

## Archived Content

Information identified as archived on the Web is for reference, research or record-keeping purposes. It has not been altered or updated after the date of archiving. Web pages that are archived on the Web are not subject to the Government of Canada Web Standards.

As per the [Communications Policy of the Government of Canada](#), you can request alternate formats on the "[Contact Us](#)" page.

## Information archivée dans le Web

Information archivée dans le Web à des fins de consultation, de recherche ou de tenue de documents. Cette dernière n'a aucunement été modifiée ni mise à jour depuis sa date de mise en archive. Les pages archivées dans le Web ne sont pas assujetties aux normes qui s'appliquent aux sites Web du gouvernement du Canada.

Conformément à la [Politique de communication du gouvernement du Canada](#), vous pouvez demander de recevoir cette information dans tout autre format de rechange à la page « [Contactez-nous](#) ».

# The US Foreign Policy After the “9/11” Event

*Col. Jiangan Wang NSSC 6*

## **Introduction**

The international security situation has witnessed major and profound changes since the end of the Cold War, and today peace and development have become the main themes of our times. However, the world is far from being peaceful. Uncertain factors which could affect the progress of peace and development are still on the increase. Terrorism, international crime, environmental deterioration, drug trafficking and other problems have become ever more prominent. Terrorism, in particular, is posing a direct, serious threat to international and regional security. The United States (US) is the main victim of the “9/11” event. It dealt a serious shock to the Bush Administration and has had a significant impact on both the US domestic and foreign policy, especially with regards to issues affecting security. Ever since then, the US has been constantly adjusting the priorities and approaches of its foreign policy in order to meet the needs of fighting terrorism. Serious consideration of the evolution of the U.S. foreign policy after “9/11”, will also be useful in understanding future trends on the international political stage. The aim of this paper is to analyze how the US

adjusted its foreign policy in the initial periods after “9/11” and provide some observations. The paper is mainly divided into three sections: Re-evaluating the international environment with more emphasis on America’s security environment; adjusting America’s foreign policy by focusing on homeland security and opposing terrorism; and some observations about the adjustment of America’s foreign policy.

## **Re-evaluating the international environment with more emphasis on America’s security environment**

Different experts hold very divergent views of the threats and vulnerabilities facing the US. Their debates affect the degree of confidence in national goals. The US, as a country isolated by two oceans, has extremely favorable geographic conditions and possesses the most powerful military and comprehensive national strength in the world today. After the Cold War, the US has emerged as the only superpower in the world, which together with its 10 years of successive economic growth, has resulted in the US becoming carried away with its peerless strength. It is consequently nurturing an optimistic judgment of the international security environment. In the “Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review” published by the US Department of Defense in 1997 and the following annual “National Security

Strategy Report” President Clinton transmitted to Congress in October 1998, the US had been stressing that a time of strategic opportunity “was knocking”.

As the 21st century approaches, the United States faces a dynamic and uncertain security environment replete with both opportunities and challenges. On the positive side of the ledger, we are in a period of strategic opportunity. The threat of global war has receded and our core values of representative democracy and market economics are embraced in many parts of the world, creating new opportunities to promote peace, prosperity, and enhanced cooperation among nations. The sustained dynamism of the global economy is transforming commerce, culture, and global interactions. Our alliances, such as NATO, the US-Japan alliance, and the US-Republic of Korea alliance, which have been so critical to US security, are adapting successfully to meet today's challenges and provide the foundation for a remarkably stable and prosperous world. Former adversaries, like Russia and other former members of the Warsaw Pact, now cooperate with us across a range of security issues. In fact, many in the world see the United States as the security partner of choice. The security environment between now and 2015 will also likely be marked by the absence of a ‘global peer competitor’ able to challenge the United States militarily around the world as the Soviet Union did during the Cold War. Furthermore, it is likely that no regional power or coalition will amass sufficient conventional military strength in the next 10 to 15 years to defeat our armed forces, once the full military potential of the United States is mobilized and deployed to the region of conflict. The United States is the world's only superpower today, and it is expected to remain so throughout the 1997-2015 period.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The US Department of Defense, “Section II: The Global Security Environment”, Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review (1997)

The U.S. National Security Strategy Report states that “[T]he security environment in which we live is dynamic and uncertain, replete with a host of threats and challenges that have the potential to grow more deadly, but also offering unprecedented opportunities to avert those threats and advance our interests.”<sup>2</sup> So, it seemed to the US that the bright side of the situation was that it would not likely confront any global strategic rivals like the former Soviet Union; neither could a regional power or big power alliance capable of defeating the US be seen on the horizon. In the early months of the Bush Administration, this judgment on the international security situation remained unchanged.

