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By

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"War on Terror"

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"Terror" is a term that rightly arouses strong emotions and deep concerns. The primary concern should, naturally, be to take measures to alleviate the threat, which has been severe in the past, and will be even more so in the future. To proceed in a serious way, we have to establish some guidelines. Here are a few simple ones:

(1) Facts matter, even if we do not like them.

(2) Elementary moral principles matter, even if they have consequences that we would prefer not to face.

(3) Relative clarity matters. It is pointless to seek a truly precise definition of "terror," or of any other concept outside of the hard sciences and mathematics, often even there. But we should seek enough clarity at least to distinguish terror from two notions that lie uneasily at its borders: aggression and legitimate resistance.

If we accept these guidelines, there are quite constructive ways to deal with the problems of terrorism, which are quite severe. It's commonly claimed that critics of ongoing policies do not present solutions. Check the record, and I think you will find that there is an accurate translation for that charge: "They present solutions, but I don't like them."

Suppose, then, that we accept these simple guidelines. Let's turn to the "War on Terror." Since facts matter, it matters that the War was not declared by George W. Bush on 9/11, but by the Reagan administration 20 years earlier. They came into office declaring that their foreign policy would confront what the President called "the evil scourge of terrorism," a plague spread by "depraved opponents of civilization itself" in "a return to barbarism in the modern age" (Secretary of State George Shultz). The campaign was directed to a particularly virulent form of the plague: state-directed international terrorism. The main focus was Central America and the Middle East, but it reached to southern Africa and Southeast Asia and beyond.

A second fact is that the war was declared and implemented by pretty much the same people who are conducting the re-declared war on terrorism. The civilian component of the re-declared War on Terror is led by John Negroponte, appointed last year to supervise all counterterror operations. As Ambassador in Honduras, he was the hands-on director of the major operation of the first War on Terror, the contra war against Nicaragua launched mainly from US bases in Honduras. I'll return to some of his tasks. The military component of the re-declared War led by Donald Rumsfeld. During the first phase of the War on Terror, Rumsfeld was Reagan's special representative to the Middle East. There, his main task was to establish close relations with Saddam Hussein so that the US could provide him with large-scale aid, including means to develop WMD, continuing long after the huge atrocities against the Kurds and the end of the war with Iran. The official purpose, not concealed, was Washington's responsibility to aid American exporters and "the strikingly unanimous view" of Washington and its allies Britain and Saudi Arabia that "whatever the sins of the Iraqi leader, he offered the West and the region a better hope for his country's

stability than did those who have suffered his repression" -- *New York Times* Middle East correspondent Alan Cowell, describing Washington's judgment as George Bush I authorized Saddam to crush the Shi'ite rebellion in 1991, which probably would have overthrown the tyrant.

Saddam is at last on trial for his crimes. The first trial, now underway, is for crimes he committed in 1982. 1982 happens to be an important year in US-Iraq relations. It was in 1982 that Reagan removed Iraq from the list of states supporting terror so that aid could flow to his friend in Baghdad. Rumsfeld then visited Baghdad to confirm the arrangements. Judging by reports and commentary, it would be impolite to mention any of these facts, let alone to suggest that some others might be standing alongside Saddam before the bar of justice. Removing Saddam from the list of states supporting terrorism left a gap. It was at once filled by Cuba, perhaps in recognition of the fact that the US terrorist wars against Cuba from 1961 had just peaked, including events that would be on the front pages right now in societies that valued their freedom, to which I'll briefly return. Again, that tells us something about the real elite attitudes towards the plague of the modern age.

Since the first War on Terror was waged by those now carrying out the redeclared war, or their immediate mentors, it follows that anyone seriously interested in the re-declared War on Terror should ask at once how it was carried out in the 1980s. The topic, however, is under a virtual ban. That becomes understandable as soon as we investigate the facts: the first War on Terror quickly became a murderous and brutal terrorist war, in every corner of the world where it reached, leaving traumatized societies that may never recover. What happened is hardly obscure, but doctrinally unacceptable, therefore protected from inspection. Unearthing the record is an enlightening exercise, with enormous implications for the future.

