

## In These Pages

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This issue of *Orbis* features individual articles and two article clusters covering a broad array of security and regional issues. Clark Murdock and Kevin Kallmyer kick things off by providing a template for applying grand strategy, a framework to guide and orient the hard decisions that policy-makers face in addressing inevitable security issues.

A major concern of U.S. grand strategy is the character of the rise of other great powers, especially China and India. Shashank Joshi examines the rise of China and India in the context of shared borders and the classical, if uneven, “security dilemma,” unpacking the implications of this simultaneous rise for external powers, especially the United States.

The first cluster of articles focuses on the war in Afghanistan. Thomas Johnson and Larry Goodson identify some troubling parallels between the U.S. effort in that country today and that of the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Greg Mills and Ewen Mclay delineate five factors that constitute challenges to the success of stability operations in Afghanistan and suggests five proposals to address those factors. David Betz attributes NATO's malaise in

Afghanistan to the *Cool Hand Luke* problem: a failure to communicate, especially regarding the war's purpose for Western audiences; a message of resolve for the Afghan audience; and a message of what success will look like in light of the cost of the war.

Next, Clifton Sherrill offers a learned and detailed look at the actors in and processes of the Iranian political system, focusing on the question of who will succeed President Ali Khamenei. And Arnold Kammel and Benjamin Zyla address the ongoing question of NATO's strategic concept.

The second of our clusters features articles, originally presented at FPRI's Study Group on America and the West. Each fall and spring, academics from greater Philadelphia—Penn, Swarthmore, Villanova, and more, gather at FPRI's center city library to hear a leading thinker deliver a paper. The rich intellectual fare includes lively conversation and a meal to match. The study group is part of FPRI's Center for the Study of America and the West, chaired by Walter McDougall. Founded in 1997, the Center relates the teaching of history to issues of American and Western identity, enhancing both the state of scholarly

discourse and the teaching of history in the classroom at the secondary and university levels.

In the first article of this cluster, Jakub Grygiel argues that the centralized organization of the Roman Empire placed it at a disadvantage in responding to the barbarian invasions that began in the fourth century of the Christian Era. His analysis has implications for the modern states of Europe and North America, in light of threats from sources other than “peer competitors.” Second, Bruce Kuklick examines the rise of academically-based policy-oriented “think tanks” during the decades after World War II. Finally, Jeremy Rabkin shows how recent developments in international law have seriously constrained the ability of the United States to conduct war, advantaging adversaries who ignore the traditional laws of war.

The issue concludes with Nicholas Gvosdev's review essay of *A Privilege to Die: Inside Hezbollah's Legions and Their Endless War Against Israel* by Thanassis Cambanis. Gvosdev has supplemented the book's observations to bring the reader up to date on Hezbollah and its enterprise.

### *Impromptus and Asides: 9/11 After a Decade*

It is now a decade since the attacks on the U.S. homeland we call simply 9/11. Those attacks were costly in both human and material terms but they revealed that the American people are willing to bear

the burden of confronting evil—not the rich, pampered cowards that the late and unlamented Osama bin Laden believed they were.

One can understand why bin Laden thought as he did. After all, when terrorists had attacked Americans before 9/11, presidents, secretaries of state, and members of Congress both Republican and Democrat—had solemnly vowed action to punish the perpetrators. But for the most part, they did nothing, treating terrorists as criminals who were to be “brought to justice,” rather than tenacious, savage soldiers who had to be rooted out and killed or captured. But the magnitude of the attack changed the mindset of our leaders, at least for a while.

How did an attack of such magnitude occur? The most fashionable answer is that the United States suffered a massive “intelligence failure.” Indeed it did, but the events of September 11, 2011 can be traced to organizational factors and political decisions made years ago. The organizational cause of this failure was described by Thomas Schelling in his forward to Roberta Wohlstetter's classic study of strategic surprise, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*.

Surprise, when it happens to a government, is likely to be a complicated, diffuse, bureaucratic thing. It includes neglect of responsibility but also responsibility so poorly defined or so ambiguously delegated that action gets lost. It includes gaps in intelligence, but also intelligence that, like a string of pearls too precious

to wear, is too sensitive to give to those who need it. It includes the alarm that fails to work, but also the alarm that has gone off so often it has been disconnected.

