II. Looking Forward

The Security Environment of the Future

If a cascade of events leading to the injection of nuclear weapons into regional conflicts around the world is anywhere near being a plausible scenario, what would the security environment look like?

- Greater availability of nuclear weapons for terrorists means that borders should be made entry-proof for any illicit cargo. But the war on drugs has shown this to be impossible. More intrusive police and intelligence activities would become necessary. The USA Patriot Act, and its implementation by the Bush administration's Justice Department, is a foretaste of things to come. The effects of this on civil liberties, and on the free flow of merchandise and travel by ordinary citizens, and, indeed, the effects on all normal aspects of life in the United States and elsewhere are incalculable, and potentially enormously harmful. Quite apart from the societal impact on democratic nations around the world, the economic effects are likely to be damaging, as the events following September 11, 2001, demonstrated.
- Nuclear crises in sensitive areas in the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia will be more frequent, requiring both diplomacy and resort to military force

to defuse. The Iraqi conflict and the India-Pakistan confrontation are examples of what can be expected.

- More calls will be heard for the U.S. military to respond to incipient nuclear programs through preventive or preemptive war, or to deploy forces to terminate local conflicts or to support a threatened friendly nation. Pressures will grow to withdraw from regions that could involve the United States in conflicts not seen as central to U.S. vital interests, even though this would not contribute to the long-run safety of the nation.
- Increased military budgets for several nations, and especially the United States, will be necessary as a result of pressures on governments to deal with nuclear crises.
- Advantages now accruing to the United States owing to its preponderance in conventional military power will be reduced. Nuclear weapons are the great equalizers. Their availability to many more nations will require a reassessment and probably a readjustment in U.S. doctrine regarding their use in limited conflicts.
- The consequences of an enhanced role for nuclear weapons in a role other than as weapons of last resort will include the strong possibility that these weapons will come to be regarded as quite usable as weapons of choice, including by the United States as it attacks deeply buried and hardened command posts and stockpiles of biological weapons.
- Nations previously dependent on the United States for the security provided by the U.S. “nuclear umbrella” will develop their own nuclear deterrent, thus dissolv-

ing one of the strongest ties between the United States and its current allies. Examples of this could include Germany, Japan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, and Turkey. The result will be diminished influence for the United States and an effective end to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

- The difficulty in managing nuclear crises in which more than two nuclear-armed states are involved, such as China, Taiwan, the United States, Japan, South or North Korea, will be much greater.
- There will be greater uncertainty about the sources of nuclear explosions, of knowing whether an accidental explosion was the beginning of a deliberate attack, and of knowing where an attacking weapon came from.
- The probability of nuclear accidents causing loss of life, environmental damage, and misinterpretations of the true causes of the events will be higher.
- Rivalries among friends or client states of the major powers, when these rivals are both armed with nuclear weapons, could, perhaps, lead to greater cooperation among the great powers to head off a conflict. But this is the less likely outcome. Much more likely is a repetition of what is already apparent in Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. The United States has been at odds with at least one, and generally more than one, of the major powers about applying economic pressure or threatening force in each one of these cases. This situation is the more probable indicator of what the future will be like. Nuclear weapons will be a potent wedge issue in relations among members of the UN Security Council.

Present-day concern about the impending demise of the non-proliferation regime and the spread of nuclear weapons is reflected in some of the voices in Washington which assume that U.S. military force, rather than patient diplomacy, is the way to resolve differences. The expectation that "the cult of the offensive" will be successful is reminiscent of the years preceding World War I. Most apparent is a disposition toward, and an ideological preference for, independent action at the expense of collective action, treaties, and international norms. Can such tendencies be altered? Is the world described above inevitable?

Motivations for Acquiring Nuclear Weapons

To answer both questions, it is necessary to look first at the motivations for national nuclear weapons programs. To block or roll back these programs, those motivations will have to be addressed, especially if diplomacy, rather than force, is to be the first instrument of choice. If policies or methods can be found that would respond to or alter those motivations, the bleak outlook described above may not be inevitable.

