
From Stabilizing to Transforming Societies as the Key to American Security

NEWT GINGRICH WITH MARK KESTER

INTRODUCTION

America is currently engaged in a long, hard, total war against those willing to destroy America and Western civilization if necessary to achieve their goals. In effect, America is being threatened by an irreconcilable wing of Islam that is engaged in a civil war with the moderate and traditional sectors of Islam. The irreconcilables, while representing a small minority of Islam (no more than 10 percent), are militant, growing in number, and seek to use weapons of mass murder (mostly biological) and weapons of mass destruction (mostly nuclear). These irreconcilables see focusing on and attacking America and her Western allies as a good way of redefining the fight so they can beat the modernizers and traditionalists within Islam as a prelude to winning a worldwide campaign for an Islamic future.

Since late 2001, America's efforts against those within Islam who oppose modernity and Western civilization have proven that America cannot win this battle on its own or by use of military force alone. America's success to date in Afghanistan and Iraq has been a direct result of its military power, but that military power required the cooperation and assistance of many nations throughout the world. While defeating the enemy on the battlefield is critical to America's effort, victory in the long-term war involves more than military engagements with its allies and "coalitions of the willing;" it involves transforming nations and groups that harbor those that cannot and will not be reconciled with America's

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and the West's existence as free societies. Only through transformation of these havens will America achieve a victory that will guarantee long-term security from the irreconcilables in the Islamic faith.

Transforming a society is not stabilizing a country or nation-building as America experienced during the Cold War or post Cold War years; it is about creating a new society much different than the current one in place. When America

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went into Haiti in 1994, it was to stabilize the country and stop the violence. As recent events have shown, stabilization did not work as a long-term solution. With transformation, our goal should be the creation of a society that has the core values and elements that enable America and Western civilizations to function in a stable, responsible manner. When such values and conditions are in place, groups that oppose what America and Western civilizations represent have difficulty gaining support from the local populace or government. The challenge for America is that, while it has plenty of experience in stabilization operations, it remains untrained and ill-equipped for transforming societies.

President George W. Bush, in his September 2002 National Security Strategy and his November 2003 speech to the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), talks about the values that America must promote globally.¹ Yet, the values President Bush refers to in the National Security Strategy and in the NED speech are not new concepts in American foreign policy. Every American president since World War I has talked about democracy, liberty, human dignity, the rule of law, and free-market economies and how the spread of each throughout the world is critical to America's security and economic growth.

For President Bush and his administration, these values involve more than promoting the benefits of American society; they are a means to an end. Charles Krauthammer recently referred to the President's approach as "democratic globalism," in which the spread of American values, specifically liberty, is a means toward securing American interests.² Because the President's plan is bold and will require a large-scale effort by the entire American national security apparatus if it is to achieve these values successfully, the American government must ensure the American system has the structure in place and has done the required long-term planning.

SAFETY, HEALTH, PROSPERITY, AND FREEDOM

While a long-term plan with effective mechanisms for implementation is critical in any effort to transform societies, if we do not promote the right values for a successful human society, the plan and its execution will be a failure. As stated previously, the types of values President Bush and other senior members of his administration support for people throughout the world are clearly reflected in their speeches and comments. These values can be simplified into the following: the United States desires a world where all people live in societies with safety, health, prosperity, and freedom. When people in a given society have these guarantees, they are more likely to be content with their lives and will not look for a fight with any nation, especially not with America. As President Bush stated in November 2003, "In democratic and successful societies, men and women do not swear allegiance to malcontents and murderers; they turn their hearts and labor to building better lives."³

It is important that in securing safety, health, prosperity, and freedom, each one is achieved in a way that reinforces the other three values. The first step in the process is almost always making people feel safe. If people do not feel safe in their homes, in their persons, and in their family, would this not be their top concern until it is corrected? Safety is directly related to survival, a basic human instinct. No person who feels threatened for himself or for his or her family can focus on other matters. Furthermore, without safety, it is impossible to ensure health or to build prosperity.