These are a few of the relevant facts, and they definitely do matter. Let's turn to the second of the guidelines: elementary moral principles. The most elementary is a virtual truism: decent people apply to themselves the same standards that they apply to others, if not more stringent ones. Adherence to this principle of universality would have many useful consequences. For one thing, it would save a lot of trees. The principle would radically reduce published reporting and commentary on social and political affairs. It would virtually eliminate the newly fashionable discipline of Just War theory. And it would wipe the slate almost clean with regard to the War on Terror. The reason is the same in all cases: the principle of universality is rejected, for the most part tacitly, though sometimes explicitly. Those are very sweeping statements. I purposely put them in a stark form to invite you to challenge them, and I hope you do. You will find, I think, that although the statements are somewhat overdrawn – purposely -- they nevertheless are uncomfortably close to accurate, and in fact very fully documented. But try for yourselves and see.

This most elementary of moral truisms is sometimes upheld at least in words. One example, of critical importance today, is the Nuremberg Tribunal. In sentencing Nazi war criminals to death, Justice Robert Jackson, Chief of Counsel for the United States, spoke eloquently, and memorably, on the principle of universality. "If certain acts of violation of treaties are crimes," he said, "they are crimes whether the United States does them or whether Germany does them, and we are not prepared to lay down a rule of criminal conduct against others which we would not be willing to have invoked against us....We must never forget that the record on which we judge these defendants is the record on which history will judge us tomorrow. To pass these defendants a poisoned chalice is to put it to our own lips as well."

That is a clear and honorable statement of the principle of universality. But the judgment at Nuremberg itself crucially violated this principle. The Tribunal had to define "war crime" and "crimes against

humanity." It crafted these definition very carefully so that crimes are criminal only if they were not committed by the allies. Urban bombing of civilian concentrations was excluded, because the allies carried it out more barbarically than the Nazis. And Nazi war criminals, like Admiral Doenitz, were able to plead successfully that their British and US counterparts had carried out the same practices. The reasoning was outlined by Telford Taylor, a distinguished international lawyer who was Jackson's Chief Counsel for War Crimes. He explained that "to punish the foe – especially the vanquished foe – for conduct in which the enforcing nation has engaged, would be so grossly inequitable as to discredit the laws themselves." That is correct, but the operative definition of "crime" also discredits the laws themselves. Subsequent Tribunals are discredited by the same moral flaw, but the self-exemption of the powerful from international law and elementary moral principle goes far beyond this illustration, and reaches to just about every aspect of the two phases of the War on Terror.

Let's turn to the third background issue: defining "terror" and distinguishing it from aggression and legitimate resistance. I have been writing about terror for 25 years, ever since the Reagan administration declared its War on Terror. I've been using definitions that seem to be doubly appropriate: first, they make sense; and second, they are the official definitions of those waging the war. To take one of these official definitions, terrorism is "the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to attain goals that are political, religious, or ideological in nature...through intimidation, coercion, or instilling fear," typically targeting civilians. The British government's definition is about the same: "Terrorism is the use, or threat, of action which is violent, damaging or disrupting, and is intended to influence the government or intimidate the public and is for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause." These definitions seem fairly clear and close to ordinary usage. There also seems to be general agreement that they are appropriate when discussing the terrorism of enemies.

But a problem at once arises. These definitions yield an entirely unacceptable consequence: it follows that the US is a leading terrorist state, dramatically so during the Reaganite war on terror. Merely to take the most uncontroversial case, Reagan's state-directed terrorist war against Nicaragua was condemned by the World Court, backed by two Security Council resolutions (vetoed by the US, with Britain politely abstaining). Another completely clear case is Cuba, where the record by now is voluminous, and not controversial. And there is a long list beyond them.

