

## Beating Terror

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In the 16 months since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, the United States has taken a number of steps -- in the military, security and intelligence areas -- that greatly improved its ability to fight the war on terrorism. What it has not done is develop a plan or demonstrate the political will to win the war.

Military action will be necessary to deal with serious and immediate threats to our national security, but the war on terrorism will not be won through attrition -- particularly because military action will often breed more terrorists. To win this war, the United States must assign to economic and diplomatic capabilities the same strategic priority we assign to military capabilities. What is still missing from American political discourse is support for the painstaking work of foreign policy and the commitment of resources to vital foreign policy objectives that lack a direct political constituency.

Since the end of the Cold War, our ability and will to exert U.S. leadership outside the confines of a military crisis have been badly eroded by inattention, budget cuts and increasing partisanship. In 2001 the share of the budget devoted to international affairs was a paltry 1.18 percent. We are conducting diplomacy on a shoestring in an era when embassies are prime terrorist targets and we depend on diplomats to build alliances, block visas to potential terrorists and explain the United States worldwide.

A 2001 General Accounting Office report found that significant staffing shortfalls plague the more than 150 diplomatic posts considered to be hardship locations. Many jobs are being filled by Foreign Service officers serving two or three grades higher than their experience warrants. Staffing shortfalls also lead to abbreviated language training. U.S. foreign assistance in constant dollars has declined about 44 percent since its peak during the Reagan presidency. The United States devotes about one-tenth of 1 percent of its GNP to economic assistance.

Contrary to the media-inspired illusion that foreign policy is determined by a series of decisions and responses to crises, most of the recent failures of U.S. foreign policy have far more to do with our inattention and parsimony between crises. For example, in 2002, amid speculation about terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction, inaction by Congress effectively suspended for seven months new U.S. initiatives to secure Russia's immense stockpiles of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Congressional conditions also have delayed for years a U.S.-Russian project to eliminate a dangerous proliferation threat: 1.9 million chemical weapons housed at a rickety and vulnerable facility in Russia.

The United States has repeatedly failed to exert the leadership necessary to bring multilateral treaties in line with important U.S. interests. The result has been problematic agreements such as Kyoto, the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the **International Criminal Court** Treaty, all of which lack sufficient support in the United States and divide us from our allies. Partisan posturing continues over whether to support these treaties, when the real question is why the United States -- occupying a seemingly unrivaled position in the world -- cannot achieve agreements that would be supported both at home and overseas.

Meanwhile, between 1995 and 2002 the United States -- economic engine of the world -- effectively constrained itself from entering into significant new trade agreements by failing to pass trade promotion authority. This monumental political failure hurt U.S. workers and businesses, perplexed allies, ceded markets to competitors and weakened development overseas.

In the Iraq crisis, military capability has never been in doubt. If we decide to go to war, we will depose Saddam Hussein's regime. What have been in doubt are factors determined by our diplomatic strength, our alliance relationships and foreign perceptions of the United States. Can we line up the support of the U.N. Security Council? Can we secure basing and overflight rights? Can we generate international support that will mitigate anti-American reactions in the Arab world? In short, the unknown in our Iraqi policy depends on U.S. foreign policy capabilities. It depends on programs and personnel that are funded at about \$ 26 billion per year, an amount equal to 6.7 percent of our defense budget.

The Iraq debate in Congress focused on whether the United States should make concessions to world opinion or pursue its perceived national security interests unencumbered by the constraints of the international community. But this was a false choice. National security decision-making can rarely be separated from the constraints of the international community, if only because our resources and influence are finite. Our security depends not on clever decision-making about when to go it alone but on executing a potent foreign policy that ensures the international community will be with us in a crisis.

In the coming months, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will explore five foreign policy campaigns necessary to win the war against terrorism:

- \* Strengthen U.S. diplomacy. Congress and the president must commit to robust, long-term investments in diplomats, embassy security, and effective foreign policy communications strategies and tools. We also must gear up our foreign assistance programs.

- \* Expand and globalize the Nunn-Lugar program. Since 1991 the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program has worked effectively to safeguard and destroy the immense stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction in the former Soviet Union. We need to redouble these efforts and expand the process to all nations where cooperation can be secured.

- \* Promote trade. Free trade is essential to strengthening our economy, building alliances and spreading the benefits of market economics. Expanding trade in the developing world is essential to building the conditions that dampen terrorist recruitment and political resentment.

- \* Strengthen and build alliances. The stronger our alliances, the more likely we are to have partners who will share financial burdens and support our efforts against terrorism.

- \* Reinvigorate our commitment to democracy, the environment, energy and development. The United States must reassert itself as a positive force for democracy and development. This must include improving energy supplies worldwide to free up resources in developing nations and reduce the dependence of the world economy on Persian Gulf oil. International environmental protection is required for successful economic development in many regions. Environmental concerns are linked to the dismantling of weapons, our ability to build alliances and political attitudes toward trade expansion.

These five campaigns will require not only money but also political leadership from the Bush administration and Congress. We must explain to

the American people why these campaigns are as critical to the war on terrorism as our military efforts. Without them we will relegate ourselves to fighting a holding action in which time is on the side of the terrorists.

***The writer, a Republican senator from Indiana, is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.***