

COMM/POSC 444

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In the contemporary world, the United States is extremely concerned with its security. The terrorist attacks of 9/11, the breakdown of historically strong alliances, and the rampant anti-Americanism in the Middle East have all combined to alert Americans of some striking realities. Americans now know that their country is not invulnerable. They know that it is unfeasible for their country to unilaterally impose its might against the world. Importantly, American citizens now realize that their country may not embody the world's best form of government, economy, or justice. In this extremely complex international world, some countries are strategic allies for certain affairs yet bitter enemies in other regards. Thus, it is challenging to know when nations are dangerous opponents or global partners. These factors make it exceedingly difficult for the nation's advisors to develop sound international strategies.

President George W. Bush feels that foreign nations are either supportive of the U.S. and its goals or totally against them. Thus, there exists no gray area as countries are classified as either allies or enemies. Yet, America must realize that the issue is more complex and multifaceted than this interpretation. In fact, intelligence advisor David Rothkopf specifically stated that it is extremely dangerous when a country defines an enemy as only someone with divergent interests. Furthermore, labeling a nation an enemy breeds hostility and resentment among that population. This could lead to long-term implications because a nation that is labeled an enemy will be reluctant to help the United States in the future.

Throughout history, it has been relatively easy to identify enemies in matters

involving Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the chapter that authorizes the use of force against nations, China supported Resolution 1441 in November 2002. This resolution concerned Iraq's weapons inspections. In this light, it clearly seems that China is an ally of the U.S. However, according to an article published in *Foreign Affairs* by Gerald Segal, China is the only country that has nuclear weapons aimed at the United States. Segal goes on to claim that China stole U.S. information about missile guidance and nuclear warheads. In addition, he shockingly reports that "Chinese military exercises simulate attacks on U.S. troops in South Korea or Japan." A nation that aims its nuclear weapons at the U.S. and has its soldiers pretend to kill Americans can never be an ally. Thus, a sound foreign policy recommendation would be to never refuse foreign aid, but to always remain skeptical of actions that oppose the U.S.

Like no other time in history, the media now exerts unprecedented influence over the world's population. Although this can occasionally aid the U.S., the increase in media influence makes it more difficult to categorize enemies and allies. America's enemies are more informed than ever before because of the prevalence of all news networks and the impact of the Internet. However, it is crucial to realize the American and foreign audiences are often educated in widely different manners. In regard to the Iraq war, American media portrays helping troops, cooperating allies, and improving societies. Yet, foreign news sources like al-Jazeera, with an audience of 25 million viewers, frequently present hostages, death, and anti-American views. Al-Jazeera's broadcast editor, Yasser Thabet repeatedly stressed that the station strives to be totally impartial. Yet, when Americans view anti-American images broadcast by al-Jazeera, they automatically assume that the entire station is anti-American and should be banned.

Yet, these different but valid views represent the media's educating impact.

While an open and honest media system will provide huge benefits for struggling populations, there are major problems with the media in the Arab world and elsewhere. In many Arab locales, the United States should develop competing news organizations or broadcast stations. Currently, many places have only one media outlet and this is subject to harsh censorship by the government. For example, an Arab journalist who tries to print something unfavorable about a government commonly faces harassment, intimidation, and legal threats. Moreover, governments often retain the power to arbitrarily close a newspaper or television channel. These actions lead to striking statistics such as the fact that the number of books published in the Arab world is less than 1.1% of the world's total publications. Furthermore, some Arab media outlets such as al-Jazeera are financed by Middle Eastern governments. Although Yasser Thabet repeatedly claimed that Qatar exerts no influence over al-Jazeera's content, this is questionable. People should be even more skeptical of this claim when they learn that the United States recently sent Colin Powell to Qatar in an effort to influence al-Jazeera's coverage. The U.S. must strive for honest, non-partisan coverage in the worldwide media. This will educate the world's population about the benefits of America's actions and about the reasons and philosophy behind American intervention.

According to David Rothkopf, the United States needs to drastically change how it views the world. Instead of magnifying the world's differences and trying to categorize friends and enemies, Rothkopf feels it is better to define the world in terms of shared interests. This small adjustment could elicit widespread favorable ramifications. Furthermore, Rothkopf feels that the U.S. should temper its passions and stop using

emotionally satisfying actions to respond to problems. Instead of lashing out against the suspected perpetrators after the 9/11 attacks, he felt that it would have been more strategic to launch a well-planned counterattack in due time. Emotionally satisfying responses may seem justified, but the U.S. military simply crushes the enemy while the underlying cause is left unattended. Thus, the U.S. needs to address the underlying causes of the world's problems such as poverty, ignorance, and frustration. Two surprising statistics learned in the Global Agenda course were that there are one million jobless individuals in emerging countries and that according to David Kay, Saudi Arabians earn one third less today than they did in 1975. These facts make frustration understandable.