However, the “9/11” upset America’s optimistic view. The terrorist attacks not only shocked Americans' confidence in their homeland security, but also exposed serious security shortcomings. It also precipitated an earlier US economic recession and this “incident has made the US clearly see the consequences of traditional security means and traditional obstructs hindering important cooperation in common interests.”<sup>3</sup> In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, prevention of further terror attacks on the US soil became the top priority of the Bush administration. The US government made use of all the tools available in fighting terrorism including military

---

<sup>2</sup> The White House, “Section I: Challenges and Opportunities”, A National Security Strategy for a New Century (1998)

<sup>3</sup> Adm. Dennis Blare, “Seizing Back the World from Osama bin Laden”, Office of the US Pacific Command, October 23, 2001

power, better homeland defense, law enforcement, intelligence and vigorous efforts to cut off terrorist financing. President Bush said “[T]he gravest danger our nation faces lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology.”<sup>4</sup> Under the pressure of confronting more threats of various terrorist attacks, the US was forced to re-evaluate the international security situation and to change dramatically the thinking guiding its security strategy. From that period since, America’s judgment of its security environment and threats it is facing tends to be grimmer. Multiple threats to America’s security, and threats to its homeland in particular were emphasized. The “Quadrennial Defense Review Report” published on Sep. 30, 2001 revealed that the US admitted that “the geographic position of the United States no longer guarantees immunity from direct attack on its population, territory, and infrastructure.”<sup>5</sup> It also pointed out “economic globalization and the attendant increase in travel and trade across US borders has created new vulnerabilities for hostile states and actors to exploit by perpetrating attacks on the US homeland.”<sup>6</sup> It further stated that threats confronting the US were getting more and more complex and unpredictable.

The attack on the United States and the war that has been visited upon us highlights a fundamental condition of our circumstances: we cannot and will not know precisely where and when America's interests will be threatened,

---

<sup>4</sup> The White House, “Introduction”, The National Security Strategy (2002)

<sup>5</sup> The US Department of Defense, “Section I: America’s Security in the 21<sup>ST</sup> Century”, Quadrennial Defense Review Report (2001)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

when America will come under attack, or when Americans might die as the result of aggression. We can be clear about trends, but uncertain about events. We can identify threats, but cannot know when or where America or its friends will be attacked.”<sup>7</sup>

These changes in America’s judgment of the international security situation have led to a major adjustment of the American foreign policy.

### **Adjusting US foreign policy by focusing on homeland security and opposing terrorism**

The reaction of the Bush Administration to the “9/11” event was swift and decisive, helping to raise the profile of President Bush and his administration. First, Bush was quick to define the war on terrorism and therefore unify the political will of the people. Second, Bush took immediate action, at home arranging rescue operations and detailing a list of the nineteen hijackers. Security measures in airports and other public places were strengthened with the aid of increased budgets. Financial assistance was also extended to those organizations most effected by the tragedy. Abroad, Bush was quick to target al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden, and extend blame to the Afghan Taliban government for harboring terrorists in spite of any real proof at the time. Third, taking advantage of the

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

international sympathies, a global anti-terrorism coalition was established. Bush then set-up a homeland security office, now called the Department of Homeland Security, and founded the US Northern Command and launched the war against al-Qaida and the Taliban government. This redirection of responsibility helped Bush divert political pressure away from his administration. As far as foreign relations are concerned, the US adjusted its foreign policy by focusing on homeland security and opposing terrorism.

**1. Setting new criteria for defining friends and enemies and making anti-terrorism the central task of America's current foreign policy.**

In the early days, the Bush Administration worked hard to promote the strategic goal of “a unipolar world” dominated by the US. As Dr. Joseph S. Nye said:

George W. Bush entered office committed to a realist foreign policy that would focus on great powers such as China and Russia and eschew nation building in failed states of the less developed world. China was to be a strategic competitor not the strategic partner of Bill Clinton's era, and the United States was to take a tougher stance with Russia.<sup>8</sup>

The criteria for distinguishing friends from enemies then became whether or not nations accepted the American “leading position” or America's values. As a result, tough policies of containment were pursued against “potential competitive rivals” like China, Russia etc. and the “rogue states” such as Iraq, Iran, Syria and North Korea etc.

