

## Periodicals

without careful thought into a strategic reality that has led America down the wrong path, asserts Andréani, head of policy planning in the French foreign ministry and adjunct professor at Paris II University.

It *did* make sense to define the campaign to root out Al Qaeda in Afghanistan after 9/11 as a war on terror. As in other efforts of this kind in Northern Ireland and Algeria, the terrorists operated inside clear territorial areas, making it possible to conduct full-blown counterinsurgency operations in a defined space. But in combating today's loosely knit global networks, with no geographic center, speaking of a "war" only exaggerates the importance of military operations in dealing with the threat.

Merging that war with the effort to contain rogue states is another source of trouble. The Bush administration worries that a rogue state will provide terrorists with weapons of mass destruction. But such states acquire such weapons, at great cost, in order to intimidate their neighbors or gain leverage against the United States, Andréani says, and they see the terrorists more clearly than Washington does: They're "not about to give their most cherished toys to madmen they do not control."

Attempting to confront these different threats with the single doctrine of "preventive war" makes no sense. And carrying the war to Iraq has "worried the United States' partners and undermined the antiterrorist coalition," while whipping up anti-Western sentiment in the Middle East.

One of the most negative consequences

of America's war against terror, according to Andréani, has been U.S. treatment of prisoners. By failing to treat its enemies as mere criminals, the United States has awarded them undue status, and by categorizing prisoners as "unlawful combatants" and depriving them of the protections of the Geneva Conventions and U.S. criminal law, America has besmirched itself. "In this 'war' without limit in time or space," the door is open to limitless abuses: "Where is the theater of operations? How will we know when the war has ended?"

Andréani hopes that as the United States devises new strategies, it "does not mistake terrorism for a new form of warfare to be met with a rigid set of military answers." Such thinking can produce blinders, as it did decades ago when Western military leaders intensively studied the challenging new tactics of guerrillas in Southeast Asia and, disastrously, missed the crucial larger point that these revolutionary movements were rooted more deeply in nationalism than in communist ideology.

Andréani acknowledges that the United States has tried to tackle the underlying causes of terrorism, especially in its campaign to spread democracy. But the war on terrorism "has detracted from the consideration of some urgent political problems that fuel Middle East terrorism, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." Most Arabs continue to view Islamic terrorists as criminals rather than liberators, and the United States should do everything that it can to reinforce that conviction.

## *Push It to the Max*

"American Maximalism" by Stephen Sestanovich, in *The National Interest* (Spring 2005), 1615 L St., N.W., Ste. 1230, Washington, D.C. 20036.

You've seen the cartoons: President George W. Bush has a six-shooter and a 10-gallon hat, and he's off on yet another bone-headed adventure. Instead of building consensus and playing by the rules, the critics wail, Washington ignores its traditional allies, defines its struggles with its adversaries in all-or-nothing terms, and stubbornly pursues its own far-reaching goals. Yes, that's

the Bush administration's approach—but it's no dramatic departure from recent U.S. practice, says Sestanovich, a professor of international diplomacy at Columbia University and U.S. ambassador-at-large for the states of the former Soviet Union during the Clinton administration's second term. And the approach of the last few decades has consistently worked.

Sestanovich writes: “Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and Bill Clinton all repeatedly ignored the dissents (and domestic political difficulties) of allies, rejected compromise with adversaries, negotiated insincerely, changed the rules, rocked the boat, moved the goal posts and even planned inadequately to deal with the consequences if their policies went wrong.”

In the 1980s, the Reagan administration’s insistence on deploying intermediate-range missiles in Europe unless the So-

a U.S.-Soviet treaty in 1987 based on the “non-negotiable” zero option. After Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev lost power, he said that the confrontation with Reagan had been instrumental in turning Soviet foreign policy around.

Under President George H. W. Bush, the United States “placed itself in direct opposition to almost all its own allies, as well as the Soviet Union,” on the question of German reunification. “As in the early 1980s, the United States alone had real confidence that it could control the process of change—that it could stimulate an international upheaval and come out

better off. . . . The United States steered the process to a positive result by exploiting its partners’ disarray, by setting a pace that kept them off balance, and even by deceiving them.”

Likewise the Clinton administration: After first bowing to European objections to strong action by NATO to halt the mass killings in the Balkans, it decided to stop listening to allied views, to do more than merely “contain” the genocide, and to use military force if necessary. The result was the breakthrough Dayton agreement in 1995 and the ambitious effort to create a single Bosnian state.

Later, the administration used the same strategy in confronting Yugoslavia’s Slobodan Milosevic over Kosovo.

Despite allied calls for a bombing pause and a German threat to block any full-scale ground invasion, the administration won a peace accord, then went on to insist on “regime change.”

Finding a lot of precedents for President George W. Bush’s tough-mindedness is not the same thing as saying his policies are sound, Sestanovich observes. But the continuity makes more urgent the question of why Bush’s “maximalist” foreign policies have stirred up so much more opposition than his predecessors’ did. “It will not be much of a legacy to be the president who, after decades of success, gave maximalism a bad name.”



viets abandoned their own missiles disturbed many allied leaders and provoked mass demonstrations in Europe. When U.S. negotiator Paul Nitze explored a compromise with the Soviets, President Ronald Reagan refused to hear of it, and his administration didn’t even bother to inform the allies of the possibility. The outcome: