

“PATHS AND PRIORITIES IN THE WAR ON TERROR”*

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THE WAR ON TERROR

Saying American foreign policy needs a change in tone and attitude, or an opening up and a reaching out, is as obvious as saying O. J. Simpson might be having a bad month. This Administration's bunker mentality has been counter-productive both at home and abroad. They have done as poor a job of communicating and consulting with other countries as they have with the American people.

A more successful foreign policy begins at home with better communication to the American people about Islamic terror. Six years after 9/11, it is still difficult for us, with our religious tolerance, our separation of church and state, to grasp how these people think. After we attend different churches on Sunday, or no church, Americans share meals or movies -- we don't slaughter each other. We have thrived on our diversity -- religious, ethnic, racial -- to become the world's only superpower. We don't merely tolerate diversity, we embrace and celebrate it. To Islamic extremists, the concept of a melting pot is as alien as the concept of a theocracy is to us. It takes an enormous leap of

imagination to understand what these people are about, that they really do want to kill every last one of us and destroy civilization as we know it.

The Administration has never done an adequate job explaining the theology and ideology behind Islamic terror, never done an adequate job of convincing us of their ruthless fanaticism. The first rule of war is “Know your enemy,” and most Americans don’t. To grasp the magnitude of the threat, we first have to understand what makes Islamic terrorists – and their suicide bombs – tick, and the Administration has not explained it well. Very few Americans are familiar with the writings of Sayyid Qutb [SIGH-yid KUH-tahb], the Egyptian radical executed in 1966, and the Muslim Brotherhood, whose call to active jihad, influenced bin Laden and the rise of Al Qaeda. Qutb is to bin Laden as Karl Marx is to Lenin. Qutb raged against the decadence and sin he saw around him and sought to restore what he considered the “pure” Islam of the seventh century. Besides opposing non-Muslims, besides opposing Shiites, he was a Sunni who opposed Sunni governments because he believed they required their citizens to worship them like “gods,” and so were guilty of a polytheism forbidden by Islam. To him, the only answer was a return to a theocratic caliphate without national borders, and he saw nothing decadent or sinful in murder to achieve that end. Americans, who go to extreme lengths to save lives, can’t comprehend human beings who delight in taking lives, it just doesn’t compute. In our culture, the death of a child is about the worst trial a person can endure, while parents of suicide bombers feel joy, not grief. We believe that every individual has intrinsic worth and value. This culture of life is a cornerstone of our society, illuminated by the conflict with the Islamic jihadists and their culture of death.

It is also difficult for us, with our culture of assimilation, to understand that life for European Muslims is different from life for American Muslims. Muslims in Britain or the Netherlands or Germany are second-class citizens because those countries have more homogenous populations that don't readily integrate outsiders. Instead of melting pots, Europe has separate pots boiling over with alienation and despair. In some countries, like France, it is more a lack of economic integration, while in others, like Britain, it is more a lack of cultural integration, but whatever the reason, Europe is a much more fertile breeding ground for terror than the United States. Unintentionally, some of our closest allies are producing some of our clearest threats. Because of our special relationship with Britain and all our similarities with them, most Americans don't realize that it is very different to be a Muslim citizen of Britain than a Muslim citizen of the United States, so we have trouble accepting that doctors in Britain become terrorists. We have to understand that while educated Muslims in Europe may not be materially deprived, many of them feel socially and emotionally deprived by a lack of acceptance. Earlier this month we saw the arrest of German citizens plotting a terror attack against American targets there. Also this month we saw Danish citizens arrested for plotting an imminent bombing. Both plots had links to Al Qaeda.

Besides the threat of small groups of educated people launching isolated attacks, we face the danger of mass movements of the dispossessed and discontented rising up in the Islamic world and overthrowing their governments, movements like those that led to the current government in Iran when the Shah was overthrown and to the Palestinians' election of Hamas and then their takeover of Gaza. To create havoc in the world, you need educated people to provide the intellectual underpinnings and poor, desperate

people to provide the manpower. Before the Russian Revolution, the rural peasants who formed the overwhelming bulk of the population weren't sitting around reading Karl Marx, they were illiterate. It took a small number of intellectuals to provide the theory and then rally oppressed peasants behind them. The ruling class is the spark, but the underclass is the fuel. A strong middle class is the firewall.

Our biggest challenge in the Arab and Muslim worlds is the lack of a viable moderate alternative. On the one hand, we have existing repressive governments that stay in power by force and suppression of basic human rights -- many of which we support, either with our oil money, like the Saudis, or with our foreign aid, like the Egyptians, who are our second largest recipient. On the other hand, we have radical Islamists, who are willing to fight dictators with terror tactics that moderates are too humane to use. This is how Iran went from the brutal Shah to the brutal Ayatollahs, despite all the Iranians who wanted a moderate government then and who want one now.