---

<sup>8</sup> Joseph S. Nye, Jr. “US Power and Strategy After Iraq”, *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2003)



Shortly after “9/11”, the US decided to make anti-terrorism the priority of its foreign policy. In his remarks to the press on 14 September 2001, Secretary of State Colin Powell stated that whether or not to cooperate with the US in fighting terrorism would be taken as the new criteria to draw the line between friends and enemies. Those countries that would not respond to this American appeal would suffer all the consequences ranging from military retaliation, economic sanction, diplomatic isolation, and losing American foreign aid.<sup>9</sup> While addressing a joint session of congress and the American people on 20 September 2001, President Bush declared “Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.”<sup>10</sup> From then on, “either you are with us or against us” has been taken by the US as the new criteria to draw the line between friends and enemies. The US has also stressed repeatedly that anti-terrorism is a long task. All the countries must support the US in fighting a protracted war against terrorism. Meanwhile, anti-terrorism has permeated through all facets of the American diplomacy. Thus, the US will seek from every country support politically, economically, militarily, as well as in

---

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2001/4921.htm>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>

public opinion and intelligence, so as to enlist these countries cooperation with the US in waging a total war against terrorism.

**2. Unilateralism has been refrained somewhat in handling relations with major powers and efforts seeking for big power coordination and cooperation has been stressed more.**

Influenced by the traditional conservatism and realism advocated by the Republican Party, the Bush Administration has dedicated itself to establishing a “unipolar world” and stressed that “American interests are above anything”. The U.S. suspended dialogue with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), withdrew from the ABM Treaty so as to deploy the missile defense system, and refused to approve the “Kyoto Protocol”, the “Biological Weapons Convention” (WPC), and the “Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty” (CTBT), regardless of the opposition of most major powers like Russia, China and many European countries.

After “9/11”, the Bush Administration, recognizing the practical need of the anti-terrorism campaign, has “drawn in its horns” in practicing unilateralism to some extent. Instead, it has been trying hard to create enhanced anti-terrorism efforts with pooled activities through coordination and cooperation among major powers. In the introduction of “The National Security Strategy” published by the White House in Sep, 2002, President Bush said:

We are also guided by the conviction that no nation can build a safer, better world alone. Alliances and multilateral institutions can multiply the strength of freedom-loving nations. The United States is committed to lasting institutions like the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the Organization of American States, and NATO as well as other long-standing alliances. Coalitions of the willing can augment these permanent institutions. In all cases, international obligations are to be taken seriously. They are not to be undertaken symbolically to rally support for an ideal without furthering its attainment.”<sup>11</sup>

In regard to US-European relations, the Europeans were likeminded in their views and would take concerted actions at critical moments, but there existed some serious contradictions on the issues of European defense, missile defense, Kyoto Protocol, trade and foreign policy etc. After “9/11”, the US put aside its differences with its European allies and enhanced coordination with them. The American intention for doing this was to reach a new common ground between the US and Europe through cooperation in opposing terrorism. On the day following “9/11”, President Bush stressed that it was extremely important that the US had the support of its allies. Bush and Secretary Powell also called the heads of states of American allies and foreign ministers of these countries, seeking their support. Heads of state and foreign ministers of America’s major allies, such as Britain, France, Germany, and Italy were invited to the U.S. to conduct urgent consultations on the issue of fighting terrorism. This was in sharp contrast with America’s

---

<sup>11</sup> The White House, “Introduction”, The National Security Strategy (2002)

previous tough practice, in the initial months after Bush taking office, of being prone to doing things alone without bothering to consult its allies. In his article, Mr. Robert Kagan said:

It is time to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the world, or even that they occupy the same world. On the all-important question of power—the efficacy of power, the morality of power, the desirability of power—American and European perspectives are diverging. Europe is turning away from power, or to put it a little differently, it is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation. It is entering a post-historical paradise of peace and relative prosperity, the realization of Kant’s “Perpetual Peace.” The United States, meanwhile, remains mired in history, exercising power in the anarchic Hobbesian world where international laws and rules are unreliable and where true security and the defense and promotion of a liberal order still depend on the possession and use of military might.<sup>12</sup>

On the European side, the allies immediately extended their firm support to the US government in fighting terrorism. On 12 September 2001, NATO decided that, if it was determined that the attack against the United States was directed from abroad, it would be regarded an action covered by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. This was the first time in the Alliance's history that Article 5 was invoked. The implications of the “9/11” terrorist attacks perpetrated against New York and Washington was at the center of discussions of NATO Defense Ministers on 26 September 2001. The US was represented by Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz, who

---

<sup>12</sup> Robert Kagan. “Power and Weakness”, Policy Review (Washington June/July 2002)

briefed his counterparts on the wide-ranging, long-term approach the US would adopt to combat terrorism. The Defense Ministers sent a strong message of solidarity to their American ally and reiterated their commitment to the principle of Article 5. They signaled that they were prepared for a long campaign against terrorism and discussed the practical measures being put into effect, including possible collective and individual support for the US. It clearly showed to the US that NATO was cooperating actively with the American military actions against terrorism. NATO countries like Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Turkey etc. soon sent or braced for sending troops to join the military actions against the Taliban. It was commented by some media that this was the best period of US-Europe relations since the end of the Cold War.