We may ask, however, whether such crimes as the state-directed attack against Nicaragua are really terrorism, or whether they rise to the level of the much higher crime of aggression. The concept of aggression was defined clearly enough by Justice Jackson at Nuremberg in terms that were basically reiterated in an authoritative General Assembly resolution. An "aggressor," Jackson proposed to the Tribunal, is a state that is the first to commit such actions as "Invasion of its armed forces, with or without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State," or "Provision of support to armed bands formed in the territory of another State, or refusal, notwithstanding the request of the invaded State, to take in its own territory, all the measures in its power to deprive those bands of all assistance or protection." The first provision unambiguously applies to the US-UK invasion of Iraq. The second, just as clearly, applies to the US war against Nicaragua. However, we might give the current incumbents in Washington and their mentors the benefit of the doubt, considering them guilty only of the lesser crime of international terrorism, on a huge and unprecedented scale.

It may also be recalled the aggression was defined at Nuremberg as "the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole" – all

the evil in the tortured land of Iraq that flowed from the US-UK invasion, for example, and in Nicaragua too, if the charge is not reduced to international terrorism. And in Lebanon, and all too many other victims who are easily dismissed on grounds of wrong agency – right to the present. A week ago (January 13), a CIA predator drone attacked a village in Pakistan, murdering dozens of civilians, entire families, who just happened to live in a suspected al-Qaeda hideout. Such routine actions elicit little notice, a legacy of the poisoning of the moral culture by centuries of imperial thuggery.

The World Court did not take up the charge of aggression in the Nicaragua case. The reasons are instructive, and of quite considerable contemporary relevance. Nicaragua's case was presented by the distinguished Harvard University law professor Abram Chayes, former legal adviser to the State Department. The Court rejected a large part of his case on the grounds that in accepting World Court jurisdiction in 1946, the US had entered a reservation excluding itself from prosecution under multilateral treaties, including the UN Charter. The Court therefore restricted its deliberations to customary international law and a bilateral US-Nicaragua treaty, so that the more serious charges were excluded. Even on these very narrow grounds, the Court charged Washington with "unlawful use of force" – in lay language, international terrorism – and ordered it to terminate the crimes and pay substantial reparations. The Reaganites reacted by escalating the war, also officially endorsing attacks by their terrorist forces against "soft targets," undefended civilian targets. The terrorist war left the country in ruins, with a death toll equivalent to 2.25 million in US per capita terms, more than the total of all wartime casualties in US history combined. After the shattered country fell back under US control, it declined to further misery. It is now the second poorest country in Latin America after Haiti – and by accident, also second after Haiti in intensity of US intervention in the past century. The standard way to lament these tragedies is to say that Haiti and Nicaragua are "battered by storms of their own making," to quote the *Boston Globe*, at the liberal extreme of American journalism. Guatemala ranks third both in misery and intervention, more storms of their own making.

In the Western canon, none of this exists. All is excluded not only from general history and commentary, but also quite tellingly from the huge literature on the War on Terror re-declared in 2001, though its relevance can hardly be in doubt.

These considerations have to do with the boundary between terror and aggression. What about the boundary between terror and resistance? One question that arises is the legitimacy of actions to realize "the right to self-determination, freedom, and independence, as derived from the Charter of the United Nations, of people forcibly deprived of that right..., particularly peoples under colonial and racist regimes and foreign occupation..." Do such actions fall under terror or resistance? The quoted word are from the most forceful denunciation of the crime of terrorism by the UN General Assembly; in December 1987, taken up under Reaganite pressure. Hence it is obviously an important resolution, even more so because of the near-unanimity of support for it. The resolution passed 153-2 (Honduras alone abstaining). It stated that "nothing in the present resolution could in any way prejudice the right to self-determination, freedom, and independence," as characterized in the quoted words.

The two countries that voted against the resolution explained their reasons at the UN session. They were based on the paragraph just quoted. The phrase "colonial and racist regimes" was understood to refer to their ally apartheid South Africa, then consummating its massacres in the neighboring countries and continuing its brutal repression within. Evidently, the US and Israel could not condone resistance to the apartheid regime, particularly when it was led by Nelson Mandela's ANC, one of the world's "more

notorious terrorist groups," as Washington determined at the same time. Granting legitimacy to resistance against "foreign occupation" was also unacceptable. The phrase was understood to refer to Israel's US-backed military occupation, then in its 20th year. Evidently, resistance to that occupation could not be condoned either, even though at the time of the resolution it scarcely existed: despite extensive torture, degradation, brutality, robbery of land and resources, and other familiar concomitants of military occupation, Palestinians under occupation still remained "Samidin," those who quietly endured.