We can't "export" democracy as if it were Coca Cola or KFC, but we can nurture native moderate forces in all these countries where Al Qaeda seeks to replace modern evil with medieval evil. This moderation may not look like or function exactly like our system, it may be more of a benevolent oligarchy, it may be more tribal than individualistic, but both for us and for the people of those countries, it will be better than either the dictatorships they have now or the theocracy they would have under the radical Islamists.

We see this potential in the way Sunni tribal leaders in Iraq, who had been working with Al Qaeda, have now turned against them and are working with us. They couldn't stand living under Al Qaeda's fundamentalism and brutality. The people of

Afghanistan turned against the Taliban for the same reason. To know these extremists is not to love them.

My goal in the Muslim world is to correctly calibrate a course between maintaining stability and promoting democracy. It is self-defeating to try to accomplish too much too soon, you just have elections where extremists win, but it's equally self-defeating to do nothing. First, we have to destroy the terrorists who already exist, then we have to attack the underlying conditions that breed terror, by helping to improve health and basic quality of life, create schools that offer an alternative to the extremist *madrassas* that turn impressionable children into killers, create jobs and opportunity and hope, encourage a free press, fair courts, and other institutions that promote democracy. We have to help other governments mount an active counter-insurgency wherever the terrorists are to be found, but we also have to help them improve their infrastructure to make future terrorists unwelcome. Our strategic interests as the world's most powerful country coincide with our moral obligations as the world's richest country. If we don't do the right thing to make life better in the Islamic world, the terrorists will step in and do the wrong thing.

We have to support moderates with no favoring of Sunnis or Shiites. As for the underlying dispute between them that's been going on for almost fourteen hundred years, we don't have a dog in that fight. Our enemy is Islamic extremism in all its guises. The Saudis want us to support extremist Sunni groups to counter growing Iranian power. The Saudis assure us that they can control these groups and keep them from turning against us. We saw how well that turned out with Al Qaeda.

We all have much to lose if the Middle East becomes chaos. We have made the Saudis rich – the wealth of their oil is seed money for terrorism. They and Pakistan have much to lose if we lose. They will ultimately accommodate whoever they think has the stamina to win.

In the past, we've been constrained because our dependence on imported oil has forced us to support repressive regimes, to conduct our foreign policy with one hand tied behind our back with an oil-soaked rope. It's time, it's past time, to untie that hand and reach out to the moderates with both hands. Oil has not just shaped our foreign policy, it has deformed it. When I make foreign policy, I want to treat Saudi Arabia the way I treat Sweden, and that requires us to be energy independent. These folks have had us over a barrel – literally – for way too long. Saudi Arabia funds *madrassas* all over the world that teach extremism. The first thing I will do as president is send Congress my comprehensive plan for energy independence, which we will achieve by the end of my second term. To those who say it will take twenty years, I compare the lackadaisical pace of work when you bring your car in for service with the urgent, concentrated effort made when a NASCAR driver pulls up for a pit stop. We must view becoming energy independent like a pit stop where every second counts, not like dropping off the family station wagon for Goober and Gomer to work on. We will explore, we will conserve, and we will pursue all avenues of alternative energy – nuclear, wind, solar, hydrogen, clean coal, ethanol and other biomass, and biodiesel. Why did Iraq and Iran fight? Oil. Whoever controls oil controls the Middle East and the world. If all the Middle East unites behind Iran, then the price of oil won't be our problem – we won't get any.

But supporting Islamic moderates and moving toward energy independence won't protect us from the terrorists who already exist. We still have to fight this war on terror hard and we have to fight it smart, using all our political, economic, diplomatic, and intelligence weapons as well as our military might. The terrorists have sympathizers all over the world, people happy to show up and be filmed shouting "Death to America," but the actual number of those willing to sign up for suicide missions is relatively few, and they train and plot in small, scattered groups.

It's an enemy conducive to being tracked down and eliminated by using the CIA and our Special Forces. We can accomplish a great deal, we can achieve tremendous bang for the buck, with swift, surgical air strikes and commando raids by our elite units, as we've recently done with the Ethiopians in Somalia. These operations are impossible without first-rate intelligence. When the Cold War ended, we cut back on our human intelligence, just as we cut back on our armed forces, and both have come back to haunt us. As president, I will beef up our human intelligence capacity, both the operatives who gather information and the analysts who figure out what it means. I'd rather have more people in Langley, so we can deploy fewer in Baghdad. Once we gather information, it will be immediately shared with those in other agencies to whom it is relevant. Anyone in my administration caught protecting his turf instead of protecting us from terror will be shown the door.

IRAN

We have urgent concerns about Iran's military and financial support of Shiite militants in Iraq, the Taliban in Afghanistan, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas among the Palestinians. We have urgent concerns about Iran's development of nuclear weapons.

