” to the United Nations, which concluded that the United States would emit almost as much carbon dioxide in the next decade as it had in the last decade. Here, alas, was a dramatic demonstration of the failure of voluntary approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>4</sup> When the administration later announced a new approach at the end of May, it clung to this same voluntary approach. But if countries are not obligated to reduce emissions, history suggests that they simply won't do so.

The U.S. Congress is just now considering climate change legislation. But the congressional opposition has yet to advance a comprehensive alternative to the Bush administration's foot-dragging approach. Many of the so-called solutions now being put forward are piecemeal and insufficient. They will only delay the adjustments that the United States needs to make.

Climate change is not just an environmental issue. It is a justice issue. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has called climate change “an act of aggression by the rich against the poor.”<sup>5</sup> The citizens of Bangladesh and Uganda—and the poorer inhabitants of New Orleans—suffer because of the wasteful energy policies of the rich. A just policy toward climate change must first acknowledge America's disproportionate use of natural resources. To reduce the emission of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, it must be the 300 million Americans—not the 150 million Bangladeshis—who take bold steps and shoulder the greater financial burden.

## CORE MISCONCEPTIONS

Over the past two years, rising temperatures, drought, record floods, and storms have grabbed headlines around much of the world. In early fall 2005, the mass media began writing more extensively about climate change in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, hurricanes made more devastating because of the warming of the Gulf of Mexico. In late 2006 and early 2007, three high-level reports appeared

in rapid succession. The Stern Review predicted enormous economic consequences of climate change.<sup>6</sup> The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report confirming the scientific evidence behind climate change assessments. And in March 2007, the UN and the Sigma Xi Scientific Research Society offered several dozen recommendations to follow up on the IPCC findings.<sup>7</sup>

Each of these studies advanced the public's understanding that corporate and human activity accelerates climate chaos. Responding to this heightened awareness, American political leaders have gone from a state of denial to a state of feverish activity. However, the rush to submit legislation under a Democratic-controlled Congress has promoted many wrong-headed solutions. These measures will only delay an even more painful and costly transition down the road because they are rooted in one or more misconceptions. Many still err in believing that climate change is not urgent and can be handled with minor tinkering, that technology and market mechanisms by themselves can solve the problem, that the problems lie with China and India, and that Americans can blithely maintain unsustainable, and ultimately unhealthy, lifestyles.

Until we address these core misconceptions, workable alternatives cannot replace the current failed policies.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *Climate change can be fixed with only minor tinkering.*

Most scientists now concur that we will pass a climate change tipping point unless countries collectively agree to stop the growth of fossil fuel use within a decade or less. We need to stabilize our carbon dioxide emissions at atmospheric concentrations of at most 400 to 450 parts per million (ppm). Unchecked, the rate will rise to 550 ppm by mid-century, and and it will be too late to stop the more catastrophic aspects of climate change, including a possible shutdown in the ocean current that warms Europe and a loss of over 50% of Africa's surface water. In a world of rising population—and increased economic growth—meeting such targets is impossible without a significant change in course.

The climate crisis is taking place within a broader crisis of widespread natural resource depletion. Traditional and readily accessible sources of oil are likely to peak in the next decade.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, oil consumption is skyrocketing in China, India, and other rapidly growing economies. As a result, fossil fuel prices are rising and competition is growing among the biggest economies over oil supplies. On top of this, we face a dangerous depletion of the Earth's fresh water, its forests, and its arable land. The water crisis is perhaps the most urgent. Roughly 1.2 billion people suffer from lack of access to clean

drinking water. Every year, over two million people die from preventable diarrhea contracted from drinking unsafe water.

The outcome of these inter-related crises may soon be a general breakdown of the most basic economic and social structures of our society. The building blocks of modern industrial society—export-oriented manufacturing, long-distance transport systems, large-scale industrial food production, complex urban and suburban systems, the dominance of the private auto, and many commodities basic to our present lifestyle—all rely on cheap energy supplies. The era of cheap energy is coming to a close.

If countries do not adjust their economies or the mindsets of their citizenry to meet this challenge, the world may soon face economic upheavals, human and environmental tragedies, and violent struggles to control the world's last resources. History is full of wars that have been fought over natural resources, but they will be dwarfed by the looming scramble over what is left if we don't change course.<sup>9</sup>

The scale and urgency of the climate change problem suggest that tinkering on the margins is not sufficient. The Stern Review conservatively predicts a cut of 20% in global economic activity if climate change continues unabated. Nor is this an issue that can be put off for the next generation to decide. According to James Hansen, a leading expert at the Goddard Institute for Space Studies, there is at most a decade in which to launch substantial change. After that, the earth will pass the tipping point, "a point of no return, beyond which the built-in momentum and feedbacks will carry us to levels of climate change with staggering consequences for humanity and all of the residents of this planet."<sup>10</sup> More recent reports suggest that the world might not have even 10 years within which to take significant action.<sup>11</sup>

The Bush administration continues to oppose anything more than a fresh coat of paint for the deck chairs on the Titanic and won't even expend the effort to rearrange them. The existing congressional climate change proposals, such as the Global Warming Pollution Reduction Act introduced by Bernie Sanders (I-VT) in the Senate, at least set the right directions for the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions: 80% of 1990 levels by 2050. But passage of such bills is not assured, and implementation will be even less likely given both parties' reluctance to put the necessary economic restructuring on the table.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *Technology, the market, and the experts can solve the crisis.*

Politicians in the United States and most other countries often get elected with a can-do enthusiasm. They tout the

technological prowess of engineers to tackle any problem thrown in their path and extol the virtues of markets to solve what technology cannot. With climate change, this enthusiasm is dangerously misplaced.

Instead of facing the urgent need to cut fossil fuel use, politicians are lining up behind technologies that look good on paper but don't deliver the goods. Technology to make coal-burning plants cleaner, for instance, is both expensive and not as clean as advertised. New ways to capture and store carbon are also expensive, unproven, and require abundant energy to carry out. Nuclear energy is extremely expensive, creates security problems with byproducts that can be turned into nuclear weapons, and burdens future generations with costly waste disposal quandaries that threaten the health and safety of millions. The revolution in biofuels made from farm products, which is driving up corn and sugar prices and threatening habitats, ignores the enormous energy inputs required to create the much-lauded energy outputs. And science-fiction schemes to "geo-engineer" the earth, for instance by deliberately polluting the stratosphere to deflect sunlight and lower temperatures or seeding the oceans with nanoparticles of iron, offer a flawed cure that is potentially worse than the illness.<sup>12</sup>

The blind faith in future and futuristic technology becomes more dangerous still when linked to the reckless embrace of the market. Indeed, markets got us into this crisis in the first place. As the Stern Review concludes, climate change is the "greatest market failure the world has seen." The "invisible hand" of the market has turned up the global thermostat by encouraging unsustainable production and putting few limits on individual and corporate behavior. Markets by themselves will do nothing to improve the situation and will likely make matters worse. Take the case of the technology proposed to solve the world's growing water crisis. Markets and corporations will not determine the safety of nuclear-powered desalination plants or nanotech water purification systems. "The big water companies are pushing for deregulation of water—much like the deregulation of telecommunications that happened last decade," writes Canadian water activist Maude Barlow. "So that they can make the decisions about this technology solely on a profit-oriented basis and not be held accountable."<sup>13</sup>

The intersection of technology and the market is even more problematic in the case of schemes to counter global warming. The key global agreement governing climate change, the Kyoto Protocol, uses market mechanisms to avoid the need to cut fossil fuel use. Kyoto allows a nation like Japan to avoid cutting carbon dioxide emissions if it uses carbon trading to pay for reductions in carbon dioxide emissions in other nations. Such trades allow wealthy countries to

avoid tough but potentially more effective choices in how to cut overall carbon dioxide emissions.

Despite the endorsement of the World Bank, carbon trading is a deeply flawed approach. Without recognition of the broader resource crises, carbon trading can support projects in poor countries that exacerbate other crises. For example, carbon trades promoted by the World Bank include subsidies for cinder-block makers that use toxic fly ash from coal-fired power plants to make their products. Such trades actually create perverse incentives to develop industries that are potent greenhouse gas emitters.

Carbon-trading proposals merely create a new market and new opportunities for corporate profit, but don't promote renewable energy. Such trading schemes are often little more than shell games in which countries and corporations can hide their polluting activities in new guises. Most congressional critics of the Bush administration have not thought beyond this inadequate carbon-trading approach. And the Bush administration remains cool even to carbon trading. "We don't believe targets and timetables are important, or a global cap and trade system," says chief U.S. climate negotiator Harlan Watson. "It's important not to jeopardize economic growth."<sup>14</sup>

Climate science is often a daunting field of knowledge. Even more challenging is the set of elaborate, acronym-riddled policy prescriptions that experts put forward to solve the problem. Despite many congressional hearings on the problem, powerful interests continue to hammer out energy policy—which has a tremendous impact on climate change—in backrooms with little if any public input. To push elected officials to address climate change and embrace more sustainable energy alternatives will require an informed electorate that is not kept at arm's length from the policy debate. The experts will not magically solve this crisis with quick fixes or free-market proposals. An engaged population must be part of the process.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *China and India are the problem, not the United States.*

The United States produces more greenhouse gas emissions than any other country: over six billion tons of carbon dioxide in 2005.<sup>15</sup> However, China is fast catching up and will soon surpass the United States. By 2030, China and India will lead the developing world, accounting for about 70% of the growth in energy demand and, depending on their energy choices, in future greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>16</sup>

"The truth about climate change policy is that developing countries are where most of the future action has to

be,” declares former World Bank chief economist Lawrence Summers.<sup>17</sup> But this common observation misses the point. Greenhouse gas emissions should be assessed in an historical context and in terms of per capita emissions. So, for instance, China will shortly surpass total annual U.S. carbon dioxide emissions. Historically, however, the United States produced far more greenhouse gas emissions than either China or India. And the Chinese still produce only 3.2 tons and Indians only 1.2 tons per capita compared to 21 tons for individual Americans. Also, foreign corporations headquartered in wealthy nations own many factories producing carbon emissions in India, China, and other rapidly industrializing countries, so it is not so easy to assign responsibility for the pollution. The United States must work with other nations on climate change, but most of all it must work on itself.

China recently instituted a policy of cutting energy intensity by 20% per unit of GDP by 2010. China also plans to boost its use of renewable energy to 16% by 2020. Its automobiles are required to get 5% greater fuel economy than current U.S. automobiles and 10% greater fuel economy standards than U.S. automobiles by 2008.<sup>18</sup> One in 10 Chinese households uses a solar water heater, and now the Chinese government is urging builders and new businesses to use solar water heating whenever possible.

With Himalayan glaciers disappearing by 2035, water tables dropping, and crop productivity falling, both China and India are beginning to recognize that unrestrained emissions are literally suicidal. What China and India want and need is investment in their infrastructure—in public transportation, power, and new building construction—that will ensure their efficient use of non-renewable fuels while phasing in clean, renewable sources of energy as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and others are encouraging China, India, and other developing countries to do just the opposite. International financial institutions are extending loans and credits for developing countries to ramp up investments in fossil fuels for domestic consumption, expand unsafe and expensive nuclear power, and invest in unproven technologies such as carbon capture and storage for coal-fired power plants while encouraging the proliferation of carbon trades rife with corruption.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *U.S. citizens won't give up unsustainable, unhealthy lifestyles in order to solve the problem of global warming.*

First the good news. Going green is good for you. Powering down to ways of living that use much less energy can lead to a healthier and more deeply fulfilling way of life for Americans.<sup>19</sup> More exercise, a better diet, cleaner natural surroundings, more time with the family: the quality of life for

U.S. citizens would improve, not deteriorate, in a green new world. The U.S. public is already getting on board. We are buying hybrid cars and more efficient appliances. We will back a gas tax if the revenues are put toward reducing global warming.<sup>20</sup> We are looking more carefully at what we eat and how it is grown.

How can we bring this leaner, greener lifestyle more fully into the American mainstream? First of all, we need to cut down on cars and hamburgers. The auto and agribusiness cultures in the United States are at the center of a lifestyle that quite literally fuels the climate crisis. The United States has 5% of the world population but emits close to 25% of manmade greenhouse gasses. The global footprint of U.S. citizens—the percentage of the earth's biologically productive space that a country actually uses—is a whopping 9.7 hectares per person, compared to 4.7 for Europe and only 1.6 for China. Worse, this footprint grew by 21% from 1992 to 2002.<sup>21</sup> Our agribusiness is fossil-fuel intensive, our homes are enormous even by European or Japanese standards, and our car use is unrivalled in the world.

A coordinated national drive toward energy efficiency and a rapid clean energy transition will require common sense. More American consumers must switch to more efficient appliances and modes of transportation. American businesses can save money by using more efficient machines and warehouses. The federal government can encourage this change with subsidies, tax incentives, and improved performance standards for industry and the home.

But efficiency alone will not reduce the U.S. global footprint and avoid the climate change tipping point. To prevent global warming and deal with growing global economic disparities, the United States must work hand in hand with the developing world to achieve an equitable compromise. For a billion people in the developing world to rise out of poverty—at a time when their countries are poised to increase radically their greenhouse gas emissions through economic growth—citizens in the United States, Europe, and Japan will have to change their lifestyles.

## **A JUST SECURITY POLICY<sup>22</sup>**

Nature's clock is ticking: we don't have much time to act. The world as a whole must move toward smaller-scale economic systems and local, renewable energy systems. U.S. actions are central to success. A just climate policy will depend on altered government policies and an immediate move to existing sustainable technologies. It will require a shift from supporting dirty energy to subsidizing clean energy. It should involve nudging countries with carrots and sticks to exceed

the Kyoto targets with a rapid phase-down in unsustainable energy consumption and a rapid phase-in of clean, renewable energy. For the Kyoto-averse United States, a top priority for the next president will be to participate in the next round of negotiating binding, international reduction targets.

Since global warming respects no national boundaries, our strategy cannot stop at the water's edge. Since climate change is taking place in a world sharply divided between rich and poor, our strategy must also address the distribution of pollution and proportional responsibility for the mess we've made.

### AT HOME

The United States can achieve rapid increases in efficiency with existing technology, given the right economic signals. If a new technology proves beneficial, then reductions can accelerate. But we cannot bank on this possibility. Setting stricter standards for pollutants is one approach that relies on existing technology. In the 1980s, countries introduced effective new standards on chlorofluorocarbon emissions that successfully headed off a crisis with the ozone layer. Performance standards tied to reducing carbon emissions from new autos, appliances, factories, and power plants can similarly play an important role in heading off this larger climate change crisis.<sup>23</sup> A first step would be for every new energy consuming and carbon-emitting product to meet much stricter efficiency standards.

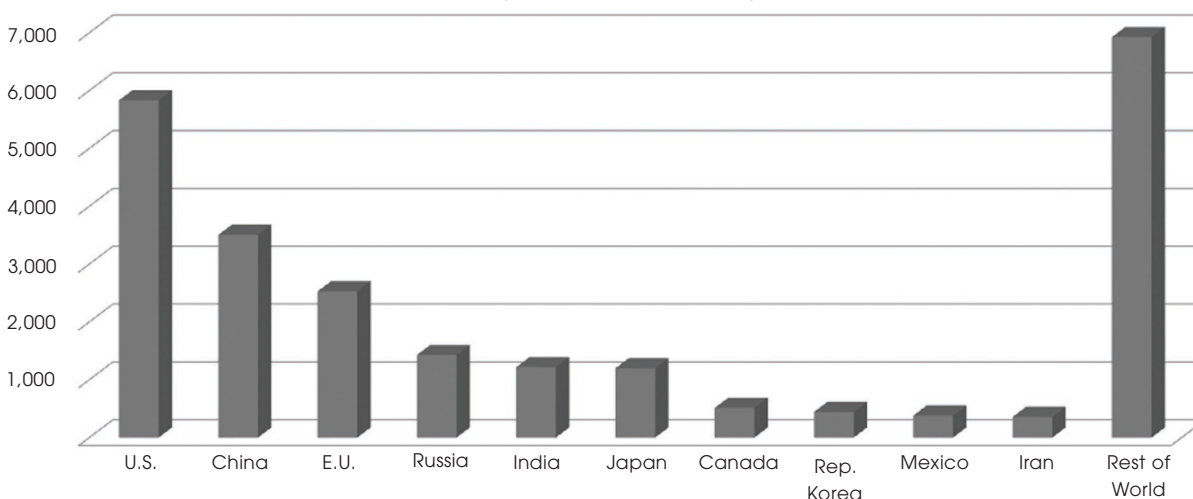
In addition to setting stricter performance standards, the U.S. government must wash its hands of subsidies for dirty technologies. The federal government subsidizes the nuclear power industry to the tune of several billion dollars per year.<sup>24</sup> In 2005, the government provided \$4.25 billion in tax subsidies for conventional fossil fuels.<sup>25</sup> In the last half of the 20th century, these dirty energy sources received between \$115 and \$147 billion in subsidies compared to only \$5 billion in subsidies for renewable energy.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the price Americans pay at the pump for oil—\$320 billion in 2006—is only half the actual cost of the U.S. military protecting our access and supply lines.<sup>27</sup>

Shifting subsidies from fossil fuels to renewable energy would reduce these costs and the conflicts associated with them while speeding the pace at which renewable energy use becomes cost-competitive. Further, we must tax this unsustainable energy use to reduce social and environmental costs beyond global warming. For instance, pollution taxes should be applied to coal: to help pay the health costs borne by miners and people downstream and downwind of mines and power plants, to create alternative employment, and to restore wildlife habitats.

This direct tax on pollutants can go into a "Climate and Energy Security Fund."<sup>28</sup> If only 15% of the revenues from a carbon tax went to income-tax reduction, energy efficiency, and investment in renewable energy sources, it could eliminate the adverse impact on energy prices. Consumers would in fact spend less on energy: 30% less on petroleum, almost

## BOX 1: CO2 TOTAL EMISSIONS BY COUNTRY: 2002

(million metric tons)



Source: The World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2006* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2006).

50% less on electricity, and about 25% less on natural gas.<sup>29</sup> A \$50 dollar per ton tax on carbon—which was then redirected into incentives for renewable energy—would achieve reductions of carbon emissions of roughly 10% below 1990 levels by 2010. By 2020, such a tax would reduce oil imports by the amount we now buy from all members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries at no net cost to the taxpayer.<sup>30</sup> This tax shift could provide incentives for energy efficiency nationally. The United States could reduce its electric energy use by 20-45% using commercially available, cost-effective technologies.<sup>31</sup>

Existing technology can meet our electricity needs. Consider what we can produce, like magicians, out of thin air. Wind farms in a few states could supply all of the U.S. electric energy needs while eliminating more than a third of the climate-changing and health-damaging air pollution U.S. sources emit.<sup>32</sup> New York State is already exploiting its very large wind energy capacity by building new wind farms relatively close to some of the largest markets on the continent. Tax policy has played a critical role in bringing wind technology to market. A production tax credit helped promote the development of wind farms across the country and establish wind as a mainstream option for new power generation.<sup>33</sup> There is also a need for greater investment in water-reservoir, hydrogen, and battery storage of energy from renewable sources such as wind, especially for use where these generation sources are not yet connected to the grid. Depending on local conditions, solar energy, geothermal, and small hydro are also attractive for both supplemental and new sources of energy.

This transformation of the U.S. economy from wasteful to sustainable presents an enormous opportunity. The new Green economy can create millions of new jobs: manufacturing energy-efficient technologies, retrofitting existing factories and buildings, and helping other countries meet the new energy efficiency standards. The Apollo Alliance dubs this new sector of the workforce “green collar jobs.”<sup>34</sup>

## AND ABROAD

Tax policy at home will have little impact if it doesn't address the global imbalance of wealth, energy use, and resource exploitation. One way of addressing global inequities is through green fees. Countries set fees on imported goods and services to reflect the sustainability of the methods and materials that went into them. Under such an arrangement, for instance, Germany could put a surcharge on a car imported from Sweden if it was built with less sustainable materials or processes than German cars. In this way, countries and cor-

porations would not be able to profit by selling items made cheaper by polluting technologies. The proceeds of such a green fee could be used for correcting the domestic damage and made available to developing countries to reduce pollution and increase efficiency and renewable energy production. Such green fees for aid could become part of the post-Kyoto requirements.

In addition, the United States and other countries must ensure that the World Bank and other international financial institutions eliminate loans and subsidies for non-renewable forms of energy.<sup>35</sup> The same principle applies to recipient countries and companies. If their leaders do not adopt green practices despite available assistance, Congress should cut our contributions and commerce accordingly.

Some European countries are leading by example.<sup>36</sup> Sweden has adopted carbon taxes in four stages. Spain, Germany, and Denmark export wind turbines and derive a higher percentage of their energy from wind with a much smaller wind resource than the United States. Some Dutch houses are steady net generators of energy. The UK is pressing for global warming to head the list of items for international cooperation. While climate change negotiators met in Nairobi, Kenya in November of 2006, the heads of state of France and Switzerland called respectively for tariffs on imports to offset lax pollution controls and new global carbon taxes to aid in the adaptation to climate change by developing countries.

