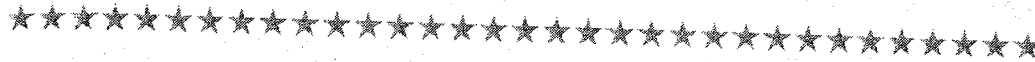


The United States and Coercive Diplomacy

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8

Coercive Diplomacy and the Response to Terrorism

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TERRORISM HAS PROVED TO BE A DIFFICULT TEST for coercive diplomacy. U.S. counterterrorism policy cannot routinely meet the basic requirements of the strategy. When coercive diplomacy is applied, the conditions that would make it successful are rarely met. While the United States has sometimes been effective in changing the policies of states that instigate or assist terrorism, it has not found an appropriate mix of threat and reward that could constrain the behavior of nonstate adversaries.

This chapter focuses on the U.S. response to terrorism from 1993 to the “war on terrorism” launched in 2001. It first outlines the general contours of the threat as it developed after the Cold War. This overview is followed by analysis of the general concept of coercive diplomacy in relation to terrorist strategies. The propositions thus generated are then tested against the instances of post-Cold War counterterrorism policy that most closely fit the definition of the concept of coercive diplomacy. These cases, when military force was used or threatened, provide the best basis for evaluating the success or failure of the strategy. They include the retaliatory strike against Iraq in 1993, threats against Iran following the bombing of U.S. military facilities in Saudi Arabia in 1996, cruise missile attacks against Sudan and Afghanistan in 1998, and efforts to compel the Taliban to yield Osama

Bin Laden after September 11, 2001. The chapter concludes by assessing the strengths and weaknesses of coercive diplomacy as a response to terrorism.

THE CONTEXT

When the Clinton administration took office in 1993, the threat of terrorism appeared to be receding. The incidence of international terrorism was diminishing. Iraq had been defeated in the Gulf War. The last remaining hostages in Lebanon had been released. The ideological hostility of the Cold War had evaporated. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was on the brink of transformation. A multilateral consensus against terrorism seemed feasible, with the United Nations assuming a more active role. Under UN auspices, for example, sanctions were implemented against Libya in order to bring to trial the Libyan agents accused of the bombing of Pan Am 103 in 1988.

The Clinton administration inherited a policy that had been applied reasonably consistently since 1972. It had four key principles: (1) no concessions to terrorist demands, (2) the imposition of diplomatic and economic sanctions against states that sponsored terrorism, (3) enforcement of the rule of law by bringing terrorists to trial, and (4) multilateral cooperation. It was accepted that the United States would take the lead in all these areas, yet frustration over lack of international cooperation often led to unilateral U.S. action. The Department of State officially designated six countries as sponsors of terrorism, which invoked automatic unilateral sanctions: Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, and Syria.

In addition, the 1986 attack on Libya had established a precedent for the use of retaliatory air power, although its effectiveness was questioned.¹ Earlier that year a task force led by Vice President George Bush had concluded that the "judicious employment of military force" might be necessary to a deterrent strategy. The report noted that a military show of force would be less risky than the use of force and might successfully intimidate terrorists and their sponsors. However, the task force also warned that a show of force could be considered gunboat diplomacy, that it might be perceived as a chal-

lenge rather than a credible threat, and, most important, that failure could require escalation to an active military response.²

The Clinton administration initially assumed a moderate stance toward terrorism. In contrast to the strong rhetoric of the Reagan years, the president's public speeches treated terrorism not as a major national security issue but as one of a series of modern transnational, or "border-crossing," threats, along with drug trafficking, global organized crime, epidemics of disease, and environmental disasters.

Immediately, however, three developments made terrorism a priority: highly destructive attacks on U.S. territory from both domestic and foreign sources, the terrorist use of chemical weapons, and the emergence of new terrorist actors hostile to U.S. interests. The close sequencing of terrorist attacks in different locations, the diversity of terrorist sources, and the geographical scope of terrorism heightened the salience of the threat.

The first shock came in February 1993, with the first bombing of the World Trade Center. Subsequent judicial investigations revealed that the perpetrators were transnational actors, independent of state sponsorship, not a familiar organization from the past. As information was gathered over the next two years, the United States identified an amorphous group composed of Egyptian religious dissidents, veterans of the war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, and freelancers. Arrests in 1995 revealed that the conspirators, led by Ramzi Youcef, had plans to bomb the Lincoln and Holland Tunnels and other buildings in New York as well as U.S. airliners over the Pacific. They seemed to represent a "new" global terrorism, with nonnegotiable demands, decentralized structures, and worldwide connections.

At the same time, the "old" state-sponsored terrorism continued to challenge U.S. interests. In April 1993 Kuwaiti authorities uncovered a plot to assassinate former president Bush during a visit to Kuwait. In June the United States retaliated against Baghdad for its complicity in the thwarted attack.

Less than two years later, in March 1995, the Aum Shinrikyo religious cult disseminated sarin gas in the Tokyo subways, killing eleven people and injuring as many as five thousand. U.S. policy-makers feared that this first terrorist use of chemical weapons would

establish a dangerous precedent for a "catastrophic" terrorism that the United States was ill equipped to combat.

Within the month a truck-bomb exploded in front of the federal building in Oklahoma City, leaving 168 people dead. The bombing exposed the country's domestic vulnerability to mass-casualty terrorism and reinforced the apprehensions inspired by the World Trade Center bombing two years earlier. Combined with the Tokyo subway attack, these incidents raised the specter of an even more deadly terrorist attack against the U.S. homeland in the future.

Although concern, especially in Congress, mounted over inadequate "domestic preparedness," U.S. interests abroad continued to be at risk, particularly military forces stationed in Saudi Arabia. Two bombings in 1995 and 1996 were the most serious attacks on U.S. targets outside the country since the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Lebanon and the 1988 midair bombing of Pan Am 103. In November 1995 an attack on a Saudi National Guard office in Riyadh used by U.S. military trainers killed five U.S. citizens.³ In June 1996 a truck-bomb at the Khobar Towers military housing complex in Dhahran killed nineteen U.S. airmen and wounded more than two hundred U.S. citizens. The Saudi government charged that Iran was responsible, and the United States considered but rejected military retaliation.

In July 1996 attention was again drawn to internal dangers. A small bomb at the Olympic Games in Atlanta led the secretary of defense to cut short a trip to Australia out of fear that it was part of a large-scale conspiracy, possibly connected to the Khobar Towers attack.⁴ Fortunately, the initial reports turned out to be exaggerated.

Nevertheless, domestic worries about terrorism increased, focused especially on the prospective use of weapons of mass destruction, or WMD. In May 1998 the president signed two presidential decision directives designed to upgrade the country's counterterrorism capability. These measures dealt primarily with the organization of the government to combat terrorism and with domestic defenses against threats to the nation's infrastructure, such as attacks on telecommunications or banking systems. The president appointed a national coordinator for security, infrastructure protection, and counterterrorism on the staff of the National Security Council (NSC).

In August 1998 the nation was shocked again when bombs exploded simultaneously at U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, resulting in 301 deaths and more than 5,000 wounded. The bombings were charged to Osama Bin Laden, whom U.S. authorities had recognized as a threat since at least 1996. The United States struck back with cruise missile attacks against Bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan and against a pharmaceuticals plant in Sudan, which was purportedly developing chemical weapons for Bin Laden. Sudan's general support for Islamic extremist terrorism had long been an irritant to the United States, and the country had been added to the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism in 1993.

In early December 1999 the United States received intelligence information that Bin Laden planned a series of attacks on U.S. citizens around the world to coincide with the New Year. Jordanian authorities had disrupted a plot to attack tourist sites in Jordan and Israel. A few days later, U.S. customs agents arrested an Algerian crossing the Canadian border into Seattle. Bomb-making materials were found in his car, and he had been trained in camps operated by Bin Laden in Afghanistan. His target was Los Angeles International Airport.

In October 2000 the U.S. military suffered another serious blow when the destroyer USS *Cole* was bombed in Yemen during a refueling stop. U.S. and Yemeni authorities suspected that Bin Laden was responsible for the attack, which killed seventeen U.S. sailors and crippled the ship, although definitive proof was lacking.

Terrorism was not an issue in the 2000 presidential campaign. On assuming office, the Bush administration did not consider it a top priority of the administration. The president's attention focused on domestic policy.

Over the spring and summer of 2001, U.S. intelligence agencies noticed an increased volume of communications among affiliates of the Bin Laden network and warned the government that a major attack was imminent. They could not predict, however, where or when or how an attack might occur. On the morning of September 11, the United States was the victim of a terrorist attack of unprecedented destructiveness. The inventiveness of the plot and the complexity of the planning also pointed to a new level of terrorism. The loss of the

World Trade Center and a wing of the Pentagon, as well as recognition that the White House or the Capitol might also have been destroyed, thrust terrorism to the top of the national security agenda. Eliminating the threat from al Qaeda suddenly became the nation's top priority.

TERRORISM AND COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

For terrorism, as for other cases, coercive diplomacy is designed to persuade an opponent to stop an action already undertaken or actively threatened. It is not uncommon for coercive diplomacy to confront an adversary who is also engaged in a form of compellence, as in the case of international terrorist adversaries seeking the government's withdrawal from a political commitment.⁵ Each party, the government and the terrorist, wants to erode the other's motivation to continue and tries to understand what the other values most. Each wants to create the expectation of costs of sufficient magnitude that the other will back down. Each attempts to calibrate the amount of force necessary to overcome the other's disinclination to comply with its demands. Subjective perceptions or estimates of the credibility and strength of threats are critical to each party's decision making. Positive inducements are difficult for both sides since the conflict typically has a zero-sum quality. Certain asymmetries are also inherent in this relationship of reciprocal compellence. Each side threatens to punish the other for noncompliance, but the coercing state's power to escalate beyond the exemplary use of force far exceeds the terrorist's capabilities. On the other hand, the terrorist is likely to be more risk acceptant.

Terrorism, however, imposes unusual constraints on coercive diplomacy that are absent in the other cases examined in this volume.⁶ Consider first the identities of the targets of coercive diplomacy. They are nonstate groups or states that are already isolated. Thus, governments are typically dealing with opponents lacking reliable internal control or valuable assets. Furthermore, the defending state is often trying to change the behavior of a loose alliance of states, non-states, and autonomous individuals with ambiguous and complex interrelationships. Any strategy of coercive diplomacy must thus be

directed toward multiple targets simultaneously, and each target's susceptibility to pressure and willingness to transgress vary. What is wanted of them will also vary. Thus, the defender has a complicated task involving critical trade-offs among different interests.

In addition, assessing the nature and intensity of the adversary's motivation is problematic. It is difficult for decision makers to put themselves in the frame of reference of the adversary. Because the essence of terrorism is concealment and deception, information about terrorist intentions is inherently difficult to obtain. When information is lacking, decision makers are tempted to rely on prior assumptions about motivation rather than on analysis of specific circumstances. Furthermore, a tendency to assume intention from behavior as well as poor understanding can lead states to focus on opportunities and vulnerabilities rather than on motivation. The propensity of policymakers to develop stereotypes and preconceptions that stress the fanaticism and irrationality of the adversary is reinforced when acts of terrorism are notably destructive and provocative. For example, policymakers may be tempted to ascribe terrorism to blind rage rather than instrumental reasoning, to personalize the adversary, and to see the enemy as monolithic. Terrorists' aspirations may be seen as unlimited and their demands nonnegotiable from the outset. Lack of knowledge makes it hard to assess the accuracy of these assumptions.

However, asymmetrical motivation is probably always in favor of the nonstate terrorist, and in favor of some state actors as well. Neither survival nor material power is at stake for the United States, however painful terrorist attacks are. In contrast, for the terrorist, everything may be at stake. Terrorism is the only reason for the existence of some nonstate actors.⁷ Moreover, precisely because of their superior motivation, and because terrorism is so unacceptable a method, the defending state is likely to want to destroy the terrorist organization, not just change its behavior. Reassurances that one's aims are limited may not be credible even at the early stages of a coercive strategy. Under these circumstances the nonstate will have little incentive to abandon terrorism. States sponsoring terrorism have more to lose by resisting demands for compliance, but their isolation may also limit their interests beyond terrorism. If the coercer

explicitly or implicitly seeks the displacement of the offending government, then compliance is unlikely unless some faction of the regime defects.