The cases of North Korea, Iran, and Iraq suggest that national security has been the basic driver of the decisions made by the governments of these countries in the nuclear arena. Parity with major opponents, prestige, and a quest for regional domination, or at least regional influence, have been part of the mix of incentives. Nor can more cynical motivations, such as extortion for financial aid by North Korea, be ruled out, though it is hard to deny that each of those nations has faced enemies, near or afar, who

might pause before employing force against it and its regional interests if it possessed nuclear weapons. Saddam Hussein's decision to take Iraq into the rank of nuclear-armed states must have caused the Iranian government to decide that Iran also should have a nuclear deterrent—at some point.

Motivating each of these three countries, to a greater or lesser degree, almost certainly have been issues of sovereignty and national prestige, sometimes involving dreams of regional dominance. Here, the evidence is more speculative but there is little doubt that the leaders of each of these countries felt entitled to the same accouterments of power to which other nations are entitled. Indeed, a North Korean spokesperson said as much: the war in Iraq proves that the defense of national sovereignty requires a powerful deterrent, said the North Korean foreign ministry. Aside from the nuclear-armed Americans always looming over him, North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Il, probably sees his nuclear-armed, though currently friendly, neighbors, China and Russia, as potential adversaries and thinks his hand would be strengthened if North Korea also were a nuclear weapon state.

Iran sees Russia and the United States as nations with whom it would like to deal on a more equal footing, not to mention Israel. Furthermore, Iran's own self-image as a major regional power since antiquity probably feeds an interest in acquiring nuclear weapons.

Under Saddam Hussein, Iraq entertained visions of great power status, of being the predominant power in the Middle East. Quite apart from basic security considerations, those visions required Iraq to become a nuclear weapon state.

In each of these three cases, it is also likely that internal advocates of nuclear weapons have been influential with their governments, as also appears to have been the case in India and Pakistan. These internal advocates may be acting on behalf of a variety of parochial interests, ranging from professional pride to bureaucratic competition to budgetary considerations. It is probable that the military leaders in these three nations pressed for nuclear weapons, quite independently of what their leaders thought. And their arguments may well have resonated with these leaders not only for broad strategic reasons but also because of internal considerations. Leaders typically enhance their grip on power by providing strong programs and financial support to important constituencies within their bureaucracies.

The Practice of Preventive or Preemptive Military Action

Any anti-proliferation campaign, to be successful, must attack the sources of the problem. To focus only on nuclear weapons programs and to ignore the broader strategic and security context in which these programs have proceeded is a recipe for failure, as past experience demonstrates. And the use of the military instrument of U.S. foreign policy to deal with nuclear proliferation must be considered as part of an anti-proliferation campaign. The question, in this regard, is under what circumstances would it be advisable to use or threaten to use American military power in a preventive or preemptive mode. Preemptive action to prevent an impending military attack is a time-honored method of dealing with a clear-cut threat

of a certain type; there are questions of evidence and legitimacy, of course, but this is familiar ground for students of international law. The more complex and controversial issue is preventive war of the type that the United States waged in Iraq and has suggested that it will wage elsewhere. For the purposes of this analysis, the question is how critical will preventive or preemptive use of military force be in stopping or rolling back nuclear aspirations. Are these methods an essential and central part of an antiproliferation campaign, or an important, but sparingly used tool? Could a preventive war doctrine be an incitement, in some cases, to nuclear proliferation?

In his joint press conference with Prime Minister Tony Blair on January 31, 2003, President Bush said:

> The strategic view of America changed after September 11th. We must deal with threats before they hurt the American people again. . . . After September the 11th, the doctrine of containment just doesn't hold any water, as far as I'm concerned. . . . My vision shifted dramatically after September the 11th, because I now realize the stakes.

In its "National Security Strategy of the United States of America" (September 17, 2002), President Bush's national security team also wrote about "taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack," and about acting against emerging threats "before they are fully formed." President Bush has declared that if weapons of mass destruction are part of the equation, preemption could come too late to save the United States from massive harm. Therefore, he is driven to a policy of

preventive wars—that is, a policy that requires the United States to take military action, or threaten such action, to blunt or eliminate a military threat involving weapons of mass destruction that might not emerge until years in the future. Much has been written about the implications—ethical, juridical, and political—if such a policy were to be systematically pursued. In this book, the precedents and potential application of such a policy will be examined.

Until the 2003 Iraq war, the best-known examples of military force being used to block or delay the development of nuclear weapons, either deliberately or inadvertently, were the Israeli attack on Iraq's Osirak reactor in 1981 and the U.S.-led coalition's attack on Iraq in 1991. The carefully calculated Israeli strike did not diminish Saddam Hussein's determination to build an Iraqi nuclear weapon, but it bought a few years' time—a not inconsequential outcome, although not a lasting solution.