In regards to US-Russia relations, the US changed its hard-line policy against Russia as practiced in the early days of the Bush Administration. Instead, the US took the initiative of befriending Russia so as to win over Russia in opposing terrorism. For this purpose, the American approach toward Chechnya underwent subtle changes like voicing support to Russia on President Putin's proposal of carrying out dialogue with Chechnya and demanding, for the first time ever, that Chechnya "must cut off contacts with international terrorist organizations unconditionally." The US also slowed down deployment of the national defense missile system and enhanced its

strategic consultation with Russia. The “Quadrennial Defense Review Report” published on Sep. 30 2001 states:

An opportunity for cooperation exists with Russia. It does not pose a large-scale conventional military threat to NATO. It shares some important security concerns with the United States, including the problem of vulnerability to attack by ballistic missiles from regional aggressors, the danger of accidental or unauthorized launches of strategic weapons, and the threat of international terrorism.<sup>13</sup>

During the summit meeting between the heads of the US and Russia which took place at Crawford, Texas in November 2001, Bush said that the US and Russia were enemies for a long period of time. Now Russia was a friend and they were working together to establish a new spirit of cooperation and trust, so that they could work together to make the world more peaceful. Bush also made certain promises to Putin on such issues as slashing strategic nuclear weapons, Russia’s accession to WTO, reducing or writing off Russian debts, economic aid to Russia etc.,<sup>14</sup> thus picking up momentum in improving US-Russia relations. On the Russian side, Putin responded positively and immediately after the event. Russia offered diplomatic support to the US and shared military information with the latter. It also declared its territorial air to be open to the US planes transporting “humanitarian materials” to Afghanistan, opened its three military bases in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and

---

<sup>13</sup> The US Department of Defense, “Section I: America’s Security in the 21<sup>ST</sup> Century”, Quadrennial Defense Review Report (2001)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/11/20011115-4.html>

Tajikistan and supplied weapons and ammunition to Afghan anti-Taliban forces. It also gave tacit consent to the US setting up forward bases in Central Asian countries for its military operation in Afghanistan. President Putin stressed support of the US anti-terrorism at the APEC Shanghai meeting in October 2001.<sup>15</sup> But Russia was very vigilant against the US entering its traditional interest zone in the name of anti-terrorism. It also worried that the US might intensify pursuit of the US-led world order under the guise of anti-terrorism and laid stress on the role of the United Nations. It consequently refused to join the military operation and advocated action with caution.

In regards to Sino-US relations, China and the US have a broad base for cooperation in strategy, diplomacy, economy, trade, culture, education, science, technology and people. They also have many common objectives and interests on global issues such as non-proliferation, anti-terrorism, and fighting smuggling, drugs trafficking and organized crimes. Furthermore, they can cooperate in maintaining Asia-Pacific peace and stability, especially on the issue of Korean Peninsula. But when President Bush was sworn in at the beginning of 2001, the Bush Administration termed China an American “strategic competitor” and China was treated as such with tough policies attempting to contain the rise of China. The incident of “aircraft

---

<sup>15</sup> US Consulate General in Shanghai, News release, “President Bush Seeking Establishment of A New Partnership with Russia”, October 23, 2001

collision” that occurred in April 2001 sent Sino-US relations down to the all-time low. Due to its practical needs after “9/11”, however the US started to attach importance to Sino-US relations. After three summit meetings in a little more than a year, the US has basically shaped its policy toward China, to wit: seeking for a stable relationship through dialogue and cooperation.

First, the US has changed its approach toward China, resulting in stressing the importance of stabilizing and improving Sino-US relations. In the wake of “9/11”, the US reviewed and reappraised China’s status as a major power and the importance of Sino-US relations, resulting in its giving up the original wording of deeming China “a strategic competitor”. During his visit in China in February 2002, President Bush emphasized on numerous occasions that both the US and China were big powers, and that strengthening the cooperation between the two countries was of great importance in maintaining the world peace. He said that China was a great country with tremendous potential, and it was in line with the American interests to maintain constant dialogue with China. The US “National Security Strategy” of 2002 consequently adopts a more positive approach toward China, stating “the United States welcomes the emergence of a strong, peaceful, and prosperous China”. The report further states “the United States relationship with China is an important part of our strategy to



promote a stable, peaceful, and prosperous Asia-Pacific region.”<sup>16</sup> Having gone through such a positive change in the American approach toward China, the US has already made the development of a “constructive and cooperative relationship” between the US and China one of the top priorities on the American diplomatic agenda.