Technically, there are no vetoes at the General Assembly. In the real world, a negative US vote is a veto, in fact a double veto: the resolution is not implemented, and is vetoed from reporting and history. It should be added that the voting pattern is quite common at the General Assembly, and also at the Security Council, on a wide range of issues. Ever since the mid-1960s, when the world fell pretty much out of control, the US is far in the lead in Security Council vetoes, Britain second, with no one else even close. It is also of some interest to note that a majority of the American public favors abandonment of the veto, and following the will of the majority even if Washington disapproves, facts virtually unknown in the US, or I suppose elsewhere. That suggests another conservative way to deal with some of the problems of the world: pay attention to public opinion.

Terrorism directed or supported by the most powerful states continues to the present, often in shocking ways. These facts offer one useful suggestion as to how to mitigate the plague spread by "depraved opponents of civilization itself" in "a return to barbarism in the modern age": Stop participating in terror and supporting it. That would certainly contribute to the proclaimed objections. But that suggestion too is off the agenda, for the usual reasons. When it is occasionally voiced, the reaction is reflexive: a tantrum about how those who make this rather conservative proposal are blaming everything on the US.

Even with careful sanitization of discussion, dilemmas constantly arise. One just arose very recently, when Luis Posada Carriles entered the US illegally. Even by the narrow operative definition of "terror," he is clearly one of the most notorious international terrorists, from the 1960s to the present. Venezuela requested that he be extradited to face charges for the bombing of a Cubana airliner in Venezuela, killing 73 people. The charges are admittedly credible, but there is a real difficulty. After Posada miraculously escaped from a Venezuelan prison, the liberal *Boston Globe* reports, he "was hired by US covert operatives to direct the resupply operation for the Nicaraguan contras from El Salvador" – that is, to play a prominent role in terrorist atrocities that are incomparably worse than blowing up the Cubana airliner. Hence the dilemma. To quote the press: "Extraditing him for trial could send a worrisome signal to covert foreign agents that they cannot count on unconditional protection from the US government, and it could expose the CIA to embarrassing public disclosures from a former operative." Evidently, a difficult problem.

The Posada dilemma was, thankfully, resolved by the courts, which rejected Venezuela's appeal for his extradition, in violation of the US-Venezuela extradition treaty. A day later, the head of the FBI, Robert Mueller, urged Europe to speed US demands for extradition: "We are always looking to see how we can make the extradition process go faster," he said. "We think we owe it to the victims of terrorism to see to it that justice is done efficiently and effectively." At the Ibero-American Summit shortly after, the leaders of Spain and the Latin American countries "backed Venezuela's efforts to have [Posada] extradited from the United States to face trial" for the Cubana airliner bombing, and again condemned the "blockade" of Cuba by the US, endorsing regular near-unanimous UN resolutions, the most recent with a vote of 179-4 (US, Israel, Marshall Islands, Palau). After strong protests from the US Embassy, the Summit withdrew the call for extradition, but refused to yield on the demand for an end to the economic warfare. Posada is therefore

free to join his colleague Orlando Bosch in Miami. Bosch is implicated in dozens of terrorist crimes, including the Cubana airliner bombing, many on US soil. The FBI and Justice Department wanted him deported as a threat to national security, but Bush I took care of that by granting him a presidential pardon.

There are other such examples. We might want to bear them in mind when we read Bush II's impassioned pronouncement that "the United States makes no distinction between those who commit acts of terror and those who support them, because they're equally as guilty of murder," and "the civilized world must hold those regimes to account." This was proclaimed to great applause at the National Endowment for Democracy, a few days after Venezuela's extradition request had been refused. Bush's remarks pose another dilemma. Either the US is part of the civilized world, and must send the US air force to bomb Washington; or it declares itself to be outside the civilized world. The logic is impeccable, but fortunately, logic has been dispatched as deep into the memory hole as moral truisms.