The use of force by the United States and its coalition partners during the Persian Gulf war of 1991 was a response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, but it had the inadvertent effect of destroying Iraq's effort to acquire nuclear weapons. At the time, Iraq was perhaps within two or three years of achieving an initial bomb by a different, and unanticipated, technology of electromagnetic isotope separation to enrich uranium for bomb fuel. Subsequently, under UN supervision, Hussein's nuclear infrastructure was dismantled to the point where, in 2003, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was unable to discover that any of it remained effective for producing nuclear weapons. At this writing, many weeks after the war ended, that remains the case.

Another well-known case where the U.S. government

came close to using force was during the North Korean nuclear crisis of 1993–94. North Korea had made overt moves toward using plutonium derived from an alleged civilian nuclear power program to fabricate nuclear weapons. It had defied pressure applied by the United States and other nations and had announced its withdrawal from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Clinton administration threatened to impose sanctions, which North Korea said would be an act of war. Faced with this situation, the U.S. Defense Department, according to public reports, made plans to destroy the North Korean nuclear facilities. This would have been a preventive attack had it been made, but it never was, instead becoming an example of coercive diplomacy. Seemingly at the last moment, former president Carter opened a door to a deal with the North Korean president at the time, the late Kim Il Sung. That resulted, in 1994, in an Agreed Framework designed to freeze and then roll back the North Korean nuclear weapons program. The episode is an example of using a threat of force to delay, but not terminate, a nuclear weapons program.

Other examples of nuclear rollback have been accomplished without the use or threat of force, but with diplomatic pressure, and, sometimes, economic help. These cases include Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Argentina, and Brazil. South Africa ended its program as the era of apartheid rule was ending. South Korea, which reportedly had an incipient nuclear weapons program in the late 1970s, ended it when threatened with the withdrawal of American military guarantees of that country's security. Nonetheless, military force, or the threat of force, was successful in three cases—Iraq in 1981 and, inadvertently,

1991; North Korea in 1993–94—in delaying the acquisition of nuclear weapons by potential proliferants. The Cuban missile crisis of 1962 also was a textbook example of the marriage of the threat of force and diplomacy to head off a potential nuclear threat, but it involved the deployment, not the acquisition, of nuclear weapons.

Assessing the Utility of Preventive or Preemptive Military Action

Can the success of using or threatening to use force in three instances—four, if the 2003 Iraq war is included—be taken as models for what should be done to delay, block, or roll back nuclear proliferation? The relevant lessons to be learned from these instances are as follows:

- Military force, or the threat of it, was usable when the likelihood of successful retaliation against the homelands of the attacking powers by the potential proliferant was low (Iraq in 1981 and 2003; North Korea in 1993).
- Military force was usable or potentially usable when the proliferant was viewed by large parts of the international community as a threat to its neighbors (North Korea in 1993; arguably Iraq in 2003).
- Military force became an option when peaceful means of blocking nuclear weapons programs had failed or seemed unlikely to work (Iraq in 1981, and, arguably, 2003; North Korea in 1993).

Those three conditions almost certainly will all have to exist in a particular case if a proposed use of military force

is to gain the broadest possible support, not only for the military action itself but also for the follow-through, economic and otherwise. To support this judgment, there are several other cases where not all three conditions existed, and, in particular, military force or the threat of force was not usable or particularly credible, and it was not brought into play. They include the Soviet Union in the 1950s as it tested and began to deploy nuclear weapons, and China, when it began to move toward a nuclear weapons capability in the 1960s.

There were voices, even influential voices, in the United States that spoke out for preventive war against the Soviet Union in the 1950s, fearing that a Soviet nuclear arsenal would prove devastating for America's position in the world and for the American homeland itself. Neither President Truman, who was not entirely convinced that this particular Soviet threat existed, nor President Eisenhower, who knew that it did but believed it could be deterred, gave any serious thought to preventive war. Eisenhower's philosophy was that the United States and the Soviet Union were in for a long-term struggle and that containment was the only answer. He was deeply troubled, not only about the effects of a nuclear war, which he regarded as horrendous, but also about the long-term problems of dealing with a Soviet Union that had become a wasteland. He thought about the follow-through. And so, to that American leader, the use or threat of force to block Soviet acquisition of nuclear weapons was not an option.