While identifying the terrorist opponent and understanding his motivations are difficult, gaining sufficiently precise and timely warning of his intention to attack in order to communicate a counterthreat and a sense of urgency is almost impossible. Terrorism depends on surprise. Furthermore, if a government learns of and exposes a terrorist plot, it may simply deflect the terrorists onto alternative targets or alter the timing of their attack. Identifying concrete assets to threaten or damage is also difficult. First, terrorism requires few material resources. Second, the assets a nonstate actor possesses, such as physical bases or financial resources, are necessarily within the domain of a state, so that considerations of sovereignty and other foreign policy interests are involved. A government cannot track, locate, or punish nonstates without the cooperation of states. Terrorism may be considered private rather than public violence, but there is no private space within which terrorists can operate.

Another difficulty is that coercing states cannot judge the effect of a threat or an initial use of demonstrative force since typically there can only be evidence of noncompliance.⁸ Even if an adversary should renounce terrorism and disarm, it requires significant trust to accept such promises since terrorism is an economical and thus easily resumed strategy. Verification is tricky. The coercer must usually infer compliance from the absence of overt noncompliance, which is inconclusive and even dangerous. This constraint also makes it difficult to use an ultimatum to create a sense of urgency.

Another problem with the use of threats or demonstrative force is that terrorist adversaries may not perceive the use of force as punishment. In fact, the purpose of terrorism may be to provoke overreaction. A limited punitive response may reward them by providing recognition and even legitimacy among their constituents. The resort to military force may erode the coercer's status as the victim, causing a loss of moral high ground. It can alienate allies who prefer persuasion to coercion. And it can lead to an endless cycle of revenge and retaliation.

A strategy of coercive diplomacy is further complicated because the

coercing state seeks not only to curb present terrorism but also to dissuade future terrorists. The goal is to compel existing terrorist actors to stop and to deter successors from starting. Using more destructive force than coercive diplomacy strictly requires may be essential to the long-term purpose of deterrence, but extreme punitiveness may exacerbate the existing conflict. Escalation can jeopardize the postcrisis relationship that the coercing government seeks, which may be based on interaction with a different set of actors than those currently posing a threat.

The government's secrecy requirements also weaken coercive diplomacy. Any meaningful threat to the terrorist in advance of an anticipated attack publicizes what the government knows and permits the terrorist to design around the government's threats. Concealing plans to threaten or use force may be an operational necessity. However, maintaining strict secrecy is an impediment to building the necessary domestic or international political consensus to ensure policy legitimacy. Lack of consultation before the response almost guarantees public criticism afterward. In the aftermath, security considerations also restrict the government's ability to justify its actions, since persuasive explanations would reveal sensitive intelligence information. Furthermore, covert preemption of an attack cannot usually be revealed to the public. Thus, failures are visible, while successes mostly are not.

Liberal democracies are restricted to a proportional and discriminating use of force. They are reluctant to incur casualties among their own forces or among noncombatants on the opponent's side. They are sensitive to reputation and to international norms governing the use of force. For these reasons, threatening escalation should an initial exemplary use of force fail can be difficult. On the other hand, public demand for action after a terrorist outrage may lead the government to respond rashly. It is the public, after all, that is targeted in the most spectacular acts of terrorism. The government's response to terrorism may come to depend more on public expectations—or decision makers' perceptions of those expectations—than on calculations of the adversary's reaction. Moreover, the defending state that offers positive inducements for stopping terrorism is vulnerable to charges of being "soft on terrorism."

Because terrorism is a form of surprise attack outside the context of war, it usually takes time to identify and locate the perpetrators. By the time the government acquires convincing evidence of responsibility, the public's outrage may have dissipated and justifying a punitive response will be difficult. However, responding quickly without conclusive information will likely appear clumsy and vindictive.

In sum, the specific properties of terrorism complicate the case for coercive diplomacy. The strategic interaction between government and terrorist is a form of reciprocal compellence. The targets of coercive diplomacy are multiple, shifting, and diffuse. Their material assets are few and meager by conventional measures of state power. Not only are nonstate actors hard to identify and understand, but they deliberately conceal their intentions. Their tactics depend on surprise and deception. Governments lack tactical warning of attacks. The terrorist can also be expected to be more highly motivated and more risk acceptant than the coercing government. Moreover, the government must look to the future and practice deterrence, preemption, prevention, and coercive diplomacy simultaneously. The government must also be concerned with policy legitimacy, since both domestic support and international cooperation are essential to an effective counterterrorist strategy.

THE U.S. RESPONSE TO TERRORISM BEFORE SEPTEMBER 11

The instances that are analyzed in depth are the best illustrations of the applicability and effectiveness of coercive diplomacy in U.S. counterterrorist policy after the end of the Cold War and before the attacks of September 11, 2001. The analysis focuses on situations involving the use or threat of military force, which is an essential component of a strategy of coercive diplomacy. Selecting these cases as focal points for a detailed examination of U.S. decision making provides empirical evidence for the theoretical propositions sketched earlier, permits comparisons to be made among cases, and establishes a foundation for drawing conclusions about the effectiveness of coercive diplomacy against terrorism. This approach also distinguishes U.S. policy before the September attacks from policy after the attacks.

Retaliation against Iraq, 1993

The case of retaliation against Iraq is the most straightforward case of the application of coercive diplomacy.⁹ The provocation was a plot to kill former president Bush in a car-bomb attack during his visit to Kuwait in April. FBI and CIA investigations produced convincing evidence that the Iraqi Intelligence Service was behind the attempt. The information included confessions by two of the sixteen suspects arrested by Kuwaiti authorities, physical evidence from the bomb, and threats by Saddam Hussein to seek revenge against Bush for his leadership of the anti-Iraq coalition during the 1991 Gulf War. President Clinton referred to incontrovertible evidence of Iraq's guilt as well as to Saddam Hussein's past behavior: "We should not be surprised by such deeds, coming, as they do, from a regime like Saddam Hussein's, which has ruled by atrocity, slaughtered its own people, invaded two neighbors, attacked others and engaged in chemical and environmental warfare. Saddam has repeatedly violated the will and conscience of the international community, but this attempt at revenge by a tyrant against the leader of the world coalition that defeated him in war is particularly loathsome and cowardly."¹⁰

The decision to use force against Iraq was carefully considered, and the process was strictly secret. It was reached after two months of intensive investigation, the conclusion of final reports from the CIA and the FBI, and long meetings between Clinton and top aides in the final week.¹¹ Apparently, no more than five presidential aides knew of the discussions. The Pentagon had been drawing up a list of possible military responses for several weeks before the decision, including targeting Saddam Hussein's personal command post and military headquarters. The option that was chosen was, as the president explained, "firm and commensurate." The target was directly related to the offending behavior, and the method comported no risks for U.S. forces. Two U.S. Navy ships in the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea fired twenty-three Tomahawk cruise missiles directly at the headquarters of the Iraqi Intelligence Service in central Baghdad. The purpose, according to the president and to top military officials, was to send a message to the people responsible for planning the operation, not to

target Saddam Hussein himself. They acknowledged that it was a show of force rather than an attempt to destroy the regime. As General Colin Powell put it, the intention was to “smack him whenever it’s necessary.” The president explained the attack’s purpose as deterring further violence or “outlawed behavior.” The United States chose to attack in the early hours of the morning in Baghdad, to avoid civilian casualties, and the attack was delayed a day in order to avoid the Muslim sabbath.

The United States also explicitly retained the option to escalate if necessary. Military officials stated publicly on several occasions that they did not rule out future military action. Clinton explained in his public address: “If Saddam and his regime contemplate further illegal provocative actions, they can be certain of our response.”

Although the attack was unilateral, the United States had apparently consulted Britain far in advance and informed some of its allies just before the attack. The United States also called for an emergency Security Council meeting and justified the attack in terms of Article 51 of the UN Charter. The operation was kept carefully separate from the UN-authorized military actions against Iraq in the no-fly zone.

The administration quickly declared the attack a success, although only sixteen of the twenty-three cruise missiles hit their intended targets. Three hit a residential housing area outside the intelligence headquarters complex, killing eight civilians, according to official Iraqi accounts that the United States did not dispute. U.S. officials claimed that major damage was done to the Iraqi facility, although they declined to be specific about the potential political impact of the raid on Iraq’s future behavior. At home, Congress was generally favorable to the decision, and the president received high approval ratings in public opinion polls.¹² However, conservative columnist William Safire criticized Clinton for choosing the weakest military option, a “pitiful wristslap,” in response to a provocation that was actually an act of war.¹³ Among U.S. allies, the British government supported a limited, proportional response, although opposition parties denounced the raid as a calculated reprisal.¹⁴ Critics also warned that the strike would only strengthen Islamic extremists. In the Middle East only the Kuwaiti government enthusiastically supported the U.S.

attack. Other Arab states criticized the action on the grounds that an anti-U.S. backlash would strengthen Saddam Hussein.¹⁵ They noted that the United States had not acted decisively to stop ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, indicating a lack of balance and objectivity in U.S. foreign policy.

As for the effect of the raid on Iraq's subsequent behavior, no concrete evidence linked Iraqi agents to further acts of anti-U.S. terrorism in the 1990s. It is possible, then, to infer compliance from the lack of evidence of noncompliance. However, Paul Pillar, former deputy chief of the Counterterrorist Center of the CIA, argued that the U.S. effort had only a minimal effect and was unlikely to have deterred Saddam Hussein from further action.¹⁶ Although temporarily weakened by the need to rebuild its intelligence networks, Iraq retained its capability for action. Iraq's primary focus became the anti-regime opposition in Iraq and abroad. The government also sheltered various rejectionist Palestinian terrorist groups such as the Abu Nidal organization and provided financial support for the families of "suicide" bombers in Palestine.

After September 11 the Bush administration charged repeatedly that Iraq was linked to al Qaeda. Iraqi support for terrorism was cited as one reason for the shift in U.S. strategy to a preemptive posture.

The Reaction to the Khobar Towers Bombing, June 1996

The truck-bomb attack was directed against a U.S. military complex that housed almost three thousand personnel participating in Joint Task Force/Southwest Asia, charged with enforcing the no-fly zone in Iraq. The explosion killed 19 U.S. airmen, wounded 372 other U.S. citizens, and injured more than 200 non-Americans. At least four classified CIA reports had warned of a terrorist threat to the housing complex since the November 1995 bombing that the Saudi government had traced to domestic Sunni opposition groups.¹⁷ The perpetrators of that bombing had been executed just three weeks earlier, and retaliation was expected. The Department of Defense concluded that although tactical intelligence was lacking, there was "considerable" information that terrorists had both the capability and the intention of attacking.¹⁸

The first routine step was to send an FBI team to assist in the investigations, but the United States had “woefully inadequate intelligence” about the opposition within Saudi Arabia.¹⁹ This assessment was subsequently confirmed by the Defense Department’s report on the bombing, issued in September. The reasons for this blind spot were both general and specific. Intelligence gathering in friendly countries cannot exceed the bounds of the host government’s tolerance, and the Saudi government was unusually sensitive to U.S. intrusion. Apparently, the United States relied primarily on the royal family for information, and only after the bombing was a special CIA task force organized to analyze security in Saudi Arabia. There were also reports of uneven cooperation between the FBI and the Saudi Ministry of the Interior in the investigation into the bombings. Saudi authorities were said to be deeply concerned about secrecy and the possibility of leaks on the U.S. side.

Nevertheless, in mid-October the Clinton administration was said to be actively considering a more aggressive response, including pre-emptive strikes and covert operations.²⁰ An internal policy debate was sparked not only by the bombing but also by Republican criticism during the presidential election campaign, especially charges of being “soft on terrorism” from Republican candidate Robert Dole and House Speaker Newt Gingrich. In September CIA director John Deutch had reluctantly gone public to defend the CIA against criticism, announcing in a speech that the CIA was drawing up a list of military options as well as improving its intelligence capabilities.²¹

Decision makers disagreed, however, over whether to target states or nonstates, a recurrent theme in counterterrorism policy debates. They also argued over the potential effectiveness of military action and the risks it comported. They had to acknowledge, however, that the primary alternative to force—economic and diplomatic sanctions against Iran, including a comprehensive trade embargo imposed by Congress in 1995—had not curbed Iranian support for terrorism. Shortly before the Khobar Towers bombing, Secretary of State Warren Christopher had publicly condemned Iran for its leadership in encouraging and financing terrorism designed to disrupt the Middle East peace process, specifically suicide bombings by Palestinian

Islamic Jihad and Hamas in Israel.²² He made no mention of a possible direct Iranian threat to the United States and recommended only increased economic pressure in order to deny Iran the resources to finance its support for terrorism. The question of responsibility was also disputed. Among the NSC staff, Richard Clarke apparently argued that Iran was guilty, but Anthony Lake believed that the case was circumstantial.²³ Similarly, Syria was known to allow Iranian agents to use Syrian territory to recruit Islamic militants for training in Iran. However, the U.S. need for Syrian support in the Middle East peace process limited its options.