...It includes the contingencies that occur to no one, but also those that everyone assumes somebody else is taking care of. It includes straightforward procrastination, but also decisions protracted by internal disagreement. It includes, in addition, the inability of individual human beings to rise to the occasion until they are sure it is the occasion—which is usually too late.

As much as organizational factors may have contributed to the nation's intelligence failure, they were less significant than political decisions made over two decades ago that gutted the *human intelligence* capability of the United States. For no matter how sophisticated technology may be, it cannot replace "*humint*."

Yet concerns in the 1970s about a "rogue" Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) led to congressional reforms that forced the agency to shift from the use of human assets to reliance on technology. But without using the often unsavory characters that agencies have managed in the past, it is difficult, if not impossible, to penetrate a terrorist support system and gain information about specific terrorist events. As one TV commentator remarked in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, "we [couldn't] follow the rats down into the sewer."

The United States appears to have taken the steps necessary to replace the "stove-piped" intelli-

gence system that existed prior to 9/11 and to fix the organizational problems arising from "crevices" in overlapping jurisdiction and responsibility. The fact that there have been no further successful attacks on the U.S. homeland indicates that this is the case but we should beware complacency. Recent events make it clear that our adversaries persist in their effort to wreak havoc against this country and the very openness of American society makes us vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

And complacency seems to be a real problem. It looks like many, if not most, Americans have reverted to a "9/10" mindset. The Obama administration has returned, at least rhetorically, to the old paradigm that sees terrorism as a law enforcement problem rather than a national security one. The attempt by the Attorney General to have high profile terrorists tried in federal court rather than by military tribunal is a case in point. Fortunately, the common sense of the American people, filtered through the Congress, convinced the Obama administration to back away from that plan.

Another example of this 9/10 style complacency concerns civil liberties. Even in the immediate wake of 9/11, there were those who claimed that the Bush administration was "shredding the Constitution." Predictably, this chorus has only grown louder the farther removed we have become from the attacks of 9/11.

The dilemma a president faces in time of emergency was expressed by James Madison in a

letter to Thomas Jefferson: "It is a melancholy reflection that liberty should be equally exposed to danger whether the government have too much or too little power." Abraham Lincoln addressed this dilemma during his speech to a special session of Congress after Fort Sumter. "Is there," he asked, "in all republics, this inherent, and fatal weakness? Must a government, of necessity, be too *strong* for the liberties of its own people, or too *weak* to maintain its own existence?"

Throughout the history of the American republic, there has been a tension between two virtues necessary to sustain republican government: *vigilance* and *responsibility*. Vigilance is the jealousy on the part of the people that constitutes a necessary check on those who hold power lest they abuse it. As Jefferson wrote, "[I]t is jealousy and not confidence which prescribes limited constitutions, to bind those whom we are obliged to trust with power."

But while vigilance is a necessary virtue, it may, if unchecked, lead to an extremism that incapacitates a government, preventing it from carrying out even its most necessary and legitimate purposes, e.g. providing for the common defense. "Jealousy," wrote Alexander Hamilton, often infects the "noble enthusiasm for liberty" with "a spirit of narrow and illiberal distrust."

Responsibility, on the other hand, is the prudential judgment necessary to moderate the excesses of political jealousy, thereby permitting limited government to fulfill its purposes. Thus, in *Federalist 23*, Hamilton wrote that those responsible for the nation's defense must be granted all of the powers necessary to achieve that end. Responsibility is the virtue necessary to govern and to preserve the republic from harm, both external and internal. The dangers of foreign and civil war taught Hamilton that liberty and power are not always adversaries, that indeed, the "vigor" of government is essential to the security of liberty.

In the war on terrorism engendered by 9/11 we continue to face the perennial tension between vigilance and responsibility: the United States, after all remains the target of those who would destroy it. In all decisions involving tradeoffs between two things of value, the costs and benefits of one alternative must be measured against those of the other. At a time when the United States once again faces an adversary that wishes nothing less than America's destruction, prudence dictates that responsibility trump vigilance in time of war. If those responsible for the preservation of the republic are not permitted the measures to save it, there will be nothing left to be vigilant about.