More is at stake than just Iran going nuclear -- faced with a nuclear Shiite Persian Iran, the Sunni Arab regimes to the west will feel the need to match them.

The Administration has quite properly said that it will not take the military option for Iran off the table. Neither would I. But if we don't put other options on the table, eventually the military option becomes the only viable one. Right now we are proceeding down only one track with Iran -- armed confrontation. Nothing would make Osama bin Laden happier -- he would welcome war between the United States and Iran, his two biggest enemies. I try to avoid doing anything that brightens bin Laden's day.

Al Qaeda and Iran seek control of the same territory -- what Iran sees as its potential Shiite crescent is a large part of what would be Al Qaeda's Sunni caliphate from Spain to Indonesia -- not just Iraq, but Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia. Both Al Qaeda and Iran seek not just to dominate Israel, but to destroy her, and control the Palestinians. The Huckabee Administration will not waver or flinch in standing by our ally Israel. The difference in America's mission is that Al Qaeda must be destroyed as a movement, while Iran just has to be contained as a nation. How do we achieve that?

To contain Iran, it is essential to win in Iraq. When we overthrew Saddam Hussein, who functioned as a bulwark against Iran, we upset the balance of power in the region. We must stabilize and strengthen Iraq not just for their security, but the security of the entire region, and our own security. We can't allow Iran to push the power of its theocracy westward into, and then beyond, Iraq.

Another way to contain Iran is through diplomacy, while never taking the military option off the table. We must be as diplomatically aggressive as we have been militarily aggressive since 9/11.

We must intensify our diplomatic efforts with Europe, Russia, China, South Korea, and India to put more economic pressure on Iran. If we end up taking military action, they will bear responsibility for failing to maximize peaceful options. So far, they have been much more interested in maintaining their trade relationships and making money. We have all kinds of leverage in our wide-ranging relationships with these countries, and given the severity of the threat from Iran, we need to demonstrate unequivocally how important it is for them to stand with us. With the change in France from Chirac to Sarkozy, we now have an ally much more willing to join us in taking on Iran, and we should take full advantage of this new opportunity to explore fresh initiatives. I agree with President Sarkozy's statement at the U. N. earlier this week that "We can only resolve this crisis by combining firmness with dialogue."

To show how seriously we take the Iranian threat here at home, we must encourage the burgeoning movement of our states and private entities like the Teamsters to divest their pension funds of Iran-related assets. We should put more of our money where our mouth is.

Normally we speak to Iran only indirectly, through the Swiss embassy in Tehran. Our recent direct negotiations about Iraq have been very narrowly-focused and not productive because we are not exploring the full range of issues. We have valuable incentives to offer Iran in exchange for helping to stabilize Iraq; not supporting the Taliban, Hamas, and Hezbollah; and abandoning its nuclear ambitions – trade and

economic assistance, full diplomatic relations and security guarantees. While there can be no rational dealing with Al Qaeda, Iran is a nation state looking for regional power, it plays the normal power politics that we understand and can skillfully pursue, and we have substantive issues to negotiate with them.

Time is of the essence and the situation continues to deteriorate and become more complex. The recent Israeli strike against Syria is said to have involved nuclear material from North Korea. If that is the case, then we know Iran is somehow involved because Syria is an Iranian proxy in the Arab world.

The wisdom of Sun-tzu from almost 2,500 years ago is relevant today: keep your friends close and your enemies closer. We haven't had diplomatic relations with Iran in almost thirty years, my whole adult life. A lot of good it's done us! Putting this in human terms, all of us know that when we stop talking to a parent or a sibling or a friend, it's impossible to accomplish anything, impossible to resolve differences and move the relationship forward. The same is true for countries.

Our experience in Iraq provides a valuable lesson for Iran. We have since learned that when we overthrew Saddam, we invaded an "imaginary country" because our information was so out of date. We relied on exiles who had long since fled the country, who exaggerated the condition of Iraq's infrastructure, the strength of its middle class, and the secular nature of its society. If we had had diplomatic relations with Iraq and an ambassador in Baghdad, we obviously would have had better information. So before we put boots on the ground in the future, we'd better have some wing tips there first.

Many Iranians are well-disposed toward us. We should remember that on 9/11, while there was dancing in the street in other parts of the Muslim world, there were

candlelight vigils and mourning in Tehran. When we first invaded Afghanistan, Iran helped us, especially in our dealings with their allies, the Northern Alliance. They wanted to join us in fighting Al Qaeda, hoping this would lead to better U. S.-Iranian relations. The CIA and the State Department supported this partnership, but some in the White House and Pentagon did not. When President Bush included Iran in his Axis of Evil, everything went downhill fast. As the only presidential candidate with a theology degree, along with years of political experience, I know that theology is black and white, but politics is not. My enemy today on one issue is my friend tomorrow on another.