It's not only Europe. China is currently planning to build a new, completely self-sufficient city on an island off Shanghai. The city of Dongtan will house 500,000 people in a car-free environment that produces no greenhouse gasses and recycles virtually everything. The buildings will be energy self-sufficient and made from local materials. Organic farmers on the island will make the city self-sufficient in food.<sup>37</sup>

Climate justice also means widening the zone of engagement beyond the wealthy. Many of the world's poor live sustainably on the land. They demand that they be given greater control of their local natural resources—and protected from encroachments from agribusiness, mining, and forest corporations—so that they can continue to manage those resources sustainably. But many poorer parts of the world now have natural resources that are badly degraded, and hundreds of millions of people live in urban poverty without access to even the most basic energy services. As such, managed transfers of resources from rich to poor countries must be part of the solution.

Individuals, acting collectively, can be catalysts for change. Through our actions, we can change how we eat, live, travel, and invest to reflect the larger changes needed at a societal level. Equally important, we can demand that our elected officials shift policy to address the huge nature of the problem. The crisis we are facing is on a scale that rivals the threat of Nazism in World War II. Just as that crisis required a significant mobilization of national and global resources so too will any effective response to climate change.

If we act now, we can prevent the seas from wiping out Bangladesh. We can save the polar bears from extinction in the Arctic Circle. We can stop the droughts from destroying farmland throughout the world. It doesn't require supernatural powers or some as-yet-undiscovered magic technology. It simply requires that we change how we live and how we relate to the rest of the world.

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# Just Nuclear Disarmament

Some said Kim Jong Il was crazy. Others declared that he was canny. When the North Korean leader pushed his country through the door of the nuclear club in October 2006 with the explosion of a nuclear device of unknown size and technical capability, he certainly shook up the international community. Observers feared that the explosion would trigger a new arms race in East Asia. Japan could turn its plutonium stockpile and nuclear know-how into an arsenal in as little as six months. South Korea and Taiwan would follow suit, and China would enlarge its rather small supply of strategic weaponry. The regime established by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in the late 1960s, which discouraged but didn't entirely prevent new entrants to the nuclear club, would be dead—and Kim Jong Il's fingerprints would be all over the murder weapon.

Given the realities of the post-Cold War nuclear age, however, Kim Jong Il's decision to test the bomb was not surprising. Like other countries since 1945, North Korea has been a U.S. nuclear target. In November 1950, not long after the outbreak of the Korean War, President Harry Truman threatened to use all weapons in the U.S. arsenal against North Korea. The following month, General Douglas MacArthur requested permission to use 26 nuclear weapons, a request that was renewed several times but ultimately denied.<sup>1</sup> In 1958, five years after the armistice, the United States introduced tactical nuclear weapons to South Korea. Although those weapons were later removed, the United States still maintained a nuclear threat. The 2002 National Security Strategy, for instance, reserves the U.S. right to use nuclear weapons in a preemptive strike “to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States.”<sup>2</sup> And the United States has treated North Korea as just such a “rogue state,” a member of what President Bush called an “axis of evil” with Iraq and Iran.

Facing an enormous asymmetrical U.S. threat and no longer able to rely on the Soviet nuclear umbrella, North Korea ramped up its own nuclear program. It was predictably concerned about Washington's regime change rhetoric and its regime change actions against Serbia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The message of the October 2006 test was clear: Kim Jong Il preferred to be on the producing rather than receiving end of a nuclear weapon.

As the North Korea story demonstrates, the threat of nuclear weapons has not disappeared with the end of the Cold War—and that threat comes from countries big and small. If anything, the risks have increased. Despite the com-

mitment of NPT signatories to reduce and then eliminate their stockpiles, the nuclear club members have made only limited moves in that direction. Indeed, several countries are actively modernizing their arsenals. China is reportedly expanding its limited stockpile and introducing a submarine-launched capability. Even more important, the United States has embarked on Complex 2030, which will produce a new generation of nuclear warheads and may well prompt a whole new round of testing. Meanwhile, there is no adequate international mechanism to safeguard the vast amount of nuclear material now available, enough to build 300,000 bombs.

The United States has refused to take the lead in reducing nuclear weapons or their threat, even though former high-ranking officials such as former secretaries of state George Shultz and Henry Kissinger have recently urged “a world free of nuclear weapons.”<sup>3</sup> The United States has the most sophisticated nuclear arsenal, it is the only country to have used nuclear weapons, and it has consistently threatened to use them ever since. A just nuclear policy would focus not simply on attempting to suppress the nuclear ambitions of one Kim Jong Il after another. A just nuclear policy would focus on the nuclear alpha male. The only feasible path to just nuclear disarmament begins with Washington.

## CORE MISCONCEPTIONS

The nuclear genie, we are told, is out of the bottle and nothing we do can entice him back in. Nuclear weapons have represented ultimate power ever since the United States destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945—as much to send a message of U.S. resolve and capabilities to the Soviets as to bludgeon the Japanese leadership into surrendering. Today there are about 27,000 nuclear weapons worldwide, of which about 11,250 are believed to be operational. The United States and Russia possess over 90% of these deployed nuclear weapons, including thousands on hair-trigger alert, ready to launch within minutes of a command. The other six nuclear weapon states (United Kingdom, France, China, Israel, India, and Pakistan) maintain fewer than 1,000 operational warheads.

Only one country, South Africa, has voluntarily given up this ultimate power. Several other countries—Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus—agreed to relinquish their portion of the Soviet arsenal in exchange for compensation. A third group, which includes South Korea, Egypt, Brazil, and Libya, has stopped their quest for a nuclear weapon either as a result of pressure or incentives. And then there is the fourth group of

20-30 virtual nuclear weapons states, which Mohamed El-Baradei of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) warns have the capacity to develop nuclear weapons in a very short time span. What would make either the comparatively weak like North Korea, the incomparably strong like the United States, or near-nuclear powers like Japan to give up this supreme instrument of last resort?

The Bush administration has shown nothing but scorn for the attempts to bottle the nuclear genie. It withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty and recently announced that it will allow the major nuclear reduction treaty with Russia to expire. Instead, it has accelerated efforts to strengthen the U.S. arsenal.

The conventional alternative to this “peace through strength” approach has been arms control and non-proliferation. Arms control advocates have worked for 60 years to establish limits—on the number of nuclear club members, on the number of permissible warheads, on the type of permissible tests. While this work has managed the atom, it has not done enough to reduce its destructive force. In some sense, the bipartisan consensus in favor of arms control has normalized nuclear weapons and legitimized their further use in war planning.

Arms control has brought us closer but not close enough to disarmament. The Bush approach, meanwhile, has brought us ever closer to doomsday. The Nuclear Clock of the *Bulletin*

*of the Atomic Scientists*, which had moved to 17 minutes to midnight in the hopeful days of 1991, now stands a mere five minutes from midnight. Disarmament seems to shimmer ever further off on the horizon. But this misconception of disarmament as a utopian or politically risky proposition—as well as the notions that nonproliferation applies only to “rogue states” and that international mechanisms for controlling nukes are ineffectual—are major conceptual barriers to reducing the threat of nuclear weapons and turning back the Nuclear Clock.

Until we address these core misconceptions, workable alternatives cannot replace the current failed policies.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *The United States is committed to reducing nuclear weapons.*

By eliminating an entire class of U.S. and Russian weapons, the 1991 Presidential Nuclear Initiatives marked the high point in U.S. commitment to reducing the threat of nuclear weapons. The United States announced it would recall and destroy all nuclear artillery and nuclear warheads for short-range ballistic missiles, and would no longer deploy tactical nuclear weapons at sea or on land-based naval planes. The Soviet Union reciprocated by announcing it would eliminate its nuclear artillery, nuclear mines, and land-based tactical nuclear warheads. Meanwhile, the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program—also known as Nunn-Lugar after the two principal senators who sponsored it—has provided

## BOX 2: NUCLEAR CLUB MEMBERS

Country	Operational Warheads	Stockpile Warheads
Russia	5,670	15,000
United States	5,163	9,938
China	~145	~200
France	348	>348
United Kingdom	<160	~200
Israel	n.a.	~80
Pakistan	n.a.	~60
India	n.a.	~65
North Korea	n.a.	<10

Sources: Hans M. Kristensen, “Status of World Nuclear Forces 2007,” Federation of American Scientists/National Resources Defense Council, May 2, 2007.

funds and training to decommission nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union. It has, to date, led to the destruction of over 6,000 warheads and over 400 long-range missiles, secured hundreds of tons of nuclear material, and employed over 50,000 former weapons scientists in peaceful work. In 1992, the United States followed up on these promising developments by stopping the testing of nuclear weapons. From 1992 to 1997, the Clinton administration reduced the size of the U.S. nuclear arsenal from 18,290 to 12,500 warheads.

Since then, the U.S. resolve has largely disappeared. The arsenal has shrunk another 2,500 warheads, and Washington and Moscow negotiated a ceiling on nuclear warheads. But the U.S.-Russian agreements don't cover delivery vehicles, reserve stockpiles, or tactical nuclear weapons, and the United States still maintains an arsenal of about 10,000 nuclear warheads. And the United States has announced that it will allow one critical agreement—the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)—to expire in 2009, which makes future reductions considerably less likely.<sup>4</sup> The Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI), designed to safeguard nuclear materials scattered around the world, has made important progress in reducing the risk of nuclear proliferation. But the funding and staffing remain inadequate, and the program emphasizes conversion rather than shutting down old nuclear reactors.<sup>5</sup>

More troubling, the United States is now moving in the opposite direction: toward more nuclear weapons and the production of more nuclear material. With Complex 2030, the Bush administration plans to spend at least \$150 billion to upgrade plutonium production and design a new generation of weapons. The new nukes may push Washington to start testing again, which would encourage other countries to do likewise. The Bush administration also wants to build a new generation of “bunker busters” that can be used, ostensibly, against weapons caches buried deep in the ground. The damage that such bunker busters would do to American forces, not to mention civilians in the targeted areas, has not persuaded the Pentagon to rethink this program (though Congress has managed to limit development so far to non-nuclear bunker busters).

The United States has always embraced a position of what it terms the “rational” use of nuclear weapons. It has maintained sufficient force to mount a first strike as well as a second strike attack. It has retained tactical nuclear weapons for use in the battlefield by commanders whose forces are sufficiently decimated and require a “robust” response. Tens of thousands of people over the years have spent their lives thinking about how nuclear weapons are made, deployed, controlled, and used on command. Although many members of this culture have renounced their nuclear war commitments—the former head of the Strategic Air Command has

called for nuclear abolition—this nuclear complex maintains its institutional integrity.

The Democratic Party has expressed skepticism over bunker busters and Complex 2030. But it has never challenged the nuclear complex or nuclear war planning. These Cold War realists believe that the United States should continue to claim the right of first use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear powers. They opposed enforcing UN resolutions against the nuclear programs of Pakistan, Israel, and India. And they have resolutely supported the possible use of military options against “nuclear rogue states” such as Iran. In short, both the current administration and its realist critics endorse nuclear weapons as a legitimate source of U.S. power that should be managed rather than sharply reduced.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *It is technically impossible and politically too risky to eliminate nuclear weapons.*

At their summit in Reykjavik in 1986, Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President Ronald Reagan were on the verge of signing an agreement to abolish nuclear weapons. The U.S. arms control and strategy community, instead of breaking out the champagne, reacted with horror.<sup>6</sup> The two leaders were about to undermine the doctrine of nuclear deterrence—the “mutually assured destruction” that has prevented nuclear powers from launching first strikes. They were about to remove a cornerstone of U.S. dominance and throw hundreds of thousands involved in the nuclear complex out of work.

The sticking point was Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, a defensive shield that he imagined would eventually make nuclear weapons obsolete. He was even willing to share the technology with the Soviets. Gorbachev remained skeptical, and the grand disarmament plan fell apart. Whether or not Washington and Moscow would ever have taken the first steps down this path back in the 1980s, the story suggests the powerful attraction that nuclear disarmament has had, even for the leaders of the two countries most heavily invested in their arsenals.

Reykjavik was not the only time the United States has at least notionally committed itself to nuclear abolition. The United States signed at least six arms control treaties that established general and complete disarmament as the goal of the process. The Arms Control and Disarmament Agency was originally tasked with preparing comprehensive peace alternatives before more piecemeal arms control treaties became the focus of the agency.

Although nuclear disarmament has not been a hot-button issue for the American public or politicians since the end

of the Cold War, the issue has broad public and significant elite support. Opinion polls over the last decade have consistently shown 70% or higher public support in the United States for the global abolition of nuclear weapons, and many former high-ranking officials have endorsed the concept. The most recent and notable example was a comprehensive statement on U.S. nuclear weapons policy signed by 20 prominent former defense, foreign policy, and arms control officials, led by former secretaries of state Henry Kissinger and George Shultz, former defense secretary William Perry, and former Democratic senator Sam Nunn. Convened by the conservative Hoover Institution at Stanford University, the group laid out a complete program for overhauling U.S. nuclear weapons policy and strongly endorsed the complete global elimination of nuclear weapons.

Abolition is not only popular. It is feasible. Contrary to the objections of disarmament skeptics, arms control treaties have been remarkably successful. There have been exceptions, of course: the nuclear club continues to fall short of their NPT commitments to move toward nuclear disarmament, the United States withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty to pursue missile defense, North Korea appears to have violated the 1994 Agreed Framework. But the test ban treaties, the nuclear-free zones, and the bilateral agreements between the United States and Soviet Union/Russia have by and large held firm. The technical challenges of monitoring have been met. Even in cases of violations, such as the North Korea situation, the Agreed Framework successfully froze the country's plutonium facilities for nearly a decade and the violation centered on what appears to have been a

minor uranium-enrichment research project. If arms control treaties are both politically and technically feasible, then a disarmament plan built on the foundation of existing treaties is neither utopian nor impractical.

Cold War realists have argued that nuclear weapons keep the peace. Deterrence is supposed to have created the longest peaceful stretch in recent history. Although many bloody conflicts arose during the Cold War, none of them involved the direct confrontation of nuclear powers. Disarmament, it is argued, would increase rather than decrease the risk of war. Indeed, some analysts like Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer argue that nuclear deterrence is such a good thing that it should be more evenly distributed. "The gradual spread of nuclear weapons is more to be welcomed than feared," Waltz has written.<sup>7</sup>

This argument is weak for two reasons. First, it is impossible to demonstrate that possession of nuclear weapons reduced the risk of war. That nuclear war was averted in Korea, during the Cuban missile crisis, or by accidental launch was more a matter of luck than the efficacy of deterrence.<sup>8</sup> The greater access to nuclear materials by non-state actors also undermines the argument, for these actors have no states to defend and are thus resistant to a certain degree to the logic of deterrence. Second, the major powers today have other reasons for not attacking one another. It is, for instance, difficult to imagine China and the United States launching a nuclear war given their significant mutual economic dependency.

### BOX 3: COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE GIVEN UP NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAMS

Argentina (1995)	Romania (1989)
Australia (1973)	South Africa (1991)
Belarus (1996)	South Korea (1975 - undisclosed research continues)
Brazil (1985)	Spain (1981)
Egypt (1967)	Sweden (1968)
Germany (1945)	Switzerland (1969)
Iraq (1991)	Taiwan (Republic of China - 1988)
Kazakhstan (1995)	Ukraine (1996)
Libya (2003)	Yugoslavia, Federal Republic of (1987)

Source: Nuclear Threat Initiative, "Country Profiles," various issues; Robert Norris and Hans Kristensen, *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, various issues; Federation of American Scientists Nuclear Forces Guide, June 7, 2007.

Missile defense, the overpriced and oversold defense against nuclear weapons, is no alternative to disarmament. U.S. attempts to protect itself from outside threat has the perhaps unintended consequence of making other countries more fearful of U.S. attack. They reason: if the United States no longer worries about retaliation, it will be free to pursue any intervention, any attack, or any regime change strategy. Moreover, countries with small arsenals such as China, because they worry that missile defense negates their deterrent capabilities, have additional reasons to modernize and expand their capabilities.

The current administration has a calculated indifference to arms control. Its critics continue to believe in the power of deterrence and support only the existing arms control regime. To move toward disarmament, we must both affirm the political and technical feasibility of arms control and challenge the dubious merits of nuclear deterrence.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *Rogue states are the greatest proliferation threat.*

In signing on to the NPT, non-nuclear states agreed to give up research and development of nuclear weapons if the nuclear powers traveled a well-defined road toward nuclear disarmament. But this road has not been traveled, and the fears of nuclear proliferation grow even among the most powerful states. The result is the toxic double standard by which the weak must follow the law and the powerful are free to do as they wish. For geopolitical purposes, the U.S. has conferred its blessing on certain nuclear states—India officially, Israel

unofficially—while labeling others as rogue states.

There is no question that the proliferation of fissile material is a great threat to the world system. But the U.S. refusal to make a sustained commitment to disarmament and the hypocrisy of its embrace of some nuclear states and not others are the greater threats. Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) are not just the atomic, biological, and chemical weapons that other countries possess or want to purchase in order to even the playing field. With its enormous nuclear complex, a chemical weapons arsenal that the Pentagon isn't planning to destroy until 2023, and a largely covert biological weapons program, the United States remains at the top of WMD heap.<sup>9</sup>

Particularly in the last six years, the United States has also undermined multilateral institutions that could play a role in monitoring and guaranteeing a non-proliferation regime. The U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative is not, for instance, a multilateral body and key countries such as Russia and China are not members. The United States has refused to negotiate with Iran to find a political solution that could arrest that country's nuclear program. It deliberately unraveled the Agreed Framework with North Korea, then delayed for four years negotiating a political solution to the crisis until it was too late and North Korea had already tested its bomb. Washington has cut funding for the Cooperative Threat Reduction program, thousands of warheads remain undestroyed, and much of the former Soviet cache of fissionable material is protected by little more than rusty fences.

BOX 4: COUNTRIES THAT MAY JOIN THE NUCLEAR CLUB	
Algeria	Libya
Australia	Saudi Arabia
Brazil	Serbia and Montenegro
Egypt	South Africa
Indonesia	South Korea
Japan	Syria
Kazakhstan	Taiwan

Source: Swedish International Peace Research Institute and First Watch International, "Countries and Issues of Strategic Nuclear Concern," updated July 2006. Available at: <http://www.sipri.org/contents/expcon/cnscindex.html>

The current administration plays hardball with the countries it doesn't want to have nuclear weapons. And what of the so-called acceptable states? Over the objections of the arms control community, Washington inked a nuclear cooperation deal with India that will allow the country to go from producing seven bombs a year to as many as 50 annually. Yet India was the first country to use its civilian nuclear energy program as a cover for a secret weapons program. It never signed the NPT. It stands accused of illicitly acquiring uranium enrichment technology. And the U.S. government sanctioned two Indian companies in 2005 for sending missile and chemical weapons technology to Iran.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, the United States has remained silent about Israel's nuclear arsenal even after Prime Minister Ehud Olmert admitted its existence in December 2006.

The Cold War realist critics of the administration continue to divide "rogues" from acceptable nuclear states. Former defense secretary William Perry, former assistant secretary of defense Ashton Carter, and former vice president Walter Mondale all endorsed a preemptive attack against North Korea's nuclear facilities, despite the risk of triggering a major conflict.<sup>11</sup> The Democratic frontrunners in the 2008 presidential race have all taken a hard line against Iran. They haven't called on the United States to implement the disarmament clause of the NPT. They haven't called on the United States to establish a just nonproliferation regime that sanctions all parties, including Washington, for failing to stop the sale or transfer of fissionable material. And they say nothing about Israel's 200-400 high-density nuclear bombs.

## **A JUST SECURITY POLICY**

A just nuclear policy would eliminate the hypocrisy in the current U.S. approach to nuclear weapons. It would emphasize the importance of arms control treaties but as a means to the end of disarmament rather than as ends in themselves. It would strengthen multilateral mechanisms for the securing of nuclear material.

Such a policy would begin with canceling U.S. plans to upgrade its nuclear arsenal. It would expand funding for the CTR and GTRI programs, pay off its arrears to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and eliminate funding for the wildly expensive and technically suspect missile defense system. Washington would restart negotiations with Moscow over further reductions in strategic arsenals. When the two largest arsenals are cut down to size, the United States should engage the other nuclear powers in the process.

Several plans for the phased reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons have been proposed since the United Na-

tions called, in its very first resolution in 1946, for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. In its 1997 report *The Future of Nuclear Weapons Policy*, the National Academy of Sciences set out a program by which the United States and Russia, in the near term, would reduce to 1,000 weapons apiece and then, in the medium term, bring down levels more dramatically along with other nuclear powers.<sup>12</sup> The Abolition 2000 framework provides a time-bound framework that builds on existing arms control treaties such as test bans and nuclear-free zones, requires rigorous monitoring and safeguards, and involves civic groups in the monitoring process.

