

the promiscuous use of preventive war, it will not be possible to stop all new nuclear weapons programs,” but the “imperfect regime” of the International Atomic Energy Agency and non-proliferation treaties can slow them down and provide intelligence about their activities. Emerging nuclear powers should be made to worry that they might be vulnerable to preemptive nuclear attacks.

At the same time, the United States should encourage its “longtime wards” to look after themselves. It should withdraw all its military forces from Europe over 10 years and wean Israel and Egypt from financial assistance. Japan should be nudged toward making itself more “alliance-worthy” in Asia.

When the Cold War ended, Posen writes, the nation’s leaders gambled that good intentions, great power, and action could change both the international and domestic politics of the world in ways that would be advantageous to the United States. Now it is clear that “transformation is unachievable, and costs are high.” America’s new policy lodestars should be: Conceive security interests narrowly, use military power stingily, pursue enemies persistently, share responsibilities equitably, and watch and wait. Patiently.

EXCERPT

Musharraf’s ATM

Why has the U.S. stayed with [President Pervez] Musharraf long after it became evident that Pakistan was not an effective partner? There was apparently a belief that he was a truly outstanding leader. . . . Thus, there was no thought of making our multi-billion-dollar aid program conditional upon performance. So in effect we’ve wasted several billions of dollars becoming Musharraf’s ATM machine, allowing him to build up a military establishment that was irrelevant to his (and our) real security threat, yet presiding over an intensification of anti-American feelings in Pakistan itself, and failing to provide adequate aid to Pakistan’s failing social and educational sectors.

—STEPHEN P. COHEN, author and senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, at www.brookings.edu (Nov. 5, 2007)

wielded these weapons experienced legendary death rates. Traditional flamethrowers are gone from the new kind of war being fought in Iraq, but fatality rates there are still vastly different from front to rear, mission to mission, and rank to rank, write Emily Buzzell, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania now serving with AmeriCorps, and Samuel H. Preston, a demographer on the university’s faculty.

Overall, the death rate of military personnel in Iraq is about four per 1,000 per year, roughly three times that of Americans of similar age at home. The Vietnam War mortality rate among American troops was nearly 22 per 1,000, five

times that for the war in Iraq. The ratio of dead to wounded in Iraq is only about a third of what it was in Southeast Asia because wounded soldiers get faster and better care.

Reflecting the differences in exposure to combat, the Marine Corps death rate is double that of the Army, nine times higher than the Navy’s, and 23 times higher than that of the Air Force. Among all servicemembers, the greatest danger in the war is faced by Marine lance corporals.

Active Army forces are three times more likely to die per deployment than are members of the Army Reserve. But Marines are at very high risk regardless of

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

Safer Than ‘Nam

THE SOURCE: “Mortality of American Troops in the Iraq War” by Emily Buzzell and Samuel H. Preston, in *Population and Development Review*, Sept. 2007.

IT DIDN’T TAKE A CREATIVE Hollywood scriptwriter to manufacture the dangers of operating a flamethrower during World War II. Lumbering across the battlefield with 70 pounds of weaponry strapped on their backs, silhouetted like the cartoon character SpongeBob SquarePants as they sought to get close enough to incinerate their targets, the men who

whether they are active-duty members or reservists.

Consistent with their official exclusion from primary combat positions, women have a mortality rate one-sixth that of men. Largely as a consequence of their lower rank, younger troops are more likely to die in the line of duty than older ones.

Hispanics face a higher risk of

death in Iraq than non-Hispanics. Blacks face less than whites. Part of the reason may be that they are overrepresented in lower-risk categories: 19 percent of blacks in Iraq are women, compared with nine percent of nonblacks, and seven percent are Marines, compared with 11 percent of nonblacks, according to Buzzell and Preston.

Deaths in Iraq—2,706 at the time the authors compiled their data and 3,894 on December 19, 2007—are rare in comparison to woundings. From 2003 to the end of 2006, one of every 31 U.S. troops serving in Iraq was wounded. The pattern of woundings, Buzzell and Preston say, is quite likely to be the same as the demographics of death.

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

Geezers on the Court

THE SOURCE: “Where Have You Gone, Sherman Minton? The Decline of the Short-Term Supreme Court Justice” by Justin Crowe and Christopher F. Karpowitz, in *Perspectives on Politics*, Sept. 2007.

ARE SUPREME COURT JUSTICES staying on the bench so long that the Court itself is in need of constitutional reform? The average tenure of justices has climbed past a quarter-century. The average age of a justice upon leaving office has soared to 79. Stephen Breyer spent 11 years handling the junior justice’s job of doorman at the Court’s conferences before a new colleague arrived to relieve him of the chore.

Law professors across the political spectrum have discovered something to agree on: Lifetime tenure for Supreme Court justices is a very bad idea and term limits are needed. But “both this diagnosis and the associated remedy are misguided,” contend Justin Crowe and

Christopher F. Karpowitz, political scientists at Pomona College and Brigham Young University, respectively. The problem is not that justices are serving unusually long terms—they aren’t. It’s that a whole breed of judge has

disappeared: the short-term justice.

Before 1970, nearly one in three appointees spent less than about seven years on the bench. Most of the short-termers, in the years before modern medicine, became ill or died, but the next-largest category simply didn’t like the job and walked. John Rutledge, one of George Washington’s original appointees, resigned to become chief justice of the



Sherman Minton (top row, left), with fellow Supreme Court justices in 1955, resigned the next year after only seven years of service. The Court hasn’t had a short-term justice in 38 years.