The bottom line is this: Iran is a regional threat to the balance of power in the Middle and Near East; Al Qaeda is an existential threat to the United States. I know we can't live with Al Qaeda, but there's a chance that we can live with a domesticated Iran. There is no way Iran will acquire nuclear weapons on my watch. But before I look parents in the eye to explain why I had to put their son's or daughter's life at risk in military action against Iran, I want to know that I have done everything possible to avoid that conflict.

PAKISTAN

While our failure to engage Iran seems to be leading inexorably to our attacking them, our failure to engage Al Qaeda in Pakistan seems to be leading inexorably to their attacking us again.

When we let bin Laden escape at Tora Bora in December 2001, and he fled Afghanistan into Pakistan, we played Brer Fox to his Brer Rabbit. We threw him into the perfect briar patch, protected directly by Islamic extremist tribal leaders who revere him

and don't consider their land part of Pakistan, protected indirectly by the Pakistani government who believe that it is.

On September 12, 2001, President Musharaff agreed to sever his relationship with the Taliban and let us fight Al Qaeda inside Pakistan. Distracted by Iraq, we have allowed Musharaff to go back on his word. While warning us not to violate Pakistan's sovereignty with our forces, he promises to go after Al Qaeda for us, then claims he can't because he doesn't control the territory where Al Qaeda has its safe haven.

What exactly *is* our policy toward Pakistan? Just like Musharraf since 9/11, the Bush Administration has played both ends in the middle – assuring the American people that it is doing everything it can to protect them, while tiptoeing around our supposed ally, afraid of upsetting the apple cart, even though that cart contains poisoned apples destined for export to the United States.

This muddle of a policy became apparent in July, when a National Intelligence Estimate confirmed what we already knew: Al Qaeda has successfully regrouped and enjoys a safe haven from which to plot and train for attacks against us in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, the remote lawless region along its border with Afghanistan. Several intelligence officials testified before Congress on July 11. Asked why we weren't doing more against Al Qaeda in Pakistan, the Deputy Director of National Intelligence, Tom Fingar declared, "It's not that we lack the ability to go into that space. But we have chosen not to do so without the permission of the Pakistani government." Speaking off the record, other officials confirmed that permission was being denied. When a congressman asked the CIA's Director for Intelligence, John

Kringen, why the CIA wasn't coordinating with tribal leaders to get bin Laden, he replied that those leaders "are the very people who are protecting him."

Then Frances Townsend, who heads the Homeland Security Council at the White House, struck a more aggressive – and encouraging -- note. When asked about military action against Al Qaeda in Pakistan, she said that if we had "actionable targets, anywhere in the world, we would pursue those targets. The president's been clear: Job No. 1 is to protect the American people, and there are no options that are off the table." But when Pakistan took offense, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher dodged and weaved, backing off of Townsend's statement by saying that we respect Pakistan's sovereignty, which seemed to take the unilateral military option off the table. His boss, Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte repeated that message just a couple of weeks ago.

Also contradicting Townsend's assurance that we will go after "actionable targets" was the news leaked in early July about a classified, aborted raid into Pakistan by Navy Seals, Army Rangers and the CIA in early 2005 that had targeted bin Laden's top deputy, Zawahiri. Despite pleas by Porter Goss, head of the CIA, Donald Rumsfeld called off the raid at the last minute when Navy Seals were already in C-130's in Afghanistan with their parachutes on. He acted not because he questioned the intelligence, but because he felt the size of the mission had grown to the point where we couldn't do it without Musharraf's permission. A dozen former and current military and intelligence officials leaked this story because they were furious that we gave up this opportunity, which they considered our most promising since Tora Bora.

The leaked report raises tantalizing questions. Why did Rumsfeld call it off and not President Bush? Did the President even know about it? Did Rumsfeld ask for

Musharraf's permission or just assume he wouldn't get it? One thing I can assure you is that when I'm president, I will make the final call on such actions, not my secretary of defense or any other official.

When this story broke, a former administration official said, "The Special Operations guys are tearing their hair out at the highest levels" because "they are looking at targets on a daily basis and can't move against them."

This missed opportunity in 2005 was especially detrimental because in September of 2006, Musharraf agreed to a cease fire with the frontier tribal leaders that helped Al Qaeda and the Taliban operate even more easily and freely. The cease fire was actually signed by leaders of the Taliban rather than the tribes. Musharraf agreed to leave the tribal leaders alone if they would keep the Taliban from making cross border raids and would go after Al Qaeda. Musharraf kept his end of the bargain, but the tribal leaders did not. Despite their constant breach, the cease fire stayed in effect until this July, when Musharraf raided extremists who had taken over the Red Mosque in Islamabad, angering the tribal leaders.

Lamenting that cease fire in July, Frances Townsend said, "It hasn't worked for Pakistan. It hasn't worked for the United States." We lost a whole year when they should have been going after terrorists, and we have no assurance, now that the cease fire has broken down, that they will try to go after targets of high value to us, like bin Laden or Zawahiri.

More recently, Townsend said on September 9, in response to Osama bin Laden's latest tape to mark the 9/11 anniversary, "This is a man on the run, from a cave, who's virtually impotent other than these tapes." She said this two days after CIA Director

Michael Hayden reached a very different conclusion: “Our analysts assess with high confidence that Al Qaeda’s central leadership is planning high impact plots against the American homeland.”

It cannot be denied that Al Qaeda has made excellent use of its safe haven in Pakistan. When we went after them right after 9/11, they were a tumor that needed to be cut out. By failing to do that, we allowed Al Qaeda to metastasize and get into the blood stream of the Islamic world, with its “franchises” of local terror groups who give their allegiance to headquarters in Pakistan and get assistance in return. Bin Laden and Zawahiri are charismatic, inspirational leaders and eliminating them would be an important psychological blow to the movement.

Al Qaeda has of course sent fighters to Iraq and made that country a revolving door of terror. Fighters pour into Iraq to train and conduct operations there, then they pour out to use their evil skills elsewhere. Some of them return home, but what is especially frightening is that the training they get in the urban environments of Iraq translates well into unleashing terror in similar environments in Europe and the United States. Not only will they follow us home if we leave Iraq, they’ll know what to do when they get here.

Al Qaeda collaborated with Kashmiri terrorists in the multiple bombings in Mumbai, India, in July 2006 that killed more than 200 people. It has similarly been working in Lebanon with Fatah al Islam, in North Africa with Al Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb, in Saudi Arabia, and Jordan.

While I disagree strongly with Democrats who claim that we are fighting on the wrong battlefield, I *am* convinced that our focus on Iraq at the expense of Pakistan or Iran

is like dealing with a neighbor's house that is on fire, while ignoring the house on the other side that is filled with carbon monoxide. Iraq may be the "hot" war, but Pakistan is where the cold, calculating planning is going on. Al Qaeda in Iraq is a branch office, corporate headquarters is in Pakistan. If Al Qaeda attacks us tomorrow, that attack will be postmarked Pakistan, not Iraq. Pakistan is the new Afghanistan.

Another attack will spark justified outrage that we let bin Laden and his top people get away. Concerns about Pakistan's delicate sensibilities will be drowned out by the wailing over American casualties. The American people will not understand why our supposed ally refused to help us or why our government put up with their intransigence.

I would prefer to skip the next attack and the exasperated fury it will rightly generate and cut to the chase by going after Al Qaeda's safe haven in Pakistan. We almost suffered that next attack – the plot Britain foiled last year to blow up ten airliners belonging to American, Continental, and United over the Atlantic was hatched in Pakistan. We almost suffered the attack against American targets in Germany that was planned to coincide roughly with the sixth anniversary of 9/11 and has been traced back to Pakistan.

We're in an absurd Catch-22 -- the Pakistanis say they have to pursue the terrorists because it's their territory, but then they say they can't do it because they don't control that territory. If they're really our ally and can't go after bin Laden, they will allow us to do it; if they can go after him and won't, they're not our ally. The successful raids they conducted earlier this month against extremists who had attacked their troops indicate that it may be a matter of will rather than ability. If they lack will, that's fine,

because we don't. Someone has to step up to the plate before our luck runs out and Americans are attacked again, either here or abroad.

We have no desire whatsoever to "invade" Pakistan, fight its forces, or harm its citizens. But we have an urgent need to pursue non-Pakistani terrorists who have declared war on us into this no man's land. I greatly prefer to do it with Pakistan's blessing and cooperation, but, one way or another, it has to get done. If we have to step onto their soil briefly to protect our own, so be it. As a child sometimes goes into a neighbor's yard to collect a baseball hit over the fence, so we may be forced to go over the fence.

As commander in chief, our president must constantly balance risks and threats in calculating how best to protect the American people. We know we are living on borrowed time against the next terror attack. That risk is far more likely and far graver than the risk that a quick and limited strike against Al Qaeda would bring extremists to power in Pakistan.

Pakistan is an inherently unstable country that has never had a constitutional change of government in its sixty years of existence. It has alternated between military and civilian rule, punctuated by assassinations and coups. Pakistan has never known true democracy because, even during times of nominal civilian rule, the army and its affiliated intelligence service, the ISI, have been the most powerful institutions in the country. That is not about to change.

Both civilian and military governments have consistently favored the rich. Economic growth has been strong under Musharraf, but the benefits have gone mainly to those who were already well off, not to the poor. Social progress has lagged dramatically

behind economic progress, with per capita income in 2006 at \$720 a year. Estimates of its literacy range from 30 to 50%. While the military gets twenty-five percent of the budget, health, education, and other social services get less than 3%.

Musharraf's top priority is not American survival, but his own, both physical and political. While he does his best to convince the Administration that our destiny and his are inextricably interwoven – that after him, the deluge – it is not true. Musharraf isn't keeping Islamic extremists from seizing power in Pakistan, they simply don't have the strength and support to do it.

Many of Musharraf's problems have nothing to do with us or the war on terror, they are purely internal and of his own making. His insistence on being both president and army chief of staff, by virtue of a constitutional amendment that expires at the end of this year, led him to suspend the chief justice of Pakistan's Supreme Court because he knew this justice would oppose his seeking reelection while keeping his army post. This led to widespread rioting and deaths. The chief justice was recently restored to office, but the incident left Musharraf weakened and more unpopular.

He was further weakened by the Supreme Court decision allowing former prime minister Sharif to return from exile, followed by Musharraf's arresting Sharif supporters and deporting him to Saudi Arabia as soon as he arrived.

We are backing someone with an extremely tenuous grip on his office. Musharraf has called for a presidential election by the parliament and national assemblies on October 6, promising to give up his army position only after he is re-elected, not before, as many have demanded. He has made it clear that he will remain as army chief of staff if he is not re-elected. Challenges to his running have just been rejected by the

Supreme Court. Since announcing the election, he has had dozens of opposition leaders and activists arrested, which isn't exactly the best way to run free and fair elections.

Yesterday, the Supreme Court ordered that they be released.

Added to the unstable mix is a new tape from Osama bin Laden calling for the Pakistani people to rise up and overthrow Musharraf. As we stand by and watch, things are getting better for Al Qaeda and worse for us in Pakistan.

The United States isn't terribly popular in Pakistan, not because the people back religious extremists, but because they see our aid benefiting the increasingly unpopular military, not them. Instead of our making Musharaff unpopular, he makes us unpopular, since we are so closely tied to him.

Musharraf claims that he agreed to our demands on September 12, 2001 under Richard Armitage's threat to "bomb Pakistan back to the Stone Age." Instead of making such a threat, I'd rather promise to help *build* them into the 21st century. If we help meet the needs of Pakistan's poor, they will have less reason to support the religious parties. If we support just the top of Pakistani society, we may someday see that layer swept away, and in the ensuing struggle, extremists could take power.

Since 9/11 we have given Pakistan about \$10 billion. About \$5.6 billion has been specifically to pay them back for counter-terrorism along the Afghan border, *i.e.* going after Al Qaeda and the Taliban. We have reimbursed Pakistan for counter-terrorism operations that it didn't conduct – kind of like the “no show” and “no work” jobs that Tony Soprano used to arrange. Of that \$10 billion, less than \$1 billion has been used for projects that directly help the Pakistani people – schools, food, medical aid. The lack of schools creates demand for the *madrassas* that produce terrorists. We've wasted all this

money on counter-terrorism that hasn't happened and very little on projects to win hearts and minds. Congress recently tied our continued aid to progress on counter-terrorism, and to me, that means fighting not just current Al Qaeda and Taliban, but those who will inevitably join them if we don't address Pakistan's poverty and lack of human rights.

Having put all these golden eggs in Musharraf's basket, we now see his power waning. Musharraf's reign has worked against our need to strengthen moderates. He has done his best to sideline Bhutto's and Sharif's mainstream parties. Because these parties are personality-driven, they have languished during the absences of Bhutto and Sharif. It is in our interest to see them reclaim votes from the religious parties.

Both Pakistani clerics and military leaders tend to come from the middle class, so there is a natural alliance between them. We would expect the military to be more of a secular institution, a bulwark against the religious parties, as it is in Turkey, but the situation in Pakistan is counter-intuitive. The political leaders of the mainstream, non-religious parties tend to come from the upper class of feudal landowners. This is another way in which Pakistan is the new Afghanistan – the same lawlessness and lack of justice that exist in Pakistan's feudal areas are what led the people of Afghanistan to turn against the war lords and embrace the Taliban. The religious extremists in Pakistan are gaining support among their powerless peasants the same way. This is what we should be afraid of, not the after-effects of a raid against Al Qaeda.

Whatever happens in the emerging power struggle among Musharraf, Bhutto, and Sharif, policy toward the United States is unlikely to change. Sharif would sound more anti-American, Bhutto more pro-American, but both their parties are secular and centrist.

We won't have our Al Qaeda problem magically solved for us. It is *our* problem, and we have to face up to it.