Once steps are taken to increase safety, it is possible to focus on health. A proper health system is a necessary extension of the value of safety because it also has a direct impact on survival. An improved health system does not need to be an expensive, bureaucratic Western model; it does need to be a responsive system that can provide the basic medical needs most Americans take for granted such as immunizations, common medications, preventive care, and normal outpatient treatments. Without safety and a responsive health system, a society remains too fragile to deal adequately with issues critical to its growth and prosperity. Violence and illness undermine economic growth and freedom.

Prosperity within a society creates an environment where individuals know they can improve their lot if they work hard and avoid conflict. Without a chance

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to better oneself through societal mechanisms like a legitimate free-market economy, individuals are susceptible to those within their society who preach violence. What recent years have shown us in societies lacking prosperity and opportunity is that those providing emotional and material support in place of prosperity are all too often individuals or groups with goals counter to democracy and Western civilization.

The urgency of creating prosperity and opportunity within societies is dramatically increased by the demographics of societies already in trouble. The world's poorest nations, most of which are already unstable, will have the largest youth populations through the year 2020.⁴ If these nations do not create an environment where prosperity is an option through normal means, the youth within these countries will look for any alternative that improves their standing within society.

Once safety, health, and prosperity exist within a society, freedom becomes much more natural and sustainable. President Bush states, "Freedom is the non-negotiable demand of human dignity; the birthright of every person—in every civilization."⁵ For many Americans, freedom is the key ingredient for bringing stability to another nation and, once established, all the other important elements of a stable society will fall into place. A good example supporting this belief would be Russia. It is clear that the decline in the rule of law and the reemergence

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of former KGB elements have weakened Russia's ability to produce economic growth and prosperity. It is even clearer that the collapse of Russian civil society has contributed to a malaise in which the longevity of Russian males is now shorter than that of Guatemalans. In simple terms, Russia is rapidly becoming a Third World country inhabited by Europeans. The stunning difference between the Polish experience of rising health and the Russian experience of

collapsing health makes as good a case for freedom versus dictatorship and economic opportunity versus bureaucratic stagnation as could be imagined. Yet, while the example of Russia does support the importance of freedom and the elements of a free society, history has shown that freedom alone within a society does not guarantee success for that society.

Iraq, which has had freedom from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein and his regime for nearly a year, is an example of a society where freedom does not equate with automatic success. While America has made large strides in moving Iraq toward becoming a democratic society, it would be difficult at this stage in Iraq's transformation for us to say that, once the country gains sovereignty at the end

of June, it will be a society free of terrorists. If we look at the average Iraqi's safety, health, and ability to prosper, we find that each area needs more work in meeting the standards found in other stable nations. Unfortunately, some Iraqis are so focused on freedom as they define it for their faction, often at the expense of other Iraqis, that they do not appreciate how, without the other three values—safety, health, and prosperity—their freedom may be short-lived. If the Iraqis do not believe in the fragility of freedom in a free and sovereign nation, then they should talk to some Haitians about what has happened over the last decade in Haiti.

Achieving safety, health, prosperity, and freedom is transformative, as events in Japan and Mexico have shown over the last half-century. Once individuals within societies acquire safety, health, prosperity, and freedom, they do not risk losing them, especially if they were a part of the society before it had the four values. By harboring or supporting terrorists, most societies understand that they would risk antagonizing nations like America and its allies and risk losing all four of those values. Iraq and Afghanistan should serve as good examples of America's willingness to challenge states that support terrorism, though neither country possessed any of the four values. While societies with the four values would likely respect America for its capability for violence through military power, it would be foolish to think a society with these four values would automatically accept American culture. The concepts of safety, health, prosperity, and freedom sound fairly simple on paper; yet, the task of implementing them in today's rapidly changing world is a challenge, requiring a much different approach than previously seen by America's national security apparatus.

