

might in some instances have a right to habeas.” It’s for this reason that the government has come to rely on facilities outside the United States, most notably the Guantánamo Bay detention camp, for holding suspected terrorists. But under the rubric of protection, geography matters less and allegiance matters more. Thus, even bringing enemies onto America’s sovereign territory for detention would not imbue them with the rights afforded to Americans.

The beauty of applying the protection principle, Hamburger writes, is that by confining legal rights to a fairly well-defined group of people, officials can avoid watering down those rights, allowing “safety and civil liberty to coexist.”

But the U.S. government has ignored the protection principle, lumping together Yaser Esam

Hamdi, who was an American citizen at the time of his arrest in Afghanistan in 2001, with non-citizens under the label “enemy combatants.” In a 2004 decision, the Supreme Court sent the cases of such combatants, including Hamdi, to military proceedings, apparently making it permissible for “a person within protection, even a citizen, [to] be denied judicial process and treated as an enemy.” In Hamburger’s view, “The Court . . . thus achieved the worst of both worlds,” watering down rights for citizens and providing enemies with more due process than they are owed.

Of course, in treating detainees, the United States must abide by international treaties and notions of decency, he concludes, but “the power to act harshly should this become necessary” remains.

## Peace Corps Follies

**THE SOURCE:** “Grow Up: How to Fix the Peace Corps” by Robert L. Strauss, in *The American Interest*, Jan.–Feb. 2010.

ON THE EVE OF ITS 50TH birthday, the Peace Corps finds itself in remarkably bad shape. Born of lofty Kennedy-era ideals, it has never come close to its founders’ vision: an army of young volunteers who would ease the pain left by colonialism and bring new nations into the Western fold. Instead, the corps is a mess, sending “the wrong people to the wrong countries to do jobs that are ill defined and undersupported,” contends Robert L. Strauss, a former Peace Corps country director for Cameroon.

### EXCERPT

## Kabul on the Take

*[In Afghanistan,] there appear to be few transactions in public life that have not been overwhelmed by graft. Stand outside the municipal courthouse in Kabul, as I did, and you can talk to any number of people who will tell you about their recent purchases: hearings, judges, verdicts, settlements. At the checkpoints that mark virtually every traffic intersection in the capital, the police regularly demand bribes to let drivers through. It is not uncommon for drivers taking their trucks through the city to fork over money at two dozen posts. I paid a bribe just to walk inside Kabul International Airport.*

*And then, of course, there was August’s presidential election. By the cautious estimates of international observers, [President Hamid] Karzai’s supporters—that is,*

*his government and the election workers under his command—falsified nearly a million ballots on his behalf. The vote stealing was astonishingly brazen. In the Shorabak region of Kandahar Province, Karzai loyalists detained the district governor (whom I interviewed) and effectively canceled the election. Inside Shorabak’s local government office, Karzai supporters—otherwise known as election workers—falsified 23,900 ballots and sent them to Kabul. Every one of them was a vote for Karzai. . . .*

*As the corruption in the Karzai government has grown more blatant, a popular hypothesis has emerged to explain it: that officials in Karzai’s government orchestrated the fraud in order to preserve their hold on the moneymaking apparatus that the government has become. “It’s a moneymaking machine,” one senior American official told me. How do you reform something like this?*

—DEXTER FILKINS, a foreign correspondent for *The New York Times*, in *The New Republic* (March 1, 2010)

The corps has lucked out in one regard: No one pays it any attention. Its budget of \$375 million—equivalent to the amount the United States spends every 28 hours in Iraq—is “dryer lint at the bottom of the federal budgetary pocket.” Its one powerful friend in Congress, Senator Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), recently announced his retirement. And aside from presidential candidates’ election-year promises to expand the Peace Corps, it remains outside the political lime-

light. Strauss says the organization should seize upon its relative obscurity to take risks and revive its fieldwork.

For starters, it should “get serious about working with serious partners.” If a country doesn’t have basic respect for the rule of law and press freedom, and a substantial commitment to economic development, the Peace Corps is just wasting its time.

The corps must also get smarter about whom it recruits for its more

than 7,500 overseas postings. It has too many volunteers who sign on in the hope that “life overseas will stimulate personal growth and, ultimately, maturity.” Forget it, says Strauss. “Life overseas in loosely structured, poorly supervised situations is, with few exceptions, a formula for boredom, depression, desertion, and generally getting into trouble.” The Peace Corps should tighten its standards and hire more permanent staff. And those who join up should be sent to cities. More and more of the world’s poor aren’t out in the bush, but that’s where the Peace Corps continues to send its eager recruits.

Get real, Strauss says. The corps’ original vision is “wildly naive and excessively optimistic.”

#### FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

## No Martyr Left Behind

**THE SOURCE:** “When Heads Roll: Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Decapitation” by Jenna Jordan, in *Security Studies*, Oct.–Dec. 2009.

REMOVING THE LEADERS OF terrorist groups, either by assassination or arrest, is a key strategy in combating terrorism. After the killing of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in 2006, President George W. Bush claimed that Al Qaeda had been dealt a “severe blow.” But Jenna Jordan, a doctoral candidate in political science at the University of Chicago, begs to differ. Decapitation, as this tactic is called, is “not an effective counterterrorism strategy” and in fact



When you’re in a hole, stop digging! The Peace Corps needs a new strategy to live up to its lofty ideals. Above, a volunteer helps repair a bridge in Colombia during the corps’ early days.