We need to assure Pakistan that we will be with them for the long haul. In the past our relations with them have been on-again, off-again. When the Russians left Afghanistan, we lost interest in Pakistan pretty quickly. They fear the same would happen without Al Qaeda and the Taliban to keep us engaged. We can't blame them for not trusting our intentions, for taking our money and running while they can. To the extent that we sign long-term agreements with them, that will show our good faith. As part of this effort, we must use our good offices with our strong ally India to improve their relationship with Pakistan and increase trade and cooperation between them. We need to bring greater stability not just to Pakistan, but to the Afghan-Pakistani-Indian region. Just as Pakistan poses a regional rather than an isolated problem, so does Iraq.

IRAQ

I have supported and continue to support the surge. Given that the surge reached full strength only in mid-June, the gains in security have been significant, but remain fragile and tenuous. The National Intelligence Estimate released in late August, which represents the consensus of all our intelligence agencies, made it clear that if we withdraw too early or too quickly, these hard-won gains will be lost and the cycle of violence will spiral upward. Now is not the moment to lose heart or lose faith, too much has been sacrificed and too much is at stake. When has an army ever turned the tide and then given up? War is about will. Whoever gives up loses. We can't afford to lose. How we handle this will determine the kind of world our grandchildren will live in – or die in.

I have confidence in General Petraeus and the plan he has presented. He has earned our trust by the significant progress he has made in a short time. Things were going downhill fast when the surge began, he has reversed that spiral dramatically.

I would certainly not withdraw any faster than he recommends. His plan should take us to pre-surge levels of about 130,000 troops by the middle of next July. We will bring home the Marine Expeditionary Unit from the surge now, one Army brigade in December, and then four additional Army brigades and two Marine battalions in the first seven months of next year. I agree with the General that we can't schedule additional withdrawals beyond next summer because there's no way to predict what conditions on the ground will be like then. By not projecting beyond pre-surge levels, we send a strong signal to the Iraqis that we will be there for them and to our enemies that they can't just wait us out. Our troops must come home based on conditions on the ground, not the calendar on the wall.

General Petraeus' reasoning makes eminent sense to me – it is too soon to reduce our mission simply to counter-terrorism and transition to the Iraqis without focus on population security as well. If we don't continue to maintain and expand population security, with the significant number of forces that requires, we can lose all of our hard-won gains. As the General points out, if we hurry our withdrawal, as the Democrats want us to do, we will just be “rushing to failure.” I would rather take the slower, steadier path to victory.

The Sunnis rejecting Al Qaeda to stand with us in places like Anbar and Diyala and parts of Baghdad has been a truly extraordinary shift, a blessing. Anbar is only one of Iraq's 18 provinces, but before the “Anbar Awakening,” almost one-third of American

casualties occurred in Anbar. By April of this year, every tribal leader in the province was cooperating with us, a truly stunning reversal. Iraqi Sunnis who embraced Al Qaeda as liberators now see them for what they are – brutal oppressors who want to take Iraq back to the seventh century. The Sunnis have joined us at tremendous risk to themselves and placed enormous trust in us that we will protect them. If we abandon them, Al Qaeda will kill them. We are winning this crucial war within the war – the war against Al Qaeda in Iraq. Just as our withdrawal would be an enormous propaganda victory for them, so the turning of local Sunni populations against them is an enormous propaganda victory for us in the overall war on terror. Sunni insurgents rejecting Al Qaeda is a “man bites dog” story that will resonate throughout the Muslim world.

We must continue funneling aid directly to these tribes for local projects and salaries for those willing to fight on our side, bypassing the government in Baghdad. This model of the Sunni tribes turning against Al Qaeda is being used to turn Shiite tribes against their militants. We’ve been banging our head against the wall dealing with ineffectual leaders in Baghdad – with local leaders, we can poke our head into open doors and get some results. The goal is to end the violence – the paradigm we use to get there is less important. In future elections, some of these local leaders may become national leaders who can end the paralysis in Baghdad.

Contrary to the Democrats’ gloom, we *are* seeing reconciliation, only it is “bottom up” rather than “top down.” Bottom up reconciliation can end the violence faster, since it comes directly from the people. We must stay to strengthen and expand this grass roots reconciliation, which shows that many Iraqis are fed up with violence and with their own ineffective leaders. Just as violence can intensify and spread quickly, so

can peace. We also must recognize that most of the benchmarks we have set for Iraq depend on top down reconciliation, so we have to come up with alternative benchmarks that gauge bottom up progress.

We also are seeing some of the goals of the benchmarks being achieved in fact, if not in law. As Ambassador Crocker told Congress, oil revenues *are* being distributed, de-Baathification *is* taking place, and the Shiite-dominated government *is* giving financial resources to the provinces, including to Sunni areas, even without passage of legislation called for in the benchmarks. These actual deeds among the people are more meaningful than mere words on paper would be.

We are getting control of situations that seemed beyond our control. The Iranians have been sending fighters, trainers, and weapons, including rockets and the especially deadly explosively formed penetrators (EFPs) across their border. We are building a base, which will be completed in November, four miles from the Iranian border to stop this flow. We are adding X-ray machines and explosives detectors at the main border crossing. Soldiers from the former Soviet republic of Georgia are going to man six checkpoints on the main roads from Iran to Baghdad.