One crucial way the U.S. can effectively combat the world's underlying problems is by abandoning its unilateral actions and working within international groups, such as the United Nations. French Ambassador Jean-David Levitte is correct when he stressed that a global world needs to be influenced by global organizations. In fact, some writers such as Andrew Moravcsik believe that the most thorough form of international diplomacy is to combine American military force with European civilian force. However, before such cooperation can occur, the United States must willingly accept European aid, possibly in the form of a united European Union. For this to happen, the U.S. must do as Jean-David Levitte suggests and "view the EU not as a U.S. counterweight." Even more, if America works with groups like the U.N., the international community will be more accepting of its actions. For example, Levitte believes that Iraqis were much more accepting of U.N. rather than U.S. inspections. Furthermore, an international organization would relieve the self-imposed burden of the

United States by using the funds, people, and tools from a variety of countries. Perhaps, if this was the case, rather than having only two Arab speakers out of 14,000 workers, David Kay may have had a more diverse group of weapons inspectors. Kay also related that totalitarian forms of government are formed and fueled by hate. While it is easy for a group to arouse hatred against one country, it would be much more difficult to engender this hatred against an international organization whose member countries each have unique policies and views.

Within this international organization, the U.S. can engage in a give and take with foreign countries. It is unreasonable for America to assume that other countries will give the U.S. whatever it wants with nothing in return. Thus, reciprocity is crucial for progress. In fact, this principle has been effective for the Bush administration during the past few years. When Bush displayed careful planning and international strategy for the military action against Afghanistan, Europeans decided to break with stereotypes and support the President's policy against both al Qaeda and the Taliban. In addition, in his article published in *Foreign Affairs*, Victor Cha writes that an effective way to reform North Korea would be to loosen international sanctions for a brief period. During this time, countries could increase trade with Pyongyang, develop amicable relations with the isolated country, and generally give the populace a taste of the good life. However, after a brief time, the increased relations should be removed in order to spark internal revolt. Cha believes that if the population experiences the benefits of an open society for only a brief period of time, they will crave such relations and demand changes from Kim Jong Il. This is a sound recommendation for effective international diplomacy.

According to Philip Gordon in his article entitled "Bridging the Atlantic Divide,"

since the attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States believes that it can “decide what is right and use its unprecedented power to achieve its goals.” American policy makers must understand that although this assertiveness can be beneficial to motivate an otherwise complacent international community, it is easily seen as arrogant or pretentious when it is taken to the extreme. Moreover, policy makers must realize that even the most powerful country on earth can not change another nation’s culture. When the U.S. attempts to alter a country’s culture, it is for political reasons. Yet, many nations, especially third world nations, are wrestling with more pressing problems than politics. For example, poverty, starvation, disease, and education are more important than international politics to many nations. However, if the U.S. remedies these troubles, Americans will receive a more positive image and may gain international support as well. Thus, fixing a country’s underlying problems represents a sound foreign policy decision. Another reason America can not simply impose its will on other nations is because many countries do not have favorable impressions of the United States. According to a report entitled “A Year After the Iraq War,” conducted by the Pew research center, 70% of Jordanians feel that suicide bombings against American soldiers are justified while only 24% claim they are unjustified. In addition, the current U.S. arch-nemesis, Osama Bin Laden has a 65% favorability rating in Pakistan. Conversely, at the time of the survey, George W. Bush was rated as favorable by 60% of America’s population, 14% of Germany’s population, 7% of Pakistan’s population, and 3% of Jordan’s population. With majorities of populations negatively regarding the United States and its President, the U.S. would be foolish to impose its ideas on the international community. To complete its goals, Washington should provide tangible benefits for

foreign populations and implement its ideals with tact.

An excellent example of how the U.S. improved a nation by providing tangible benefits to its population occurred in Iraq. A program sponsored by the Research Triangle Institute makes money available directly to local governments. The program has made roughly 1,000 grants that directly effect ordinary Iraqi citizens by bypassing American and Iraqi bureaucracies. Because of this program, Iraqis are starting to look to their local governments for solutions. Moreover, this program is removing many of the underlying problems that could mature into uprisings or international terrorism. In this light, the United States should commit itself to endeavors that benefit a country's ordinary citizens.