Another approach, certainly consistent with abolition efforts, focuses on the strengthening of international institutions that can create the groundwork for eventual disarmament. The IAEA, for instance, has proposed a new multilateral framework that controls the nuclear fuel cycle. If all countries submit the spent fuel from their civilian nuclear programs to an international agency, the risk of proliferation is reduced. Better yet, given its conflict of interest between controlling and promoting nuclear energy, the IAEA should be split into two new organizations, one to promote sustainable energy sources and the other to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The case of Libya also offers an engagement model for dealing with weapons of mass destruction. Rather than isolating the country further, the United States worked with Britain on quiet diplomacy to stop Libya's unconventional weapons programs in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions and the welcoming of the country back into the international community. Sanctions for violating arms control treaties are appropriate, but they should be applied against all violators, no matter how powerful. However, the disarmament option and a path back to international compliance must always be kept open.

Given the risk of blowing up the planet, the United States must make disarmament a priority. The current administration, or its successor, should appoint a high-profile, broadly empowered "nuclear disarmament czar," such as Shultz or Nunn, to cut through bureaucratic and political inertia, jump-start efforts to change U.S. nuclear policy, and provide sorely needed global leadership on the issue. It is, of course, no longer just states that post-nuclear threats. Before September 11, the United States intercepted an al-Qaeda message that Osama bin Laden was planning a "Hiroshima" against America. There is no adequate international mechanism to safeguard the vast amount of nuclear weapons material now stockpiled around the world. While terrorist organizations don't yet have the means to build or deliver a nuclear weapon, the risk remains high.

The abolition of anything—slavery, discrimination—is arduous. With nuclear weapons, incremental steps toward abolition must be applauded. However, only when such efforts to control arms are undertaken within a justice framework—where the rules are fair and apply to all, where the first moves are made by and the greatest financial burdens fall on the strongest powers—will these incremental steps bring us closer to the goal of complete, verifiable, and irreversible disarmament rather than keep us locked in a world of bristling arsenals and double standards.

Nuclear weapons remain a major threat to humanity and the international community. By committing to disarmament, the United States can restore some of the credibility it has lost over the last six years and help repair its relationship with the global South. The nuclear issue has long divided the international community into those within the club and those outside. Nuclear disarmament, on the other hand, can repair this breach and bring the international community together around a feasible project that still, even after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Twin Towers, has the capacity to determine the fate of the earth.

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# Just Livelihoods

In 2006, Karen Chacon and eight of her co-workers at a Guatemalan apparel factory decided to organize a union. Chacon, 21, had struggled to support her mother and a nephew on \$244 per month sewing zippers on dress pants for Jones Apparel Group, a major U.S. retailer. The plant managers refused to provide workers with clean drinking water and often demanded unpaid overtime, sometimes locking in pregnant workers until dawn. The workers' first step was to file a petition with the Guatemalan Labor Ministry to set up a labor committee. The workers were hopeful. After all, the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), which went into effect in 2006, was supposed to strengthen labor rights in the region. But the very day after they filed the petition, all of the workers were fired. They later learned that they were blacklisted from other factory jobs as well.<sup>1</sup>

Chacon and her fellow workers tried to achieve more justice in their lives—fair wages and safe working conditions—and ended up suffering more injustice.” I believe that CAFTA can spread opportunity, provide jobs, and help lift people out of poverty,” President George W. Bush stated in his March 2007 visit to Guatemala. Yet even U.S. embassy personnel in Guatemala concede a lack of improvement in labor standards. If anything, employers now have even more leverage to fight unions. Guatemala, like many other poor countries, is losing jobs to China, where independent labor unions are officially banned. The China factor is one reason Guatemala's exports to the United States actually fell during the first year of CAFTA.

U.S. policy towards the poorer two-thirds of the world is based overwhelmingly on textbook theories about the wonders of the free market. Lifting barriers to trade and investment and giving special privileges to large corporations are supposed to create benefits that trickle down to workers like Karen Chacon. Market-based remedies have also been touted as solutions to the global health care problem. But the result of U.S. policies has been rising poverty and inequality. Health care around the world has deteriorated sharply and the risk of global pandemics has increased, despite the rising amount of U.S. and international aid devoted to treating sickness. And entrenched conditions of inequality have forced many people to leave their land to flood into cities and to leave their countries to become immigrants.

This widening disparity in health and wealth between the haves and the have-nots has undermined both justice and security, for the South *and* the North. Poverty and poor health care in the global South can be solved but only by supporting

policies that empower people in the global South to secure just livelihoods.

## CORE MISCONCEPTIONS

Both the Democratic and Republican parties have largely been wedded to core misconceptions about richer and poorer, sickness and health. While the Democratic Party has become more critical of current “free trade” policies, a substantial bipartisan consensus still holds that such deals help the poor and promote democracy in developing countries. Both parties are convinced that increased aid is the central tool to end poverty and cure the major diseases afflicting the global South. And they are more focused on trying to slow immigration flows into the United States than on addressing the reasons why people leave their countries in the first place.

Until we address these core misconceptions, workable alternatives cannot replace the current failed policies.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *Current free-trade and free-market policies help the poor.*

As implemented by both parties over the past two decades, free-trade policies in fact *contribute* to poverty and inequality. These policies, which are really corporate-managed trade not free trade, increase the power of corporations to bargain down wages and benefits by pitting workers from different countries against one another. They encourage governments to export the very natural resources on which the livelihoods of so many of their citizens depend. And by protecting the patent rights of giant pharmaceutical firms, they reduce access to affordable medicines.

But perhaps the most devastating effects of free trade have been in agriculture, which employs about 70% of the developing world's poor.<sup>2</sup> Current trade rules restrict a government's power to control imports. As a result, cheaper foreign goods flood in and undercut local farmers. In Mexico, more than a million small farmers have lost their livelihoods due to an influx of subsidized U.S. corn. In sub-Saharan Africa, according to Christian Aid researchers, “trade liberalization has cost an estimated \$272 billion over the past 20 years,” which is about what the region received in aid over these years.<sup>3</sup> World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) pressure on developing country governments to slash supports for small producers only compounds the problem. In areas where ecosystems are still intact, rural communities offer greater food and human security than life in urban slums.

The total number of people living on under \$2 per day actually increased worldwide over the past two decades, particularly in countries that were victims of free-trade policies. While large countries like China and India have indeed reduced extreme poverty, they've not done so as a result of the types of trade and investment liberalization policies that the U.S. government has promoted. For example, the Chinese government has applied extensive restrictions on foreign investment and tightly controlled trade flows through quotas and import and export licenses. According to economist Dani Rodrik, poorer nations with high import barriers did better in the 1990s than those with low barriers. His works suggests that openness to the global economy is usually a *result* of economic development, not a cause of it.<sup>4</sup>

Trade is not an explicitly partisan issue in Washington. President Clinton relied on Republican support to push the North American Free Trade Agreement through Congress in 1993, just as Bush peeled off 15 House Democrats to push through its successor CAFTA in 2005. However, the Democrats have recently moved in a more critical direction. In early 2007, the Democratic Caucus approved a "New Trade Policy for America" that emphasizes the need to raise living standards at home and abroad. While short on details, the proposal differs in some significant ways from the Bush administration's model, for example requiring compliance with internationally recognized labor rights and environmental accords and attempting to balance the need for access to medicines with protection of pharmaceutical patents.<sup>5</sup>

Not surprisingly, though, elected officials' criticism of our trade policies is driven mostly by concerns over U.S., not overseas, impact. Sen. Max Baucus, who is now chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, explained on the Senate floor that he would vote against CAFTA because he did not expect it would benefit the United States. With regard to developing countries, however, the Montana Democrat said that such deals could "generate the wealth they need to lift their people out of poverty. We can spread the values of democracy and promote the rule of law."<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Bush continues to contend that free trade is "the best hope to lift millions out of poverty."<sup>7</sup>

A study by the United Nations University found that:<sup>8</sup>

- The richest 2 percent of adults own more than 50 percent of global household wealth;
- The richest 1 percent of adults (those worth at least \$500,000) control 40 percent of global assets;
- The richest 10 percent of adults own 85 percent of global assets;
- The poorest 50 percent of adults own 1 percent of global wealth. Over the past 35 years, these gaps have grown rapidly.

### BOX 5: PEOPLE LIVING ON LESS THAN \$2 A DAY (millions)

	1981	2004
East Asia and Pacific	1,170	684
China	876	452
E. Europe and Central Asia	20	46
Latin America and Caribbean	104	121
Middle East and North Africa	51	59
South Asia	818	1,124
Sub-Saharan Africa	295	522
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,458</b>	<b>2,556</b>
Total, excluding China	1,582	2,104

Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2007* (Washington D.C.: The World Bank, April 2007).

**MISCONCEPTION:** *Free-trade policies promote democracy.*

The U.S. government's approach to trade is explicitly anti-democratic in both process and substance. An elite few make the decisions about trade policy. Trade negotiations are conducted behind closed doors, with little opportunity for citizen input. Under "fast track" authority, Congress has limited time for debate and cannot make changes in trade deals concluded by the executive branch. And although U.S. trade negotiators must by law consult with independent groups, representatives of big business dominate the official advisory committees.

Trade rules also undermine the authority of governments at all levels to regulate trade and investment to support the public good. Investment provisions slipped into NAFTA and subsequent trade agreements and treaties, for example, give private foreign investors the power to sue governments over laws, including public interest regulations, which might diminish their profits. The U.S. government is currently facing a corporate challenge over a California law aimed at reducing environmental damages related to gold mining. European investors are suing South Africa over affirmative action policies aimed at redressing historic racism in hiring.<sup>9</sup>

Both Democratic and Republican leaders are guilty of employing empty rhetoric equating free trade with democracy as part of their sales pitches. In his State of the Union address in 1997, President Clinton declared that "by expanding trade, we can advance the cause of freedom and democracy around the world." In the wake of September 11, the Bush administration declared that free trade policies were good for democracy and hence global security. The White House's National Security Strategy claims that free trade "reinforces the habits of liberty." Yet, both Augusto Pinochet in Chile and Suharto in Indonesia pursued export-oriented growth strategies and opened their economies wide to foreign investment. This didn't stop either dictator from ruling with an iron fist.

Since 1997, most Democrats and some Republicans have made it tough for the White House to renew fast-track authority (a mechanism that allows the president to submit trade legislation to Congress and get an up-or-down vote without amendments within 90 legislative days). In fact, fast track has become so controversial that the Bush administration renamed it "trade promotion authority" and is facing a tough renewal fight. But the Democrats have not united in opposition to the excessive powers given to corporations through the investment provisions in trade agreements, and it remains unclear whether they will push for substantial changes to open up the negotiation process.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *The private sector always does it better.*

For the past 25 years, the U.S. government has supported World Bank and IMF demands that developing countries seeking loans or debt relief must privatize: sell off government enterprises to private corporations. More than 100 countries have privatized some or most of their state-owned companies, including everything from telecommunications and road-building to essential services like education, health care, and water.

U.S. officials have also promoted privatization through the World Trade Organization's General Agreement on Trade in Services, which sets rules to open up local service markets to foreign businesses. The Bush administration insisted that Costa Rica privatize its telecommunications system as a condition of trade negotiations, despite the country's strong record of providing nationwide telephone service at relatively low rates.

The argument behind privatization is that public entities become bloated and corrupt as a result of being insulated from competition. Indeed, it is not difficult to find examples of government waste in the developing world—or for that matter, in any country. However, when profit-driven corporations take over, they typically slash jobs, bust unions, and favor customers who can pay the most. As a result, privatization has consistently failed to deliver good quality, affordable services to the poor.

Senegal is just one example of privatization gone awry. International financial institutions forced the government to sell part of its electricity system to a Canadian firm in return for debt relief. Promised investments did not materialize. Frequent power outages caused an estimated 1.5-2% drop in GDP. Even though service improved after the government took back control of the system in 2001, the World Bank and IMF also pushed Senegal to privatize a state company that handled the buying and marketing of groundnuts, an important food crop. As a result, less than 30% of the country's groundnut crop was collected, resulting in millions of dollars of lost income and a rural hunger crisis.<sup>10</sup>

Water privatization projects have been particularly prone to failure. Under pressure from the World Bank, the capital of the Philippines sold its water system to private corporations in 1997. An international consortium won the contract for the east side of Manila, based on its promise of a 74% rate cut, but jacked up rates by nearly 500% by 2003. The west side of the city went to a French-Filipino consortium that not only broke its rate cut promises but also stopped making

payments on its debt to the government in 2001. After the company abandoned the contract in 2002, the government had to take over the system.<sup>11</sup>

Rather than reducing corruption, privatization has expanded opportunities for graft. “In country after country,” writes former World Bank Chief Economist Joseph Stiglitz, “government officials have realized that privatization meant that they no longer needed to be limited to annual profit skimming. By selling a government enterprise below market price, they could get a significant chunk of the asset value for themselves rather than leaving it for subsequent officeholders.”<sup>12</sup> Russia is an extreme example. In the 1990s, the government used rigged auctions to sell off the country’s crown jewel enterprises, including its oil industry, to political insiders at fire sale prices. This impoverished the country, while creating a class of so-called oligarchs who now dominate the economy.<sup>13</sup>

In response to widespread protest, the World Bank and IMF have in recent years advised governments in some limited cases to maintain ownership of infrastructure while hiring private firms to manage services. However, this has done little to improve the impact of private sector involvement on services for the poor.

Democratic and Republican leaders alike tend to view scandals of corporate corruption and incompetence as anomalies. Even the Iraq reconstruction fiasco does not appear to have resulted in a fundamental re-thinking of policies that promote privatization. While Congress, under Democratic leadership, is finally aggressively investigating the rampant fraud, waste, and abuse of the Iraq contractors, there are no calls yet for a broader review of the appropriate role of private corporations in providing public services.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *More aid is the panacea for poverty.*<sup>14</sup>

Under the right conditions and with the right framework, aid can help mitigate disease and natural disasters. But it has seldom reduced poverty or inequality in any sustainable fashion. Former World Bank economist William Easterly estimates that rich countries “spent \$568 billion (in today’s dollars) to end poverty in Africa” between 1960 and 2003. Yet, over these years, the ranks of the poor in Africa rose steadily.<sup>15</sup> Often, aid has exacerbated poverty and inequality. In the 1970s, researchers Betsy Hartmann and James Boyce studied an aid project that was supposed to deliver tubewells for irrigation for some Bangladeshi small farmers. They found that invariably, the richest people ended up owning the tubewells, which enhanced their power over the supposed beneficiaries, the poor farmers.<sup>16</sup>

The political and ideological nature of U.S. aid has exacerbated these problems. Strategic allies have garnered the lion’s share of assistance (regardless of need). Aid contracts often do little for the target communities. Food aid, for instance, helps enrich U.S. agribusiness at the expense of local farmers in the recipient country. In 2004, the Bush administration created the Millennium Challenge Account that links aid to free-market criteria, including trade liberalization. In 2006, the administration aligned the U.S. Agency for International Development more closely with the State Department. This would create, warned *The New York Times*, “tremendous political pressure to take money away from effective antipoverty programs, which have very small political constituencies and divert it to the State Department’s geopolitical goals, which have little to do with development.”<sup>17</sup>

Debt relief, rather than aid (most of which consists of loans requiring repayment), is a much more effective tool for reducing poverty, in part due to the politicization of aid, but also because debt relief provides direct budget support with low transactions costs.<sup>18</sup> And yet, while the Bush administration has taken some initial steps toward reducing the developing world’s debt burden, much more needs to be done. A bill that would grant further cancellation has languished for years in Congress. While its prospects of becoming law rose considerably with the power shift, Democratic leaders have not yet mustered strong support behind it.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *If we simply spend more money on medicine to treat disease, we will improve global health.*

During his March 2007 trip to Latin America, President Bush announced that a U.S. Navy medical ship would visit 12 Latin American and Caribbean countries to offer treatment and perform surgeries. His offer symbolized much of what is wrong with the overall U.S. debate on global health. The offer treated the symptoms but not the underlying causes, and it relied on U.S. doctors rather than hiring or training local medical staff. Treat a person for a toothache and you solve the problem for a day. Teach a person proper dental care and train local people to become dentists, and you solve the problem for a lifetime.

There is a welcome and growing understanding in public and elite debates that global health is important to U.S. national interests and to our foreign policy.<sup>19</sup> But the U.S. government still stands in the way of just and effective global health policies. For instance, a focus on prevention through abstinence, rather than through distribution of condoms or better-funded treatment programs, has hampered efforts to deal with the HIV/AIDS pandemic. U.S. government concerns about protecting the intellectual property rights

of pharmaceutical companies have reduced the impact that generic drugs could have in countries where the sick cannot afford the more expensive medicine.

More importantly, the U.S. government has placed an overwhelming emphasis on increasing financial aid for treatment of specific diseases rather than on developing comprehensive health systems. While money for treatment is critical in addressing the current AIDS crisis, developing countries would benefit more in the long term from a greater emphasis on preventive care and health-care training.

There are models of how to do this. In Haiti, the NGO Partners in Health trains community health workers who distribute AIDS medicine and spread information about preventive care. The United States could also learn a great deal from the Cuban model, which has produced excellent results at far less financial cost by investing in preventive care and training new generations of public health professionals.<sup>20</sup> At present, there are 28,000 Cuban doctors in 61 countries, and Cuba has started 11 medical and two nursing schools in other countries. In contrast, according to the World Health Organization, there are 57 countries with critical shortages of public health professionals, adding up to a global deficit of 2.4 million doctors, nurses, and midwives. Both the Partners in Health and the Cuban models of training health care workers are inexpensive and replicable in other nations. Indeed, Partners in Health has adapted their model for Boston.<sup>21</sup>

The U.S. debate also overlooks the fact that the market fundamentalist approach of the international financial institutions undermines many well-meaning health initiatives. According to the *Journal of Health, Population and Nutrition*, World Bank and IMF-promoted spending cuts, such as the elimination of food subsidies, have increased the vulnerability of women and children to the sex trade and hence to HIV/AIDS exposure. Such social spending caps and cuts and the attendant push toward the privatization of health care means that, even in countries with enough doctors, governments can no longer hire them to provide health care for the poor. Although both the Bank and Fund now require borrowing countries to generate poverty reduction strategies, the World Health Organization found that this has not led to significant increases in health spending.<sup>22</sup>

Underlying this discussion is a fundamental question: is health a human right? In fact, several countries have written the concept of health as a human right into their constitutions. Most European countries have not done so, but their commitment to national health systems with equitable access for all, which is free at the point of delivery, means that, *de facto*, they are accepting that proposition. The U.S. government has never accepted the concept that health is a human right either

for U.S. citizens or for people anywhere else in the world. Access to health care is considered a marketable commodity to be exploited for profit. Hence, the United States suffers a health care crisis, with over 45 million uninsured citizens. The United States spends more on health care than any other country and yet the quality of care often lags behind that of our industrialized allies.<sup>23</sup> The Democrats and Republicans have both largely refused to challenge the insurance companies that maintain a stranglehold over the U.S. system and the pharmaceutical companies that have tried to block the spread of cheaper generic drugs in the global South.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *Immigration concerns can be addressed through domestic policies rather than by tackling root causes.*

Given a choice, most people would prefer to stay in their home country. People everywhere are fighting for the right to adequate housing, income, security and other basic needs to allow them that choice. But millions in the developing world are forced to leave in search of better opportunities. They leave for many reasons. But the poverty, inequality, and insecurity related to U.S. trade policies are clearly push factors.<sup>24</sup>

For instance, NAFTA almost certainly contributed to the sharp increase in the number of Mexicans living in the United States without authorization, from two million in 1990 to an estimated 6.2 million in 2005. With barriers to agricultural imports lifted, Mexican farmers have found themselves competing against an influx of cheap, heavily subsidized U.S. agricultural commodities. Facing dire poverty in the Mexican countryside, millions have made the wrenching decision to leave, often crossing the border in the dead of night or putting their fates, and often their life savings, in the hands of smugglers. The phase-out of remaining import barriers on corn and beans in January 2008 is expected to cause a further surge in Mexican migration. And yet neither Congress nor the White House has seriously considered a waiver of that NAFTA requirement.

U.S. politicians are fighting over a wide range of immigration proposals that all have one thing in common. From the muscular plans to deploy National Guard and build extra fencing on the border to the softer guestworker visas and paths to citizenship, they are all purely domestic measures. No one in the debate has acknowledged that reducing poverty, inequality, and joblessness abroad is the only long-term solution to immigration concerns in this country.

## A JUST SECURITY ALTERNATIVE

Any program to improve livelihoods must acknowledge the connection between U.S. foreign policy and the lives of U.S. citizens. Rising poverty and inequality in developing countries boomerangs back to hurt Americans in a number of ways. The ever-expanding global pool of desperately poor workers who lack basic labor rights means that U.S. workers face increased competition from cheap imports and job loss to lower wage countries. The U.S. trade deficit has skyrocketed, and the number of Americans employed in manufacturing has declined sharply, from 18 million in 1989 to only slightly more than 14 million in 2006.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, the growth areas of the U.S. economy are overwhelmingly in the service sector, where wage levels are much lower on average than in manufacturing. Even in the service sector, a wide range of jobs, from X-ray readers to software engineers, are being sent overseas. An estimated 14 million U.S. workers—11% of the workforce—are at risk of being outsourced.<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, current trade and aid policies encourage the rapid and uncontrolled development of export industries in developing countries. This boomerangs back to hit Americans by contributing to global warming that threatens all of us. Leading developing country exporters all have massive environmental problems related to export-oriented policies. Just as U.S. greenhouse gas emissions hurt Bangladesh, pollution from China's coal-burning power plants, which service the country's booming export industry, is already reaching cities on the West Coast of the United States, making it difficult to meet air quality standards.