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INTEGRATING AND PLANNING FOR TRANSFORMATION

If America's national security apparatus plans on transforming societies into responsible nations, the current "interagency committee system" has to be replaced by an integrated system of clear authority and accountability. Today's interagency process simply lacks the clarity and accountability to handle the complexities of a transformational strategy. To focus all of America's national power (both governmental and non-governmental) on transformation, America needs

an “integrated doctrine” that details what agency is in charge of the effort and how each agency interacts with one another. The integrated doctrine needs to be created by legislative reforms on the scale of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, but focused on the levels above the U.S. Department of Defense.

With such a large task at hand, the National Security Council (NSC) should have the lead in transforming societies, coordinating the efforts of all government agencies involved in the process. Oversight by the NSC should include ensuring that government agencies maintain a common line and do not pursue separate agendas. When conflicts arise between agencies, the NSC should resolve them and have the final say as to which option will be pursued. That decision

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should be binding and enforceable across departmental boundaries. Without an integrated effort, the American government will continue operating at full speed, but in more than one direction on the same issue and with remarkable inefficiency. In this age of rapid global communication, America cannot afford continuous confusion in its efforts toward those it wants to help transform.

The NSC should begin the society transformation campaign by planning it like a military campaign, using a “deep-mid-near” model. In this model, one focuses on the deep (long-range) goal first, i.e., trans-

forming a society, and then looks backwards at the mid and near goals that will help us achieve the deep goal. America’s national security apparatus currently spends most of its time focusing on the near challenges of crisis management and does not have the resources to plan and think through the deep goal. Once the NSC determines what a society would look like if it had all four values—safety, health, prosperity, and freedom—and the path we need for attaining them, the NSC can begin working the strategies, tasks, and projects that will bring about the transformation of societies.

COMMUNICATION

In transforming societies, America cannot afford its current institutionalized inarticulateness in communicating its message because it will need the support of friends and allies as well as the support of those being transformed. Over recent years, when America has embarked on global missions or initiatives, the world’s perception of America’s actions has too often been misinterpreted.

Sometimes the misinterpretation has been a result of poor American communication; other times it has been the result of propaganda by those who oppose America and its culture. In either case, the intended audience did not receive the message America wanted to communicate and, therefore, America struggled for the support of those for whom it was sacrificing lives and resources.

Examine how in just a year, many Iraqis, including non-Ba'athists, have come to oppose America's presence and efforts. Considering the brutal dictatorship America kicked out of Iraq, one wonders how this is possible. Look at countries that have been historically our allies—Germany and France. The public perception in both countries concerning our actions in Iraq would have been unimaginable just a few years ago. Look at the recent results in the Spanish election in which the people repudiated the administration allied to U.S. efforts against terror and elected a leader committed to pulling the Spanish

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troops out of Iraq. America's actions in the global war against terrorism are just and benefit not only America, but also any nation that seeks freedom and prosperity, including Spain, Germany, and France. If the intended audiences fail in understanding this message, the primary reason is because America has failed in communicating the message.

Communication in today's foreign politics is much more critical than it was just 10 years ago. When al-Jazeera can broadcast images via satellite TV to Muslims throughout the world in near real-time of Palestinians being killed by Israeli troops using American equipment, America must appreciate the effect these pictures have in turning Muslims against America. United States Air Force Colonel John Boyd developed a theory on air warfare that America should apply in countering the challenge of today's fast paced media. His theory was called the OODA loop: Observe, Orient, Decide, and Act before an opponent can act against you. If America can communicate its message effectively and stay ahead of those who are countering its messages, America over time can win the information war, which should be the first step in implementing the transformation of societies.

American communication must begin with the values of safety, health, prosperity, and freedom and explain why these values will benefit the intended audience. Not only will this help others better understand why America is transforming their society, but it may help them better understand what America represents and why it is better being America's friend than its opponent. While all of this sounds as if it should be easy, recent reports indicate our

efforts on communicating with foreign peoples and governments have been a failure and are in serious need of reform.