Second, the US has gradually adopted the approach of mutual respect and non-confrontation in dealing with the differences between two countries. The poor relations between China and the US in the early days of the Bush Administration was the inevitable result of the approach of confrontation adopted by the US toward China on a variety of issues. However, the approach and practice adopted by the US in dealing with disputes between the two countries has changed quite dramatically after “9/11”. President Bush stated in February 2002 while meeting with the Chinese President Jiang Zemin in Beijing “The United States shares interests with China, but we also have some disagreements. We believe that we can discuss our differences with mutual understanding and respect.” In his testimony about China before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations on April 24, 2002, Secretary Powell stressed that “[W]e do not want the interests where we differ to constrain us from pursuing those where we share common goals. And that is the basis upon which our relations are

---

<sup>16</sup> The White House, “Section VIII: Develop Agendas for Cooperative Action with the Other Main Centers of Global Power”, The National Security Strategy (2002)

going rather smoothly at present”.<sup>17</sup> In comparison with previous years, in 2002, the US reduced its attacks on China’s record on human rights issues. The US government and even the American media were speaking more positively about China’s domestic situation.

Third, the US has become more cautious in handling the Taiwan issue. The Bush Administration stepped up its effort of supporting Taiwan in its first year in office, which resulted in the forces advocating for “Taiwan independence” headed by Chen Shuibian being greatly inspired. Consequently, the Taiwan authority was heading further and further down on the road of “incremental independence”, culminating with the open claim of “One country each side” and “holding a referendum in deciding the status of Taiwan”. This attempt of deteriorating the relations across the Taiwan Strait and dragging the US into the mire has aroused the vigilance of the Bush Administration. As a result, the US has fine-tuned its policy in handling the Taiwan issue since mid-2002. Mr. Wolfowitz, Undersecretary of Defense, stated twice, in May and in June 2002, that the US would not support “Taiwan independence” and was not in favor of any attempt of separating Taiwan from China. In the press conference following the “ranch meeting” between President Bush and President Jiang, President Bush stated openly for the first time that the U.S. would not support “Taiwan

---

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2002/9713.htm>

independence.” President Bush also resolutely vetoed a bill by a handful of pro-Taiwan, anti-China elements in the US Congress, frustrating their efforts in trying to energetically push through a motion of allowing Chen Shuibian to visit the US. This illustrates that the Bush Administration has gained a deeper understanding of the seriousness of “Taiwan independence”. It does not wish to exacerbate the Sino-US relations and adversely impact the overall agenda of anti-terrorism due to troubles arising from the Taiwan issue.

Sino-US relations after the Bush Administration came to power have risen and fallen time and again, fully reflecting the reversionary nature and complicity of the bilateral relations. But the reason Sino-US relations can develop through twists and turns is that the two countries have considerably common interests on global, regional and bilateral issues, which surpass their differences and contradictions.

### **3. Re-stressing the role of the UN and seeking for the means multi-lateral organizations like the UN to the service of opposing terrorism.**

In its early days, the Bush Administration tried to brush aside multi-lateral security mechanisms such as the UN in order to have its own way on some vital international issues. This led to its failure in May 2001 both in the UN Human Rights Committee election and the International Drug Control Agency election. America’s long delay of paying its UN membership fees

and its unusual slowness in appointing a new Ambassador to the UN further strained its relations with the UN. After the “9/11”, the Security Council and the UN General Assembly adopted resolutions 1368 and 1373 respectively, strongly condemning terrorist attacks and calling on the international community to take all necessary steps to fight terrorism. In view of these steps, the US considered the UN a usable agent in fighting terrorism, thus changing its approach from being cool to the UN to being friendly again. After eight months of delay in appointing a representative to the UN, the US Congress quickly approved the appointment of the US representative to the UN on 14 September 2001. It also decided to pay \$0.6 billion of membership fees to the UN, which it had refused to pay for years. During his nomination hearing in the US Congress, Mr. Negroponte, the newly appointed US Ambassador to the UN, pointed out that the UN was extremely important to the US in promoting American national interests. Therefore, the US should try to deal with terrorist threats facing it through concerted efforts with the UN. For the purpose of winning over the UN support to the American military strikes against terrorism, Mr. Negroponte stressed in his letter on 7 October 2001 to the President of the Security Council that “In accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, I wish, on behalf of my Government, to report that the United States of America, together with other States, has initiated actions in the

exercise of its inherent right of individual and collective self-defense following the armed attacks that were carried out against the United States on 11 September 2001”.<sup>18</sup> He stated that his primary task was to “cooperate closely with the UN and its member states to set up an international anti-terrorist coalition,” and that in fighting against terrorism, “international cooperation is the principal means.”<sup>19</sup> Secretary Powell subsequently praised the UN for having made valuable contributions to the global movement of anti-terrorism. He indicated that the US attached importance to the role of the UN even on the issue of political arrangements and for the reconstruction of Afghanistan after the war. Mr. Hass, the Special envoy of the US State Department for the Afghan issue, openly stated that he talked to the UN Secretary General Annan almost every day. The US also decided to review its position on the issues of the “Biological Weapon Protocol” and the “Greenhouse Effect” associated with global warming.