When economic policies pushed by the U.S. government make the world's rich richer and the poor poorer, they are not just. And when they have negative effects on U.S. security and welfare, they are ultimately not pragmatic either. A Just Security alternative rests on four pillars. **Debt cancellation** will allow governments to increase spending on basic services. **Reformed trade and investment policies** must set a floor for basic labor and environmental standards. Investment must be made into **comprehensive health care infrastructure**. And we must address the **root causes of immigration** in developing countries.

### DEBT AND AID

A just security alternative for the global economy should start by answering the Jubilee movement's call for cancellation of impoverished country debts owed to international financial institutions. On average, low-income countries spend about \$100 million per day just to pay the interest on their external debts, precious resources that could otherwise go toward

health care, education, and other basic services.<sup>27</sup> In many cases, these debts were accumulated under dictatorships and have already been repaid through high-interest payments over several decades.

The Bush administration has set an important precedent by supporting debt relief for about 20 countries, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa. However, these offers have come with onerous policy conditions, including rigid budget caps and privatization demands, which could undermine the benefits of debt relief. Moreover, an additional 50 or so countries require immediate debt cancellation if they are to have any hope of meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals on poverty reduction.

Lifting these debt burdens will not solve all of the developing world's problems. Efforts to promote social goals through debt cancellation will be vastly more effective if combined with good governance. But even the small amount of debt relief given so far has led to promising results, such as more than doubling school enrollment in Uganda, eliminating fees to allow 1.6 million Tanzanian children to return to school, prompting a 50% increase in education and health spending in 10 African countries, and successfully stabilized HIV rates in Burkina Faso.<sup>28</sup>

Foreign aid should be largely focused on building strong public health infrastructures and ensuring universal access to primary health care, as well as dealing with natural disasters. It must also be applied to helping developing countries build clean and efficient energy infrastructure. Just as aid programs should be delinked from onerous policy conditions, so too should aid be delinked from any requirements to purchase goods for the United States.

### TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Further debt cancellation would also loosen the stranglehold that now pressures so many developing countries to attract foreign investment and boost exports by any means necessary. Truly healthy trade and investment relations, however, require a total overhaul of our current trade policies.

The Democrats' proposals to date do not go far enough. Their agenda would require adherence to international labor standards, which is critical. Countries and corporations should not be allowed to compete on the basis of violating basic human rights. But many other changes are needed in our trade laws to make them pro-worker and pro-healthy communities. For example, under global trade rules our trading partners are no longer able to require foreign investors to use a certain amount of local content in their production.

Without this provision, job creation and other local benefits are limited. Nor can they impose controls on capital flows, even though such measures have helped insulate countries from devastating financial volatility. NAFTA, CAFTA, and other trade pacts also contribute to high unemployment by stripping governments' authority to protect small farmers from being displaced by unmitigated competition with northern agribusiness.

Thus, while setting a floor for basic labor and environmental rights and standards, our trade and investment laws should also give governments sufficient policy space to pursue their own national economic strategies. This means going further than either the Democrats or Republicans have ventured thus far to allow countries to use trade and investment restrictions to protect sensitive products, like staple foods, or to advance other social and environmental goals. Last year, the Bolivian government prepared a set of guidelines for a "fair trade and cooperation treaty" with the United States.<sup>29</sup> This document should be seriously considered as part of a broader dialogue toward a more equitable and sustainable approach to trade. U.S. officials should also use their influence within the World Bank, IMF, and other international financial institutions to end efforts to impose trade liberalization and other free market reforms on developing countries.

## HEALTH

On health, the U.S. government, other governments, and private foundations such as the Gates Foundation are pouring tens of billions of dollars into fighting HIV-AIDS and other high-profile diseases. While this is laudatory, there is an urgent need to shift from this almost exclusive emphasis on specific diseases to a far more comprehensive approach that recognizes the interrelationship of health with many other issues raised in this report. Debt cancellation would free precious resources for struggling public health systems. Eliminating World Bank and IMF budget caps for public sector wages would encourage many health workers not to emigrate. Addressing global warming will help to reduce the spike in malaria cases. Access to clean water will reduce diseases such as dysentery that are most important causes of child mortality.

"Many national health systems are weak, unresponsive, and inequitable," notes the World Health Organization.<sup>30</sup> At the core of more robust health systems is a massive commitment to public health overall and specifically, to training new public health professionals.<sup>31</sup> Africa, with just under a quarter of the global burden of disease, has only 3% of the world's health workers.<sup>32</sup> Because of the lack of health workers, combined with weak public health infrastructures (hospitals,

clinics, labs), much of the outside infusion of health aid is leaking away. The United States adds to the crisis in another way by recruiting hundreds of thousands of doctors and nurses from the Philippines and other poor countries to attend to our aging population.

The challenge remains: how to train sufficient health professionals to meet the population's needs. A large-scale, global plan to train the four million new health workers around the world is the most effective single response to the plagues of HIV-AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and other diseases. Targeting these diseases is the one area where the United States and many other countries have increased their generosity over the past decade. But health expert Laurie Garrett has identified the problem of "stovepiping" that channels aid to specific diseases without any concern for the larger public health infrastructure.<sup>33</sup> Countries like Costa Rica and Cuba demonstrate that it is possible to train at relatively low cost massive numbers of health professionals, who then become the lifeblood of vibrant health systems.

## IMMIGRATION

These debt, trade, finance, and health reforms should be part of a broad agenda to address the root causes of immigration. The European Union offers some important lessons. When Spain and Portugal wanted to join the EU in the 1980s, there was widespread fear in member states that migrants from these poorer countries would flood eastward, stealing jobs and straining public services. Instead of militarizing and fencing the borders, the richer nations focused on leveling the economic playing field through resource transfers and setting common (and high) social and environmental standards. As a result, there was no exodus after borders were opened, and all EU member states benefited from a more cohesive union. While the United States can't expect to copy the EU model, it could apply the same basic principles, beginning with a major initiative developed with our neighbors in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean.

At the same time, the U.S. government should reduce the economic insecurities that are fueling the anti-immigrant backlash in the United States by strengthening labor laws to protect unions, expanding public health care, and increasing training benefits—particularly for those displaced by economic globalization.

To secure liberty and justice for all—in which people can meet their basic needs and live in a stable, healthy environment—is not just an American dream but a global requirement. The welfare of workers like Karen Chacon in Guatemala is linked to the welfare of workers in Cleveland and Los

Angeles and rural South Carolina. As long as she and other brave workers in the developing world are denied their rights and tossed out into labor markets that offer few opportunities to escape grinding poverty, workers here and there will continue to struggle for their fair share of the benefits of a globalized economy.

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## ENDNOTES

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# Just Peace

**A**sha Hagi Elmi was horrified at what was happening in her country. A member of the Somali parliament and leading women's rights activist, Elmi watched the Ethiopian invasion in December 2006 push her country from precarious stability over the edge into catastrophe. "There is no food, no shelter, no water, no medicine and people are dying every day, children are dying every day," she told a British reporter in April 2007.<sup>1</sup> In the ensuing war among Somali insurgents, Somali clans, and Ethiopian troops, thousands have died. The fighting has also created a large-scale humanitarian crisis, with hundreds of thousands of refugees.

The United States backed Ethiopia's invasion in Somalia. The U.S. military also sent AC-130 gunships to attack suspected terrorists in Somalia but instead killed 70 innocent nomadic herders.<sup>2</sup> "People are using the war on terror as a pretext to provide political and financial support, and the reality is far from that," according to Elmi. "The people who were killed in Mogadishu—the civilians, the women and children, the innocent people, the elderly—are not terrorists." Resentment against Ethiopia and its U.S. backer runs high, and Somalia is now more of a failed state than ever before. Elmi urges reconciliation, not further conflict. She wants to see a "comprehensive political solution" that involves all the parties in Somalia, including the remnants of the Islamic Courts Union, which Ethiopia dislodged from power.

Somalia is only one of several wars burning in Africa—in Sudan, Congo, Uganda, and elsewhere. Injustice fuels these conflicts. It is the injustice of borders transgressed and sovereignty ignored, of unequal access to resources, of massacres of civilians and the misuse of political power. In the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Chechnya, Colombia, and the 30-odd other wars raging in the world, the stated rationales for fighting—to combat terrorism, say, or to prevent nuclear proliferation—can be deceptive. Underneath these rationales lie injustices that, left unaddressed, will continue to generate war and conflict, no matter how many ceasefires are brokered.

The United States is involved in many of these conflicts. It has intervened directly or through proxies like Israel and Ethiopia. It has helped fan the flames by selling billions of dollars of military hardware and by training officers and intelligence operatives. A network of more than 700 military installations scattered around the world reinforces the U.S. commitment to unilateral military force. U.S. military spending, which neared \$500 billion in 2005 and will top \$600 billion for 2008 with the Iraq and Afghanistan spending included, is twice that spent by our nine closest competitors *combined*.<sup>3</sup>

Military conflicts are never easy to resolve. But instead of causing or exacerbating these conflicts, the United States can become part of the solution. It can move from a position of conflict promotion—either tacit or otherwise—to one of conflict prevention. To secure a just peace in Somalia, throughout Africa and the Middle East, and elsewhere, the United States has to step back from its reliance on military force, invest more resources and authority into international law and the UN, and put the protection of human rights and equality for all at the heart of a new, just foreign policy.

## CORE MISCONCEPTIONS

Both Democrats and Republicans have been committed to military intervention to control resources and expand U.S. military power. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the United States embarked on building a territorial empire with seizures of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Hawaii. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as territorial control became less important than mercantile expansion, secure access to oil resources and the extension of U.S. military bases became the linchpins of U.S. power projection. During the Cold War, the justification for U.S. military expansion overseas changed to "combating communism." Washington expended enormous resources in its failed attempt to stop Southeast Asia's "dominoes" from toppling in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. It propped up dictators against "communist-backed" insurgencies threatening authoritarian allies and supported guerrilla forces against governments in Angola, Nicaragua, and elsewhere. After the Cold War ended, the United States continued to use existing regional conflicts as pretexts for war, engaging in direct and indirect military interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, Haiti, Sudan, Bosnia/Serbia/Kosovo, Somalia, and Lebanon.

Ending U.S. military interventions will require a full-scale reversal of the imperial trajectory embedded so deeply in U.S. foreign policy. This applies to the prudent imperialism of President Jimmy Carter's 1980 definition of Persian Gulf oil as a U.S. "vital interest" that might require military force to protect. It applies to the Afghanistan and Sudan air strikes of the Clinton years. And it applies as well to the reckless launch of permanent global war that characterizes the Bush administration. We face a fundamental challenge to recognize, as a nation, the injustice of pouring arms, troops, and dollars into military conflicts, all the while refusing to examine the root causes of those disputes over sovereignty, resources, equity, and rights.

## BOX 6: LEAVING IRAQ: A HOW-TO

**D**uring his weekly radio address on January 13, 2007, President Bush challenged those who disagreed with him to offer their own plan for Iraq. Before he even issued his challenge, there were plenty of proposals that call for a change in direction and are most are far more nuanced than the “cut-and-run” label the president has bestowed upon them.

The three alternatives that have been put forward by Republican and Democratic analysts are “strategic redeployment,” partition and the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group. But none of these are sufficient. Ending the war in Iraq must begin with a rapid and complete withdrawal of all U.S. troops and mercenaries, closing the U.S. bases, and ending U.S. efforts to control Iraq’s oil.

All of that, however, will only constitute step one of U.S. obligations towards the people of Iraq. Senator Biden’s plan and the ISG report include sound measures that should be adopted for a massive reconstruction plan to provide employment for Iraqi citizens and U.S. support for a regional non-aggression pact. These measures would involve the United Nations, the Arab League, and Iraq’s neighbors, who are desperately needed for a long term solution.

U.S. policy, as we withdraw, must recognize that we do not have the right to determine Iraq’s future. Only a full withdrawal of U.S. troops will allow Iraqis to begin the long and difficult struggle to overcome the invasion-driven sectarian violence and begin to rebuild their country. Instead of “cutting and running,” these six steps outline a responsible redeployment.

**First: Announce a timetable for rapid and complete withdrawal of U.S. and coalition troops and mercenaries, and simultaneously end U.S. offensive operations.** Such a halt will give substance to U.S. claims that it does not intend to occupy Iraq indefinitely, and is serious about bringing all the troops home. It will remove a key justification for the anti-U.S. resistance, and will make possible the beginnings of negotiations with resistance forces leading to a full ceasefire. Congress should immediately vote to repeal the \$95 billion 2007 supplemental funding bill and pass a new bill to fund the cost of a complete withdrawal.

**Second: Support a regional conference under United Nations-Arab League auspices to produce a regional non-aggression pact.** Iran, Turkey, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia all are key to Iraq’s ability to control its own future, and all have strong interests in supporting Iraq’s unity and stability. Such a conference’s success would be determined by other countries’ and other people’s belief that the U.S. no longer intends to dominate and control Iraq’s politics. The U.S. should make clear that the United Nations, not the U.S., should take the lead in mobilizing international support for post-war Iraq, and that international law, not U.S. military power, should be determinative in setting the role of the international community.

**Third: Provide economic and political support for current reconstruction and for maintaining national unity in Iraq.** Reconstruction funds should be turned over to the Iraqi government to enable them to hire local contractors, local suppliers and local workers, while remaining contracts with U.S. based corporations should be cancelled or otherwise settled, so as to free funds currently committed to U.S. contractors to be made available directly to Iraqis. We should make clear that additional reconstruction and reparation funds will be forthcoming after the end of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

**Fourth: The U.S. should stop trying to train Iraqi military and police forces, and instead turn over remaining training funds to the United Nations for use after the end of the U.S. occupation.** The U.S. should stop trying to create Iraq’s military in its own image and for its own interests.

**Fifth: The U.S. should immediately announce the closure of all U.S. military bases in Iraq** as soon as U.S. troops, coalition troops and mercenaries are out of the country.

**Sixth: The U.S. should immediately stop its effort to force Iraq’s parliament to pass an oil law that privileges U.S. and other international oil companies.** The U.S. should announce that control of Iraq’s oil belongs solely to the people of Iraq, and that Iraq’s own decisions regarding its oil production will have no bearing on U.S. obligations for reconstruction and reparations.

Bush’s Iraq War strategy has proven to be too costly in human and financial terms, both to the Iraqi people and to the United States. But more importantly, it isn’t working. Instead of casting critics as defeatists, we should all start looking at the alternatives.

This refusal to deal seriously with the fundamental underpinning of military conflict has produced a set of misconceptions that characterize U.S. foreign policy: that conflict prevention is not a serious option; that the only way to stop a regional military conflict is through more military force; and that the United States should only engage in a regional conflict when strategic U.S. resources (such as oil or key markets) are threatened and not when only people's lives are at risk (such as the 1994 Rwandan genocide). These misconceptions are perhaps most evident in U.S. policy toward Israel and Palestine where, contrary to Washington's statements, the United States has never played an even-handed role or dealt with the injustices that sustain the conflict.

Until we address these core misconceptions, workable alternatives cannot replace the current failed policies. Let's begin with misconceptions about U.S. military policy before turning to the Middle East and Africa, two regions that have endured a variety of longstanding conflicts.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *The United States needs to spend over \$600 billion each year to keep the peace internationally.*

U.S. military spending falls under a "defense" budget. But much of this budget in fact goes to offense: weapons used to attack, invade, and destroy. Nearly half of President Bush's proposed 2008 military budget of \$656 billion goes to maintaining U.S. military presence abroad, which includes a large chunk for continuing the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Yet from the Middle East to Central Asia to Africa, the U.S. military presence provokes rather than prevents conflict. International polling indicates that nearly 70% of the world believes that the U.S. military's operations in Iraq are counterproductive.<sup>4</sup> In Afghanistan, the rising number of civilian casualties in the U.S.-led war has generated more calls for foreign troops to leave the country. Public movements against U.S. military bases in Japan, South Korea, Ecuador, and elsewhere are forcing the U.S. government to rethink its overseas military footprint.

The United States has taken on the role of world's policeman, but the world is not calling 911 for our services. Of the total 2008 military budget, \$145 billion devoted to outfitting the world's policeman can be redirected to proper defense—Homeland Security, preventive security—and to other human needs. Another \$68 billion can be saved by reducing the U.S. nuclear arsenal, cutting out weapons designed to fight bygone wars, and trimming Pentagon bureaucracy.<sup>5</sup> We can therefore cut \$213 billion of military spending, improve our defenses, and still have money left over for other human needs.

The United States spends way too much on the military. We are responsible for nearly half of all global military spending. We are spending more now on an annual basis than at any time since World War II. Neither the Democrats nor the Republicans have proposed even freezing the U.S. military budget much less cutting it down to size.

## BOX 7: IRAQ: THE COSTS OF WAR

### United States:

Fatalities: **3,504**  
Wounded: **25,830**  
Monetary Cost: **\$432 trillion**

### Iraq:

Civilian Deaths: **64,879 – 71,042** (DoD confirmed)  
Civilian Deaths: John's Hopkins University Estimate: **655,000**  
Internally Displaced Persons: **1,908,400**  
International Refugees: **2,550,000**  
Infant Mortality Rate 2003: **107.9**  
Infant Mortality Rate 2004: **102**

#### Sources:

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"Internally Displaced People In Iraq," United Nations High Commission for Refugees, April 2007.  
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"Basic Indicators for All Member States," World Health Organization, 2002 and 2006.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *U.S. weapons sales overseas are in the national interest.*<sup>6</sup>

The end of the Cold War should have provided an opportunity to scale back substantially on the worldwide market in weapons. Instead, the late 1980s marked a dramatic rise in arms sales worldwide. This trend was led by the United States, which was eager to take advantage of the Soviet Union's decline and collapse to seize market share. From 1987 to 1992, U.S. foreign military sales jumped from \$6.5 billion to \$15 billion. Over the next year, helped in large part by the first Gulf War, they doubled again to \$32 billion.<sup>7</sup>

The end of the Cold War did lead to some modest cutbacks in Pentagon spending. So, as the Pentagon's procurement budget dropped, U.S. arms manufacturers eagerly sought new foreign markets to compensate. The U.S. government bent over backwards to help: In May 1993, Secretary of State Warren Christopher called on U.S. embassies to help in the promotion of arms exports.<sup>8</sup> Commerce Secretary Ron Brown created the Office of Strategic Industries and Economic Security to boost weapons exports. The expansion of NATO and the promotion of new markets in Latin America helped U.S. arms merchants stay in business and keep the United States on top of the list of arms exporting countries.

While the Bush administration has sought to distance itself from so much of the Clinton legacy, it has had no qualms about embracing the arms promotion approach of its predecessor. As a result of the events of September 11, the Bush administration has made arms transfers one of the key strategies in the war against terrorism. To help countries buy and use U.S. weapons after September 11, Foreign Military Financing rose by half a billion, and there was a 38% increase in the International Military Education and Training budget.<sup>9</sup> In the process of building an anti-terrorism coalition, the United States lifted sanctions against key arms-importing nations such as Pakistan and India and potentially large customers such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan.

U.S. weapons sales—and the U.S. government's aggressive promotion of private military contractors—is neither in the global interest nor the U.S. national interest. Arms sales to Israel have not only supported Israel's occupation strategies but also provided key backup for Israel's decision to invade Lebanon last summer. Arms sales to Africa have helped keep the region awash in violence and conflict. Economic aid to rights-abusing regimes, as in Sudan, has allowed governments to maintain a high level of military spending. Major weapons sales to Chile, Taiwan, South Korea, Turkey, and elsewhere have only encouraged regional arms races. U.S. insistence on inter-operability—the joint functioning of the U.S. military and other militaries—not only ensures future arms deals but

also gives the United States greater influence over the foreign policies of countries that buy U.S. weapons.

The Bush administration has steadfastly opposed multi-lateral agreements to restrain global arms sales. In October 2006, when the UN voted to kick off the process to negotiate an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), there was only one naysayer: the United States. In 2005, nearly \$45 billion worth of weapons were being sold around the world, two-thirds to the developing world.<sup>10</sup> Democrats and Republicans share the blame for the U.S. role in growing the arms market.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *The United States has played an even-handed role in the Middle East.*

The region where conflict and tensions are spreading and militarizing most rapidly is the Middle East. The U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq has polarized the region and sharply raised the level of violence. Uncritical and unlimited U.S. support has helped maintain Israel's 40-year-long illegal occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. And Washington's reckless rhetoric about "leaving all options open" threatens to spark conflict with Iran. The United States has a long history of diplomacy aimed at Middle East peace. But no serious efforts have taken place in the last six years. And since those earlier efforts actually aimed to normalize rather than end the Israeli occupation, they had no chance of succeeding.