By November Saudi authorities had arrested forty suspects in the bombing. Press reports claimed that the Saudi government was convinced that Iran had sponsored the attack.²⁴ The perpetrators were said to be members of a wing of Hizbullah, a Lebanese Islamic organization trained and equipped by Iran and known for the 1983 U.S. Marines barracks bombing. Other evidence was said to indicate a direct Iranian connection, possibly with Syrian assistance. However, U.S. officials appeared unconvinced; in public they were cautious and noncommittal. When Secretary of Defense William Perry suggested openly that Iran might be behind the bombing, other officials immediately replied that he lacked evidence. Some officials suggested privately that Saudi Arabia might find it convenient to blame foreign or Shiite sources rather than domestic Sunni extremists. Saudi Arabia still appeared reluctant to provide conclusive evidence to the United States, perhaps out of fear that the United States would respond precipitately. A show of force or limited punitive strike against Iran would put Saudi Arabia at risk, not the United States. FBI officials were said to be frustrated and dissatisfied over the progress of the "joint" investigation; they had not been allowed to see the specific evidence linking Iran to the attack. Even so, to allay Saudi fears of leaks, information about the investigation was tightly restricted within the U.S. official community.

After the elections in the United States, Saudi authorities gave FBI director Louis Freeh more detailed information linking Iran to the bombing.²⁵ The Saudi government remained divided, however, over what response to recommend. Some officials favored a strong policy that might include punitive military strikes or an international trade

embargo, such as the one approved by the Security Council against Libya in order to compel the surrender of the agents accused of the Pan Am 103 bombing. Others urged restraint and moderation.

Although the timing was not opportune—some U.S. officials remained skeptical about Saudi claims, the administration was in a postelection transition period, and the FBI had not had time to evaluate the Saudi evidence—the discussion of policy options resumed in December.²⁶ Because the Saudi information was highly sensitive, only top officials were briefed fully, including National Security Adviser Anthony Lake, CIA director John Deutch, and Secretary of Defense William Perry. Alternatives included selective military strikes to shut down Iran's oil export terminal at Kharg Island or to destroy Iran's navy. The United States could also blockade Iranian ports or impose a selective embargo on shipping. Attacks on Hizbullah training camps in Lebanon would be a less confrontational and more proportional military option, but they would not directly damage Iran's interests. The fact that these discussions were leaked to the press could be interpreted as a veiled threat, and Iran apparently expected a strike at this time since its forces were placed on alert. It is not clear, however, whether the threats were meaningful to Iran.

By January 1998 the administration still hesitated, feeling that the evidence linking Iran to the bombing was not definitive enough to justify admittedly risky military action or even to expose Iran in order to mobilize support for sanctions.²⁷ Saudi Arabia still would not allow FBI access to the imprisoned suspects (all Saudi citizens) or provide comprehensive evidence. The previous December FBI director Freeh had told the families of victims that no indictments or charges were imminent. Nevertheless, by late 1998 or early 1999 U.S. officials had apparently acquired convincing evidence that Iran was behind the attack, even if it was insufficient for prosecution.²⁸

Instead of publicizing the information, the administration decided to use it secretly in order to try to induce Iran to abandon terrorism. In May 1997 Mohammed Khatemi's election as president of Iran had led to rapprochement with Saudi Arabia, concluding in an agreement not to support further acts of terrorism. As its critics had urged, the administration decided to pursue an accommodationist strategy in the inter-

est of shifting the regime toward a more moderate stance. In fact, administration officials appeared uncomfortable when reminded of the earlier threats of retaliation. Rather than threatening confrontation, in August 1999 Clinton sent a secret letter to Khatemi.²⁹ The letter, which had been drafted months earlier but not sent, apparently asked for Iranian cooperation in solving the problem of the bombing, which was cited as the most important barrier to a policy of engagement. Congressional opposition, including charges that the administration was deliberately ignoring Iran's role in Khobar Towers, prevented the administration from changing policy without progress on the issue. But the administration had already begun to reduce unilateral sanctions against Iran and to issue public statements that communicated understanding of Iran's resentment of the United States. Iran, however, remained obstinate. At this point the United States again began to refer publicly to possible Iranian involvement, suggesting that Iranian officials were implicated but that it was unclear whether the government itself had directed the attack. Moderates dominated Iranian parliamentary elections in February 2000, further complicating the problem of combining coercion and diplomacy.

There were no further direct Iranian attacks on U.S. interests, but Iran remained on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism.³⁰ In January 2002 President Bush singled out Iran as part of the "axis of evil." The government was also suspected of aiding Palestinian groups conducting bombings in Israel and of assisting al Qaeda militants fleeing Afghanistan.

Military Strikes against Sudan and Afghanistan, 1998

Cruise missile attacks on targets in Sudan and Afghanistan in response to the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were the most obvious use of military force against terrorism before September 11. However, the 1998 bombings must be interpreted in the context of increasing reliance on covert operations to apprehend or kill Bin Laden and disrupt al Qaeda operations, beginning before 1998 and extending to September 2001.

Bin Laden was first identified as a serious threat during investigations into the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.³¹ In 1991, after

Saudi Arabia expelled him, he moved to Sudan. In 1994, at U.S. instigation, Saudi authorities stripped him of his citizenship and much of his property and assets. By May 1996 the United States and Saudi Arabia had convinced Sudan to expel him. Apparently, the United States urged Saudi Arabia and Egypt to accept him but they refused, and the president did not want to spend his political capital on the issue. Sudan was reportedly willing to turn him over to the United States, but the Justice Department lacked the evidence to mount a trial. In order to build regional support for efforts to induce Sudan to expel him, the United States circulated a dossier accusing Bin Laden of training the Somalis who attacked U.S. forces in 1993, a role he was pleased to acknowledge.³²

Thus Bin Laden took refuge in Afghanistan on the eve of the Taliban's takeover. As the State Department's 1997 report on terrorism noted, from August 1996 on, Bin Laden became "very vocal in expressing his approval of and intent to use terrorism."³³ In March 1997, in an interview with CNN, for example, he declared a jihad against the United States, ostensibly as a response to U.S. support for Israel, its military presence in Saudi Arabia, and its "aggressive intervention against Muslims in the whole world."³⁴ This campaign culminated in 1998 with the establishment of an "International Front for Islamic Holy War against the Jews and Crusaders," which effectively merged the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and al Qaeda.³⁵ The front issued an appeal for attacks on U.S. civil and military targets around the world in order to force a U.S. withdrawal from Saudi Arabia and an end to the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem. Although Bin Laden had no clerical authority, the appeal was presented as a *fatwa*, or religious edict, which all Muslims were called on to obey.³⁶

In 1996 the United States had already launched a grand jury investigation into Bin Laden's activities, and the CIA had begun to "disrupt" his network, often with the assistance of foreign governments. By June 1997 the National Security Agency was monitoring telephone conversations in Nairobi. A sealed indictment in June 1998 provided a basis for the arrests of twenty-one al Qaeda militants during the summer. It charged Bin Laden and his associates with attacks on U.S. and UN troops in Somalia and accused him of leading a terrorist conspiracy in

concert with Sudan, Iraq, and Iran. Press reports later indicated the United States was simultaneously plotting a raid into Afghanistan to arrest Bin Laden, as a result of a 1998 finding by President Clinton authorizing specific covert operations that included blocking Bin Laden's financial assets and exercising close surveillance. A worldwide alert issued by the Department of State in March 1998 drew attention to threats against U.S. military and civilians following the February 23 *fatwa*.

Although Sudan had expelled Bin Laden, it continued to support terrorism, in the U.S. view. In 1993 the country had been added to the State Department's list of state sponsors because it provided a base of operations for several terrorist groups, including Hizbullah. In 1995 U.S. intelligence agencies found that Bin Laden and Sudan were cooperating to produce chemical weapons to use against the United States in Saudi Arabia.³⁷ However, owing to the risk of terrorism (reportedly including an assassination attempt against Anthony Lake), the CIA's Khartoum station was shut down in 1995, and the embassy staff was removed for security reasons in 1996. The UN Security Council imposed sanctions when Sudan refused to turn over three Egyptian dissidents linked to an assassination attempt against Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak. In the summer of 1997 U.S. suspicions that Sudan might be developing chemical weapons deepened. In November the United States imposed a wide range of economic sanctions.³⁸ The 1997 State Department annual report accused Sudan of harboring terrorist organizations and assisting Iran in its support of radical Islamic groups. At approximately the same time, the United States began investigating the Al Shifa pharmaceuticals plant, and in July and August 1998 the CIA issued intelligence reports detailing links between the plant and Bin Laden. In fact, an August 4 report referred to new intelligence indicating that Bin Laden had already acquired chemical weapons and might be ready to attack.

There were, however, divisions of opinion within the administration, as there would be throughout Clinton's term. Supporters of a less confrontational approach pointed to positive aspects of Sudan's behavior: assistance in apprehending the world-famous terrorist "Carlos" in 1994; reinstatement of visa requirements for Muslim visitors in 1995;

expulsion of Bin Laden in 1996; and offers in February 1997 and June 1998 to assist in combating terrorism. Unimpressed, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice dismissed these offers as a "charm offensive."³⁹

Before the embassy bombings, Afghanistan was not a primary area of U.S. interest. The United States did not recognize the Taliban government. Afghanistan had ceased to be of strategic importance after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, and the country was isolated during the period of anarchy that followed the collapse of the government in 1992. When the Taliban seized power in 1996, the United States was not alarmed.⁴⁰ Its extremist creed was perceived as "antimodern" rather than "anti-Western," and its opposition to Iran was welcome. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, both U.S. allies, were the regime's main outside contacts.

The August bombings of the embassies in Kenya and Tanzania surprised U.S. authorities. Added to the difficulties of obtaining credible and specific intelligence warnings, bureaucratic coordination was a problem, both between agencies and between Washington and the field. According to the reports of the Accountability Review Boards, in Dar es Salaam, a "low-threat" post, no information or intelligence warned of a possible attack. In Kenya, a "medium-threat" post, no intelligence reports were received immediately before the bombing, but earlier reports referred explicitly to threats of vehicle-bombs and assassinations. These reports, however, were discounted because the sources were discredited or the information was imprecise. It was also believed that actions taken by the CIA and the FBI to confront Bin Laden in Nairobi, including telephone intercepts, raids, and arrests, had effectively eliminated the threat by the latter part of 1997, although in May 1998 surveillance resumed. However, the FBI and the CIA may not have shared what they knew with the State Department.⁴¹ For its part, the State Department found the threat of crime more immediate and specific, a critical "daily reality." The ambassador to Kenya was more sensitive to the threat of terrorism, but her requests for the construction of a less vulnerable building were not met.

On August 20, thirteen days after the embassy bombings, the United States launched six or seven Tomahawk cruise missiles against the Al

Shifa pharmaceuticals plant in Khartoum. Probably sixty to seventy missiles, launched from navy ships in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, struck a complex of base, support, and training camps used by Bin Laden in Afghanistan, near the Pakistani border. The Defense Department released few details, but later accounts disclosed that Pakistan was not informed of the operation in advance and that two of the targeted camps were run by Pakistani intelligence services.⁴²

Secrecy, controversy, and a growing sense of urgency had characterized the decision-making process.⁴³ President Clinton, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Under Secretary of State Thomas Pickering, CIA director George Tenet, National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Henry Hugh Shelton were the key participants. On the NSC staff, Richard Clarke, now the national coordinator for counterterrorism, played a "pivotal role in planning the operation on behalf of the President," according to press reports.⁴⁴ An NSC staff member was quoted as saying, "For the first time, the White House is treating terrorism as a national-security problem, and not as a law-enforcement problem. America has joined the battle."⁴⁵

On August 8, the day after the embassy bombings, presidential advisers asked the Pentagon Joint Staff and the CIA, including the Counterterrorist Center, to draw up a list of possible targets. Approximately twenty sites were selected in Sudan, Afghanistan, and an unidentified third nation. Four days later, the list was narrowed according to the evidence linking each target to terrorism and the risks involved, including the danger of hitting civilians. On August 13, however, the CIA received information that Bin Laden and his key associates planned to meet in Afghanistan on August 20, and this date was selected for the attack.⁴⁶ The intelligence report also indicated that he might be planning further attacks, possibly using chemical weapons. This development imparted a new sense of urgency to the deliberations.

On August 19, with one day left to select the targets, a meeting was held at the White House to decide on final recommendations for the president. The code name of the operation, Infinite Reach, was not coincidental; the administration was apparently determined

to demonstrate that it could strike two targets simultaneously, to match the adversary. The choices were the camps in Afghanistan and two targets in Sudan: the Al Shifa pharmaceuticals plant and a tannery linked to Bin Laden. The attacks were to take place at night, in order to avoid civilian casualties.