Of course Eisenhower presumed that nuclear weapons would be used in the case of a general war with the Soviet Union. Some current administration strategists appear to

believe that the threats now visible might be handled through conventional-only preventive war, an easier task for the decision maker. The closer the targeted state is to acquiring weapons of mass destruction, however, the less certain that premise will be.

A similar discussion took place at high levels of the American and Soviet governments during the Kennedy administration when China was seen to be nearing a nuclear weapons capability. The discussion led nowhere, another example of the disutility of military force under the circumstances then existing.

In other cases the use of force was not necessary, and was very unlikely even to be considered. These include South Africa, Argentina, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Ukraine. North Korea in 2002–2003 may also be a highly relevant case although it is too early to say. The South African nuclear program was not generally known to exist, but it lasted only a few years before being dismantled. Argentina and Brazil accommodated themselves to a non-nuclear status for political and diplomatic reasons. Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan gave in to U.S. and Russian political pressure and economic blandishments. Ukraine also received a form of security assurance from the United States.

These situations may also be taken as illustrations of a generic situation: where determination to build and to keep nuclear weapons on the part of potential proliferants is not very strong, military force is not needed in the policy equation. One could also ask whether the use of U.S. military force against such countries would ever have been considered. The answer is unknown, but it seems in retrospect to have been very unlikely.

Having discussed situations where force might be used, the opposite question should be addressed: in which generic situations is force unlikely to be used to block nuclear proliferation?

- Military force is not likely to be used when the costs of doing so are judged to be higher than allowing proliferation to occur (Soviet Union, 1950s; China, 1960s).
- Military force is not likely to be used when the proliferant government is perceived as being legitimate and sufficiently responsible so as to be deterrable (again, the Soviet Union and China).
- Military force, or even the threat of force, will not be used if diplomatic efforts could plausibly succeed in blocking or rolling back proliferation (South Africa, Argentina, Brazil, Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan; North Korea after the 1994 U.S.–North Korean Agreed Framework).
- Military force or the threat of such force is not likely to be used in the cases of friendly or democratically inclined countries (Israel and India, for example). A close reading of Bush administration statements suggests that, in such cases, strong diplomatic pressure would not be used either.

The conclusion from this analysis is that military force or the threat of using such force is quite circumscribed in its application to the problem of nuclear proliferation. In most of the future cases that can be imagined, force in a preventive war sense would not be considered.

So where would U.S. military force be considered in the future? The list is short. It is limited to states widely

considered to be run by tyrants with a history of threatening aggressive tendencies and to sub-state groups that appear to have embarked on the course of acquiring nuclear weapons but have not yet done so. Iraq was the prime example of the first category. It is clear that factors apart from worries about nuclear proliferation and links to terrorism were in play that strongly reinforced the determination of the Bush administration to wage war against Iraq. President Bush cited these in his speech of February 26, 2003. They included: "Example of freedom for other nations in the region"; "A new stage for Middle Eastern peace"; "A clear warning that support for terror will not be tolerated"; "No excuse to leave the Iraqi regime's torture chambers and poison labs in operation." The experience of the 2003 Iraq war suggests that for the American people, at least, an emerging new principle of international law carries great weight: brutal treatment inflicted by a government on its own people can be considered a threat to international peace and security justifying military intervention. Postwar public opinion in the United States deems the Iraq war to have been justified on human rights grounds, even though weapons of mass destruction were not found, at this writing.

There are not many other countries that fit all the criteria. Libya comes to mind, and possibly Cuba and Syria would fit the profile, but none of these countries is quite "roguish" enough and none has a serious nuclear weapons program. They could become the hosts for international terrorist groups, which might trigger an attack. The most notorious cases of potential proliferants, of course, are North Korea and Iran. North Korea has a credible deterrent in its conventional military forces. When U.S. troops

are withdrawn from forward positions in South Korea, the Pentagon might then be freer to launch a preventive attack on North Korea, but with both South Korea and Japan in the position of being hostages, and likely to suffer immense damage if North Korea chose to respond, a powerful deterrent to U.S. offensive action would continue to exist. Iran has a nascent democratic movement and more international support than Saddam Hussein ever enjoyed. Conditions may exist in the future in Iran that could meet the criteria for military intervention, but they do not exist now.