Since 1967, U.S. policy in the Middle East has rested on three pillars: oil, Israel, and military/economic stability. As a result, Washington has supported Israel's occupation of Palestinian land. It has rejected international law, UN resolutions, and human rights standards as the appropriate components of a real solution to the conflict. It has denied Palestinian rights to equality, land, and return. And it continues uncritically to provide military, financial, diplomatic, strategic, and political support for Israel as an expansionist, militarized, nuclear-weaponized strategic partner. For years, Washington has spent a quarter to a third of its foreign military aid funds on Israel. In 2007 the Foreign Military Financing budget included nearly \$2.4 billion for Israel out of a total of \$4.5 billion for the whole world.<sup>11</sup>

U.S. attempts to stabilize and democratize the Middle East and insure U.S. control of the region's oil have failed. Washington has never been able to support simultaneously its three pillars of policy in the region—oil, stability, and Israel. If attention goes primarily to securing the oil and protecting Israel, major instability is likely to ensue. It might be possible to stabilize the region's repressive monarchies and pseudo-democratic governments and keep U.S. hands on the oil spigots. But absolute support for Israeli occupation

(and indeed for the parallel U.S. occupation of Iraq) would have to be sacrificed. Two out of three has been the best any administration could hope for.

Tragically, the failed U.S. policy in the Middle East—specifically the Israel-Palestine conflict—also remains the venue of the most consistent bipartisan, bicameral, and executive-legislative consensus of any U.S. foreign policy issue. Democrats and Republicans alike have long vied with each other to see who can be more supportive of Israel. Powerful lobbies work both sides of the aisle: both the traditional Jewish lobby groups, influential among Congress and the Democratic Party, and newer right-wing Christian Zionist organizations currently more influential among Republicans and the White House. As Nicholas Kristof wrote in *The New York Times*, “There is no serious political debate among either Democrats or Republicans about our policy toward Israelis and Palestinians. And that silence harms America, Middle East peace prospects and Israel itself.”<sup>12</sup>

In that context, the main difference between the current administration’s overwhelming embrace of Israel and the policies of earlier presidents is the fact that earlier administrations often (though not always) pretended to be honest brokers encouraging Israeli-Palestinian peace processes. The Bush administration attempts no such charade.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *The United States has opposed Israel’s policy of occupying Palestinian territory.*

In the occupied West Bank, roads, bridges, and tunnels controlled by the Israeli military currently divide the Delaware-sized territory into scores of even smaller cantons. More than 530 armed checkpoints, huge earth berms dug by armored tractors, and especially the huge separation wall under construction throughout the West Bank all prevent Palestinians from moving within their own territory let alone traveling into Israel. The resulting economic shortages are severe. Truckloads of produce rot in the sun at checkpoints, milk sours, and workers cannot get to their jobs. Women give birth and their newborn babies die at these artificial borders because Israeli soldiers will not allow them to pass. Victims of settler or soldier violence die because military officers refuse to authorize Palestinian ambulances to come to their rescue.

The Gaza Strip, meanwhile, remains isolated, impoverished, and besieged. Despite the withdrawal of Israeli troops and settlers in 2005, Gaza continues to face Israeli military control of exit and entry of all goods and people. In June 2006, the World Food Program reported that a majority of the Gaza population could not cover their daily food needs without outside assistance.<sup>13</sup>

In April 2004 Bush accepted Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s unilateral plan to permanently absorb the huge West Bank settlement blocs and their 220,000 settlers into Israel. For the first time, the United States explicitly and officially rejected the internationally recognized and UN-sanctioned Palestinian right of return. The Bush-Sharon agreement was the U.S. *quid pro quo* for Israel’s decision to withdraw the illegal Israeli settlers and Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip. Bush thus essentially banished any commitment to achieving a serious and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. Bush’s “new status quo”—permanent Israeli occupation, no right of return for Palestinians, and no viable Palestinian state—has set the terms for the next indefinite period.

The U.S. acceptance of Israel’s unilateral decision-making also returned Middle East diplomacy to its pre-1991 position: the official exclusion of Palestinians from all negotiations. U.S. negotiations with Israel have become the substitute for Israeli–Palestinian talks, with the United States free to give up Palestinian land and rights. “Imagine if Palestinians said, ‘O.K., we give California to Canada,’” one Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) legal advisor told *The New York Times*. “Americans should stop wondering why they have so little credibility in the Middle East.”<sup>14</sup>

U.S. military, financial, and diplomatic support helps maintain Israel’s occupation policy. Since 1976, although it is wealthier than a number of European Union member countries, Israel has received 25% of the entire U.S. foreign aid budget and remains the highest recipient of U.S. foreign aid in the world.<sup>15</sup> The total aid package, which includes military aid, economic assistance, and tax-exempt contributions by private citizens, comes to over \$5 billion annually.

Israel can purchase the most advanced weapons systems in the U.S. arsenal, with U.S. taxpayer assistance. Most of the weapons Israel uses in the occupied territories, including Apache helicopter gunships, F-16 fighter bombers, wire-guided missiles, and armored Caterpillar bulldozers for demolishing Palestinian houses, are all made in the United States, and purchased from U.S. manufacturers with U.S. military aid funds. Some of the weapons, such as the Merkava tanks, are joint products of Israel’s domestic arms industry and U.S. manufacturing technology.<sup>16</sup>

Diplomatically, the United States alone protects Israel in the UN and other international arenas and keeps it from being held accountable for its violations of international law. Under international law, particularly the Geneva Conventions, it is always illegal for an occupying power, such as Israel in the Palestinian territories, to do anything to change conditions within occupied areas. In a spring 2006 report, the UN’s Spe-

## BOX 8: HOME IN LATIN AMERICA

**T**hroughout Latin America, marginalized people are rising up, challenging the system that has kept them poor, and pursuing a new course. In country after country, people are selecting leaders who strongly reject restricted government spending on social programs, privatization of public services such as education and water, and opening up borders to foreign corporations.

There are exceptions, most notably Mexico, where conservative Felipe Calderón claimed power after a bruising battle over disputed election results. But the growing backlash has driven old-guard presidents out of power in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Bolivia. And, while there are sharp differences among the new leaders, there is no question that a growing outcry against economic injustice put all of them in power. Over 40 percent of the region still lives in poverty, and the gap between rich and poor is the widest in the world.

**Bolivia:** Evo Morales, the country's first indigenous president, took office in 2006 with the strongest mandate of any Bolivian leader. Spurred by his experience as a coca grower, Morales has introduced new policies that challenge the U.S. approach to the "drug war." The Morales government has developed a farmer-friendly program that allows small farmers to grow small amounts of coca for domestic consumption, while also implementing a zero-cocaine policy that includes interdiction and anti-money laundering efforts to prevent drug trafficking.

**Brazil:** When Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva, a metalworker with an elementary education, rode a wave of popular support to the presidency in 2002, it inspired working-class people around the world. He was re-elected with a comfortable 60 percent of the vote in October 2006. Although his first term was tainted by corruption scandals and accusations from many on Brazil's left that he acquiesced too much to the demands for strict fiscal policies by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), he fulfilled some of his campaign pledges to the poor who form his political base.

**Venezuela:** Best known for his overblown rhetoric against George W. Bush, President Hugo Chávez has used oil windfalls to advance Bolívar's dream of uniting the region in a strong bloc. Venezuela has purchased big chunks of Argentina and Ecuador's debts to the IMF, for example, and sold discounted oil to several of its neighbors and even to poor communities in the United States. And Venezuela has signed trade pacts with several countries that include novel bartering arrangements, such as agricultural products in exchange for doctors and other technical personnel. Chávez has devised a regional trade plan to counter the Bush-favored Free Trade Area of the Americas. The Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America (ALBA, for its Spanish acronym) aims to benefit the poor and the environment, and to advance trade among countries within the region.

Some of the most hopeful democratic advances in Latin America are not the result of official policies, but of social movements harnessing their own power. The thousands of poor peasants who make up the Landless Workers Movement (MST) in Brazil have claimed the right to settle on and farm close to 7 million hectares, or 43,000 square miles, of unused land—a territory a little larger than the state of Ohio. For millions of people who are largely outside of the mainstream economic system, access to land is of paramount importance, as they depend on it for subsistence.

Source: Reprinted from Nadia Martinez, "Latin America Rising," *Yes Magazine*, Summer 2007. Available online at: <http://www.yesmagazine.org>



cial Rapporteur for Human Rights John Dugard stated that “Israel is in violation of major Security Council and General Assembly resolutions dealing with unlawful territorial change and the violation of human rights, has failed to implement the 2004 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice [which held that Israel’s separation Wall is illegal everywhere it crosses the Green Line border and extends into the West Bank itself—which is about 80% of its length] and should accordingly be subjected to international sanctions. Instead the Palestinian people have been subjected to possibly the most rigorous form of international sanctions imposed in modern times.”<sup>17</sup>

This direct and indirect support of Israel’s occupation enjoys bipartisan support in the United States. The Democrats have provided solid backing for Israel. In 2003, when presidential hopeful Howard Dean urged the United States to have an “even-handed approach” to the Arab-Israeli conflict and that “an enormous number “of Israeli settlements would have to be dismantled in the occupied territories, he was roundly criticized by his fellow Democrats. Today, as U.S. threats against Iran are escalating, members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus introduced legislation to prohibit a U.S. military strike against Iran without congressional approval. But the Democratic Party leadership stripped the proposal out of the bill’s final language because of pressure from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the key pro-Israel lobby.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *U.S. policy toward Africa focuses solely on peace and development.*

In February 2007, the Pentagon announced the creation of a new U.S. Africa Command infrastructure, known as AFRICOM. “This new command will strengthen our security cooperation with Africa,” President Bush said in a White House statement, “and create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of our partners in Africa.” Ordering that AFRICOM be created by September 30, 2008, Bush said, “Africa Command will enhance our efforts to bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa.”<sup>18</sup>

The general assumption of this policy is that the United States should act unilaterally and through military means to bring health, education, and development to Africa. This military-driven U.S. engagement with Africa reflects the desperation of the Bush administration to outmaneuver other countries, particularly China, to control the increasingly strategic natural resources on the African continent such as oil, gas, and uranium. Nigeria is the fifth-largest exporter of oil to the United States. The West African region currently

provides nearly 20% of the U.S. supply of hydrocarbons, up from 15% just five years ago and well on the way to a 25% share forecast for 2015.<sup>19</sup>

The new Africa Command, based potentially in or near oil-rich West Africa would consolidate existing operations while also bringing development (USAID) and diplomacy (State Department) even more in line with U.S. military objectives. The Pentagon commands significantly more money and other resources for its work in Africa than either the State Department or the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The Bush administration’s militaristic approach leads to an Africa policy that provides more weapons, equipment, and military hardware than schools. By helping to build machineries of repression, these policies reinforce undemocratic practices and reward leaders responsive not to the interests or needs of their people but to the demands and dictates of U.S. military agents. Making military force a higher priority than development and diplomacy creates an imbalance that can encourage irresponsible regimes to use U.S.-sourced military might to oppress their own people. These fatally flawed Bush administration policies create instability, foment tensions, and lead to a less secure world.

The U.S. government is mistakenly looking at Africa through the prism of terrorism. The Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative, for instance, focuses on border security and denying safe haven to suspected terrorists in North African countries like Algeria, Mali, and Chad. But the U.S. claims of an African “second front” in the war against terror have been exaggerated, and the counter-terrorism rationale has served as a convenient excuse to provide military aid to dictatorial governments, such as Algeria.<sup>20</sup> The terrorism rubric also justifies U.S. training of African special forces, expansion of military bases in the region, and a general elevation of military over diplomatic approaches.

In Sudan, meanwhile, the United States has hesitated to press hard to stop genocide in Darfur because the government in Khartoum is a key ally in the “global war on terrorism” and because U.S. oil companies have a large stake in the country. Even as it backs the murderous Janjaweed militias committing ethnic cleansing and widespread rape, the Sudanese government has received millions of dollars in Economic Support Funds from Washington, which has freed it up to divert money to the military.<sup>21</sup> While congressional opposition to the Bush administration’s handling of the Sudan crisis has grown, Democrats have largely focused on military solutions, such as air strikes against the government in Khartoum.<sup>22</sup> But such air strikes would reduce the chances of a diplomatic solution pushed by African negotiators, run the risk of creating

a greater humanitarian crisis, and probably achieve very little since Khartoum doesn't ultimately control the Janjaweed.

In Congo, Niger, and elsewhere in Africa, the United States has followed the same pattern of selling arms and securing access to natural resources. It's a bipartisan approach. "We value our deepening economic ties with Africa, including Central and West Africa's rapidly rising position as a major source of non-Gulf oil," reads the 2004 Democratic Party platform. And the Clinton administration was notorious for boosting arms sales to the continent. During the 1990s, Washington provided over \$227 million in arms and training to African countries.<sup>23</sup>

## A JUST SECURITY ALTERNATIVE

To reorient U.S. foreign policy regarding military conflict, the United States must support international law, respect other nations' sovereignty, and protect human rights and equality for all. Washington must work closely with allies—and in the UN—to restrain arms exports. It must boost support for peacekeeping operations. And it must help restrain the market for the "blood resources," like diamonds and oil sold extracted in war zones, which only prolong conflict.

International law is fundamental to any just security alternative. A consistent set of rules and regulations, hammered out through democratic procedures, ensures that powerful countries do not take advantage of weaker countries and weaker countries do not feel compelled to compensate for their asymmetrical disadvantages. An increasingly globalized world requires an ever more robust system of international law. But laws are only as good as their enforcement. So we must work to improve the institutions that implement international rules and regulations and create a level playing field for all nations.

The greatest threat to the health of the international community is the profusion of deadly weapons and the national spending patterns that continue to direct resources into their production. As the country that splurges the most on its military, the United States must be the first to cut up its "Arms-Mart" credit card. We can cut nearly one-third of U.S. military spending by resigning our self-appointed commission as world cop, scrapping old-fashioned weapons, and stripping unnecessary bureaucracy from the Pentagon.

Injustice fuels conflicts, and the arms trade only fans the flames. The United States must stop backing repressive regimes and their oppressive policies. It must cut back on arms exports, because the costs of the resulting blowback far

outweigh the very minor increases in U.S. export totals. The Arms Trade Agreement can potentially improve on existing treaties that have done so little to stem the flow of arms. By supporting the ATA, the United States can effectively signal that it is rejoining the international community.

In terms of the Israel-Palestine conflict, the United States should acknowledge its lack of neutrality. It should abandon the so-called Quartet—a U.S.-created diplomatic fiction made up of the United States, Europe, Russia, and the UN designed to provide a multilateral imprimatur to unilateral U.S. control of Middle East diplomacy. Instead, the UN should be the nucleus of a new diplomatic process. The UN created the state of Israel; Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem violates numerous UN resolutions; and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has global significance and thus should be addressed by an international body.

UN resolutions, not a U.S.-created road map, should set the terms for an international peace conference under the auspices of the Security Council, or indeed the more representative General Assembly. Such a conference would involve all the parties to the conflict, including Israel, the Palestinians, the Arab states, as well as Europe and the United States. The conference should be based on all relevant UN resolutions and internationally guaranteed rights for all parties, and the goal should be to bring about an end to occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem and to create an independent Palestinian state.

A just security solution would achieve both security and justice for Palestinians and Israelis. It would begin with recognizing the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. That starts with Israel's recognition of its role in the expulsion of refugees and creation of the refugee crisis in 1948, and public acceptance of Resolution 194 and the legal right of refugees to return, to which Israel agreed at the time it joined the UN in 1949. Once the right to return has been recognized, negotiations on implementation can begin.

Israel and Palestine, as equals, would jointly exchange full diplomatic relations. Israeli settlers would be disarmed and given the option of moving to new homes inside Israel or remaining in their homes as citizens of Palestine with no special privileges and accountable to the Palestinian government. Jerusalem would be an open city, with the capital of Israel in West Jerusalem and the capital of Palestine in East Jerusalem. Each state would be responsible for maintaining the safety and security of its own citizens and would make commitments to prevent any cross-border attacks on civilians in the other's territory.

A comprehensive and lasting peace would also require reversing the humanitarian disaster in Palestine as well as addressing the vast disparity of economic power between the two countries, which threatens the basis for regional economic cooperation. Technology transfer and job creation should be among the approaches considered. Within each state, equality of all citizens would be guaranteed. There would be no privileges for one group or discrimination against other groups in either Israel or Palestine.

An end to Israel's occupation—described as apartheid by former South African President Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former President Jimmy Carter, and numerous Israelis and Palestinians—will immediately reduce tensions and instability in the region, and make possible much better relations between the United States and the Arab world. The establishment of an independent Palestinian state and the normalization of its relations with Israel as well as with surrounding Arab states will set the terms for the other Arab states' normalization of ties with Israel, further easing tensions in the Middle East. Furthermore, because anger at Israel's occupation translates so powerfully into anger toward the United States, Israel's global patron, an end to occupation will also reduce antagonism toward U.S. policies and reduce the threat to ordinary Americans that those policies engender.

By addressing occupation and oppression, the twin engines of war and terrorism, a Middle East peace with Israeli-Palestinian cooperation at its heart would establish a powerful precedent. Instead of addressing only the symptoms of conflict, it would go deeper toward resolving issues of political power, national identity, and management of economic resources. If Palestinians and Israelis can share space with justice and security for both, if the Middle East becomes a place of peace and prosperity, then people elsewhere in the world will see their own struggles for dignity to be that much more achievable.

Peace is not simply a matter of good intentions. Peace, as the case of Africa demonstrates, requires institutional support. A just security framework in Africa would prioritize the protection of civilians, particularly in instances of genocide and gross violations of international humanitarian law. The Bush administration is building its new Africa Command in an era when, after the debacle of the Iraq War, the costs and flaws of unilateral peacemaking are most stark. A just U.S. Africa policy would fully fund regional and international efforts at peacekeeping. The African Union, woefully underfunded and ill-equipped, should have financial and logistical capacity to serve as "first responders" to crises on the continent. Their mandate should be the short-term protection of civilians so as not to drain scarce resources from the development needs

of the continent. The international community must then step in to provide the long-term peacekeeping needed for protracted crises.

A just U.S. Africa policy would also support efforts at regional integration and cohesion within the African continent. The greater integration of markets, currencies, standards, and transport systems would encourage African leaders and civil society to look within, put people first, and work to uplift the entire continent. A progressive U.S. Africa policy would look beyond a militaristic unilateral security frame to a comprehensive engagement that prioritizes Africa's development.

A just U.S. policy toward Asia would work to erode rather than reinforce the remaining Cold War structures and thinking in the region. The Bush administration reversed itself on negotiating with North Korea over the nuclear crisis. However, the United States has been supporting Japan's constitutional revisions and large-scale military buildup. Washington has pressured South Korea to back the new military doctrine of "strategic flexibility" that might draw the country against its better judgment into any future U.S.-China conflict. And the United States is building a new Pacific War, an alliance of India, Thailand, Australia, and Japan to contain the ambitions of China.<sup>24</sup> Instead, the United States should back regional confidence-building and disarmament mechanisms that can diminish the looming Cold War conflict between Washington and Beijing and prevent Asia from slipping into a disastrous arms race.

A just U.S. policy toward Latin America would stop militarizing the region. In the last decade, the U.S. government has poured over \$7 billion in military and police aid into Latin America and the Caribbean.<sup>25</sup> A large portion of this sum has gone into narcotics control, which has done nothing to diminish the supply of drugs or deal with the demand in the United States. The U.S. counter-narcotics program for Colombia—Plan Colombia—has sustained a bloody war in that South American country and propped up its corrupt and human rights-abusing government. After September 11, the Bush administration has increasingly merged drugs and terrorism, redefining traffickers as terrorists. Whether justified as counter-narcotics or counter-terrorism, Washington has approached a largely peaceful region as though it were an enormous conflict zone.

After more than a decade of instability, Somalis were beginning to achieve a measure of self-determination. Asha Hagi Elmi's success in organizing a women's party and electing 23 women to the national parliament was one sign that the country was beginning to address a range of social injustices. The Ethiopian invasion and the ensuing war has temporarily destroyed those hopes. The Palestinians, Tamils,

Kurds, and others similarly want to exercise their right of self-determination. Only when the United States and other countries address these underlying roots of conflict will the international community, in the words of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, embrace the “world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.”

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# Just Counter-Terrorism

**B**ack in September 2002, Maher Arar was passing through JFK airport in New York. He was expecting a simple transit. A Syrian-born Canadian citizen and wireless technology consultant, Arar was traveling home to Ottawa after a vacation with his family in Tunis. The stopover in New York was the best deal he could get with his frequent flyer miles. He had no inkling of what would happen next. He didn't know that he would spend the next ten months being tortured in a secret jail.