#### **4. Trying hard to achieve geo-strategic superiority in South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East.**

Achieving geo-strategic superiority in South Asia and Central Asia has been a long cherished goal of the US. After “9/11”, by exploiting the opportunity of anti-terrorism, the US has modified, at least for the time

---

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.un.int/usa/s-2001-946.htm>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

being, its policy of “India first, Pakistan second,” in trying to maintain a balance between its relations with Pakistan and with India. The US lifted its sanctions against Pakistan imposed on the latter since Pakistan’s nuclear test in 1998, and promised to provide Pakistan with \$ 1 billion in urgent aid and more economic aid. It also promised to reduce or write off its debt owed to the US and claimed that it would take Pakistani interests into full consideration on the issue of political arrangements in Afghanistan after the war. All this very quickly resulted in improved US-Pakistan relations. America’s strategic position and political clout in the region have also been enhanced through maintaining a relatively balanced relationship with India and Pakistan respectively.

Central Asia used to be part of the Russian sphere of influence, in view of the great importance attached to its geographic position and rich natural resources. However, the US has now been attaching great importance to this region after the Cold War. Anti-terrorism and military operations in Afghanistan helped the US government make Central Asian geopolitics an important issue. The US also carried out an all-round diplomatic offensive in Central Asia under the pretext of requirements of the anti-terrorist war. By applying the tactics of both temptation and pressure, the US won over the support of several Central Asian countries like Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan for its war on terrorism. Through

providing military bases for the US and accepting US Special Forces, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan also became “front countries” for US military actions in Afghanistan. As a result, America’s long cherished aim of military presence in Central Asia has tentatively come true.

On the issue of the Middle-East peace process, the US has displayed more strategic interest and concern to the Middle East, changing its approach of being stubbornly biased towards Israel. Consequentially, more pressure was exerted on Israel whose government was pressured into resuming contact with the Palestinian Authorities. The Bush Administration also openly declared for the first time that it was in favor of the establishment of a Palestine State. It claimed that the American peace plan for the Middle East would include a tentative plan for the establishment of a Palestinian State, provided the Israeli right of existence was respected. This is the first time for the American Republican party to officially state such a stand. President Bush even openly criticized Mr. Sharon for his remark that the US was cuddling up to Arab countries at the expense of Israel, and demanded an open apology from Mr. Sharon. Furthermore, the US also made serious efforts in winning over major regional powers such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia. For the purpose of establishing the broadest possible international coalition against terrorism, the US even went so far as to adopt a flexible policy toward the “rogue states”. Indeed, it pressed these countries

to declare their support for the anti-terrorism actions and then the US extended a little “olive branch” to some of them such as Iran, Syria, Sudan, indicating that the US was willing to improve its relations with them.

## **Some observations on the adjustment of America’s foreign policy**

At present, not every impact of “9/11” on American foreign policy has shown itself. The American military action against terrorism is still underway and adjustments of American foreign policy are still on going. Are these adjustments of American foreign policy just measures of expediency adopted to meet the present requirements of the U.S. in fighting terrorism or are they part of a long-term strategic plan? It is most likely that they are short-term actions and by no means the result of America profoundly rethinking its foreign policy. The Following arguments are some principal grounds supporting this view:

### **1. America’s desire for hegemonism and unilateralism has not been fundamentally changed.**

It is very clear after “9/11” that the US has regarded territorial defense as top priority task for the future. But the US would not give up its leading role in the world politically, diplomatically and economically. The US “Quadrennial Defense Review” report published in Sept. 2001 states:



America's security role in the world is unique. It provides the basis for a network of alliances and friendships. It provides a general sense of stability and confidence, which is crucial to the economic prosperity that benefits much of the world. And it warns those who would threaten the Nation's welfare or the welfare of U.S. allies and friends that their efforts at coercion or aggression will not succeed. Even now as the Nation mourns the victims of terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center, America's purposes remain clear and its commitment resolute.<sup>20</sup>

The US stresses the need to “maintain peace”, but in a speech delivered at West Point on June 1, 2001, President Bush first formally put forward strategy of pre-emption. This was reconfirmed in the US national security strategy. It holds that “traditional concepts of deterrence will not work against a terrorist enemy whose avowed tactics are wanton destruction and the targeting of innocents.”<sup>21</sup> Therefore, it is quite natural for one to come to the conclusion that the essence of American foreign policy has not been changed fundamentally. The US scholars, as well as policy makers, have issued a series of new terms such as “new imperialism” to account for these new circumstances. According to these people, the US has already become an empire akin to that of a modern Roman Empire. As such, and in contrast to other empires of the past, the US should shoulder these added responsibilities by taking a more benevolent role in international affairs.