The Government Accounting Office (GAO) report from September 2003, entitled *US Public Diplomacy*, highlights the lack of an integrated strategy toward public diplomacy and recommends developing a strategy that considers private sector public relations techniques.⁶ Ambassador Edward Djerejian and his advisory group's report from October 2003, entitled *Changing Minds, Winning Peace* highlights the lack of effective U.S. diplomacy in the Middle East, the need for serious reform in how America communicates to foreign peoples, and, most importantly, why effective communication is essential for relations with other nations.⁷ If America does not learn proper people-to-people communication, it does not stand a chance of transforming societies. Indeed, if America does not learn to communicate dramatically better than we are doing today, we will not be able to sustain our role in the world.

COOPERATIVE BURDEN SHARING

History has shown us that when America faces challenges as large as the transformation of societies it cannot execute the plan on its own. Execution of a grand-scale plan must involve other nations, and, in this case, America must utilize cooperative burden sharing as it transforms societies. As stated in the

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National Security Strategy, "Concerned nations must remain actively engaged in critical regional disputes to avoid explosive escalation and minimize human suffering."⁸

Transformation of societies is not only critical to America's security, but it will benefit all democratic nations through the stability and prosperity it will create.

If we doubt the world is capable of responding to such a large undertaking, we need only examine the Cold War. When the Cold War became a reality in the late 1940s, the United States and its North American and European allies quickly responded and created NATO. NATO was the centerpiece of the North American and Western European response to the Soviet Union, the

critical element in the West's winning of the Cold War. Since the Cold War ended, every major American military operation, including Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, has involved numerous allied and coalition partners.

While America is a strong country on its own, one must appreciate that America's power worldwide is a direct result of its ability to leverage partners toward a common goal.

Engagement with America's allies on this task will require several changes in how America deals with its friends and allies. As previously discussed, America needs better communication skills between diplomats and between people. If America cannot garner support from friends and allies, it will face an uphill battle in transforming unfriendly societies. Once America convinces other nations that transforming societies is a worthwhile cause, America should assist willing partners so they can effectively contribute toward transforming societies.

Training and equipping America's partners so they operate seamlessly with American military forces and government agencies will be critical, especially when executing the safety aspect of transforming societies. If America does not prepare its partners for working with it, America should not hold high expectations for its partners' performance, at least in regards to American standards. If one looks at what NATO's Allied Command Transformation (ACT) is doing in this regard, one sees the path along which America should continue in working with allies.

For ACT's recent Multinational Experiment 3, NATO countries and Australia took the current Afghanistan political and military situation and used it in an experimental scenario, testing new concepts such as Effects Based Planning and Standing Joint Force Headquarters. This experiment and others by ACT produce concepts that NATO can immediately implement into ongoing operations.⁹ Only through continued experiments and cross-training with allies and potential coalition partners will America build confidence and capability among its potential partners for future military operations that might be required for establishing safe societies.

Besides establishing safe societies with its military partners, America should look toward its partners for help with the other three values—health, prosperity, and freedom. Chapter IV of the National Security Strategy highlights some of the areas where America can work bilaterally or with intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). One area of the world where America could embark with its partners on a large-scale effort would be Africa. As the National Security Strategy states, "In Africa,

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promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war, and desperate poverty. ...Together with our European allies, we must help strengthen Africa's fragile states..."¹⁰ Such an undertaking would be a great step for America and the European Union (EU) and would have many benefits for all involved.

America and the EU could call their endeavor the African Challenge, with a goal of bringing safety, health, prosperity, and freedom to all people of sub-

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Saharan Africa. Instead of focusing most of America's effort on just one problem in sub-Saharan Africa—HIV/AIDS—America and the EU should look at implementing each of the values of safety, health, prosperity, and freedom that could make the region stable. Sub-Saharan Africa has a direct impact on both America's and Europe's security and both have strong historical ties to the region. While not only working toward developing sub-Saharan Africa into a much better society, the EU and America would also learn more about working with one another, which will become a necessity over the next half-century. Prior relations with European countries have been through

bilateral arrangements and NATO. The EU is now a reality America must accept and learn how to operate with on all global matters.