At the airport immigration line, U.S. officials pulled Arar aside. They fingerprinted and photographed him. They didn't let him make any phone calls. They didn't let him contact a lawyer. Interrogated about his connections to another Syrian-born Canadian, a bewildered Arar did his best to answer the questions. The authorities were not satisfied. They transferred him to New York's Metropolitan Detention Center where he spent more than a week. Then, based on evidence that they would not share with him, U.S. immigration officials informed Arar that he would be deported to Syria. He objected that he was a Canadian citizen, that the United States couldn't just send him to another country, particularly not Syria, where they might well torture him. Heedless, U.S. officials loaded him onto a private plane and flew him to Jordan, where he was beaten before being driven across the border into Syria.

In Syria, Arar was imprisoned in a cell that was just large enough for him to stand. He was repeatedly tortured and forced to sign a false confession. Only as a result of outside pressure—by his wife, by human rights organizations, by the Canadian consulate—was he finally released and returned home. Two years later, a Canadian Commission of Inquiry cleared Arar of all charges of terrorism. Yet the United States still bars him from visiting the country. An innocent man caught up in the machinery of fear created by the U.S. “global war on terror,” Arar will bear the scars of his experience for the rest of his life.<sup>1</sup>

Maher Arar's story illustrates the key problems with the Bush administration's approach to terrorism and how it has defied legal standards at all levels. In the United States, the administration suspended key civil liberties. It imprisoned over 5,000 foreign nationals, subjected 80,000 Arab and Muslim immigrants to fingerprinting and registration, sent 30,000 “national security letters” every year to U.S. businesses demanding information about their customers, and justified the large-scale, warrantless wiretapping of citizens.<sup>2</sup> It denied the

right of habeas corpus to both American and non-American detainees and plans to continue to restrict the legal rights of terrorism suspects by trying them in military tribunals rather than civilian courts.

At the international level, the administration rationalized the use of torture and rendition. It presided over gross human rights violations in Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, Camp Delta at Guantanamo, Cuba, a series of rendition sites in Europe, and elsewhere. At the geopolitical level, it broke international law by pursuing a preventive war against Iraq. It failed to capitalize on the international goodwill directed at Washington after September 11 by brokering a broad, multilateral effort against terrorism. Instead, the United States ignored promising overtures from longstanding adversaries, rejected the advice of previously close allies, and set dangerous precedents that will haunt U.S. foreign policy for decades. Through it all, American policymakers either relied on or hid behind the excuse of faulty intelligence, which contributed to the failures to track the September 11 perpetrators prior to the attacks and continued to entrap innocent victims like Maher Arar in the post-September 11 era.

The “global war on terror” has been going on now for over six years. Its emphasis on military responses—in Afghanistan and Iraq—has only swelled the ranks of terrorist organizations. The erosion of civil liberties has undermined democracy at home and raised serious doubts abroad about U.S. credibility. The failure to put adequate funds into homeland security—particularly port and border protection—has put too great a burden on local governments. The hostility to international mechanisms such as the International Criminal Court has weakened the very institutions that can properly address terrorist organizations. And the refusal to address the root causes of terrorism—economic inequality, repressive regimes, foreign occupation—has ensured that the conditions continue to flourish that produce if not the terrorists themselves then the communities of anger and alienation that support terrorist organizations.

A just counter-terrorism policy would shift the focus away from military solutions, which have done so little to improve the security of the United States and have sent Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia into tailspins of insecurity. It would focus on strengthening homeland security and the international mechanisms that hold terrorists accountable. And it would attack the enabling conditions that are laid out in this document—economic inequality, the international health crisis, unjust dictatorships, and regional wars.

The Chinese have a saying: before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves. The U.S. pursuit of vengeance, rather than justice, has been similarly self-defeating.

## CORE MISCONCEPTIONS

Fear disables rational thinking. In his book *Blink*, Malcolm Gladwell describes how rapid heartbeat and adrenaline rush distort the immediate perceptions of frightened people. They make mistakes. They see guns where there are no guns. They misread facial expressions. They come to the wrong conclusions.<sup>3</sup>

Since September 11, the United States has been kept in an artificially prolonged state of fear. The Bush administration has used this fear to advance a fundamentally irrational and un-American agenda. As a result, America has misidentified terrorists, seen weapons of mass destruction where they don't exist, and supported quick-draw military solutions when diplomacy would have been more appropriate.

Such fear has paralyzed the U.S. system in the past—during the McCarthy period of the Cold War, during the Red Scare after World War I, in the era of Jim Crow legislation in the South, in 1798 when Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts. Today, by contrast, the paranoia behind the Bush administration's counter-terrorism campaign threatens to sustain a global crusade of unlimited scope and duration. Even during the Cold War, the United States negotiated with the object of its worst fears. The current regime of fear is more theological in nature. "We don't negotiate with evil," Vice President Dick Cheney famously remarked. "We defeat evil."<sup>4</sup> In such a struggle against "evil," all means can be justified, as they were during the Crusades and the Inquisition. By putting the "fear of the Devil" into the American public, the Bush administration has acquired *carte blanche* to transform not only certain U.S. policies but the entire policy-making structure.

Congressional critics of the administration have challenged the worse excesses of this fearful crusade. There have been campaigns against torture, the abrogation of *habeas corpus*, and unlawful surveillance. But the opposition has been unwilling or unable to challenge the heart of the administration's terrorism policy. It, too, has been fearful—of being labeled "weak on terrorism." The administration and its mainstream critics still buy into several core misconceptions about terrorism: that we need a war in the first place, that terrorists represent a major threat to U.S. national interests, that terrorists are attacking "our" way of life.

Until we address these core misconceptions, workable alternatives cannot replace the current failed policies.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *Terrorism is the major threat to U.S. and global interests*

The September 11 attacks were horrifying. So were the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Terrorist acts in Bali (2002), Istanbul (2003), Madrid (2004), London (2005), Delhi (2005), Amman (2005), Algiers (2007), and elsewhere have been equally without justification.

The world's major leaders have argued, as British Prime Minister Tony Blair has said, that terrorism is the greatest global threat of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. "No challenge is greater than the threat of terrorism," Australian Prime Minister John Howard proclaimed in 2006. "Terrorism is the greatest threat to world peace," said Vladimir Putin in 2000.<sup>5</sup> In the United States, there is a bipartisan consensus around terrorism as a major threat. In its 2004 party platform, the Democratic Party, too, put winning "the global war on terror" as the top challenge facing the United States.

Terrorist acts, by claiming innocent lives, are indeed reprehensible. But does terrorism pose a *major* threat? We can measure the size of a challenge in several ways: the acuity of the threat, its scope, and its likely duration.

Measured in terms of acuity, terrorism pales in comparison to nuclear weapons and climate change. A nuclear exchange and several degrees of global warming threaten the existence of the entire planet rather than select targets on the surface. Terrorists have no interest in destroying the world, nor do they possess the means to end the human race. Their goals and capacities are considerably more circumscribed, and that applies even to al-Qaeda.

In terms of scope, the number of victims of terrorism remains relatively low compared to the casualty rates connected to disease, malnutrition, or conventional military conflict. The number of terrorist attacks has certainly increased since the invasion of Iraq. In 2001, the peak in terrorist fatalities to that time, international terrorist attacks killed 3,572 persons and injured 1,083. By 2006, those numbers had risen to 11,170 deaths and 38,191 injuries, approximately half occurring in Iraq alone.<sup>6</sup> In contrast even to these higher numbers, however, more than 2,000 children die each day in sub-Saharan Africa as a result of malaria, a preventable disease.<sup>7</sup> Several hundred thousand people died as a result of the 2004 earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean. Nearly four million people have died as a result of the Congo conflict.

Finally, there is the question of duration. Al-Qaeda is a relatively recent phenomenon. Its concerns were originally quite specific—to compel the United States to withdraw its troops from Saudi Arabia. It was on the verge of extinction after the collapse of its patron, the Taliban, in Afghanistan in 2001. If approached with the appropriate legal mechanisms—and with the discriminate force associated with law enforcement undertaken with due respect for human rights<sup>8</sup>—al-Qaeda will once again retreat into obscurity. Regional wars, by contrast, have been with us for millennia. Global inequalities have persisted since the age of colonialism. Though of more recent vintage, nuclear weapons will be very difficult to get rid of, and the half-life of uranium 235 is 700 million years. These are indeed durable challenges. In another decade, after appropriate counter-terrorism measures, the current “greatest threat to world peace” will likely be demoted in importance. Terrorism, after all, was at the top of Ronald Reagan’s agenda when he took office in 1981. But as the number of attacks began to decline, particularly in the 1990s, so did the U.S. evaluation of the threat.<sup>9</sup>

It can be plausibly argued that the symbolic nature of terrorist attacks far exceeds the number of casualties. The argument here is not to ignore terrorism but simply put it into perspective. To elevate terrorism to the status of a “major threat” is to give more power to the terrorists than they deserve.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *A “war” on terrorism is the only solution.*

It is meaningless to say we are fighting a “war on terror.” Terrorism is a particular tactic of political violence. Wars are conducted between states. Declaring a war on terror is like declaring war on serial murderers. War is what al-Qaeda wants. Such language elevates the terrorists to the level of warriors in a battle. The terrorists are criminals, not warriors, and should be treated accordingly.

Many of the real successes in combating al-Qaeda in the years since Sept. 11, 2001, have come from treating the terrorists as criminals. International cooperation on intelligence as well as police work and domestic investigations have been particularly helpful. War—the use of military force—has been counterproductive. The invasion and occupation of Iraq, which was falsely presented as part of the “global war on terrorism,” in fact served as al-Qaeda’s most effective recruitment campaign.

By enshrining preventive war as a policy doctrine in the national security strategy in general and for combating terrorism in particular, the Bush administration has actually reduced rather than increased U.S. security in several ways.

It has reinforced the image of the United States as eager to use military force and willing to do so without regard for international law and legitimacy. This has led other countries to resist U.S. foreign policy goals more broadly, including efforts to fight terrorism. Advocating preemption also warns potential enemies to hide the very assets that Washington might wish to take action against. Finally, if the United States enshrines preemption as a core policy doctrine, it legitimates its adoption by other countries, which increases overall global instability and reduces security, as other countries are emboldened to justify attacks on their enemies as preemptive in nature.

The casting of counter-terrorism in the language of war has justified extraordinary means such as rendition, the seizing of terrorism suspects and transporting them to places where they can be interrogated and tortured. By resorting to these extralegal tactics, the United States sets dangerous international precedents. Citing the U.S. example, another country’s secret service could abduct American tourists in Paris on suspicion of terrorism, transport them to a third country, and torture the suspects into confessing.

With the war on terrorism, the administration and Congress have given the Pentagon a blank check. Military spending has risen dramatically since 2001. In 2003, reflecting the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, military spending increased nearly 28% and passed the \$500 billion threshold. For 2008, the administration has requested \$623 billion.<sup>10</sup> Not including funding for Iraq and Afghanistan, Pentagon spending has increased 35% since 2001.<sup>11</sup> Even after taking over Congress in the 2006 midterm elections, the Democrats have not challenged the bloated military budget.

Finally, a “war” suggests that victory is possible and terrorism can be extinguished. But terrorist networks are decentralized, and new leaders emerge to replace older ones. Even if one group surrenders or disbands, it has no necessary influence on any other groups. Police never speak of ending crime, only controlling and reducing it. The same applies to terrorism. Perhaps acknowledging this basic insight, the House Armed Services Committee removed the phrase “Global War on Terror” from the 2008 defense budget.

**MISCONCEPTION:** *Terrorists are attacking “our” way of life.*

Terrorists have traditionally pursued narrow political ends. The Irish Republican Army wanted to oust the British and unite Ireland. The Basque ETA, the Corsican FLNC, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and the Kurdish PKK all have wanted independence for their countries. Once these aims are achieved, the terrorist organizations either disappear

or become official political entities. For instance, the Stern Gang, an Israeli terrorist organization, became absorbed in the Israeli army after the declaration of the country's independence.

Al-Qaeda, because of its transnational aspirations, is a new type of terrorist organization. It wants to awaken and inspire the Muslim world. While it envisions a long struggle against the West, its first targets are the Arab governments that have suppressed radical Islamic movements. Its final goal is to re-establish an Islamic caliphate or state.

This grand vision suffers from several problems. Al-Qaeda derives its strength from its narrow objectives of resisting the U.S. occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. The larger goal of establishing a caliphate motivates only a handful of people. Al-Qaeda is also not a centralized organization that can dictate policy to its members. Its more militant adherents are largely focused on resisting U.S. power projection in the Middle East and Central Asia.

Terrorists are, by and large, attacking the policies of the U.S. government, not a Western way of life. If these policies change, particularly in the Middle East, terrorist organizations would lose a major organizing tool. A change in U.S. policy in the Middle East—withdrawing from Iraq, providing more reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan, pressuring Arab allies to democratize, brokering a two-state peace deal between Israel and Palestine—would deprive al-Qaeda of its mobilizing symbols. Despite its myriad divisions, the Islamic world has united in opposition to current U.S. military policy. If U.S. policy changes, then diversity will return to the foreground, and the notion of an Islamic caliphate will become even more improbable a goal than it currently is.

The roots of terrorist support lie in despair. Poverty alone is not responsible for terrorism, or else Haiti and Burkina Faso would be terrorist strongholds. And oppressive state structures, too, are not sufficient, or else North Korean citizens would be among the ranks of the world's terrorists. Rather, the despair that generates terrorism derives from a combination of unjust economic, political, and geopolitical conditions. Prosperity and a greater degree of self-determination—which is, arguably, “our way” of life—is considerably appealing throughout the Muslim world, even among communities that today produce or support terrorist operations.

Finally, after September 11, the victims of terrorism have not been, by and large, Americans. Half the victims of terrorism in 2006 were Muslim and most were from Iraq. Only 28 U.S. citizens died in terrorist attacks in 2006.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, as political scientist John Mueller has argued recently in *Foreign Affairs*, the terrorist threat to the United States has been

greatly exaggerated. No terrorist attacks have taken place on American soil since 2001, and investigators have not turned up any real al-Qaeda cells in the United States. “The massive and expensive homeland security apparatus erected since 9/11,” Mueller writes, “may be persecuting some, spying on many, inconveniencing most, and taxing all to defend the United States against an enemy that scarcely exists.”<sup>13</sup>

## A JUST SECURITY POLICY

Once we address the core misconceptions of U.S. counter-terrorism policy, the fear begins to lift. Terrorism is not the most important threat facing the world. Military tactics are largely counter-productive for they elevate the status of the terrorists and also create conditions that help spur recruitment. Terrorists are not bent on destroying “our” way of life but are animated by particular ideologies and derive their support from opposition to specific U.S. foreign policies. Only when we put terrorism in proper perspective can we start to think about appropriate solutions.

Four major building blocks support a just counter-terrorism policy: improving homeland security, strengthening legal systems, promoting democracy and human rights, and addressing the root causes of terrorism.

Terrorism is not the most important threat facing the world or Americans. But September 11 happened, and we must prevent another attack like it from happening again. An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of the Bush administration's purported cure of a “global war.” Prevention entails tightened border security, improved intelligence and oversight of intelligence agencies, strengthened protections for critical infrastructure, and denying terrorists access to weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, and other items that can be used as weapons. Mitigating the effects of terrorist attacks requires honing disaster preparedness and emergency response plans and strengthening the infrastructures and public services that might either be targets of an attack or that would be necessary to respond effectively to such an attack.

Law is ultimately a more effective method of ensnaring terrorists than military force. Osama bin Laden remains at large, and military campaigns have only swelled the ranks of his followers. A more effective response to terrorism requires strengthening the national and international legal infrastructure necessary to identify and prosecute the individuals and organizations that facilitate, finance, perpetrate, and profit from terrorism. A strengthened UN should be the primary instrument for pursuing this objective. Unilateralist elements within the U.S. Congress and a lack of enthusiasm by mem-



bers of the administration have been major obstacles to a more sustained and constructive U.S. engagement with the UN system.

In the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the Bush administration made an apparent U-turn with respect to the UN, suddenly recognizing its importance in combating terrorism. But that momentary honeymoon ended with the invasion of Iraq and the administration's ongoing campaign to undermine the International Criminal Court. Such moves have weakened the international legal architecture that represents a globalization of America's firm principles and beliefs in the centrality of the rule of law. Revelations of torture sanctioned by Bush administration personnel and efforts to exempt U.S. troops from Geneva Convention restrictions in waging the "war on terrorism" have also raised legitimate questions over the seriousness of the Bush administration's commitment to international law.

In a just security approach, a balance between liberty and security need not require sacrificing the former for the latter. Such an approach would refuse to sacrifice the fundamental elements of transparency and accountability, which are necessary for democracy to remain vital. It would refuse to subject people like Maher Arar to unlawful detention and torture because of "security" interests.

The administration's approach to combating terrorism should embody respect for the very human rights that America defends and promotes at home. This means that citizens should loudly proclaim opposition to religious extremism and actions taken in its name, no matter the perpetrator. Citizens should also reject any policies that undermine human rights norms in the name of a "war" on terrorism, including those that inflict casualties on innocent victims, that lift restrictions on the CIA to allow assassinations, and that permit the hiring of human rights violators.

Finally, combating terrorism requires looking beyond any one terrorist event—horrific as it may be—to address the broader socioeconomic, political, and military contexts from which terrorism emerges. Because terrorism is a particular kind of violent act aimed at achieving a political objective, a preventive strategy must also address its political roots in occupation and oppression. The United States is a target of terrorist attacks "because we support governments and policies that are sources of their oppression," writes banker and former president of the New York Stock Exchange Richard Vague.<sup>14</sup> Other root causes include failed and failing states, which provide terrorists with unregulated arenas for operations; economic inequality, which can enhance support for terrorist acts and provide a source of recruits, even though

poverty itself does not cause terrorism; and efforts by one country to institutionalize a position of global dominance, including through alliances with repressive regimes. Addressing root causes is one way of insuring that the efforts of terrorist groups to mobilize support meet as inhospitable a social, economic, and political climate as possible.

In his 1941 State of the Union Address, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt talked about Four Freedoms. The first two—freedom of speech and religion—came directly from the U.S. constitution. The third, freedom from want, derived from the experience of the Great Depression of the 1930s. But the fourth one, freedom from fear, spoke to a public facing the escalation of a world war that would, before the year was out, engulf the United States.

Today, the U.S. government has forgotten that this fourth freedom is as precious as the other three. Fear created the "global war on terror." Fear propelled the invasion of Iraq. Fear plucked Maher Arar from the immigration line at JFK airport and consigned him to a year of torture and imprisonment.

Fear is the greatest weapon of terrorists. When it becomes our greatest weapon, too, what does that make us?

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# Just Security Budget

**A**s the Berlin Wall was torn down and the world celebrated the end of the Cold War in 1989, several military experts and U.S. generals suggested that the United States could slash its defense budget significantly and without jeopardizing the country security in any way. “I’ve been maintaining for some time now that our defense budget could safely and modestly be cut to one-half what it was in the later days of the Cold War,” argued former CIA director William Colby in 1993. At the time, the military budget stood at \$300 billion.<sup>1</sup>

Fourteen years later the Cold War is long over, but the U.S. military budget has doubled not halved. Colby’s observation remains more timely than ever. Researchers at the Institute for Policy Studies and the National Priorities Project have examined the Pentagon’s 2008 budget requests of over \$650 billion and have identified cuts of over \$213 billion that can be made with no sacrifice to our security. Indeed, this reduction of about one-third of our military spending would make the United States and the world safer and more secure.

Many of these cuts could begin immediately with the elimination of weapons systems that are redundant and economically inefficient. The United States could also save money by ending military and militarized assistance to other countries. We could significantly reduce other areas of the budget by ending the occupation of Iraq, closing many of the military bases abroad, and reducing the number of personnel afloat in non-U.S. waters.

In the transition from an overly militarized foreign policy to a Just Security foreign policy, a portion of the funds cut from the defense budget would be needed to help former military personnel move into the civilian labor force. Some of the demobilized personnel can help the United States shift from fossil fuel dependency to a new Green economy. Other savings can be applied to turning a different, less militarized face to the world by increasing foreign aid, expanding U.S. diplomatic efforts, and better securing the country from terrorism. Yet, all of these suggested new expenditures together are far less than the savings from the proposed cuts. Hence, a true Just Security budget could save valuable financial resources for the vital health, education, and infrastructure needs of the United States.

In this section, we outline the \$213 billion in cuts from the current defense budget request of the Bush administration for 2008 fiscal year. More savings can be achieved in future years as further military bases abroad are closed, and the overall national security strategy shifts to more coopera-

tive engagement. Then, we outline \$50 billion in additional non-military spending, in such areas as development assistance, clean energy, and non-proliferation, as well as key underfunded homeland security protections.

Most of the savings in a “Just Security Budget” would come from three sources: the Iraq War, unnecessary overseas bases, and obsolete weapons systems. We offer a brief explanation of each of the proposed cuts below, a time line for that set of cuts, and why each would leave the United States more safe and secure.