---

<sup>20</sup> The US Department of Defense, “Section I: America’s Security in the 21<sup>ST</sup> Century”, Quadrennial Defense Review Report (2001)

<sup>21</sup> The White House, “Section V: Prevent Our Enemies from Threatening US, Our Allies, and Our Friends with Weapons of Mass Destruction,” The National Security Strategy (2002)

This new imperialism, to some extent, re-confirms America's position in the world.

In fact, the US has apparently increased its efforts, in the wake of the "9/11" event, in attempting to direct world affairs from Washington under the flag of anti-terrorism. The US has stressed that anti-terrorism is a "total war". In order to meet the needs of fighting terrorism in an all round way, the US took the step of reevaluating issues such as world politics, economy, finance, trade, culture, nationality and religion and has also tightened control over the circulation of currency worldwide. All these efforts support the aim of forging a method of closing in on terrorist organizations throughout the globe and reinforcing American intervention in and domination of world affairs. On the one hand, American action against terrorism is conducive to curbing the momentum of international terrorism. On the other hand, it has also offered a new opportunity for the US to promote its plan of pushing for a unipolar world. Dr. Nye said "[T]he world has changed in ways that make it impossible for the most dominant power since Rome to go it alone. The US policy makers must realize that power today lies not only in the might of one's sword but in the appeal of one's ideas."<sup>22</sup> Mr. Michael Hirsh said "to fight terrorism and protect US interests and ideals, the only practical solution

---

<sup>22</sup> Joseph S. Nye, Jr. "US Power and Strategy After Iraq", *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2003)

is to bolster the international community that the United States helped

create.<sup>23</sup> Norm win particulld the fonternatioons fom (ig seriom (radint actiies have )Tj0.0011 Tc

**2. The US has not recognized or is reluctant to recognize the real source fomenting contemporary terrorism.**

Ever since mankind entered into a class society, terrorist activities have found their ways on to the political arena. When the Cold War ended, terrorism didn't die down with it, instead it has stepped up violent actions posing serious challenges to the international community. What's more, it is still escalating. The fundamental reason for the pernicious increase of contemporary terrorism resides in the reality that the issue of peace and develop13.9rfailteppeopleWhatexperelthe on fl cotismulth its in the

yet, terrorists' bitterness against and challenge to the American life style, values and social system, avoiding consideration of other source that breed terrorism. For instance, the US has, as yet, refused to recognize that one of the important reasons for it to be subjected to terrorist attacks resides in its hanging on endlessly to hegemonist policy all over the world and, inter alia, its double standard practice in the Middle East. Shortly after "9/11", the US did address somewhat its practice of being blindly partial in favor of Israel, adopted a relatively balanced policy toward both Israel and Palestine.

However, with the escalation of the violent conflicts between Israel and Palestine, the US has returned to its position of being blindly biased in favor of Israel, giving free hand to Israel in launching military attacks against Palestinian territory. As a result, the prospect of peace between Israel and Palestine has become grim.

Another example, in recent years "East-Turkistan" terrorist forces are posing a real threat to the national security of China. However, for a long time, the US had been clinging to a double standard toward Chinese actions of increasing its efforts in combating "East-Turkistan" terrorist forces in China. Even after the US captured some "East-Turkistan" terrorists in Afghanistan, the US claimed that there should be a distinction between international terrorists and the rational ethnic dissidents fighting for their rights. Until August 2002, the US Department of State declared to put "East-

Turkistan” into the list of terrorist groups after China’s untiring efforts. Therefore, so long as the US fails to recognize the true source of terrorism and refuses to rethink about its unipolar policies, it will be impossible to uproot international terrorism and the soil for breeding and spreading terrorism. American territory and the security of its people will consequently not be able to be effectively defended.