The Bush doctrine that "those who harbor terrorists are as guilty as the terrorists themselves" was promulgated when the Taliban asked for evidence before handing over people the US suspected of terrorism – without credible evidence, as the FBI conceded many months later. The doctrine is taken very seriously. Harvard international relations specialist Graham Allison writes that it has "already become a de facto rule of international relations," revoking "the sovereignty of states that provide sanctuary to terrorists." Some states, that is, thanks to the rejection of the principle of universality.

One might also have thought that a dilemma would have arisen when John Negroponte was appointed to the position of head of counter-terrorism. As Ambassador to Honduras in the 1980s, he was running the world's largest CIA station, not because of the grand role of Honduras in world affairs, but because Honduras was the primary US base for the international terrorist war for which Washington was condemned by the ICJ and Security Council (absent the veto). Known in Honduras as "the Proconsul," Negroponte had the task of ensuring that the international terrorist operations, which reached remarkable levels of savagery, would proceed efficiently. His responsibilities in managing the war on the scene took a new turn after official funding was barred in 1983, and he had to implement White House orders to bribe and pressure senior Honduran Generals to step up their support for the terrorist war using funds from other sources, later funds illegally transferred from US arms sales to Iran. The most vicious of the Honduran killers and torturers was General Alvarez Martínez, the chief of the Honduran armed forces at the time, who had informed the US that "he intended to use the Argentine method of eliminating suspected subversives." Negroponte regularly denied gruesome state crimes in Honduras to ensure that military aid would continue to flow for international terrorism. Knowing all about Alvarez, the Reagan administration awarded him the Legion of Merit medal for "encouraging the success of democratic processes in Honduras." The elite unit responsible for the worst crimes in Honduras was Battalion 3-16, organized and trained by Washington and its Argentine neo-Nazi associates. Honduran military officers in charge of the Battalion were on the CIA payroll. When the government of Honduras finally tried to deal with these crimes and bring the perpetrators to justice, the Reagan-Bush administration refused to allow Negroponte to testify, as the courts requested.

There was virtually no reaction to the appointment of a leading international terrorist to the top counter-terrorism position in the world. Nor to the fact that at the very same time, the heroine of the popular struggle that overthrew the vicious Somoza regime in Nicaragua, Dora María Téllez, was denied a visa to teach at the Harvard Divinity School, as a terrorist. Her crime was to have helped overthrow a US-backed tyrant and mass murderer. Orwell would not have known whether to laugh or weep.

So far I have been keeping to the kinds of topics that would be addressed in a discussion of the War on Terror that is not deformed to accord with the iron laws of doctrine. And this barely scratches the surface. But let us now adopt prevailing Western hypocrisy and cynicism, and keep to the operative definition of "terror." It is the same as the official definitions, but with the Nuremberg exception: admissible terror is *your* terror; ours is exempt..

Even with this constraint, terror is a major problem, undoubtedly. And to mitigate or terminate the threat should be a high priority. Regrettably, it is not. That is all too easy to demonstrate, and the consequences are likely to be severe.

The invasion of Iraq is perhaps the most glaring example of the low priority assigned by US-UK leaders to the threat of terror. Washington planners had been advised, even by their own intelligence agencies, that the invasion was likely to increase the risk of terror. And it did, as their own intelligence agencies confirm. The National Intelligence Council reported a year ago that "Iraq and other possible conflicts in the future could provide recruitment, training grounds, technical skills and language proficiency for a new class of terrorists who are `professionalized' and for whom political violence becomes an end in itself," spreading elsewhere to defend Muslim lands from attack by "infidel invaders" in a globalized network of "diffuse Islamic extremist groups," with Iraq now replacing the Afghan training grounds for this more extensive network, as a result of the invasion. A high-level government review of the "war on terror" two years after the invasion `focused on how to deal with the rise of a new generation of terrorists, schooled in Iraq over the past couple years. Top government officials are increasingly turning their attention to anticipate what one called "the bleed out" of hundreds or thousands of Iraq-trained jihadists back to their home countries throughout the Middle East and Western Europe. "It's a new piece of a new equation," a former senior Bush administration official said. "If you don't know who they are in Iraq, how are you going to locate them in Istanbul or London?"' (*Washington Post*)