There are two other generic situations that must be considered to round out an analysis of the circumstances under which U.S. military force might be used. The first is a situation where a nation close to the realization of a nuclear weapons capability shows unmistakable signs of an intention to attack another nation. Those signs could range from public or private statements to preparations to launch a ballistic missile. A U.S. attack in this situation would be preemption, however, not a case of preventive war.

The second situation is one in which other major nations—all other nuclear weapon states, for example—have jointly agreed with the United States that a particular nation's acquisition of nuclear weapons would be a threat to international peace and security. In this case, an attack could be preventive or preemptive depending on how imminent the threat.

These two situations bring the discussion into the realm of legitimacy, as customarily defined by the international community. International law, including the UN Charter, accepts the principle that defense against aggression is lawful and morally justified, quite apart from the

question of whether nuclear weapons are a part of the picture. Preemption has been an accepted principle of international law for a very long time. Preventive war does not enjoy that status, although it has often figured in balance of power calculations throughout history. The UN Charter (Chapter VII), also explicitly permits the use of force when necessary to restore international peace and security when authorized by the Security Council, even when members of the Security Council are not themselves the victims of aggression.

There are other actions available to the United States in cases where military force is not the right answer. In fact, a main theme of this book is that diplomacy, backed by all the instruments of national power, is generally going to be the right response to the threat of nuclear proliferation. "Regime change," for example, can be the best solution to the problem, as the Bush administration argued in the case of Iraq. But this can be attained through internal processes that do not require the use or threat of use of American military power. "Societal change," in fact, is a better way of describing these processes. The United States cannot dictate such changes but it can encourage and support them. This will be discussed in connection with individual case studies at the end of this book.

The Terrorist Threat

The danger that terrorists or non-state actors will acquire a usable nuclear weapons capability should be neither exaggerated nor minimized. The most direct way for them to achieve such a capability would be through theft, or illegal purchase. Aside from especially designed devices

such as the notorious "suitcase bomb" referred to by the late General Lebed of Russia, nuclear devices are not small, though they are readily mobile. Depending upon their level of sophistication or contemplated deployment options, many devices have some sort of permissive action link, or control mechanisms designed to prevent unauthorized detonation. These may include disarming mechanisms that will disable the weapon upon receipt of incorrect signals.

The most important means for minimizing the risk of terrorists' acquiring a nuclear weapon is the extension and aggressive application of cooperative threat reduction measures, first developed in the 1990s under the Nunn-Lugar legislation for the former Soviet Union. Technology is available, and should be supported, for effective material protection, control, and accountability. An example of a security measure that merits receiving more attention would be the installation of radiation detectors at transit points at national borders. At present, many of the exit and entrance points on the borders of the former Soviet Union are not so equipped.

As to whether a terrorist or non-state organization could actually develop or create its own nuclear weapon, the most difficult step is to acquire the fuel for a nuclear explosion, that is, plutonium or highly enriched uranium. A substantial economic and technical investment is required to build and operate a facility for indigenous production of such special nuclear materials. To do so covertly is very challenging and is unlikely to succeed. Once in possession of the necessary quantity of special nuclear materials, the path to a workable bomb, even of the simplest type—a gun-type uranium bomb like the untested

one that the United States dropped over Hiroshima on August 6, 1945—is still far from easy. It is more challenging to build a plutonium bomb that requires, for detonation, a carefully designed and time-coordinated implosion mechanism to initiate a fission chain reaction. But for a primitive single-stage fission device the technical information is widely available, and it is too late to do much about preventing its further dissemination. The best means for denial of a nuclear capability to terrorists or sub-state organizations is to provide maximum protection for existing stockpiles of weapons and nuclear materials that can be used as fuel for nuclear weapons, and, additionally to reduce the size of the weapons stockpiles and begin to modify the existing nuclear materials to make them no longer readily usable as fuel for weapons. A universal treaty that would cap the production of fissile material for weapons purposes, long under discussion in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, would also be useful.

The relative ease of acquiring or producing biological pathogens or chemical agents that are far less costly, and do not require a major infrastructure and development program, suggests that this is a more likely path for acquiring weapons intended to cause mass terror. There is also the possibility of building radiological dispersal devices, the so-called "dirty bombs." They are basically high explosives mixed with relatively long-lived (months to years) radioactive isotopes, such as cesium 137, strontium 90, or cobalt 60. In today's era of suicidal terrorism there would be no need to shield the individuals delivering such a weapon from being incapacitated by radiation, since the cumulative dose would hardly affect or incapacitate them during the minutes or hours of accomplishing a delivery.