## PROPOSED CUTS

We recommend reducing the proposed military budget by one-third. With the following cuts of \$213 billion, the United States would still retain the largest military in the world. The United States would still spend over eight times more than any of the next largest militaries, including the United Kingdom, France, Japan, and China. The remaining \$442.3 billion military budget would primarily cover the pay and benefits of the one million-plus strong U.S. military, operating and maintenance costs of those troops and their U.S. home bases, and for tanks, planes, ships and other equipment that are critical to a strong military.

### IRAQ WAR (\$99.1 BILLION)

This report argues that the war in Iraq is illegal, immoral, and counterproductive, making the United States and the world less secure. A fraction of this proposed \$99.1 billion could be used to bring the U.S. troops and military contractors home. A larger amount would be needed as part of a “National Security Adjustment Act” to help those troops transition into civilian life. The model of this kind of transition is the post-World War II U.S. effort (through the GI Bill and other measures). As with U.S. troops currently stationed on U.S. bases overseas, the troops brought home from Iraq would need substantial resources to readjust and to retrain for the sorts of jobs we outline in the just climate portion of this report. That section highlights the proposals of the Apollo Alliance, a coalition of labor, environmental, civil rights and other groups that has outlined investments of tens of billions of dollars into creating a clean energy and energy-efficient infrastructure in the United States. Such investment would create millions of new jobs retrofitting U.S. buildings and building up the solar, wind and other clean energy infrastructure of the country. Many of those jobs could go to U.S.

## BOX 9: PROPOSED CUTS TO THE 2008 DEFENSE AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE BUDGET

	\$ billion	Percentage
<b>Total Requested by Bush administration</b>	<b>656.0<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total Proposed Cuts for a Just Security Budget</b>		
Iraq War	99.1 <sup>2</sup>	15.1
Overseas Bases and Personnel Stationed Afloat (1/3 of \$137.7b)	45.9 <sup>3</sup>	7.0
Unnecessary Weaponry	43.9 <sup>4</sup>	6.7
U.S. Military Aid	10.8 <sup>5</sup>	1.6
Waste in Procurement and Business Operations	7.0 <sup>6</sup>	1.1
Force Structure	5.0 <sup>7</sup>	0.8
Military Recruitment	2.0 <sup>8</sup>	0.3
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>213.7</b>	<b>32.6</b>
<b>Amount Remaining in U.S. Defense Budget after Cuts</b>	<b>442.3</b>	<b>67.4</b>

- 1 This figure represents the total Bush Defense spending request of \$647.2 billion, including the regular military budget (050) plus supplemental spending on the Iraq and Afghan wars, plus two other items from other budgets: the proposed \$9.6 billion in military aid, and the proposed \$1.2 billion in Andean counter-drug initiative and international narcotics control and law enforcement; minus one item: \$2.0 billion in non-proliferation programs.
- 2 This is the amount requested to continue to fight the Iraq War. The total for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars is \$141.6 billion.
- 3 This figure represents one-third of our estimate of the portion of the military budget funding bases and personnel (military and civilian) stationed or afloat outside of the United States (including territories) for military purposes. We subtracted \$9.6 billion from the total, which we estimate is already accounted for within our category of cuts in unnecessary weapons systems.
- 4 This figure includes weapon systems, like the V-22 Osprey and the F/A-22 Raptor, which were deemed “unnecessary” by a task force of experts convened by Miriam Pemberton and Lawrence Korb in early 2007. For details, see “A Report of the Task Force on A Unified Security Budget for the United States, FY 2008,” by Foreign Policy In Focus and the Institute for Policy Studies, April 2007, <http://www.fpiif.org/fpifxt/4175>.
- 5 This figure is the total of the proposed \$9.6 billion in military aid, and the proposed \$1.2 billion in the Andean counter-drug initiative and international narcotics control and law enforcement.
- 6 See Unified Security Budget, p. 25.
- 7 See Unified Security Budget, p. 25
- 8 This would cut military recruitment expenditures in half.

<b>BOX 10: PROPOSED SECURITY ADDITIONS TO THE 2008 BUDGET</b>	
	\$ billion
<b>Preventive Measures</b>	
Development Assistance	15.0
Clean Energy	8.8
Non-proliferation	5.0
Diplomacy	1.9
U.S. Contributions to International Peacekeeping	1.3
U.S. Contributions to International Organizations	1.2
Other	1.6
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>34.7</b>
<b>Homeland Security Measures</b>	
Public Health	5.0
Rail and Transit	3.4
DHS First Responder Grants	2.7
Baggage and Cargo Screening	1.3
Other	2.6
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>15.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.7</b>

Source: Miriam Pemberton and Lawrence Korb, "A Unified Security Budget for the United States, FY 2008" (Washington, DC: Foreign Policy In Focus, May 2007).

soldiers making the transition to the civilian work force.

According to a forthcoming study by the University of Massachusetts' Political Economy Research Institute and the Institute for Policy Studies, the net employment effects of shifting the entire Iraq War budget into investments in education, health care, poverty reduction, and a clean environment would be positive and large -- that is, after accounting for both the employment losses in military-related activities as well as the employment gains resulting from the new investments. According to preliminary results, this shift would produce a net increase of about 1.1 million jobs within the United States.

#### OVERSEAS BASES AND PERSONNEL STATIONED AFLOAT (\$45.9 BILLION OR A THIRD OF THE ESTIMATED \$137.7 BILLION THE UNITED STATES SPENDS ON THESE ITEMS):

University of California professor emeritus Chalmers Johnson has done a brilliant job of mapping the more than 1,000 overseas bases and facilities that the U.S. military has built up in Japan, Germany, and dozens of other countries since World War II.<sup>2</sup> If you add to these bases the costs of maintaining tens of thousands of U.S. personnel on carrier fleets and other naval vessels, the United States spends annually to maintain its global military presence an amount roughly equivalent to what it is spending on the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. This network of bases was vastly expanded during the Cold War on the grounds that they were needed to protect other countries and the United States from our adversaries. Many challenged this justification then. But in the post-Cold War period, it has become increasingly difficult to justify this complex web of facilities, which many around the world associate with U.S. empire.

The majority of these bases are located in three countries: Germany (302), Japan (111) and South Korea (106). We would start here to begin the rollback of our overseas military presence. Others mentioned elsewhere in this report include the new Africa Command and bases in the Caspian Sea region whose rationale is tied to our fossil-fuel-dominated energy past rather than our clean energy future. In a forthcoming report we will examine more closely the question of how much overseas military presence is required for our security over the long-term.

For now we would propose beginning the process of reducing that global military presence by a third and working to slowly re-integrate demobilized military personnel into U.S. civilian life in the manner outlined above for troops serving in Iraq. Like our allies, who remain safe and secure without

networks of bases around the world, the United States would continue to engage the world diplomatically, economically, and culturally. Troops currently stationed in the United States would continue to defend the country from attack. However, like other nations, the drawing down of overseas bases would simply mean that the United States would join overseas military operations through multilateral arrangements such as UN peacekeeping forces and NATO forces. Shutting down bases would remove a key target of anti-American sentiment overseas.

#### UNNECESSARY WEAPONRY (\$43.9 BILLION)

After surveying all current and proposed U.S. weapons systems, the 2007 Task Force on "A Unified Security Budget" turned up 11 areas of unnecessary spending on weaponry that could be cut from the budget without decreasing U.S. security. These areas are detailed in the FY 2008 "Unified Security Budget" report, and we simply list them here (the 11 total \$43.9 billion in savings):

- F/A-22 Raptor: Originally designed to counter a Soviet aircraft that was never built, this aircraft is obsolete. Savings: \$3.8 billion.
- Ballistic Missile Defense: "A system that doesn't work for a threat that doesn't exist." Savings: \$6.8 billion.
- Virginia-Class Submarine: Any conceivable mission for this new submarine can be handled by the existing fleet. Savings: \$2.5 billion.
- DD(G-1000) Destroyer: Another cost-escalating program whose missions are well-covered by existing ships. Savings: \$2.8 billion.
- V-22 Osprey: This hybrid plane-helicopter is being rushed into service in Iraq despite safety, technical and cost problems that have never been solved. Savings: \$2.4 billion.
- C-130J transport plane: Has 168 documented deficiencies that could cause death, severe injury or illness. Savings: \$1 billion.
- F-35 Joint Strike Fighter: This program can afford to be slowed down, since the U.S. already has overwhelming superiority in tactical aircraft. Savings: \$3.1 billion.

- **Offensive Space Weapons:** Risks fueling an arms race in space. Savings: \$721 million.
- **Future Combat System:** 52 of its 53 critical technologies are unproven. Slow it down and get it right. Savings: \$2.2 billion.
- **R&D:** In real terms the budget for developing futuristic weapons systems is \$20 billion higher than at the height of the Reagan buildup. Savings: \$5 billion.
- **Nuclear Forces:** The U.S. spends more on its nuclear arsenal in real terms than at the height of the Cold War. Savings: \$14.7 billion.

#### U.S. MILITARY AID (\$10.8 BILLION)

Military assistance to other countries all too frequently enables human rights abusers, fuels conflicts, and strengthens the military of countries at the expense of civil society. There is also a significant risk of U.S.-provided arms and training being used against U.S. interests, as in the cases of Iraq and Iran. Roughly \$1.2 billion of this amount goes toward the so-called “drug war” in Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru. Roughly 70% of this amount goes toward a military approach that has only made matters worse. U.S. military aid to these nations has increased killings and violence and has not decreased the drug trade. We are proposing that the United States eliminate the military portion on this aid and work closely with non-governmental organizations to increase the usefulness and effectiveness of the non-military portion.

#### WASTE IN PROCUREMENT AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS (\$7 BILLION)

Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld estimated that more than \$20 billion a year could be saved by fixing procurement and business operations. The Government Accountability Office and the Congressional Budget Office estimate that consolidating various activities could save \$1 billion a year. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) estimates that there are several billion dollars worth of earmarks (pork) in the annual defense budget. In the FY 2007 budget alone, there were 2,822 earmarks totaling \$15 billion, up from \$11.2 billion the year before.

#### FORCE STRUCTURE (\$5 BILLION)

At present, the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps have more than 5,000 tactical combat planes and 1,800 armed helicopters. It is hard to imagine a scenario that would require such large numbers of aircraft. Therefore, two active Air Force wings and one carrier battle group and its associated air wing can be eliminated without overloading our forces.

#### SHIFT TO NON-MILITARY SPENDING

Currently, the United States spends roughly nine times more on military approaches to security as on non-military approaches. Not only does this go against the wishes of the American people—65% of Americans think the country has been “too quick to get American military forces involved” in conflicts—it has made the world and this country less safe and secure.<sup>3</sup>

The task force on the “Unified Security Budget” examined a wide range of non-military approaches to security, and identified \$49.7 billion in additional expenditures that could make the country and world more secure. Most of these expenditures (\$34.7 billion) are “preventive” measures, such as investments in clean energy, aid, and non-proliferation expenses. Another \$15.0 billion is applied to new homeland security expenses, such as improving port security.

Again, each of these items is detailed in the “Unified Security Budget.” Here we offer a brief rationale for each category of proposed expenditures.

#### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

**Development Assistance:** \$15 billion: As is explained in the “Just Livelihoods” section of this report, the United States would be well served by increased overseas aid to poor countries, particularly in helping to build a public health infrastructure across the developing world.

**Clean Energy:** \$8.8 billion: Above, we made the argument for an “Apollo Alliance” type major investment in clean energy in the United States. If the federal government were to pay a third of the \$30 billion a year infrastructure investment proposed by the Apollo Alliance, it would need an additional \$8.8 billion beyond Bush’s proposed \$1.2 billion for such efforts.

**Nonproliferation:** The current administration has short-changed the array of proven non-military non-proliferation programs that secure and dismantle stockpiles of nuclear material around the world. A \$5 billion investment would address the shortfalls from previous years, expand these programs and accelerate their pace.

**Diplomacy:** Our diplomatic mission requires an immediate increase of \$2 billion over current spending to address critical shortfalls in staffing and to upgrade antiquated information and communications systems.

**U.S. Contributions to International Organizations:** Turning a different face to the world requires doubling the anemic \$1.2 billion currently devoted in total to supporting such international organizations as the UN, the International Atomic Energy Commission, and the World Health Organization.

**U.S. Contributions to International Peacekeeping Operations:** This budget needs an increase of \$1.3 billion to make up past shortfalls and prepare for new missions that have been identified as necessary in the year ahead.

**Other:** Urgently needed international capacities for post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization include a UN Peacebuilding organization and a UN Civilian Police Corps. The State Department's Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization must also be given dedicated funding.

## HOMELAND SECURITY MEASURES

**Public Health:** Since September 11, no real progress has been made toward eliminating the \$10 billion gap estimated as necessary to bring the U.S. public health system up to an acceptable level of preparedness.<sup>4</sup>

**Department of Homeland Security First Responder Grants:** Like the expenditures on public health, funding for improving first responders' capacity to deal with terrorist attacks enhances readiness for other hazards and emergencies too.

**Rail and Transit Security:** Upgrading security procedures and capacities in this domain has been short-changed in favor of spending on airline security.

**Baggage and Cargo Screening:** The successor organization to the 9-11 Commission has given a "D" grade to U.S. efforts to date on improving baggage and

cargo screening; inadequate funding remains the main impediment.

Overall, the transition from the current overly militarized U.S. security budget to a Just Security budget will take several years. In addition to the \$50 billion in proposed non-military measures outlined above, the U.S. government would need to spend part of the hundreds of billions of dollars saved in the proposed cuts on facilitating a just and orderly transition of hundreds of thousands of U.S. military personnel into civilian life. If done in accordance with the real security needs of the United States, including the climate, poverty, nuclear, terrorism, and other measures outlined in the rest of this report, this transition can be just both for the individuals and families involved and for the nation as a whole.

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 William Colby, Interview by America's Defense Monitor, "President Clinton's Military Establishment," Recording, November 7, 1993. Available at: <http://www.cdi.org/adm/708>
- 2 Johnson cites the official figure of 737 U.S. bases and facilities as of 2005, but notes that this number excludes 109 garrisons in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as facilities in Kosovo, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, and Uzbekistan, which brings the number over 1,000. "But no one—possibly not even the Pentagon—knows the exact number for sure," Johnson cautions. Chalmers Johnson, *Nemesis* (New York: Metropolitan, 2007), pp. 138, 140.
- 3 Program on International Policy Attitudes and Knowledge Networks, "What Kind of Public Policy Does the American Public Want?" October 20, 2006. Available at: [http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/oct06/SecurityFP\\_Oct06\\_rpt.pdf](http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/oct06/SecurityFP_Oct06_rpt.pdf)
- 4 "Public Health: Costs of Complacency," *Governing*, February 2004; Available at: <http://www.governing.com/gpp/2004/public.htm>. We recommend adding \$5 billion for public health infrastructure in the next year alone.



# Conclusion

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**A**lbert Beveridge was a promising politician in his thirties when he stood up to speak in favor of war and the promotion of democracy to his peers in the U.S. Senate. A historian, Beveridge unabashedly called for the United States to remake the globe. “We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee, under God, of the civilization of the world,” Beveridge proclaimed. “And we will move forward to our work, not howling out regrets like slaves whipped to their burdens but with gratitude for a task worthy of our strength and thanksgiving to Almighty God that He has marked us as His chosen people, henceforth to lead in the regeneration of the world.”

Stripped of its more racist rhetoric, Beveridge’s 1900 speech to justify the U.S. war and colonization of the Philippines could have been made on Capitol Hill a century later in support of the U.S. invasion of Iraq and the larger “global war on terror.” Beveridge, too, tried to make an ugly war into a necessary and uplifting venture. There are the same invocations of religious certainty and civilizing missions. The Republican senator from Indiana even had words for those who would voice skepticism about U.S. military actions. “All this has aided the enemy more than climate, arms, and battle,” the senator concluded.

The attempt by the Bush administration to expand U.S. military power and “lead in the regeneration of the world” has roots in U.S. foreign policy that extend further back than even Albert Beveridge. Justifications for preemptive war to safeguard U.S. security can be found in the words of Presidents Thomas Jefferson and John Quincy Adams. The doctrine of manifest destiny helped expand the territorial limits of America. Only at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it stretched from “sea to shining sea,” did the United States have to make a choice: leave well enough alone or expand overseas.

Spurred on by politicians like Beveridge, the United States entered late into the colonial game. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the European land grab in Asia, Africa, and the Americas had been going on for some time, the United States acquired its first colonies. Thereafter, with some exceptions, the American zone of control expanded not so much through territorial acquisition as through calculated alliances, the facilitation of corporate expansion, and selected military interventions to depose opponents and secure access to key resources.

Although the two major parties might bicker over any particular flexing of military muscle, the maintenance and expansion of U.S. power has been decidedly a bipartisan project. Anti-imperialists such as William Jennings Bryan, Andrew Carnegie, and Robert Taft have raised objections. But a bipartisan chorus in favor of America’s global expansion has drowned out these populist, libertarian, and isolationist voices.

At the end of World War II, the United States had a chance to step away from its expansionist past. Again it faced two distinct choices. There was the option of peace and international human rights presided over by the newly established United Nations and inspired by the vision of both Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. The second option was the construction of a national security state anchored in a growing military industrial complex at home and sustained by covert, militarized policies abroad. This second approach, pushed by the Truman wing of the Democratic Party and endorsed by key members of the Republican establishment, became the core of U.S. foreign policy for the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

This Cold War foreign policy rested on a fundamentally unjust division of world spoils. “We have about 50% of the world’s wealth but only 6.3% of its population,” observed containment’s architect George Kennan in 1948. “In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security.”

The drive to maintain “this pattern of relationships,” perhaps *the* core misconception of U.S. foreign policy, persists to the present day. Injustice and national security, in fact, have an inverse relationship. The more injustice there is, the less security we all enjoy. In this report, we have urged the marriage of justice and security for both pragmatic and principled reasons. The timing is right. We have had three chances in the last 30 years to go down this path of greater international cooperation, and we failed each time. We are now facing a fourth opportunity. Let us hope that world history does not abide by the “three strikes and you’re out” principle.

## **PATHS NOT TAKEN**

At three points in recent history the United States could have rejected the bipartisan consensus on militaristic internationalism and returned to the cooperative internationalism that brought representatives of 50 countries to San Francisco for the inaugural meeting of the UN. These moments came in 1975, 1991, and 2001.

In 1975, the United States faced defeat in Vietnam, was engaged in *détente* with the Soviet Union, and had begun negotiations to recognize Communist China. The Vietnam War marked the first major defeat of U.S. military power. *Détente* with the Soviets had the potential to reduce the growing arsenals of nuclear weapons. With the opening to China, a new age of international cooperation at the United Nations beckoned.

But the Cold War did not end in the 1970s. *Détente* with the Soviets faltered, horrific wars continued in Southeast Asia, and the UN continued to be hamstrung by superpower conflict. Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States was willing to relinquish control over their respective spheres of influence much less step back from their proxy wars elsewhere in the world.

When the Cold War did end with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States had a second opportunity to help usher in an equitable and peaceful world order. The explicit need for nuclear weapons had disappeared. New regional structures like the Organization on Security and Cooperate in Europe and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum stood ready to provide new security frameworks. The UN was rapidly expanding its peacekeeping capacities. The United States might have taken the opportunity to press for a global peace dividend, so that all countries could benefit from shifting military spending to human needs.

The peace dividend never truly materialized, nor did peace itself. The United States owed over \$1 billion in arrears to the UN by 2000 and repeatedly vetoed peacekeeping missions. Underfunded and without sufficient political backing, the UN was unable to prevent the genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia, and failed to bring stability to Somalia. The United States took advantage of the Soviet Union's collapse to acquire greater market share in arms exports, which only fanned the flames of regional conflicts. Nuclear weapons reductions faltered. Under Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, the United States sought to maintain its status as the world's sole superpower. In the 1990s, America became the "indispensable nation" because, to quote former secretary of state Madeleine Albright, "We stand tall. We see further

into the future."

As the third opportunity that came after September 11 demonstrated, however, the United States did not in fact see further into the future. Washington could have translated the outpouring of world sympathy over the 2001 attacks into a strengthening of international legal institutions to pursue and prosecute the perpetrators. It could have dramatically increased development assistance to the global South. It could have drawn down the U.S. military presence around the world that had made America an international lightning rod for anger and resentment.

But the United States did not do any of this. With bipartisan support, the Bush administration attacked Afghanistan and Iraq, two countries where conflict still burns today. Instead of reviving the internationalist option, the United States proceeded to unravel what little remained of U.S. commitment to international law, international institutions, and respect for international public opinion. The administration managed to turn back the clock, not simply to the late 1940s and the launch of the Cold War but all the way back to the time of Albert Beveridge. Once again war and conquest, wrapped up in the more appealing package of democracy promotion, dazzled Congress into backing the administration.

As in 1900, the Bush administration chose the path of global expansion. It has attempted to remake the world in America's image. Instead, it has been America's image that has been remade, and the result has not been pretty.