Given the magnitude of its impact, the resultant damage, and the scale of affected areas, terrorism is no longer an unconventional threat in an ordinary sense. It has become an international scourge. Since the fight against terrorism is difficult and complicated and it calls for extensive international cooperation, it has become a focal point of the international situation at the beginning of the new century. China is one of the victims of terrorism. The Chinese government actively supports and participates in the international counter-terrorism cooperation. The essential elements of China’s counter-terrorism policy are as follows: “We condemn and oppose all forms of terrorism. We must address both the symptoms and causes of terrorism. We must take an integrated approach to combat terrorism. We must give full play to the leading role of the UN in coordinating the international counter-terrorism campaigns.”<sup>24</sup>

### **3. The American policy with respect to containing China still exists.**

---

<sup>24</sup> Gen. Xiong Guangkai. “International Strategy and Revolution in Military Affairs” (Tsinghua University Press, 2003), p. 147

Today, we are faced with a common challenge of terrorism and the fight against terrorism has just begun. After “9/11”, the US has, proceeding from the immediate needs of the anti-terrorism campaign, positively adjusted its policy toward China. Given its own strategic requirements and economic interests, the US will, in the future, maintain the overall strategic framework of engagement plus containment toward China. The structure of both struggles and cooperation will be kept for Sino-US relations. On the one hand, for quite a long time, the US will continue to take anti-terrorism as its priority. This will require the American government to keep stressing the vital role of China in the anti-terrorist coalition and will put the job of stabilizing Sino-US relations at the top of the list in order to serve the overall interest of anti-terrorism. Also, from the domestic point of view, the US cannot neglect the role of the Chinese market in the recovery of the American economy since the Chinese economy has enjoyed rapid growth in recent years and the degree of mutual dependency between the Chinese economy and the American economy is constantly growing. In a word, the US policy toward China in the coming years will remain positive and the policy of maintaining and developing a “constructive and cooperative relationship” with China will most likely not be derailed. On the other hand, the change of American policy toward China has limits, to wit, it is still confined to the framework of both engaging and keeping guard against

China, both cooperation and containment, which has been the American policy toward China for a long time. The various anti-China forces inside the US are still very active. The intrinsic contradictions still exist in Sino-US relations. New disputes are also emerging in the process of more extensive and close contacts. The US “Report

of security have increased. Third, although the US government has stressed that the differences between the two political systems of the two countries do not dominate the current bilateral relations and will not likely hinder the cooperation of the two countries in various sectors, it is certainly a factor that can not be ignored as a source of tension in the future. Fourth, increasing trade relations will likely result in new friction in the future as well.

In taking general view of the diplomatic relations between China and the US since its establishment in 1979, it is clear that contradictions and difficulties have been continuous. History has repeatedly told us that we must not and should not lose confidence when meeting difficulties in Sino-US relations, because there is an inherent motive force in them. When momentum towards improvement of Sino-US relations appears, opposite forces tend to jump out and intervene. So, we should still observe the situation coolly, act calmly and grasp Sino-US relations in an all-round way. Presently, under the general situation of significant improvement of Sino-US relations, the aforementioned problems will most unlikely be allowed to grow into big troubles between the two countries. The two governments will certainly handle these with propriety and see to it that they will not affect the overall situation.



## **Conclusion**

After the Second World War, the U.S. has been “the leading state” for more than 50 years in the world. Since the end of the Cold War, the status of power of the US as a hegemonic state has gradually met the pressures of the trends of multi-polarization and democratization of international relations. “9/11” dealt a heavy blow to the US conceited mentality. But the reaction of the Bush Administration to “9/11” was swift and decisive, helping to raise the profile of President Bush and his administration.

Meanwhile, adjustments in US foreign policy have not affected the basis and the essence of the American policy. Its original efforts to improve diplomatic relations around the world have since been overshadowed by a return to more traditional policies that will likely undermine, not improve, the overall security situation for the US in future. It is a truth that American supremacy—military, economic, and social—is overwhelming and cannot be denied. But the US will meet more and more restrictions from the continuing trend of world multi-polarization and democratization of international relations. The American power is still inadequate to achieve world peace and prosperity. Its unipolar foreign policy will also undoubtedly undermine international support for the US-led campaign on anti-terrorism.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

The US Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report (1997)

The White House, A National Security Strategy for a New Century (1998)

Adm. Dennis Blare, “Seizing Back the World from Osama bin Laden”, Office of the US Pacific Command, October 23, 2001

The White House, The National Security Strategy (2002)

The US Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report (2001)

Joseph S. Nye, Jr. “US Power and Strategy After Iraq”, Foreign Affairs (July/August 2003)

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2001/>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/>

Robert Kagan. “Power and Weakness”, Policy Review (Washington June/July 2002)

US Consulate General in Shanghai, News release, “President Bush Seeking Establishment of A New Partnership with Russia”, October 23, 2001

<http://www.un.int/usa/s-2001-946.htm>

Michael Hirsh. “Bush and the World”, Foreign Affairs (September/October 2002)

Gen. Xiong Guangkai. “International Strategy and Revolution in Military Affairs” (Tsinghua University Press, 2003)