The focus in this book has been limited to the nuclear weapons danger, and what can and should be done to reduce it. But it is evident from this discussion that cooperative threat reduction programs such as Nunn-Lugar are of vital importance to prevent the spread of other weapons capable of mass terror—biological, chemical, and radiological.

A particularly pressing issue at this time is whether it is possible to agree on actionable criteria against terrorist or sub-state entities that are developing or attempting to develop nuclear capabilities, or against the states that are harboring them. This is a new challenge for the world community.

The experience at the United Nations leading up to the invasion of Iraq shows how difficult that challenge will be. If there is a need to restore the international consensus that nuclear proliferation should be prevented, it must begin with building a consensus within the UN Security Council on what to do about terrorists and their access to nuclear weapons. Restoring and increasing confidence in the IAEA as a nuclear monitoring agency also will be necessary in the aftermath of its efforts to inspect Iraq, efforts that were terminated while still in progress, and prematurely so in the eyes of many. The return of IAEA personnel to Iraq for a meaningful role in investigating Iraq's nuclear infrastructure would be a beneficial first step.

More than a decade ago, in January 1992, the UN Security Council discussed the spreading capacity of nations around the globe to produce or otherwise acquire weapons of mass destruction. The Council concluded that this represented a threat to international peace and security.

On September 21, 1992, President George H. W. Bush proposed, in a speech at the United Nations, that "the

Security Council should become a key forum for non-proliferation enforcement." The Security Council's 16–0 vote in support of a resolution requiring Iraq's nuclear (and biological and chemical) disarmament in November 2002, showed that a consensus exists favoring anti-proliferation policies. Despite the Council's inability to achieve a consensus concerning military action against Iraq in March 2003, the first President Bush's idea has merit and a strong effort should be made to implement that proposal. Among the ideas that his administration floated in 1992 was that a cell should be established at United Nations headquarters to advise the Security Council on nuclear proliferation problems. That was never acted upon, except in the form of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) established in 1991 and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspections Commission (UNMOVIC), established in 1999 for biological and chemical weapons, both concerned with Iraq. The IAEA was pressed into service to deal with the special case of Iraq's nuclear potential.

The United Nations Secretariat has been strengthened significantly since 1992 in its ability to assist the Security Council with peacekeeping issues. UNMOVIC also has a strong staff in the area of biological and chemical weapons. Nothing on the required scale has been done at UN Headquarters with regard to the deadly threat of nuclear terrorism and proliferation. An important step in restoring the unity and effectiveness of the Security Council would be to adopt a resolution requesting the UN secretary-general, in close coordination with the IAEA, to strengthen the IAEA's presence in New York to help the Security Council deal with these matters.

Furthermore, the IAEA, as part of a move to strengthen

its enforcement mechanism, should be directed to propose to the Security Council a plan for linking the suppression of nuclear terrorism to the Chapter VII peace-enforcement authority that the UN Charter confers upon the Security Council.

A prime purpose of such an anti-terrorism operation would be to establish plausible links between a terrorist organization and an identified supplier source of nuclear materials or nuclear weapons-related equipment. An authorization, in that case, might be given to nations concerned to interdict shipments by sea or air of fissile material and, perhaps, the means of their delivery. As the Bush administration's Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) in this area suggests, unilateral military action might be required because of lack of time to act. But if possible, it would be desirable to conduct interdiction operations under a general UN Security Council authorization. An example might be a decision to impose a Cuba-style quarantine around North Korea. In such a case, support by Japan, China, and Russia would be critically important, and an advance blessing by the UN would be helpful.

Is it wise to embroil the United Nations and the IAEA in such controversial matters so soon after the highly divisive debate over Iraq? The sooner the rebuilding process begins, the sooner the wounds will heal. An indication that the United States still has faith in the United Nations would encourage other nations to cooperate in enhancing its capability. And dealing with nuclear weapons in the context of what President G. W. Bush has called "the crossroads of radicalism and technology" should attract the support of nations that are genuinely worried about global terrorism. The first President Bush had it right in his proposal of September 21, 1992.