Last May the CIA reported that "Iraq has become a magnet for Islamic militants similar to Soviet-occupied Afghanistan two decades ago and Bosnia in the 1990s," according to US officials quoted in the *New York Times*. The CIA concluded that "Iraq may prove to be an even more effective training ground for Islamic extremists than Afghanistan was in Al Qaeda's early days, because it is serving as a real-world laboratory for urban combat." Shortly after the London bombing last July, Chatham House released a study concluding that "there is `no doubt' that the invasion of Iraq has `given a boost to the al-Qaida network' in propaganda, recruitment and fundraising,` while providing an ideal training area for terrorists"; and that "the UK is at particular risk because it is the closest ally of the United States" and is "a pillion passenger" of American policy" in Iraq and Afghanistan.

There is extensive supporting evidence to show that -- as anticipated -- the invasion increased the risk of terror and nuclear proliferation. None of this shows that planners prefer these consequences, of course. Rather, they are not of much concern in comparison with much higher priorities that are obscure only to those who prefer what human rights researchers sometimes call "intentional ignorance."

Once again we find, very easily, a way to reduce the threat of terror: stop acting in ways that – predictably – enhance the threat.

Though enhancement of the threat of terror and proliferation was anticipated, the invasion did so even in unanticipated ways. It is common to say that no WMD were found in Iraq after exhaustive search. That is not quite accurate, however. There were stores of WMD in Iraq: namely, those produced in the 1980s, thanks to aid provided by the US and Britain, along with others. These sites had been secured by UN inspectors, who were dismantling the weapons. But the inspectors were dismissed by the invaders and the sites were left unguarded. The inspectors nevertheless continued to carry out their work with satellite imagery. They discovered sophisticated massive looting of these installations in over 100 sites, including equipment for producing solid and liquid propellant missiles, biotoxins and other materials usable for chemical and biological weapons, and high-precision equipment capable of making parts for nuclear and chemical weapons and missiles. A Jordanian journalist was informed by officials in charge of the Jordanian-Iraqi border that after US-UK forces took over, radioactive materials were detected in one of every eight trucks crossing to Jordan, destination unknown.

The ironies are almost inexpressible. The official justification for the US-UK invasion was to prevent the use of WMD that did not exist. The invasion provided the terrorists who had been mobilized by the US and its allies with the means to develop WMD -- namely, equipment they had provided to Saddam, caring nothing about the terrible crimes they later invoked to whip up support for the invasion. It is as if Iran were now making nuclear weapons using fissionable materials provided by the US to Iran under the Shah -- which may indeed be happening. Programs to recover and secure such materials were having considerable success in the '90s, but like the war on terror, these programs fell victim to Bush administration priorities as they dedicated their energy and resources to invading Iraq.

Elsewhere in the Mideast too terror is regarded as secondary to ensuring that the region is under control. Another illustration is Bush's imposition of new sanctions on Syria in May 2004, implementing the Syria Accountability Act passed by Congress a few months earlier. Syria is on the official list of states sponsoring terrorism, despite Washington's acknowledgment that Syria has not been implicated in terrorist acts for many years and has been highly cooperative in providing important intelligence to Washington on al-Qaeda and other radical Islamist groups. The gravity of Washington's concern over Syria's links to terror was revealed by President Clinton when he offered to remove Syria from the list of states sponsoring terror if it agreed to US-Israeli peace terms. When Syria insisted on recovering its conquered territory, it remained on the list. Implementation of the Syria Accountability Act deprived the US of an important source of information about radical Islamist terrorism in order to achieve the higher goal of establishing in Syria a regime that will accept US-Israeli demands.