A surprising fact learned during the Global Agenda class was the extent of American hatred throughout the world. Americans believe that their country's goal of spreading Democracy is a lofty and worthwhile undertaking. Yet, citizens of the Middle East have been living in their cultures for thousands of years and are more or less comfortable with them. They think it is ludicrous for a young country such as the United States to try to change their way of life. Moreover, many historic U.S. allies are angered when the U.S. tries to impose its policies on foreign countries. The governments of some nations, such as Jordan, will not even allow their citizens to answer survey questions about democracy because they find the concept so repugnant. However, the extent of such hatred is only realized in incidents such as the attacks in Fallujah. In perhaps the most striking story of the semester, William Perry reminisced about a time he was in North Korea with supplies of medicine and soap to donate to a children's hospital. When the children were informed that they were going to have American visitors, one child

asked “are they here to kill us?” From this disheartening story, it is clear that American ideals and military presence are not welcome in many countries.

Because of this hatred, any U.S. attempts to aid Middle Eastern countries are largely ignored. For example, in his article in Foreign Affairs, Barry Rubin writes that in the last 50 years “in 11 of 12 major conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims, Muslims and secular forces, or Arabs and non-Arabs, the United States has sided with the former group.” Yet, as Zahir Jamal related, all Arabs think the U.S. favors Israel and is anti-Islam. The U.S. must be sure to separate religion from a nation or person. After all, nobody condemned Christianity after Timothy McVeigh bombed the Oklahoma City Federal Building. In this way, the one conflict in which the U.S. has not sided with Muslim or Arabic factions is magnified into greater importance than 11 other conflicts.

Due to the fact that there are no simple answers to these global problems, both consistencies and inconsistencies exist among the Global Agenda advisors’ opinions. One of the most notable inconsistencies was David Kay’s defense of President Bush. Kay felt that the President had good intentions regarding Iraq, but that things just went awry. Furthermore, he put some of the blame for the Iraq debacle on the intelligence community when he claimed that the President did not necessarily make a mistake because his intelligence reports were incorrect. Kay was the only advisor who defended Bush’s policies; everyone else felt that there were major problems in the White House. Yet, while David Kay contradicted many advisors, he agreed with many of the points made by David Rothkopf. Both Kay and Rothkopf emphasized the new breed of enemy the U.S. faces. They agree that previous enemies were more distinct, sovereign countries whereas modern enemies are only small factions within nations. Furthermore, Kay stated

that past enemies usually had political goals and therefore did not employ suicide bombing tactics. His view of an evolving enemy parallels the points made by Rothkopf.

Another inconsistency emerges surrounding some of the comments made by David Rothkopf. He feels, and has written about in a paper entitled “In Praise of Cultural Imperialism?,” that the United States has an outstanding culture, is in a position to lead the globalization of the 21st century, and can bridge the gaps between countries. In this light, he feels that many aspects of U.S. culture should be applied to the world at large. However, this sharply contrasts with the comments of Ambassador Levitte, Ambassador Keith, and Zahir Jamal who all emphasized the uniqueness and greatness of every culture. They would not agree that American culture should be spread around the world. On the other hand, several advisors recommended negotiation as the ideal way to maintain an effective presence in an increasingly global world. Robert Gallucci felt that negotiation was possibly the best of his three proposals on how to deal with North Korea. Former Secretary of State William Perry expressed his disappointment that negotiations about North Korea’s nuclear weapons program were halted when the Bush administration took office. Lastly, both Ambassador Kenton Keith and Zahir Jamal felt that it is imperative to fully understand a country and negotiate with it if there is to be hope of diplomatic progress. Thus, many advisors agree that negotiation is an effective way to deal with the international community.

This analysis only begins to cover the complexities of international politics. Clearly, it is too simple to believe that nations can be categorized as either allies or adversaries. Furthermore, in a ever-changing and increasingly sophisticated world, it is challenging to develop an effective foreign policy that pleases one’s allies. Yet, despite

these obstacles, a few generalizations can be made. The U.S. must have a flexible definition of an enemy that does not permanently pigeon-hole a country as an foe on all topics. The U.S. should make an effort to negotiate with countries instead of using force. This will improve America's international image and be less costly in terms of lost lives. The U.S. can also use diplomacy to combat the world's underlying problems, such as poverty and ignorance, and keep them from flourishing into international terrorism. In addition, the United States needs to realize that, as Michael Mandelbaum states in his article "The Inadequacy of American Power," "The United States has the resources to do virtually anything---although not to do everything." The U.S. needs to learn to pick its fights more carefully and to curtail its military operations. If this happens, perhaps the children in North Korean hospitals will not fear for their lives when they learn of American visitors. If America takes these steps, it will regain its allies, strengthen its relations with other nations, be more successful with its international policies, and be viewed in a more positive light. This will be more like the United States many Americans believe exists- a truly great, honorable, and helpful nation.