The decision to target training camps in Afghanistan was not questioned, but the choice of the Al Shifa plant was contentious. The secrecy surrounding the decision and the haste with which it was made may have precluded a broader examination of the evidence linking Al Shifa to chemical weapons production, and some analysts in the CIA and the State Department remained unconvinced. The FBI and the Defense Intelligence Agency were apparently excluded from the decision, although the FBI was responsible for constructing the legal case to prosecute Bin Laden. Tenet apparently warned that the link between Bin Laden and the factory was indirect and inferential. Berger, however, later countered that the choice of target was not questioned and that the only objections concerned the wisdom of striking Sudan after Bin Laden had left. He concluded the meeting by warning of the consequences if the United States failed to act and Bin Laden then launched a chemical attack.⁴⁷

Apparently, General Shelton also criticized the targeting plan. He felt that the tannery should be taken off the list because it was not involved in chemical weapons production and the attack might cause civilian casualties. He then explained the plans for a military strike to other officers among the Joint Chiefs, who shared his doubts. Later that day Berger informed the president of their objections, and the tannery was dropped from the list.

On the afternoon of August 19 Richard Clarke summoned other administration officials responsible for counterterrorism to his office at the NSC and told them to remain through the evening in order to prepare a public response to follow the bombing. These advisers had not been consulted about the targets and reacted with skepticism when told of the decision, according to reports that Clarke later denied. Similarly, as word of the prospective military strike leaked out, CIA and State Department analysts expressed doubts about the choice of targets. Pickering and Albright were shown a report by the

State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research questioning the Al Shifa evidence, but they held firm.

The strike against Sudan provoked extensive debate and criticism, primarily in the domestic press and among the U.S. political elite. Top U.S. officials, especially Secretary Albright, vigorously defended the action in terms of a mix of objectives—self-defense, preemption, disruption, and deterrence. Albright appeared on all four major television networks to make the case. The U.S. refusal to provide the intelligence information on which the choice of targets was based, on grounds of the need for secrecy, exacerbated the controversy. Almost immediately critics charged that the U.S. government was wrong on several counts in its public explanations that the Al Shifa plant was set up to manufacture chemical weapons.⁴⁸ The Clinton administration then revealed some of its information, insisting that soil samples the CIA had taken from the plant grounds had traces of Empta, a precursor chemical for the production of VX nerve gas.⁴⁹

After the August strikes, the United States kept up the pressure on Bin Laden and al Qaeda. A "Small Group" of the Cabinet met almost weekly, and a Counterterrorism Security Group led by Richard Clarke met two or three times a week. In early September 1998, for example, six bombers were sent to Guam on a training mission characterized as a show of force aimed at Bin Laden, and the secretary of defense was quoted more than once as not ruling out the possibility of further military strikes.⁵⁰ Apparently, the major constraint was time. Using air bases in the Middle East was considered too politically sensitive, but U.S. decision makers insisted on precise weapons. These restrictions meant that cruise missiles had to be launched from ships and required a minimum of six hours' notice. Moreover, U.S. policy was apparently not to strike just any al Qaeda asset but to pinpoint Bin Laden and top al Qaeda leaders, who were moving targets.⁵¹ Clinton had reportedly authorized the CIA or its local recruits to use lethal military force against Bin Laden and his top associates, to the extent of shooting down civilian aircraft should he attempt to leave Afghanistan. In December 1998 CIA director Tenet had issued a written "declaration of war" against Bin Laden, but this move did not lead to budget shifts or reassignment of

personnel, nor was his intent known widely through the intelligence community.⁵²

The Joint Chiefs opposed using Special Forces in a limited military operation, rejecting such proposals from Clinton's advisers as too risky and "naive." Moreover, a raid by Delta Force, for example, would have taken twelve to fourteen hours' advance notice. On the other hand, the White House did not sense that there was sufficient popular support for a major combat commitment, which is what the military recommended. Clinton was also said to fear an embarrassing mistake.⁵³

U.S. policy also stressed law enforcement and sanctions. On August 20 President Clinton had added al Qaeda to the government's official list of terrorist organizations, which blocked their U.S. assets and prohibited all financial transactions. A \$5 million reward was offered for Bin Laden's arrest. With the cooperation of the Kenyan and Tanzanian governments, as well as other allies, the U.S. criminal investigation produced a series of indictments. Within a week after the military strikes, the FBI had brought two suspects back to the United States for trial, and arrests continued at a regular pace. In November and December additional indictments were returned, including charges against Bin Laden.

Another critical part of U.S. policy was pressing Afghanistan to extradite Bin Laden. In October 1999, at U.S. urging, the UN Security Council imposed a deadline of thirty days for the turnover of Bin Laden to a country where he would be tried. The council threatened sanctions to freeze the country's economic assets abroad and curtail international flights by the national airline (the United States had already imposed a unilateral embargo). The Taliban's desire to assume the UN seat still held by representatives of the former regime suggested that a bargain might be possible. However, Taliban leaders replied that they had already restricted Bin Laden's movements and communications but that they could not turn him over. Accordingly, in November sanctions were imposed despite the Taliban's request for a delay. The Taliban's foreign minister, Wakil Ahmad Muttawakil, responded, "We will never hand over Osama bin Laden, and we will not force him out. He will remain free in defiance of America. . . . We will not hand him to an infidel nation."⁵⁴

Still U.S. officials continued to meet with representatives of the Taliban, reiterating the message that the United States was always prepared to talk but that Bin Laden had to be surrendered.⁵⁵ The administration declined the Taliban's offer to convene a panel of Islamic scholars to decide the issue. According to later press reports, U.S. threats then were as "stark" as those issued after September 11 by the Bush administration.⁵⁶ If so, they were not implemented.

The United States also worked to persuade Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates, the only governments with diplomatic relations with Afghanistan, to secure compliance. The State Department coordinator for counterterrorism, Michael Sheehan, was said to have written a secret memorandum calling for more vigorous efforts to cut off financing, sanctuary, and other support from friendly states, Pakistan in particular.⁵⁷ Sheehan's memo was said to urge the administration to make terrorism the central issue in U.S. policy toward Pakistan, but it had only slight effect.

Pakistan had been an important conduit for aid to the rebels during the war against the Soviet Union, and a number of Islamic groups operating in Pakistan had well-known ties to the Taliban. The Pakistani Interservices Intelligence Division (ISI) was connected not only to the Taliban, and thus indirectly to al Qaeda, but to the Harakat ul-Mujadeen, a Kashmiri organization added to the State Department's list of foreign terrorist groups in 1997. The 1998 cruise missile attack on the ISI-run training camps for Kashmiri militants had been a warning signal. Adding to these complications, General Pervez Musharraf seized power in a military coup in October 1999. The United States was thus restrained by Pakistan's status as an ally and by the worry that isolating the regime would interfere with other U.S. policy goals such as restoring democracy and controlling nuclear proliferation.⁵⁸ And Pakistan had been helpful in past instances, such as by arresting Ramzi Youcef in 1995.

Sudan also continued to be an irritant. The 1998 military strike had gained the regime some sympathy in the Arab world. Moreover, U.S. allies, such as Canada, began to show increased interest in investing in the country's oil industry, and Great Britain returned its ambassador. Within the Clinton administration an intense dispute over policy toward

Sudan broke into the headlines in late November 1999. Hard-liners argued for a tougher policy of isolation and pressure. Officials in the Africa bureaus of the State Department and the NSC backed legislation to permit the United States to give food assistance directly to Christian rebels in southern Sudan, who had been fighting the northern-dominated Islamic government since the early 1980s. (Previous legislation had prohibited such assistance.) Other officials, including the State Department's Bureau of Refugee Affairs and two former ambassadors, opposed intervention in the civil war as well as the use of food as a weapon of war. The U.S. embassy remained closed; Under Secretary of State Pickering sought to reopen it, but the Africa bureau countered his efforts. The State Department did appoint a special envoy to Sudan, but the United States still seemed determined to isolate the regime even though the FBI reported that any former terrorist camps in Sudan had been vacated.⁵⁹

In early December 1999 the United States received intelligence information that Bin Laden planned a series of attacks on U.S. citizens around the world to coincide with the New Year.⁶⁰ Jordanian authorities had broken up a plot to attack tourist sites in Jordan and Israel. At the White House, George Tenet and Richard Clarke worked for a month to produce a "Millennium Threats Plan" to disrupt terrorist planning through arrests of members of Bin Laden's network by allies around the world. After considerable argument, the White House also decided to issue a public alert on December 11.

Three days later, customs agents arrested an Algerian, Ahmed Rasmam, crossing the Canadian border into Seattle. Some 130 pounds of explosives as well as detonators were in his car, and he was found to have trained in camps operated by Bin Laden in Afghanistan.⁶¹ This surprise prompted the United States to issue a direct threat. Michael Sheehan telephoned the Taliban's foreign minister to warn him that the United States would not tolerate a refusal to turn over Bin Laden while disavowing responsibility for his actions. Apparently, Sheehan hinted that the United States would use military force against Afghanistan should terrorist attacks occur. This message was reinforced in the State Department's 1999 annual report on terrorism, which declared that "[t]he United States repeatedly made clear to the Tal-

iban that they will be held responsible for any terrorist acts undertaken by Bin Laden while he is in their territory.”⁶² Yet there were no specific public threats or an ultimatum.

In anticipation of the year’s end, efforts to help European allies arrest suspected terrorists abroad were stepped up. After a further warning on December 21, which increased airport security and placed U.S. military bases on high alert, the president reassured the public that the holiday season would not be disturbed. On December 30 the FBI began questioning Arab Americans who appeared suspicious, and operational response teams were placed on the ready in Europe and the United States. Clarke’s Counterterrorism Subgroup kept watch in a top-secret communications vault through New Year’s Eve and concluded with relief that on this occasion the battle had been won. It seemed that the huge increase in the counterterrorism budget—over 90 percent since 1995—had been worth it. However, Clarke was quoted as saying, “It’s not enough to be in a cat-and-mouse game, warning about his plots. . . . We need to seriously think about doing more. Our goal should be to so erode his network of organizations that they no longer pose a serious threat.”⁶³

In fact, by March 2000 U.S. officials were optimistic.⁶⁴ International cooperation had produced arrests in Britain, Germany, Canada, the United States, Jordan, and Pakistan. Experts agreed that Bin Laden had been significantly weakened, although his reputation among Islamic militants remained high. The United States also continued covert operations in Afghanistan. The Predator drone had recently been deployed, and the administration was pursuing the idea of equipping it with a Hellfire missile.

However, efforts to persuade Pakistan to change its policies proved unproductive. In a brief visit in March, Clinton asked Musharraf to halt incursions across the Line of Control in Kashmir and to crack down on militant groups operating in Pakistan, as well as to help pressure the Taliban to turn over Bin Laden. Musharraf was apparently reassuring on the last point but made no concrete promises. He denied that Pakistan was supporting violence against India in Kashmir. The United States had to be content with having made its position clear.⁶⁵

As general policy, the State Department stressed “political and diplomatic efforts that reduce the space in which terrorists operate,” criminal punishment for the perpetrators of terrorist acts, “depoliticizing the message of terrorism,” and international cooperation. The instruments of counterterrorism policy were listed as U.S. leadership, zero tolerance for terrorism, and “draining the swamp” to deny terrorists safe refuge.⁶⁶ The 1999 annual report, an unusually detailed statement of policy, called for efforts to drain the “swamps” where governments were too sympathetic or weak to control terrorists. The aim of U.S. policy was to “compel” these states to end their support for terrorism through the use of political and economic pressures and “other means as necessary.”⁶⁷ The report explained that the United States sought to remove states from the terrorism business entirely by persuading them to rejoin the community of nations committed to ending the threat. A “zero-tolerance” policy would delineate the steps state sponsors must take to be removed from the official list. Other policy differences would not be allowed to stand in the way. The report mentioned positive signs shown in North Korea and Syria, although no similarly veiled overtures were extended to Iran, Sudan, or Afghanistan. In fact, both Afghanistan and Pakistan were criticized, as well as Iran, although neither state was added to the list of state sponsors.⁶⁸ The report did recognize that Afghanistan was not otherwise hostile to U.S. interests, which could be interpreted as a positive signal.⁶⁹

The policy of offering cautious inducements to state sponsors was further accentuated in June, when Secretary of State Albright explained that the Clinton administration had officially replaced the label “rogue states” with the more innocuous term “states of concern.”⁷⁰ The change reflected a belief that more “gentle” terms and a more “nuanced” American vocabulary would advance internal reforms more effectively. Specific mention was made of North Korea, Iran, and Libya. In October the secretary of state paid an official visit to North Korea.