Turning to another domain, the Treasury Department has a bureau (OFAC, Office of Foreign Assets Control) that is assigned the task of investigating suspicious financial transfers, a central component of the "war on terror." In April 2004, OFAC informed Congress that of its 120 employees, *four* were assigned to tracking the finances of Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein, while almost two dozen were occupied with enforcing the embargo against Cuba. From 1990 to 2003 there were 93 terrorism-related investigations with $9000 in fines; and 11,000 Cuba-related investigations with $8 million in fines. The revelations received the silent treatment in the US media, elsewhere as well to my knowledge.

Why should the Treasury Department devote vastly more energy to strangling Cuba than to the "war on terror"? The basic reasons were explained in internal documents of the Kennedy-Johnson years. State Department planners warned that the "very existence" of the Castro regime is "successful defiance" of US policies going back 150 years, to the Monroe Doctrine; not Russians, but intolerable defiance of the master

of the hemisphere, much like Iran's crime of successful defiance in 1979, or Syria's rejection of Clinton's demands. Punishment of the population was regarded as fully legitimate, we learn from internal documents. "The Cuban people [are] responsible for the regime," the Eisenhower State Department decided, so that the US has the right to cause them to suffer by economic strangulation, later escalated to direct terror by Kennedy. Eisenhower and Kennedy agreed that the embargo would hasten Fidel Castro's departure as a result of the "rising discomfort among hungry Cubans." The basic thinking was summarized by State Department official Lester Mallory: Castro would be removed "through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship so every possible means should be undertaken promptly to weaken the economic life of Cuba in order to bring about hunger, desperation and the overthrow of the government." When Cuba was in dire straits after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Washington intensified the punishment of the people of Cuba, at the initiative of liberal Democrats. The author of the 1992 measures to tighten the blockade proclaimed that "my objective is to wreak havoc in Cuba" (Representative Robert Torricelli). All of this continues until the present moment.

The Kennedy administration was also deeply concerned about the threat of Cuban successful development, which might be a model for others. But even apart from these standard concerns, successful defiance in itself is intolerable, ranked far higher as a priority than combating terror. These are just further illustrations of principles that are well-established, internally rational, clear enough to the victims, but scarcely perceptible in the intellectual world of the agents.

If reducing the threat of terror were a high priority for Washington or London, as it certainly should be, there would be ways to proceed – even apart from the unmentionable idea of withdrawing participation. The first step, plainly, is to try to understand its roots. With regard to Islamic terror, there is a broad consensus among intelligence agencies and researchers. They identify two categories: the jihadis, who regard themselves as a vanguard, and their audience, which may reject terror but nevertheless regard their cause as just. A serious counter-terror campaign would therefore begin by considering the grievances , and where appropriate, addressing them, as should be done with or without the threat of terror. There is broad agreement among specialists that al-Qaeda-style terror "is today less a product of Islamic fundamentalism than of a simple strategic goal: to compel the United States and its Western allies to withdraw combat forces from the Arabian Peninsula and other Muslim countries" (Robert Pape, who has done the major research on suicide bombers). Serious analysts have pointed out that bin Laden's words and deeds correlate closely. The jihadis organized by the Reagan administration and its allies ended their Afghan-based terrorism inside Russia after the Russians withdrew from Afghanistan, though they continued it from occupied Muslim Chechnya, the scene of horrifying Russian crimes back to the 19th century. Osama turned against the US in 1991 because he took it to be occupying the holiest Arab land; that was later acknowledged by the Pentagon as a reason for shifting US bases from Saudi Arabia to Iraq. Additionally, he was angered by the rejection of his effort to join the attack against Saddam.