We have seen our “peace dividend” from the fall of the Soviet Union turn into a “war deficit” with the rise of Islamic terror. We didn’t send enough troops to Iraq initially. Admiral Fallon, chief of the Central Command and General Petraeus’ boss, is especially worried about Iran and has been pushing for troop reductions in Iraq. In fact, we can’t continue the surge any longer than we now plan without extending deployments beyond fifteen months, so the size of our military is dictating that we get down to pre-

surge levels by mid-July. We don't have enough troops in Afghanistan – neither does the rest of NATO – and we are losing our hard-won gains there.

Our current armed forces simply aren't large enough – we have relied far too heavily on our National Guard and our Reserves to provide the support structure for our active duty forces, we have worn them out. This has been a strain not just on them, but on their families and communities. It has also left us under-manned here at home in coping with natural disasters and terror attacks.

When our enemies know that we're spread thin, as we are now, they're more apt to test us by provoking a crisis. Having a sizeable standing army makes it less likely that we'll have to use it. The Administration plans to increase the Army and Marines by about 92,000 over the next five years. We can and must do this in two to three years. I recognize that it will be a challenge to increase our enlistments without lowering standards and to expand our training facilities and personnel, but that is one of the reasons why we must increase our military budget. Right now we spend about 3.9% of our GDP on defense, while we spent about 6% in 1986 under President Reagan. We need to return to that 6% level.

We have to stop using our active duty forces for nation building and rely on other government agencies for building schools, hospitals, roads, sewage treatment, water filtration, electricity, legal and banking systems. The State Department should be in charge and coordinate with the relevant departments of Energy, Housing, Education, Treasury, Justice, and Transportation.

If I ever have to undertake a large invasion, I will follow the Powell Doctrine and use overwhelming force. The notion of an "occupation with a light footprint" that was

our model for Iraq always struck me as a contradiction in terms. Liberating a country and occupying it are two different missions. Our invasion went well militarily, but the occupation destroyed Iraq politically, economically, and socially. In the former Yugoslavia, we had twenty peacekeeping soldiers for every thousand civilians. For the occupation of Iraq, that would have worked out to a force of 450,000. Instead of marginalizing General Shinseki when he said we needed several hundred thousand troops for Iraq, I would have met privately with him and carefully weighed his advice and his underlying analysis. Our generals must be independent advisers to the president, always free to speak without fear of retribution or dismissal.

Staying in Iraq will bring continued challenges, but leaving now will bring chaos. To withdraw before Iraq is internally stable and secure in its borders would have serious strategic consequences for us and horrific humanitarian consequences for the Iraqis. Iraq's neighbors on all sides will face a refugee crisis and be drawn into the war: Iran to protect the Shiites; Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan to protect the Sunnis; and Turkey to protect its control over its own Kurd population. Iraq is the crossroads where Arab meets Persian and Kurd, Sunni meets Shiite, so if it's not a peaceful buffer, it can easily become a tinder box. When we deposed Saddam, we emphasized Iraq's central location as a prime place to establish democracy and have it spread. That was the potential dramatic upside. Now we face the potential dramatic downside that the terrorists want to take advantage of – Iraq's central location as the perfect place to create anarchy and have it spread. That is both an unnecessary and an unacceptable outcome. The answer is not to stay the course, but to continue to adapt the course, to take advantage of change faster

than our enemies, as we have the last six months, to bring the Iraqis to that safe place where they will thrive and terror will not.

Cancer treatment can be rough, but the alternative is death. That's how it is in Iraq: difficult as it is to stay, the consequences of leaving would be disastrous for the Iraqis, for the entire region, and for us. Those who say we don't owe the Iraqis any more are ignoring what we owe our own children and grandchildren. We have to make our stand against Al Qaeda in Iraq and against Iranian expansionism there, and we have to make it now.

We will remain in Iraq into the next administration, and I am prepared to finish this war with honor and victory.

Ambassador Crocker told Congress: "The process will not be quick, it will be uneven, punctuated by setbacks as well as achievements, and it will require substantial U. S. resolve and commitment." Does this sound familiar? Does this remind you of anything? It sounds to me like our Revolution, like our Civil War, like World War I and World War II. We paid a heavy price each time, but we won those, and we will win this one for tolerant and peace-loving people all over the world. Our history has been one of perseverance, from the snows of Valley Forge to the flames of 9/11. Our way of life, our economic and moral strength, our civilization are at stake. I understand exactly what we face, and, as president, I am determined to look this evil in the eye, confront it, defeat it, and emerge stronger than ever. It's easy to be a peace-lover; the hard part is being a peace-maker.