The United States also opened a counterterrorist “dialogue” with Sudan, although unilateral sanctions remained in force. By the summer of 2000 Sudan was eager to see UN sanctions lifted (even though they had not been strictly enforced) and, more ambitiously, lobbied

for a regional seat on the Security Council.⁷¹ The Sudanese argued that their behavior had changed and reminded Washington that the previous December Sudan's president had dismissed his radical Islamic mentor. Sudan had also improved its relationships with Ethiopia and Egypt.

U.S. policy toward nonstates also appeared to shift slightly by the spring of 2000. The 1999 State Department report announced that the goal of U.S. policy was to "eliminate the use of terrorism as a policy instrument," not destroy the organization in question. Should nonstates cease using terrorism, they would be removed from the State Department's list of terrorist organizations. Otherwise, they were reminded of the severe sanctions mandated by legislation enacted in 1996: members and representatives of "FTOs" (foreign terrorist organizations) are ineligible for U.S. visas and subject to exclusion from the country, their funds are blocked, and no U.S. citizen or person within U.S. jurisdiction can provide any material support or resources. This message was probably intended for organizations other than al Qaeda, however.

The National Commission on Terrorism took a more hard-line approach, reflecting differences of opinion between Congress and the administration.⁷² Its June 2000 report recommended that Afghanistan be added to the list of state sponsors and that Pakistan be considered for classification as a state "not cooperating fully," which requires the imposition of limited sanctions. It also recommended strengthening sanctions and legal penalties across the board as well as expanded FBI and CIA efforts to disrupt and prosecute nonstate actors.

In September the State Department added the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) to the list of foreign terrorist organizations. Administration officials explained that the IMU and other Islamic militants in the former Soviet republics in Central Asia were receiving financial support and training from Bin Laden's network.⁷³

On October 12, 2000, in Yemen, a small boat armed with explosives rammed the naval destroyer *Cole* in the Aden harbor. Circumstantial evidence pointed to Bin Laden's involvement, although U.S. officials could not make a definitive case that would justify military retaliation. Yemeni authorities were reluctant to cooperate beyond a

modest extent, which slowed and frustrated FBI investigations. In turn, the U.S. ambassador to Yemen, Barbara Bodine, was irritated by the FBI. Yemeni security police did discover, however, that an attack on another U.S. ship had failed the previous January and that planning for the bombing may have started as early as 1997.

In spite of official U.S. caution, a retaliatory missile attack was widely expected. Within the ranks of the NSC, Richard Clarke was said to have favored bombing al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan.⁷⁴ In December Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh warned against a repetition of the 1998 attack against Afghanistan. It would be a mistake, he said, for a great power to use disproportionate force against a weaker enemy. Instead, if the case against Bin Laden could be proved, the United States should apprehend and prosecute him.⁷⁵

In fact, in public the secretary of state and the president stressed accountability and did not threaten force. The president, at the end of his term, was absorbed with negotiating a peaceful settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A retaliatory strike would have undermined that process. Thus, in addition to ongoing covert operations, the United States urged stiffer sanctions against Afghanistan, including an arms embargo, to force the Taliban to hand over Bin Laden and close all training camps for Islamic militants.⁷⁶ Russia supported the U.S. resolution submitted to the UN Security Council, but Pakistan rejected new sanctions, substantially reducing their potential effectiveness.

Terrorism was not an issue in the 2000 presidential campaign. The Bush administration entered office without a great sense of urgency.⁷⁷ In January Richard Clarke briefed Condoleezza Rice on the terrorist threat.⁷⁸ He apparently described a strategy paper that the Clinton NSC had declined to take up in December. In it he had recommended a number of actions to break up or "roll back" al Qaeda, including the introduction of Special Forces into Afghanistan, air strikes on the training camps, and increased support for the Northern Alliance. However, the proposals were not considered until April, and the policy review process did not conclude until September 4.

Beginning in late March, and continuing into the summer, intelligence agencies noted an unprecedented increase in threat reporting.

However, tactical warning, or “actionable detail,” was lacking.⁷⁹ The Fourth of July, for example, was considered a likely target date, and the State Department issued a worldwide caution on June 22. On June 26 the State Department presented a demarche to Taliban representatives in Pakistan. The Defense Department issued four threat warnings in June and July. There were indications of a planned attack on the president at the Genoa summit meeting in mid-July. The CIA briefed the president on August 6, apparently at his request.

COERCIVE DIPLOMACY AND THE WAR ON TERRORISM

After the September 11 attacks, coercive diplomacy was no longer an option for responding directly to the threat from al Qaeda, if it had ever been. The “war on terrorism” assumed a strategy of destruction leading to defeat. However, the Bush administration did attempt, unsuccessfully, to coerce the Taliban into giving up Bin Laden. Pakistan was also forced to reverse its policy of support for the Taliban, although it is hard to know what mixture of threat and reward the United States employed in this case.

The Bush administration decided immediately that both the Taliban and Pakistan, as well as the rest of the world, should be told “you’re for us or against us.”⁸⁰ In the days following the attacks, the president and the secretary of state both telephoned General Musharraf to demand Pakistani assistance. In his conversation on September 13, Powell was said to have been set to throw a “brushback pitch.” The ambassador to Pakistan then visited Musharraf to specify the details. On September 19 Musharraf delivered a televised speech to the nation in which he dramatically announced his support for the United States. He contended that Pakistan’s survival was at stake and alluded to the danger that India, having quickly proposed allowing the United States to use its air and naval bases, would exploit Pakistan’s isolation and even have it declared a state sponsor of terrorism.⁸¹ He was rewarded with the lifting of sanctions, massive debt relief, and substantial economic assistance. Pakistan became the third-largest beneficiary of U.S. aid, after Israel and Egypt. The alternative was bleak. Pakistan would become a pariah state relegated to crushing poverty and internal instability. It

would be vulnerable to Indian pressure. The U.S. war on terrorism could extend to military strikes against local militant groups operating in Afghanistan and Kashmir from Pakistani territory or to the seizure of Pakistan's nuclear facilities should they appear likely to fall into the hands of Islamic extremists.

Thus the U.S. government first communicated its demand to the Taliban to turn Bin Laden over for trial via a Pakistani military delegation led by General Mahmood Ahmed, the head of the ISI, within days after September 11.⁸² The demand was accompanied by threats of military action, and heavy bombers and other military forces were moved to bases within striking range of Afghanistan.

The Taliban's response was equivocal. It rejected the demand, but Mullah Omar asked the United States for patience and for more information linking Bin Laden to the attacks. Apparently, Mullah Omar suggested that were he to surrender Bin Laden, he would need the endorsement of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, an organization of fifty Muslim nations dominated by Saudi Arabia.⁸³

More contradictory signals followed. On September 20 a clerical grand council, or *shura*, issued a *fatwa* declaring that Bin Laden should be persuaded to leave the country immediately. The *shura* asked Mullah Omar to implement the decision. The United States, however, rejected the move as inadequate. Statements from officials at the Afghan embassy in Islamabad were contradictory; some said that there would be no surrender, while others said that Bin Laden might surrender voluntarily.

During this time Bush decided to issue a public ultimatum, to be communicated in his speech to Congress on the evening of September 20. The idea apparently came from Prime Minister Tony Blair. The speech demanded that the Taliban deliver to the United States all al Qaeda leaders, release all foreign nationals, close all terrorist training camps, and hand over all terrorists to "appropriate authorities." The president concluded: "These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act, and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate."⁸⁴ No deadline was imposed nor was a reward offered, at least not in public. Within hours, a Taliban emissary announced defiantly that its "final

decision" was to reject the ultimatum: "So the only master of the world wants to threaten us. But make no mistake: Afghanistan . . . is a swamp. People enter here laughing, are exiting injured."⁸⁵ The Taliban official implied that Mullah Omar had overruled the *shura's* decree that Bin Laden be asked to leave Afghanistan. It was not certain, however, that Taliban officials had the power to hand over Bin Laden should they wish to.

As the United States kept up a steady pace of military preparations, Mullah Omar issued his own demand and counterthreat that the United States withdraw its military forces from the Persian Gulf and end its "partisanship" in Palestine or risk involvement in a "vain and bloody war."⁸⁶ Yet Taliban officials at the embassy in Pakistan read a statement from the Foreign Affairs Ministry asking "the American people to urge their authorities to save the people of Afghanistan and America from the impacts and consequences and untoward problems of a war." The Taliban faced a growing refugee crisis—more than a million people were said to have fled the cities in anticipation of war—as well as diplomatic isolation. The United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia severed diplomatic ties and Pakistan withdrew its diplomats.

Possibly hoping to exploit divisions within the Taliban ranks, the United States asked the Pakistani ISI officials who had remained in Afghanistan after their first unsuccessful mission to go back to the Taliban and repeat the U.S. demand. This request apparently preceded a public Pakistani warning that it did not want to see a new government in Afghanistan, particularly one constructed as a result of U.S. support for the Northern Alliance.⁸⁷ The Pakistani overture appeared to bear fruit when the Taliban issued another statement announcing that Bin Laden had been asked to leave. Interpreting this development as a hopeful sign, or at least as a reprieve, and desperate to avoid war, Musharraf again sent General Mahmood Ahmed, the head of the ISI. This time he was accompanied by a group of militant Islamic clerics who had taught many of the Taliban, including Mullah Omar, at madrassahs in Pakistan. The mission went to Kandahar to meet with Mullah Omar himself.⁸⁸ Pakistani authorities hoped that the group of clerics could serve as a substitute for the Islamic Conference that Mullah Omar had initially called for and that they could persuade him that

resistance only harmed the cause of Islam. Information about political conditions in Afghanistan had become scarce since Western reporters had been expelled, but there were indications that the Taliban's authority was eroding.

However, within almost a day the Pakistani mission was rebuffed.⁸⁹ One of the Pakistani clerics reported that Mullah Omar was not afraid of war. Some of the military officers in the delegation suggested that the Taliban's leaders had no grasp of U.S. military power or of the outrage that the September 11 attacks had provoked. One Pakistani official reportedly said, "You tell them they may die, and the Taliban with them, and they are unmoved." Furthermore, while the Pakistani clerics had the advantage of being credible intermediaries, they were also fundamentally unsympathetic to the U.S. demands.

This failure as well as contradictory statements from the Afghani ambassador to Pakistan may have convinced the U.S. government to apply more coercion. Bush secretly approved aid for the Northern Alliance as well as psychological operations (e.g., radio broadcasts and air drops of leaflets) as a "nonmilitary" way of pressuring the Taliban. The presence of Special Forces in Afghanistan was reported in the press. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld set out on a tour of the region to build a supporting coalition, including Uzbekistan. It also became evident to the Taliban that the ISI and the CIA were trying to persuade Pashtun warlords in the border areas to defect.⁹⁰

The Taliban's response was to hedge and try to buy time. The ambassador to Pakistan said that although the request to leave had been delivered to Bin Laden, he had not answered. Both Rumsfeld and Musharraf expressed public doubt that the Taliban would give him up.⁹¹ Nevertheless, Pakistan resolved to send a third delegation to Kandahar, this time of clerics only, on October 2. Simultaneously, a blunt public threat came from Tony Blair on October 2. In a speech to the Labour Party annual conference he asserted: "I say to the Taliban: surrender the terrorists, or surrender power."⁹² Within the day the Taliban's ambassador to Pakistan appealed to the United States not to initiate military action, saying that while Taliban leaders still required proof of Bin Laden's complicity, they were ready to negotiate with Washington.⁹³ He suggested that Bin Laden might be turned

over to some third country, but he also replied to Tony Blair's threat earlier that day: only Allah, he said, could overthrow the Taliban. At the same time Mullah Omar continued to issue belligerent statements, in particular condemning U.S. moves to build a coalition to support the return of the former king, Zahir Shah. In tacit recognition of Pakistani complaints that they, too, lacked evidence, the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan visited Musharraf to brief him on Bin Laden's role.

In Washington, on October 6 Bush again publicly threatened Taliban leaders that they had been warned and that time was running out.⁹⁴ Winter would be closing in by mid-November, which also marked the start of Ramadan. Military mobilization was proceeding rapidly, with a thousand troops from the Tenth Mountain Division deployed in Uzbekistan and allied assistance lined up. It was clear that the United States intended to use force to disable the Taliban's air defenses in order to facilitate ground operations.

The Taliban responded by (1) preparing for military action, especially by trying to ensure the loyalty of regional commanders, (2) issuing rhetorical threats of a "holy war," and (3) offering to release eight imprisoned Christian aid workers *if* the United States stopped its threats, in effect making them hostages.⁹⁵ A spokesman reiterated the well-established Taliban position that it lacked evidence of Bin Laden's guilt, and he denied that there were terrorist training camps in Afghanistan in which the September 11 hijackers could have trained. Press reports now referred to splits within the Taliban ranks, with a more "realist" faction favoring compromise.