President Bush's recently launched Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) is a good example of how America can inspire the transformation of societies. Looking at the requirement below for aid under the MCA, one recognizes a nation must be moving down the path toward providing safety, health, prosperity, and freedom, before it will receive assistance. Under the MCA, America only provides aid to "developing countries that demonstrate a strong commitment toward:

- Good governance. Rooting out corruption, upholding human rights, and adherence to the rule of law are essential conditions for successful development.
 - The health and education of their people. Investment in education, health care, and immunization provide for healthy and educated citizens who become agents of development.
 - Sound economic policies that foster enterprise and entrepreneurship. More open markets, sustainable budget policies, and strong support for individual entrepreneurship unleash the enterprise and creativity for lasting growth and prosperity."¹¹
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America cannot afford to waste aid on a nation that is unstable or corrupt or does not have the systems in place that can utilize the aid. In fact, aid provided under those conditions usually results in further corruption or problems for the citizens within those nations. On the other hand, if a nation has the foundation for becoming a proper society, then the aid provided under the conditions of the MCA will help them down the path to success. As stated in the National Security Strategy, "The United States should be realistic about its ability to help those who are unwilling or unready to help themselves. Where and when people are ready to do their part, we will be willing to move decisively."¹² This is the message America must transmit around the world to all struggling nations, and it is a message that must be understood.

If nations understand America will only help those who will help themselves, they will work toward improving their safety, health, prosperity, and freedom. When it is necessary for American national interests to help countries even when their current government is unprepared or unwilling to do so, the United States should move to help people despite their governments, as was the case in Afghanistan and Iraq. Charles Krauthammer referred to this approach toward foreign policy as "democratic realism." As Krauthammer said in reference to democratic realism and its use in the war against terrorism, "You win by taking territory—and leaving something behind."¹³ The "something we leave behind" would be safety, health, prosperity, and freedom.

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CONCLUSION

In the late 1940s when America faced the Cold War, it responded by creating institutions that were instrumental in curbing the spread of communism. The creation of the Department of Defense, Central Intelligence Agency, Strategic Air Command, and Paul Nitze's NSC-68 were all critical in transforming America's national security apparatus for the Cold War. Just as critical to America's effort was the Marshall Plan, which resurrected war-torn Europe.

George Marshall understood that people, who did not struggle for food and who could trade with others, were people less likely to go to war. Transformation of societies is just an extension of Marshall's ideas, with a focus on creating a safe, healthy, prosperous, and free society in which those who wish America harm have no chance of gaining support. America's survival depends on transforming societies, and if it does not respond to the challenge, it will risk another attack like 9/11 or one greater in scale that could jeopardize America's own safety, health, prosperity, and freedom. ■

NOTES

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- 2 Charles Krauthammer, *Democratic Realism: An American Foreign Policy for a Unipolar World* (Washington, D.C.: The AEI Press, 2004), 13-14.
- 3 Transcript of speech by George W. Bush at Whitehall Palace, London, UK, November 19, 2003, as released by the White House Office of Press Secretary, <<http://whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/print/20031119-1.html>> (accessed March 3, 2004).
- 4 "Youth Bulge Bodes Instability," *Long-Term Global Demographic Trends: Reshaping the Geopolitical Landscape* (Langley, VA: Central Intelligence Agency, 2001), 36.
- 5 *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, supra note 1.
- 6 *US Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges* (September 2003), U.S. Government Accounting Office, <<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03951.pdf>> (accessed October 3, 2003).
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- 8 *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, supra note 1 at 9.
- 9 Chris Harstad, "Multinational Experiment 3," NATO Allied Command Transformation, <<http://www.act.nato.int/transformation/cde/newsarticlescde/multinatexpmnt3.htm>> (accessed March 8, 2004).
- 10 *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, supra note 1 at 10.
- 11 "Millennium Account Update" (June 3, 2003), U.S. Agency for International Development, <http://www.usaid.gov/press/releases/2002/fs_mca.html> (accessed March 5, 2004).
- 12 *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, supra note 8.
- 13 Krauthammer, 17.