## **WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?**

The policies of the last six years have palpably failed—on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan, at the negotiating table with Iran, amid the chaos of Somalia and Sudan, in the shantytowns and abandoned farmland of the global South, and even in the stratosphere where our emissions accelerate global warming and our woefully expensive missile defense systems consistently fail to work.

In this report, we have traced the consequences of these failed policies through six stories. Lieutenant Ehren Watada lays out for us the crimes and misdemeanors of the administration's Iraq policy. The salination of Topol Mondal's farm and the impending inundation of Bangladesh focus our attention on the failures of U.S. climate change policy. Kim Jong Il's drive to acquire nuclear weapons reveals the flaws of our nonproliferation strategy. The predicament of Karen Chacon demonstrates how free-trade solutions have only widened global inequalities. The anguish of Asha Hagi Elmi illustrates the folly that military intervention can repair the

unjust conditions that give rise to regional conflicts. And the suffering of Maher Arar underscores the errors of our counter-terrorism efforts.

These failures of U.S. policy are not a secret. Virtually everyone outside a small perimeter around the White House acknowledges that U.S. foreign policy is broken. So, how do we fix it?

Before we turn to our Just Security approach—which integrates the recommendations of the previous five sections—let’s first assess the competition. Perhaps the most eligible contender is an updated version of Cold War realism. It is supported by liberal hawks of both parties. And it has a hallowed pedigree.

In the late 1940s, after the United States largely abandoned the FDR approach of principled internationalism, the Cold War leadership debated over two strategies: rollback and containment. The partisans of rollback wanted to use the dominant military force of the United States to roll back Communist influence and ultimately topple the Soviet Union itself. The Truman administration eventually settled on the alternative of containment: the deployment of U.S. troops and bases, and the construction of strategic alliances in Europe and Asia, to rein in Soviet and then Chinese influence. Cold War realists shied away from direct military confrontation with the Communist superpowers.

Today, with its doctrine of preventive war and an all-out military assault on terrorism, the Bush administration continues to advocate its own version of rollback. Since these military strategies have only overstretched U.S. capabilities and increased U.S. insecurity, it is not surprising that some Democrats and Republicans have recommended replacing the Bush doctrine with an updated version of the Truman doctrine of containment. This “new and improved” containment strategy would be deployed against transnational terrorism, threatening regimes, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The United States would strengthen its existing military alliances and maintain high levels of military spending. But it would be more discriminating about the use of military force.

Liberals must have a “fighting faith,” argues former editor *The New Republic* Peter Beinart, a faith that can separate worthy goals such as the war on terrorism and the struggle against tyrants from the human rights morass created by the Bush administration.<sup>1</sup> Just as Truman faced the Soviet threat, the United States must create a united front against terrorism.<sup>2</sup> The United States must not shrink from the use of hard power, because only through military force can it maintain a preeminent position in the world, defeat terrorism, and pro-

vide the hidden fist to bolster the hidden hand of the market.<sup>3</sup> For these liberal hawks, the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq was not wrong in principle but only in execution. More soldiers, more air power, and more resolve would have done the trick, just as the military brass argued 30 years ago in Vietnam. According to these new containment advocates, multilateral structures are fine in theory but often ineffectual or unreliable in practice. The United States must pay more attention to regions like East Asia, which are crucial to U.S. national interests, and pay less attention to regions such as Africa, which are largely peripheral. And U.S. military interventions overseas should be used both for furthering U.S. goals, such as democracy promotion, and for achieving larger humanitarian aims.<sup>4</sup>

Just as containment was preferable to a nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, its contemporary variant is an improvement on the schoolyard bully stance of the Bush administration. But containment of the liberal hawk variety is an impoverished alternative. This rehabilitation of Harry Truman’s foreign policy record is an attempt to pump up the Democratic Party with steroids lest it appear weak on the military or terrorism. It is close to the same Bush foreign policy, minus the more flagrant human rights violations.

If we apply the “new and improved” Cold War approach to the five questions that opened the introductory chapter, we find that it comes up lacking. The containment approach maintains U.S. dominance in nuclear weapons rather than advancing disarmament. The hard power approach continues to think of counter-terrorism in military terms. The liberal hawks view arms exports as central to securing alliances and subsidizing U.S. military research and development. The Cold War realists embrace free trade as a sure-fire way of growing the U.S. and global economy. And climate change doesn’t merit much discussion at all.

The Cold War is over. We live in a fundamentally different world—of important new economic powers like China, India, and Brazil, of increasingly connected and powerful civil movements, of changing notions of sovereignty, of global threats such as climate change. It seems odd that the foreign policy establishment can’t think outside the containment box. The Bush administration responded to this new world with a strategy of rollback that has inevitably generated blowback. The proposed alternative of containment does not resolve the fundamentally unjust assumptions of U.S. foreign policy. We must have the courage and the imagination to leave the Cold War behind and approach our common challenges with a fresh perspective.

## AN INTEGRATED JUST SECURITY ALTERNATIVE

What distinguishes this report from many alternative foreign policy proposals is an integrated approach that avoids the twin perils of hard power and global disengagement. It proposes a principled U.S. engagement with the international community. We recommend that Washington act as a global partner not a global boss.

Emerging from this report are several intersecting themes:

- 1) **The United States must advance rather than undermine international mechanisms and institutions.** In the course of human events, empires have succeeded empires. Today we have a unique opportunity to move from a unipolar system presided over by the United States to a secure, multipolar system that is held in place by a latticework of international institutions and laws. The United States should work with the UN to devise a workable solution to the Israel-Palestine debate, develop with other countries a viable cap-and-tax program to reduce carbon emissions, reduce the challenge of transnational terrorism with equally transnational legal mechanisms, support an Arms Trade Agreement to reduce the role of weaponry in sparking and heightening conflict, strengthen the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty by working with other nuclear powers to radically reduce nuclear arsenals, and contribute to fashioning a global plan to train four million new health workers around the world.
- 2) **We must support the rule of law, not the rule of the jungle.** If we break the Geneva Conventions in our treatment of enemy combatants, we can only expect that other countries will do the same to our soldiers. If we launch a preventive war in violation of international law, we can only expect that other countries will follow our precedent. We cannot expect other countries to uphold fair labor practices when we ourselves have not ratified all of the core labor standards of the International Labor Organization. The United States should spend less time talking about the rule of law and more time practicing the rule of law.
- 3) **We must lead by example, not by force.** As the most powerful country in the world system, the United States can play a leading role in key areas. But with power comes responsibilities. We are the leading nuclear power, so it is incumbent upon us to take the first steps toward negotiating down

nuclear arsenals. We are the leading producer of carbon emissions—and we pollute so disproportionately with respect to our share of the world population—that we must bear the greater burden of adjustment. We are the leading arms exporter, so we must take the lead in restraining such proliferation. Only when we lead by positive example can we expect the anti-Americanism that has sprung up all over the world—as a result of the Iraq War and scandals such as Abu Ghraib—to subside.

- 4) **Global problems call for global solutions, but one size does not fit all.** In coming up with alternatives to fossil fuels, it would be ridiculous to ask landlocked Austria to invest in tidal power. So, too, would it be illogical to expect that counter-terrorism strategies effective against al-Qaeda are automatically effective against all terrorist organizations. The support of democratic practice, which involves the active participation of social movements, is an insurance policy against the imposition of solutions that ignore particular, local conditions. We should also be wary of quick fixes. The Bush administration has focused on military power to solve the many dilemmas facing the United States and the world. We must be careful not to hold up other single solutions to global inequality, regional wars, and so on. There are no technological quick fixes to climate change. The free market and free trade are not magic powder that we can sprinkle over global inequality to make it go away. Resolution to difficult conflicts, such as the one between Israel and Palestine, will require a great deal of negotiation and compromise.
- 5) **We should support just policies abroad because they also encourage just policies at home.** We have seen how rising global inequality adversely affects U.S. workers by driving down wages and increasing job loss. Our arms export policies keep our military industrial complex humming and undermine attempts to redirect money to social needs. Our fearful pursuit of terrorists abroad has chipped away at the edifice of our civil liberties at home. Our refusal to support effective, global solutions to climate change have hamstrung attempts to reorganize the U.S. economy on a foundation of sustainable energy.
- 6) **We need more public involvement in global affairs not less.** Foreign policy issues can be complex. But so are the rules of major league sports, and most Americans have figured them out. We can't leave it to the experts to solve the world's problems.

In many cases, the experts got us into the jam in the first place. As those who live in this country, we must use democratic means to close the gap between what the polls say and what our leaders are doing.

- 7) **Security is not just about the military.** We have defined security broadly in this document. When we speak of security, we are talking about freedom from military conflict and terrorist attack. But we also believe that security involves access to sufficient food and shelter, good health care and good jobs, a clean environment and well-functioning, accountable political structures.

These are the principles of a just security program. The specific recommendations—such as our plan for Middle East peace, our nuclear disarmament proposal, our proposal for a global health care workforce—flow from these principles. The different parts of Just Security are intrinsically related to one another. So, for instance, as we apply ourselves to finding sustainable sources of energy, we will find that we gradually reduce a contributing factor behind conflict, namely the securing of access to oil. If we make a concerted effort to address economic inequality, we will diminish one of the root causes of terrorism. As the United States works to build effective international mechanisms, such as an Arms Trade Treaty or a transborder carbon tax, then Washington will accumulate political capital rather than invite scorn as the world's largest debtor in that category.

## MONEY AND JOBS

This integrated program will generate some new revenues, for instance from the carbon tax. But it will also cost money. If we are serious about dealing with the global health crisis, we have to figure out how to pay for it. Fortunately, a less militarized, less unilateral foreign policy will cost us a great deal less money. Policing the world is expensive. So is maintaining a nuclear complex. Assuming a more modest role in international affairs will allow us to redirect funds to other pressing needs, both at home and abroad.

The United States has managed, to use Chalmers Johnson's resonant phrase, "to garrison the globe."<sup>5</sup> What will abandoning this global garrison mean for our military? Within a total military budget of \$647 billion, the policing of our expanded sphere of influence constitutes 44.7%, or \$289 billion (see table). We could save another \$55 billion by trimming the Cold War weapons and Pentagon inefficiency out of the budget. The remaining \$303 billion would be entirely sufficient to deter any attack on the homeland and to provide troops to internationally sanctioned peacekeeping

and peacemaking operations. This remaining amount would still constitute four-and-a-half times the highest estimate of what China, our nearest competitor, now spends.

The United States is already moving in this direction with its "revolution in military affairs." Fixed bases and lumbering tanks are giving way to rapid response units and visiting forces agreements. But this is not enough. The United States must transform its forward-based, offensively oriented military structure. The bottom line is not whether the U.S. military can respond quickly or slowly but whether the United States should be there in the first place. The congressional debate is about rethinking the U.S. military engagement in Iraq. It should be about rethinking U.S. military engagement in the world.

We need to spend more money on preventing conflict than generating it. Right now, within our total budget for security—including military forces, homeland security and non-military international affairs activities such as diplomacy, economic development, and nuclear nonproliferation—90% is currently devoted to the military.<sup>6</sup> The money we spend on garrisoning the globe must be redirected toward negotiating peace agreements, securing nuclear material, and improving global livelihoods. Some of the savings would need to be devoted to military tasks. The largest of these will be addressing the long-term mental and physical trauma of Iraq War veterans. By the most authoritative estimate, these costs will likely equal the costs to date of prosecuting the war itself.<sup>7</sup> There will also be transition costs, and costs for replacing equipment destroyed in the war.

We are not calling for an end to the U.S. military. We propose that it focus on its primary mission: defense. Also, although we emphasize diplomacy and the rule of law, we would be naïve to rule out the use of force. Earlier we called for a policy of discriminate force. We mean that military force is justified for the defense of the country, for peacekeeping, and protect allies through multilateral means. In counterterrorism operations, we support the use of force to uphold the rule of law just as police must use force sometimes to apprehend criminals, but this force must be undertaken with due respect for human rights.

Finally, we need to create jobs for all the people who are today dependent on the military-industrial complex. The United States created tens of millions of military-related jobs from 1941 through a succession of wars, hot and cold. We now face the threat of global warming. We should respond with an all-out program to build a new, Green economy. Instead of producing more efficient killing machines, we must now produce more efficient factories, appliances, and cars. Instead of an arms race, we must race against time with other

countries to see who can find the most sustainable energy sources. Rosie the Riveter symbolized the new jobs and the new capacities created by the U.S. effort during World War II. Rosie the Recycler should become the symbol of the new jobs created by the U.S. effort to help save the world from climate change.

## WHAT ABOUT CHINA?

The Soviet Union served as the rationale for the aggressive U.S. foreign policy and high levels of military spending during the Cold War. Terrorism serves that purpose today. But with withdrawal from Iraq just a matter of timetables and the “global war on terror” already losing some of its political force, Washington is grooming a new potential enemy.

In 2000, before terrorism became the focus of U.S. foreign policy, former deputy assistant secretary of defense Kurt Campbell wrote an article about the looming China threat. The Cold War was over, and U.S. politicians were suffering from serious “enemy envy.” China’s growing economy and burgeoning military budget suggested that it could be the next challenger to step into the ring with the United States. “Even the strategists concede that they now have a sense of renewed purpose after a prolonged period of melancholy and nostalgia,” Campbell wrote of the atmosphere among military and political strategists in Washington.<sup>8</sup>

But China is no Soviet Union. And it’s no al-Qaeda either. In fact, the current administration is of two minds when it comes to China. The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review talks of the country’s “potential to compete militarily with the United States “even as it waxes optimistic about China as a “partner in addressing common security challenges.”<sup>9</sup> Indeed, China has become a strategic partner in deed though not in name. On global terrorism, North Korea’s nuclear ambitions, and the imperative of global economic growth, Washington and Beijing saw largely eye to eye. The economics of the relationship are clear. From 2000 to 2005, U.S.-China trade grew 150% to nearly \$300 billion.<sup>10</sup> China has turned around and invested its huge trade surplus into U.S. bonds. As a friend who keeps our economy afloat *and* as a foe that justifies full-spectrum military spending, China is useful to the United States. Never before has a rival for U.S. power held us in quite such a tight clinch.

In this report, we’ve looked at China from various angles. Beijing is modernizing its military, but its nuclear arsenal is tiny and its military spending is still a fraction of the Pentagon’s budget. China’s growing economy is producing more and more greenhouse gasses, but it still trails the United

States in per-capita emissions. The Chinese government has pulled hundreds of millions of its citizens out of extreme poverty, but low wages and the lack of workers’ rights in the country have a downward effect on wages and working conditions globally. China has expanded its diplomatic efforts in different parts of the world, but it continues to maintain close relations with repressive governments in Sudan, Zimbabwe, Burma, and elsewhere, and the Taiwan Straits remain a dangerous flashpoint.

While many Chinese policies are troubling, the country does not pose a military threat to the United States. As the United States and China move closer together economically, it will become ever more difficult for the Pentagon to use China to justify an ever-increasing military budget. In the 1990s, the United States treated China as a strategic partner. In an era in which engagement with China over economic policies, regional conflicts, and climate change is critical, such a partnership is needed now more than ever.

The multifaceted relationship between China and the United States is perhaps the strongest evidence yet that Cold War thinking—about containment, about hard power—no longer makes any sense. Attack a country that is the second largest holder of U.S. Treasury bonds? Contain a country where 80% of Wal-Mart’s suppliers are located? That’s yesterday’s foreign policy.

## THE POLITICAL WILL

Much has changed in the United States since the days of Albert Beveridge. The civil rights movement, the women’s movement, and the peace movement have all transformed U.S. society. The majority of Americans no longer believe that the United States has a mission to “civilize” the world. We have become a more just society, a more diverse culture, a more international country. Immigration has changed the composition of our population. To quote the song: we are the world. It is time to change our foreign policy so that it looks more like America and also reflects those strands of the American tradition that celebrate and advance justice.

Many of the ideas and proposals in this report have broad support among the American public. For instance, according to polling data from The Chicago Council on Global Affairs and World Public Opinion, “Seventy-five percent of Americans think the United Nations should be able to go into countries to investigate human rights abuses, 72% favor a standing UN peacekeeping force, and 60% endorse UN regulation of international arms sales.”<sup>11</sup> Majorities of Americans believe that no nations should possess nuclear weapons,<sup>12</sup> reject the

notion that military force should be used to promote democracy, and believe that immediate steps must be taken to halt global warming.<sup>13</sup>

What was once considered radical has now gained mainstream attention. For instance, George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger, and Sam Nunn recently endorsed nuclear disarmament. Zbigniew Brzezinski bemoans the transformation of the United States from mediator in the Middle East to “a partisan for Israel.”<sup>14</sup> Foreign policy columnist Thomas Friedman has gone green and now supports a carbon tax, and Pete Stark (D-CA) has introduced a bill to get one up and running.<sup>15</sup> The House Armed Forces Committee has rejected the language of a “global war on terrorism.”

We need leaders and we need social movements that can translate this broad American appeal and this narrow elite support into an integrated program for American renewal. We believe that this program must be founded on the principles of just security laid out in this report. Only a just security policy will make us all feel more secure.

Our vision is inspired by justice, by what is fair. The social movements that have made U.S. society more just must now make U.S. foreign policy more just. As Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, “The arc of the moral universe is long. But it bends toward justice.”

- 5 Chalmers Johnson, *Nemesis* (New York: Metropolitan, 2007), p.7.
- 6 Unified Security Budget, op. cit., p. 6.
- 7 Bryan Bender, “Economists Say Cost of War Could Top \$2 Trillion,” *The Boston Globe*, January 8, 2006.
- 8 Kurt Campbell, “China Watchers Fighting a Turf War of Their Own,” *The New York Times*, May 20, 2000.
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- 12 “AP Poll Shows Americans Prefer Nuclear Disarmament to Alternatives by Large Margin,” *Common Dreams*, March 31, 2005. Available at: <http://www.commondreams.org/news2005/0331-11.htm>
- 13 John Broder and Marjorie Connelly, “Public Says Warming Is a Problem, but Remains Split on Response,” *International Herald Tribune*, April 27, 2007.
- 14 Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Second Chance* (New York: Basic, 2007), p.163.
- 15 Thomas Friedman, “The Power of Green,” *The New York Times Magazine*, April 15, 2007; and, Thomas Friedman, “Only Halfway There,” *The New York Times*, May 13, 2007.

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 Peter Beinart, “An Argument for a New Liberalism,” *The New Republic*, December 2, 2004.
- 2 Ian Shapiro, *Containment* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).
- 3 Kurt Campbell and Michael O’Hanlon, *Hard Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2006).
- 4 David Greenberg, “The Choice,” *Boston Globe*, May 21, 2006. Another variant of Cold War realism is “ethical realism,” which emphasizes a somewhat different legacy of Truman, namely his alliance-building skills and such practical programs as the Marshall Plan of aid to war-torn Europe. The “ethical” part, which recoils from the erosion of civil liberties under the Bush administration, emphasizes the value of prudence: that there are consequences to our actions and responsibilities that must be shouldered. See, for instance, Anatol Lieven and John Hulsman, *Ethical Realism* (New York: Pantheon, 2006); Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke, *America Alone* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Stephen Walt, *Taming American Power* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005).

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The authors appreciate comments on different chapters from Peter Bourne, John Fitzgerald, William Fletcher, Jr., Saul Landau, Erik Leaver, Kathy McNeely, Nadia Martinez, Zia Mian, Leon Newton, Chris Oeschli, Saif Rahman, Beth Schulman, Emily Schwartz Greco, Marty Shupak, Chris Toensing, Leonor Tomero, Sanho Tree, Jeff Vogt, and Rob Weisman





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### **Lend Us Your Voice**

This report is a first step in a longer process at the Institute for Policy Studies and Foreign Policy in Focus to define a Just Security policy for the United States. In the upcoming months, we will be producing shorter educational versions of this report, as well as a longer, more in-depth report. We are convening study groups on some issues where we need to dig deeper, such as the issue of overseas U.S. bases. We will be commissioning a poll in the fall to see how the “Just Security” framework meshes with the American public. If you have comments on this report that you feel should be reflected in future products of this programs, please send them to [info@ips-dc.org](mailto:info@ips-dc.org).



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## A Call for Public Engagement in Foreign Policy

This report argues that public engagement will change U.S. foreign policy. The civil rights movement, the women's movement, and the peace movement have all transformed U.S. society. We have become a more just society, a more diverse culture, a more international country. Immigration has changed the composition of our population. To quote the song: we are the world. It is time to change our foreign policy so that it looks more like America and also reflects American traditions of justice.

Many of the ideas and proposals in this report have broad support among the American public. Majorities of Americans believe that no nations should possess nuclear weapons, reject the notion that military force should be used to promote democracy, and want immediate steps taken to halt global warming. What was once considered radical has now gained some political support in Washington.

We need leaders and we need social movements that can translate this broad American appeal into an integrated program for American renewal. We believe that this program must be founded on the principles of just security laid out in this report. Only a just security policy will make us all feel more secure. Our vision is inspired by justice, by what is fair. The social movements that have made U.S. society more just must now make U.S. foreign policy more just. As Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "The arc of the moral universe is long. But it bends toward justice."