On October 7 the U.S. and British military campaign opened with cruise missile and long-range bomber attacks. Bush announced that the actions were designed not only to disrupt terrorism but also to damage the Taliban's military capabilities. Taliban leaders had been warned, he said, and now they would pay a price for resisting U.S. demands.⁹⁶ Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld added that the goal was to punish the Taliban and weaken it so severely that it would not be able to withstand an assault from the Northern Alliance or other opposition groups. The targets were military airfields, air defense sites, and command centers, including Mullah Omar's residence in Kandahar.⁹⁷ On the second day of bombing, the United States attacked Afghan

ground forces north of Kabul who were fighting Northern Alliance units. Rumsfeld announced that a U.S. goal was to help Afghan forces interested in overthrowing and expelling the Taliban. After three days, the United States effectively controlled Afghan air space and began bombing troop facilities and other ground force targets using cluster bombs and other "area munitions." The next stage would involve helicopter gunships and special operations forces.

On October 11, in a White House news conference, Bush offered to reconsider the military offensive if the Taliban surrendered Bin Laden.⁹⁸ You have a second chance, he said, to cough up him and his people. Then the United States would reconsider its actions in Afghanistan. He also spoke for the first time of the prospect of nation building in Afghanistan, looking forward to a post-Taliban era.

The Taliban quickly rejected the invitation but said that it would begin discussions *if* the bombing stopped. A top Taliban leader, the second in command to Mullah Omar, responded: "We would be ready to hand him over to a third country. It can be negotiated provided the U.S gives us evidence and the Taliban are assured that the country is neutral and will not be influenced by the United States."⁹⁹

Bush countered by telling reporters emphatically and repeatedly: "When I said no negotiations, I meant no negotiations," "this is non-negotiable," "there's nothing to negotiate about," and "there is no negotiation, period."¹⁰⁰ He refused to discuss the question of providing evidence since "we know he's guilty." He reiterated the demands set out in his September 20 speech to Congress: the Taliban must turn over Bin Laden and the al Qaeda organization; destroy the terrorist camps and give the United States access to them; protect all foreign journalists, diplomats, and aid workers; and release all foreign nationals in custody.

In the meantime Powell left Washington for a visit to Pakistan, India, and China. He arrived in Islamabad on the evening of October 15. There he learned that meetings between the Taliban's foreign minister and Pakistani officials, including the head of the military intelligence directorate, had resulted in a request for a bombing pause while Taliban moderates tried to persuade Mullah Omar to agree to hand over Bin Laden.¹⁰¹ At least two or three days would be required

for officials in Kabul to travel to Kandahar, since the bombing campaign had cut off all communications and made travel by road or helicopter too dangerous. Most observers interpreted the move as a sign of a split in Taliban ranks. Otherwise, the intentions behind the request were not clear: was it a sign of a genuine difference of opinion or an attempt to confuse and buy time? If the plea was sincere, was it likely that Mullah Omar could be convinced to change his mind, or that he could be displaced? Observers commented that the Taliban foreign minister was not a close associate of Mullah Omar. And, as was the case with earlier offers, it was not certain that the Taliban could implement a promise to turn over Bin Laden, given the strength of al Qaeda forces as well as the disruption caused by the bombing campaign.

Probably as both an attempt to encourage defections within Taliban ranks by offering a reward for compromise and a concession to Pakistan's interests, Powell agreed with Musharraf that moderate elements of the Taliban could participate in a new Afghani government.¹⁰² Powell's message was ambiguous, however. He referred to "listening to" the Taliban movement and "taking them into account," since the Taliban could not be "exported," but he also insisted that this "particular regime" had to go. It was also unclear whether Bin Laden had to be surrendered as a condition for "moderate" participation. In the previous twenty-four hours, bombing of Taliban positions near Kabul had escalated, although the United States generally refrained from attacking the Taliban front lines that prevented the Northern Alliance from moving against Kabul or Mazar-i-Sharif. The prospects for bargaining were further diminished when a spokesman for the Northern Alliance refused adamantly to accept any Taliban members in a future coalition government.

The day after the Powell-Musharraf news conference in Islamabad, Mullah Omar sent a radio message encouraging Taliban troops to continue to fight the infidel. He promised that they would triumph as they had over the Soviet Union in the 1980s. He added, "We will succeed whether we live or die. Death will definitely come one day. We are not worried about death. We should die as Muslims. It does not matter whether we die today or tomorrow. The goal is martyrdom."¹⁰³ The

regime's last remaining ambassador, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, just having returned to Pakistan from a week in Afghanistan, echoed his resolve. He denied that there was a "moderate" Taliban: "All the Taliban are the same, and they follow the views of the leadership. . . . On the issue of Osama, there is no change in that. Osama is a faith issue, and we are not going to change our faith for anyone."¹⁰⁴

On October 19 the United States launched a helicopter commando raid against Mullah Omar's compound, the first large-scale commando attack since the intervention in Somalia in 1993. Two days later, bombing of Taliban front-line defenses around Kabul began, and Powell indicated that the Northern Alliance would be encouraged to move on Kabul. The United States had lost patience. The military campaign could no longer wait for Taliban compliance or a defection by "moderates."¹⁰⁵ The aim was now decisive military victory and the replacement of the regime.

CONCLUSION

The Record

The record of coercive diplomacy is not encouraging. The outcomes of even the simplest cases of state-sponsored terrorism are not clear-cut.¹⁰⁶ The response to Iraq in 1993 can be considered an example of appropriately implemented coercive diplomacy, but its success or failure is hard to judge. That assessment depends on whether the United States was attempting to halt direct attacks on U.S. targets or force Iraq out of the business of supporting terrorism altogether. If the judgment is based on the first assumption, then compliance can only be inferred from lack of evidence of noncompliance. This is a weak standard, since Iraq never admitted to having organized the plot against President Bush, much less to having complied with U.S. demands not to continue. If the judgment is based on the second assumption, then coercive diplomacy failed.

The case of Iran in 1996 is even more problematic. A conclusion about whether or not coercive diplomacy was employed depends on estimating the seriousness of U.S. threats of military retaliation for the

1996 Khobar Towers bombing. Although the United States decided not to use force, Iran, like Iraq, did not directly attack U.S. targets again. However, like Iraq, Iran also stayed in the terrorism business and refused to cooperate in resolving the dispute over responsibility for the Khobar Towers bombing. The United States was initially constrained from using force by lack of information that linked Iran conclusively to the bombing. When the evidence was finally acquired, internal changes in Iran had made the use of force too costly in terms of its effect on other policy interests, especially reforming Iran. Saudi Arabia's reluctance to share data, in part a consequence of the fear of unilateral U.S. retaliation, contributed to the U.S. dilemma. Thus, paradoxically, a willingness to use force made it less feasible. Furthermore, unlike with the case of Iraq, the administration was divided over how to respond to Iran.

Dealing with the more lethal and ambiguous threat of al Qaeda was even more complicated. This conflict was a zero-sum game. One cannot conclude either that the United States employed coercive diplomacy or that coercive diplomacy would have been an appropriate response to such an adversary, however expertly applied. From the beginning, the U.S. strategy was not to induce Bin Laden and al Qaeda to stop terrorism but to disrupt and destroy so as to make continued terrorism impossible. It was not the group's collective intentions but its capabilities that mattered.¹⁰⁷ The cruise missile attacks in 1998 were not so much exemplary uses of coercive force as symbolic statements of political commitment to combating terrorism. They inflicted little pain on al Qaeda. Covert operations in Afghanistan were meant to arrest or kill Bin Laden.¹⁰⁸ After 1998 Bin Laden's indictment by a U.S. court could not be ignored in the interest of striking a bargain. Coercive diplomacy and a strategy of law enforcement, or "bringing to justice," may not be complementary.

Furthermore, even if coercive diplomacy had been the intent, and al Qaeda not been impervious to coercion, its use would not necessarily have prevented specific attacks, notably those of September 11. Although the United States received streams of warnings, none were specific or timely enough to issue a threat or use demonstrative force to compel al Qaeda to desist. This limitation on coercive diplomacy was exacerbated by the organizational structure of al

Qaeda. Cells such as the one organized by Mohammed Atta operated with considerable autonomy. Changing the calculations of the top leadership at the last minute would probably not have defeated a plot already in the last planning stages.

Coercive diplomacy was more relevant when it came to altering the behavior of the states that directly or indirectly assisted al Qaeda, but significant constraints existed. First, consider Sudan. The 1998 attack on the Al Shifa pharmaceuticals plant might be interpreted as a demonstration of force, but it was modest. Perhaps the strike communicated to Sudan that any further assistance to Bin Laden would be similarly punished, but the likelihood of escalation was low. Sudan's behavior improved, but probably not as the result of threats of military force. The United States also resisted opportunities to offer rewards. Perhaps Sudan's behavior was not threatening enough. Sudan, after all, had expelled Bin Laden. It took measures to reduce its ties to radical Islamic groups and offered other positive signals. The links to terrorism that remained were hard to prove. As a consequence of these ambiguities, U.S. officials disagreed on the subject of how to treat Sudan. None of these factors are favorable for successful coercive diplomacy.

Pakistan was also a difficult case. Pakistan's support for the Taliban was not disguised, and the United States tried unsuccessfully to exploit Pakistan's leverage over the Taliban to cut its ties with al Qaeda. However, before September 11 the United States hesitated to put pressure on Pakistan, placing other foreign policy interests ahead of preventing terrorism. The United States objected to Pakistan's support for militant groups operating in Kashmir and distrusted Pakistan because of the ISI's connections with the Taliban, but the Clinton administration took almost no visible action beyond the cruise missile attack on the ISI-run training camps in Afghanistan in 1998.

Policy shifted after September 11. The Bush administration both promised rewards and threatened punishment, but it is hard to know whether these threats included military force. The threats, which were kept private, probably centered on economic and political costs. However, Pakistan's conflict with India and the risk of domestic unrest created at least an implicit sense of threat. This case shows that it is

difficult to coerce allies whose assistance is needed even when they are uncooperative.

The least ambiguous case is the unsuccessful use of coercive diplomacy to induce the Taliban to turn over Bin Laden. Under both administrations, the objective of coercive diplomacy was precise. It was communicated clearly. After 1998 the Clinton administration combined threats and rewards, although in principle officials rejected the idea of "rewarding terrorism." The 1998 cruise missile attacks were balanced against normalization of relations, which presumably meant the removal of sanctions and official recognition of the regime. The public record does not show any specific threats or the insistence on an ultimatum. Various options for coercion were apparently considered—aid to the Northern Alliance, for example—but rejected. Rhetorical threats were not implemented, even after the discovery of al Qaeda plots in December 1999 and the USS *Cole* bombing in October 2000.

After September 11 the Bush administration continued coercive diplomacy. Bush gave the Taliban several "second chances" after issuing a public ultimatum for compliance and even after launching military operations. However, the Taliban leadership may not have believed U.S. promises. In October the offer to "moderates" of a place in a future government was a threat to the leaders who were clearly not moderates. As coercive military pressure mounted, the Taliban's ability to comply decreased correspondingly. This relationship suggests another potential paradox: as the defending state escalates the use of force, the ability of the adversary to comply decreases. The adversary may become more willing but less able. At this point, the United States had superior motivation, but Taliban leaders may not have recognized it, despite Pakistan's efforts to convince them. The Taliban may have mistaken not just the new U.S. willingness to conduct a ground war but the prospect that a war could be fought at so little cost. Pakistani intermediaries reported that the Taliban had no conception of U.S. capabilities or motivation after September 11. One could argue that the Bush administration should have been more patient in waiting for a response to its demands, and the public use of an ultimatum by both Bush and Blair may have set back efforts to

reach a compromise. However, the United States had made the same demand consistently since 1998. The Taliban had taken three years to consider its options. Situational factors (the advent of winter and of Ramadan) also constrained the Bush administration's choices.

Implications

It is important for a government to know which adversaries can be coerced and which cannot. This determination is harder to make in the case of states than of nonstates, probably because policymakers assume that states possess tangible assets that their leaders and citizens value enough not to want to risk losing them. A regime may be willing to sacrifice its hold on power rather than comply with the coercer's demands. Furthermore, the government may be mistaken in believing that the regime that is assisting terrorism can comply with its demands. Possibly the Taliban leaders believed that turning over Bin Laden would cost them their tenure anyway, because the surrender would remove what legitimacy they had. As they said, it was an issue of faith. Possibly the Taliban was also so dependent on or intermingled with al Qaeda forces that it had no control over Bin Laden from the outset.