In the most extensive scholarly inquiry into the jihadi phenomenon, Fawaz Gerges concludes that after 9/11, "the dominant response to Al Qaeda in the Muslim world was very hostile," specifically among the jihadis, who regarded it as a dangerous extremist fringe. Instead of recognizing that opposition to Al Qaeda offered Washington "the most effective way to drive a nail into its coffin" by finding "intelligent means to nourish and support the internal forces that were opposed to militant ideologies like the bin Laden network," he writes, the Bush administration did exactly what bin Laden hoped it would do: resort to violence, particularly in the invasion of Iraq. Al-Azhar in Egypt, the oldest institution of religious higher learning in the Islamic world, issued a fatwa, which gained strong support, advising "all Muslims in the

world to make jihad against invading American forces" in a war that Bush had declared against Islam. A leading religious figure at al-Azhar, who had been "one of the first Muslim scholars to condemn Al Qaeda [and was] often criticized by ultraconservative clerics as a pro-Western reformer, ruled that efforts to stop the American invasion [of Iraq] are a `binding Islamic duty'." Investigations by Israeli and Saudi intelligence, supported by US strategic studies institutes, conclude that foreign fighters in Iraq, some 5-10% of the insurgents, were mobilized by the invasion, and had no previous record of association with terrorist groups. The achievements of Bush administration planners in inspiring Islamic radicalism and terror, and joining Osama in creating a "clash of civilizations," are quite impressive.

The senior CIA analyst responsible for tracking Osama bin Laden from 1996, Michael Scheuer, writes that "bin Laden has been precise in telling America the reasons he is waging war on us. None of the reasons have anything to do with our freedom, liberty, and democracy, but have everything to do with U.S. policies and actions in the Muslim world." Osama's concern "is out to drastically alter U.S. and Western policies toward the Islamic world," Scheuer writes: "He is a practical warrior, not an apocalyptic terrorist in search of Armageddon." As Osama constantly repeats, "Al Qaeda supports no Islamic insurgency that seeks to conquer new lands." Preferring comforting illusions, Washington ignores "the ideological power, lethality, and growth potential of the threat personified by Osama bin Laden, as well as the impetus that threat has been given by the U.S.-led invasion and occupation of Muslim Iraq, [which is] icing on the cake for al Qaeda." "U.S. forces and policies are completing the radicalization of the Islamic world, something Osama bin Laden has been trying to do with substantial but incomplete success since the early 1990s. As a result, [Scheuer adds,] it is fair to conclude that the United States of America remains bin Laden's only indispensable ally."

The grievances are very real. A Pentagon advisory Panel concluded a year ago that "Muslims do not `hate our freedom,' but rather they hate our policies," adding that "when American public diplomacy talks about bringing democracy to Islamic societies, this is seen as no more than self-serving hypocrisy." The conclusions go back many years. In 1958, President Eisenhower puzzled about "the campaign of hatred against us" in the Arab world, "not by the governments but by the people," who are "on Nasser's side," supporting independent secular nationalism. The reasons for the "campaign of hatred" were outlined by the National Security Council: "In the eyes of the majority of Arabs the United States appears to be opposed to the realization of the goals of Arab nationalism. They believe that the United States is seeking to protect its interest in Near East oil by supporting the status quo and opposing political or economic progress." Furthermore, the perception is understandable: "our economic and cultural interests in the area have led not unnaturally to close U.S. relations with elements in the Arab world whose primary interest lies in the maintenance of relations with the West and the status quo in their countries," blocking democracy and development.

Much the same was found by the *Wall Street Journal* when it surveyed the opinions of "moneyed Muslims" immediately after 9/11: bankers, professionals, businessmen, committed to official "Western values" and embedded in the neoliberal globalization project. They too were dismayed by Washington's support for harsh authoritarian states and the barriers it erects against development and democracy by "propping up oppressive regimes." They had new grievances, however, beyond those reported by the NSC in 1958: Washington's sanctions regime in Iraq and support for Israel's military occupation and takeover of the territories. There was no survey of the great mass of poor and suffering people, but it is likely that their sentiments are more intense, coupled with bitter resentment of the Western-oriented elites and corrupt and brutal rulers backed by Western power who ensure that the enormous wealth of the region flows to the

West, apart from enriching themselves. The Iraq invasion only intensified these feelings further, much as anticipated.

There are ways to deal constructively with the threat of terror, though not those preferred by "bin Laden's indispensable ally," or those who try to avoid the real world by striking heroic poses about Islamo-fascism, or who simply claim that no proposals are made when there are quite straightforward proposals that they do not like. The constructive ways have to begin with an honest look in the mirror, never an easy task, always a necessary one.