Before September 11 the United States found it difficult to threaten escalation or to communicate a sense of urgency. Terrorism was not the top national security priority. One could blame lack of domestic public support, owing to failure to recognize the threat or aversion to U.S. military casualties.¹⁰⁹ However, the Clinton administration did not advocate or try to justify a stronger coercive policy against the Taliban or against Pakistan. The anticipation of international disapproval of the use of force might also have restricted policy choices. Furthermore, the hiatus between the last months of the Clinton administration and the Bush administration's conclusion of the policy review process the next fall created a policy vacuum.

Many questions remain. One is whether the Taliban's compliance with the demand to turn over Bin Laden and his associates and to shut down al Qaeda's training camps would actually have halted terrorism or prevented the September 11 attacks. The hijacking plot, like most other spectacular terrorist attacks, was initiated years in advance. Al Qaeda might have survived without sanctuary in

Afghanistan. The leadership of Bin Laden may not be critical to the organization's existence.

Another question concerns the alternatives to coercive diplomacy. Was there a strategy with a better conceptual fit, leaving aside the issue of whether it would be politically acceptable? Even the "war on terrorism" has not guaranteed long-term success. Terrorism is extraordinarily hard to control, much less defeat, especially in the short term. The outcomes of policies are highly uncertain and contingent. Neither scholars nor practitioners know precisely how and why campaigns of terrorism end.¹¹⁰ Expectations of what coercive diplomacy can achieve may be too high.

Policymakers need a mix of strategies. They also need to be consistent and clear about the strategies they are using, to ensure that they are compatible with each other, and to tailor them to a range of different actors, not all of whom are adversaries. Policymakers must resign themselves to dealing with high levels of ambiguity, complexity, and uncertainty. Success and failure will be hard to judge.

NOTES

1. See Tim Zimmermann, "Coercive Diplomacy and Libya," in *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 2d ed., ed. Alexander L. George and William E. Simons (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994), 201-228. The United States had also used limited military force in efforts to apprehend individual terrorist suspects.

2. *Public Report of the Vice President's Task Force on Combating Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1986), esp. 9, 13.

3. In April 1996 Saudi authorities televised the confessions of four religious militants who claimed to be motivated by dissatisfaction with the regime. Three had fought in the wars in Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Chechnya. In May they were executed.

4. See "A False Alarm (This Time): Preventive Defense against Catastrophic Terrorism," in Ashton B. Carter and William J. Perry, *Preventive Defense: A New Security Strategy for America*, ed. Ashton B. Carter and William J. Perry (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1999), 143-174.

5. See Martha Crenshaw, "The Logic of Terrorism: Terrorism as the

Product of Strategic Choice,” in *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*, ed. Walter Reich (Cambridge: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Cambridge University Press, 1990).

6. On the question of how to coerce terrorists, see Joseph Lepgold, “Hypotheses on Vulnerability: Are Terrorists and Drug Traffickers Coercible?” in *Strategic Coercion: Concepts and Cases*, ed. Lawrence Freedman (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); and Ian O. Lesser, “Countering the New Terrorism: Implications for Strategy,” in *Countering the New Terrorism*, ed. Ian O. Lesser et al. (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1999). See also Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and RAND, 2002).

7. Some nonstates have alternatives to terrorism, while others do not. This is an important consideration in choosing a defensive or coercive strategy.

8. Zimmermann, “Coercive Diplomacy and Libya,” 204.

9. This account is based on David Von Drehle and R. Jeffrey Smith, “U.S. Strikes Iraq for Plot to Kill Bush,” *Washington Post*, June 27, 1993; and Eric Schmitt, “Raid on Baghdad,” *New York Times*, June 28, 1993.

10. The text of the president’s statement on June 26 can be found in *Washington Post*, June 27, 1993, A20.

11. The Kuwaiti trial of the accused plotters had not been completed, however.

12. Richard L. Berke, “Raid on Baghdad: Poll Shows Raid on Iraq Buoyed Clinton’s Popularity,” *New York Times*, June 29, 1993.

13. William Safire, “Slapping Saddam’s Wrist,” *New York Times*, June 28, 1993.

14. Martin Walker and Michael White, “Clinton Sparks Anger Abroad,” *Guardian*, June 29, 1993.

15. Stephen Hubbell, “Arab States Condemn US Strike on Baghdad,” *Christian Science Monitor*, June 29, 1993.

16. Paul Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), 103–104.

17. R. Jeffrey Smith, “Critics ‘Wrong,’ CIA Chief Says,” *Washington Post*, September 6, 1996.

18. See U.S. Department of Defense, *Report to the President and Congress on the Protection of U.S. Forces Deployed Abroad* (with the Downing

Investigation Report, August 30, 1996) (Washington, D.C.: September 15, 1996). In June 2001 indictments returned before the U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Virginia, revealed that plans for the attack started in 1993 and that the Saudis had arrested some members of the group before the bombing.

19. Jeff Gerth and Elaine Sciolino, "U.S. Takes Hard Look at Saudis with Bombing and Shah in Mind," *New York Times*, December 1, 1996.

20. David B. Ottaway, "U.S. Considers Slugging It Out with International Terrorism," *Washington Post*, October 17, 1996.

21. See Smith, "Critics 'Wrong,' CIA Chief Says." Smith also notes that Deutch's speech was remarkably lacking in detail, apparently because its contents had been strongly debated within the agency. The opponents of disclosure seemed to prevail. The CIA was apparently uncomfortable about defending the agency against partisan attacks, but National Security Adviser Anthony Lake was angry. Deutch also announced that the CIA was establishing a new "terrorist warning group."

22. Warren Christopher, "Fighting Terrorism: Challenges for Peacemakers" (address to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, May 21, 1996), in *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, June 3, 1996, 277-279.

23. Michael Dobbs, "An Obscure Chief in U.S. War on Terror," *Washington Post*, April 2, 2000. In 1994 Lake had described a moderate and non-threatening policy toward Iran, suggesting that normal relations would be "conceivable" if Iran ceased its support for terrorism and its challenge to non-proliferation principles. He described U.S. policy as isolation and containment. See "Confronting Backlash States," *Foreign Affairs* (March-April 1994).

24. R. Jeffrey Smith, "Saudis Hold 40 Suspects in GI Quarters Bombing," *Washington Post*, November 1, 1996. The details of the Saudi findings and U.S. response come primarily from this reporting.

25. R. Jeffrey Smith, "Saudis Offer Data to U.S. Linking Extremists, Bomb," *Washington Post*, December 11, 1996.

26. Thomas W. Lippman and Bradley Graham, "U.S. Mulls Possible Response to Iran in Saudi Bombing," *Washington Post*, December 22, 1996. See also Robin Wright, "Iran Braces to Get Blamed for Bombing," *Los Angeles Times*, December 25, 1996.

27. R. Jeffrey Smith, "New Questions about Old Issues," *Washington Post*, January 8, 1998. Alternatively, a conclusive demonstration of Iranian complicity might persuade U.S. allies to support economic sanctions. The following April, when a German court concluded that Iran's "Committee for Special Operations" had ordered the assassinations of Kurdish dissidents, the State Department seized the opportunity to criticize the Europeans for maintaining

a "critical dialogue" with Iran. The European Union was asked again to join in U.S. sanctions in order to contain Iran. See Alan Cowell, "Berlin Court Says Top Iran Leaders Ordered Killings," *New York Times*, April 11, 1997. The government was also coming under criticism at home for its policy of "dual containment" of Iraq and Iran. An impressive trio of former officials warned that although direct attacks on Americans called for retaliation, containment was not a solution to the general problem of terrorism. They urged that Iran's support for terrorism be addressed by "specific policy instruments," not the current crude and counterproductive attempt to isolate the entire country. They also advocated incentives for cooperation. See Zbigniew Brzezinski, Brent Scowcroft, and Richard Murphy, "Differentiated Containment," *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 3 (May-June 1997): 20-41.

28. Jane Perlez and James Risen, "Clinton Seeks an Opening to Iran," *New York Times*, December 3, 1999. The indictments handed down in June 2001 did not name or charge any Iranians, although the involvement of Iranian military officials was described.

29. *Ibid.*

30. See U.S. Department of State, Office of the Secretary of State and Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, for the years 1996, 1997, 1998, and 1999.

31. On U.S. awareness of the threat before the August bombings, see Vernon Loeb, "Where the CIA Wages Its New World War," *Washington Post*, September 9, 1998; Benjamin Weiser, "Saudi Is Indicted in Bomb Attacks on U.S. Embassies," and "Senior Aide Implicating Bin Laden in Terrorism," *New York Times*, November 5, 1998, and December 3, 1998, respectively; and James Risen and Benjamin Weiser, "Before Bombings, Omens and Fears," *New York Times*, January 9, 1999. Further information was revealed during the trial in New York of some of those responsible, from January to July 2001. Extensive coverage can be found in the *New York Times*, and much of the trial testimony has been made public.

32. See "Planning for Terror but Failing to Act," *New York Times*, December 30, 2001. This lengthy overview has helped inform the following discussion.

33. U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1997*.

34. Osama bin Laden, interview with Peter Arnett, accessed at CNN's homepage, "CNN/Time Impact: Holy Terror?"

35. See Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

36. The text is available at www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/980223-

fatwa.htm. Bin Laden also gave an interview to ABC News in May. See "Talking with Terror's Banker" on www.abcnews.com. See also the analysis of the declaration by Bernard Lewis, "License to Kill," *Foreign Affairs* 77, no. 6 (November-December 1998): 14-19.

37. Details of U.S. information about Sudan and chemical weapons production are taken from James Risen, "To Bomb Sudan Plant, or Not: A Year Later, Debates Rankle," *New York Times*, October 27, 1999.

38. Thomas W. Lippman, "Clinton Imposes Sanctions on Sudan, Freezes Assets," *Washington Post*, November 5, 1997.

39. Tim Weiner and James Risen, "Decision to Strike Factory in Sudan Based on Surmise," *New York Times*, September 21, 1998.

40. Michael Dobbs, "Analysts Feel Militia Could End Anarchy," *Washington Post*, September 28, 1996.

41. See *Report of the Accountability Review Boards: Bombings of the US Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on August 7, 1998*. January 11, 1999. Available at www/zgram.net/embassybombing.htm. See further details from the classified report in Risen and Weiser, "Before Bombings, Omens and Fears." According to this account, the Kenyan authorities arrested a group of suspects, but the CIA station chief declined to interview them. Also see Benjamin Weiser, "U.S. to Offer Detailed Trail of bin Laden in Bomb Trial," *New York Times*, January 13, 2001.

42. Seymour Hersh, "The Missiles of August," *New Yorker*, October 12, 1998, 34-41. See also James Risen and Judith Miller, "Pakistani Intelligence Had Ties to al Qaeda," *New York Times*, October 29, 2001.

43. See Hersh, "The Missiles of August," and Risen, "To Bomb Sudan Plant, or Not." The following description of the decision-making process is based largely on these accounts, and also on background interviews with some officials. See also Tim Weiner and Steven Lee Myers, "Flaws in U.S. Account Raise Questions on Strike in Sudan," *New York Times*, August 29, 1998; and Weiner and Risen, "Decision to Strike Factory in Sudan Based on Surmise."

44. Risen, "To Bomb Sudan Plant, or Not."

45. Hersh, "The Missiles of August."

46. It appears that the aim was not so much to kill Bin Laden (although this would have been a welcome side effect) but to demonstrate U.S. knowledge of his location.

47. Former NSC staff members Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon report that the decision was unanimous and argue that the press underestimated the importance of Al Shifa. Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, "A Failure of Intelligence?" in *Striking Terror: America's New War*, ed.

Robert B. Silvers and Barbara Epstein (New York: New York Review of Books, 2002). Benjamin and Simon are also the authors of *The Age of Sacred Terror* (New York: Random House, 2002).

48. See Michael Barletta, "Chemical Weapons in the Sudan: Allegations and Evidence," *Nonproliferation Review* 6, no. 1 (fall 1998): 1-37. As a counter to this view, consult Benjamin and Simon, "A Failure of Intelligence?"

49. Risen, "To Bomb Sudan Plant, or Not?"; and Tim Weiner and Steven Lee Myers, "U.S. Notes Gaps in Data about Drug Plant but Defends Attack," *New York Times*, September 3, 1998. See also James Risen and David Johnston, "Experts Find No Arms Chemicals at Bombed Sudan Plant." *New York Times*, February 9, 1999, and the discussion in Paul Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), 107-109.

50. "Bombers Sent to Train on Guam," *New York Times*, September 3, 1998.

51. See Barton Gellman, "Clinton's Covert War" and "Terrorism Wasn't a Top Priority," *Washington Post*, National Weekly Edition, January 7-13 and 14-20, 2002, respectively. Both provide details on the 1998-2000 period.

52. *Joint Inquiry Staff Statement, Part I*, September 18, 2002, available on the House and Senate Intelligence Committee websites (intelligence.house.gov and intelligence.senate.gov). See p. 10. In 1999 only three analysts were assigned full-time to tracking Bin Laden; there were five by 2000 (p. 18). The Counterterrorist Center staff doubled after September 11, from four hundred to eight hundred.

53. See Gellman, "Clinton's Covert War."

54. Wakil Ahmad Muttawakil, quoted in Pamela Constable, "U.N. Imposes Air, Economic Sanctions on Afghanistan," *Washington Post*, November 14, 1999.

55. Barbara Crossette, "U.S. Steps Up Pressure on Taliban to Deliver Osama bin Laden," *New York Times*, October 19, 1999.

56. Gellman, "Clinton's Covert War."

57. See James Risen and Judith Miller, "Pakistani Intelligence Had Ties to Al Qaeda," *New York Times*, October 29, 2001.

58. See John Lancaster, "U.S. Pressures Pakistan to Cut Ties with Extremist Groups," *Washington Post*, January 26, 2000.

59. Among numerous press reports, see Jane Perlez, "U.S. Weighs Using Food as Support for Sudan Rebels" and "Friendly Fire: In a War, Even Food

Aid Can Kill," *New York Times*, November 29, 1999, and December 5, 1999, respectively. See also Mark Huband, "Debate Grows on How to Deal with Sudan," *Financial Times*, December 7, 1999. Susan Rice, the assistant secretary of state for African affairs, was said to view the Sudanese regime as "evil incarnate" and to be the main proponent of a hard-line policy.

60. Neil King, Jr., and David S. Cloud, "Casting a Global Net, U.S. Security Forces Survive Terrorist Test," *Wall Street Journal*, March 8, 2000. See also Dobbs, "An Obscure Chief in U.S. War on Terror."

61. He intended to bomb the Los Angeles International Airport, a target he chose himself, according to his testimony. See Laura Mansnerus and Judith Miller, "Terrorist Details His Training in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, July 4, 2001.

62. U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism, 1999* (April 2000), 7.

63. Dobbs, "An Obscure Chief in U.S. War on Terror."

64. David A. Vise and Lorraine Adams, "Bin Ladin Weakened, Officials Say," *Washington Post*, March 11, 2000. However, shortly after this report Clinton canceled a visit to a village in Bangladesh during his South Asia visit, owing to threats from Bin Laden. See "Report on bin Laden Altered Clinton Plan," *New York Times*, March 21, 2000.

65. Jane Perlez, "Clinton Entreats Pakistan to Tread Lightly in Kashmir," *New York Times*, March 26, 2000. In fact, the Secret Service opposed the trip because of concerns about Clinton's safety. Extraordinary security precautions were taken, and the trip lasted only a few hours.

66. See Ambassador Michael Sheehan, "Post-Millennium Terrorism Review" (speech to the Brookings Institution, February 10, 2000), as well as his testimony before the House Committee on International Relations (July 12, 2000). See also "Fact Sheet: U.S. Counterterrorism Efforts since the 1998 U.S. Embassy Bombings in Africa," August 7, 2000. The texts are available on the Office of Counterterrorism's website, state.gov/s/ct.

67. In contrast, the 1998 report referred to "forcing" state sponsors to change their behavior. The reports usually appear in the spring of the following year. This view is also corroborated by later *Washington Post* interviews with Ambassador Michael Sheehan (see Gellman, "Clinton's Covert War").

68. In an interview with Judith Miller, Ambassador Sheehan explained that Afghanistan was not added to the list because the United States did not recognize the Taliban government, and that Pakistan was a "friendly state" trying to improve its record, which badly needed it. See "South Asia Called Major Terror Hub in a Survey by U.S.," *New York Times*, April 30, 2000.

69. However, in September Secretary of State Albright repeated the Clinton administration's demand that the regime agree to a broad-based democratic government. Barbara Crossette, "Taliban Open a Campaign to Gain Status at the U.N.," *New York Times*, September 21, 2000.

70. Christopher Marquis, "U.S. Declares 'Rogue Nations' Are Now 'States of Concern,'" *New York Times*, June 20, 2000.

71. Barbara Crossette, "Spurned Sudan, Looking for Foreign Support, Says It Has Changed," *New York Times*, June 21, 2000. See also Karl Vick, "Sudanese Leader Moves against Rival," *Washington Post*, December 15, 1999. The State Department's 2001 annual report explains the U.S. position. After the September 11 attacks, which Sudan condemned, Sudan pledged cooperation and was rewarded with the lifting of UN sanctions. However, U.S. unilateral sanctions remained in force.

72. National Commission on Terrorism, *Report to Congress: Countering the Changing Threat of International Terrorism* (Washington, D.C., June 5, 2000). The administration responded firmly that it was not considering sanctions against Pakistan.

73. Judith Miller, "U.S. Puts Uzbek Group on Its Terror List," *New York Times*, September 15, 2000. See also Ambassador Sheehan's testimony before the House Committee on International Relations, July 12, 2000. Afghanistan was said to be the "primary swamp of terrorism." On the other hand, Sheehan also argued that Bin Laden had no need for a state sponsor for material support. And he warned again that the Taliban would be held responsible should Bin Laden undertake any terrorist acts while based on its territory.

74. See "Planning for Terror but Failing to Act," *New York Times*, December 30, 2002.

75. John F. Burns, "Yemeni on Delicate Path in bin Laden Hunt," *New York Times*, December 15, 2000.

76. Barbara Crossette, "U.S. and Russia Ask Harsh Sanctions on Afghanistan," *New York Times*, December 8, 2000. An arms embargo might be considered an implied threat, since it would presumably handicap the Taliban in the internal struggle for power.

77. See David Johnston and James Risen, "Traces of Terrorism: The Intelligence Reports," and David E. Sanger and Elisabeth Bumiller, "Traces of Terrorism: The Overview," in *New York Times*, May 17, 2002; and Jane Perlez and David E. Sanger, "A Nation Challenged: State Department: Powell Says U.S. Had Signs, but Not Clear Ones, of a Plot," *New York Times*, October 3, 2001.

78. See the special report in *Time*, August 12, 2002.

79. In September 2002 a joint inquiry by the House and Senate Intelligence Committees produced an interim report. So far investigators had not found a "smoking gun" that would have alerted the government to a preventable attack. However, the government had received a stream of more general warnings, or "chatter." See *Joint Inquiry Staff Statement, Part I*, September 18, 2002, and "The Intelligence Community's Knowledge of the September 11 Hijackers prior to September 11, 2001," September 20, 2002. Both documents are available on the House and Senate Intelligence Committee websites. The report also noted that information on what the White House and the president knew remained classified. The report states that "high government officials" were briefed repeatedly.
80. See the series of reports by Dan Balz and Bob Woodward, "Ten Days in September," *Washington Post*, January 27-February 3, 2002.
81. Siddharth Varadarajan, "Musharraf Drops Taliban to Get Kashmir," *Times of India*, September 21, 2001. He refers to "relentless pressure" from the United States. See also Farhan Bokhari and Edward Luce, "Pakistan's Choice," *Financial Times*, September 18, 2001. J. N. Dixit, former Indian foreign minister, is quoted as saying that "America's war on terrorism is the best opportunity India has had to settle the Kashmir dispute in its favour once and for all."
82. John F. Burns, "Pakistani Defends Joining with U.S." and "Pakistanis Fail in Last-Ditch Bid to Persuade Taliban to Turn Over bin Laden," *New York Times*, September 20 and September 29, 2001, respectively. Delegations traveled both to Kandahar and to Kabul and met with the Taliban for two days.
83. See John F. Burns, "New Push to Get bin Laden to Agree to Quit Afghanistan," *New York Times*, September 28, 2001.
84. See the text of the president's speech at www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09. The Taliban had imprisoned a group of Christian relief workers accused of proselytizing.
85. John F. Burns, "Clerics Answer 'No, No, No!' and Invoke Fates of Past Foes," *New York Times*, September 22, 2001.
86. John F. Burns, "U.S. Officers Are Meeting in Islamabad on War Plans," *New York Times*, September 25, 2001.
87. John F. Burns, "Pakistan Fights U.S. Move Linked to Anti-Taliban Drive," *New York Times*, September 26, 2001.
88. See Burns, "New Push to Get bin Laden to Agree to Quit Afghanistan." Burns refers to these talks as well as the earlier set as "negotiations."

89. The following account is based on Burns, "Pakistanis Fail in Last-Ditch Bid to Persuade Taliban to Turn Over bin Laden."

90. See Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt, "Pentagon Tries to Avoid Using Pakistan Bases," and Douglas Frantz, "Taliban Say They Want to Negotiate with the U.S. Over bin Laden." *New York Times*, October 3, 2001.

91. John F. Burns, "Taliban Say They Hold bin Laden," *New York Times*, October 1, 2001.

92. See Sarah Lyall, "Tough Talk from Blair on Taliban," *New York Times*, October 3, 2001.

93. Frantz, "Taliban Say They Want to Negotiate with the U.S. over bin Laden." The ambassador appeared in Quetta, Pakistan, sixty miles from the Afghan border, where the local tribal chiefs had been meeting.

94. Elaine Sciolino and Steven Lee Myers, "Bush Says 'Time Is Running Out,'" *New York Times*, October 7, 2001.

95. John F. Burns, "Taliban Link Fate of Aid Workers to U.S. Action," *New York Times*, October 7, 2001.

96. Patrick E. Tyler, "U.S. and Britain Strike Afghanistan," and "Jets Pound Taliban Sites a 2nd Night," *New York Times*, October 8 and 9, 2001, respectively. The bombing involved fifteen land-based bombers and twenty-five strike aircraft from carriers. They used precision-guided bombs. U.S. warships and British submarines fired fifty Tomahawk cruise missiles.

97. Although this attack was reported at the time, only on October 15 did the secretary of defense admit openly that the air strikes had been targeting Mullah Omar since the first day of the air campaign. See Michael R. Gordon and Tim Weiner, "Taliban Leader a Target of U.S. Air Campaign," *New York Times*, October 16, 2001.

98. Patrick E. Tyler and Elisabeth Bumiller, "Bush Offers Taliban '2nd Chance' to Yield," *New York Times*, October 12, 2001.

99. Elisabeth Bumiller, "President Rejects Offer by Taliban for Negotiations," *New York Times*, October 15, 2001. Gunaratna argues that the Taliban might have turned Bin Laden over to Pakistan had the Bush administration given them more time (*Inside Al Qaeda*, 227).

100. *Ibid.*

101. John F. Burns, "Taliban Envoy Talks of a Deal over bin Laden," *New York Times*, October 16, 2001.

102. Patrick E. Tyler, "Powell Suggests Role for Taliban," *New York Times*, October 17, 2001.

103. John F. Burns, "Taliban Chief Urges Troops: Defy 'Infidel,'" *New York Times*, October 18, 2001.

104. Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, quoted in John F. Burns, "Don't Doubt Steadfastness of Taliban, Envoy Insists," *New York Times*, October 20, 2001. Maulvi Jalaluddin Haqqani, the commander of Taliban forces on the Pakistan border, also rejected the idea of Taliban participation in a postwar government, although Pakistan had encouraged him to consider the idea, and earlier Pakistani and U.S. intelligence agents had approached him about defecting. See John F. Burns, "Taliban Army Chief Scoffs at Report of Peace Talks," *New York Times*, October 21, 2001.

105. Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. Bombs Taliban's Forces on Front Lines," *New York Times*, October 22, 2001.

106. Access to classified information would undoubtedly yield a less tentative assessment.

107. Possibly these efforts might be interpreted as coercion at the individual rather than the group level, since militants might have been expected to lose enthusiasm for the cause once the costs of action mounted.

108. Even the 1998 cruise missile attack was meant to strike a group of senior leaders, including Bin Laden, so it might be interpreted as an assassination attempt as much as a demonstration of force.

109. Simon and Benjamin, for example, blame the press for labeling the attack on the Al Shifa pharmaceuticals a foreign policy blunder ("A Failure of Intelligence?" 292-299).

110. See Martha Crenshaw, "How Terrorism Declines," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 3, no. 1 (spring 1991): 69-87 (also in *Terrorism Research and Public Policy*, ed. Clark McCauley [London: Frank Cass, 1991]); and "Why Violence Is Rejected or Renounced: A Case Study of Oppositional Terrorism," in *The Natural History of Peace*, ed. Tom Gregor (Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt University Press, 1996).