



Foreign Policy In Focus Task Force on Terrorism: A Secure America in a Secure World

Talking Points

FAILED POLICY

The Bush administration has chosen a path to combat terrorism that has weakened multilateral institutions and squandered international goodwill. It has failed to support effective reconstruction in Afghanistan. War and occupation in Iraq have made the United States more vulnerable and have opened a new front and a recruiting tool for terrorists while diverting resources from essential homeland security efforts.

Overemphasis on Military Policy

- War is the least effective approach to combating terrorism and should represent the last resort.
- According to the Center for Defense Information, about two-thirds of the increase in the FY2003 Pentagon budget funds programs and activities that are largely irrelevant to homeland security or counterterrorism operations.
- The War in Iraq has not decreased terrorism. According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the Iraq war has "accelerated recruitment" for al-Qaida.
- The U.S. government spends more every three days on the Iraq war than it has in three years on the security of the country's 361 commercial seaports.

Undermining Homeland Security

- The Bush administration has put us in danger by adopting a hands-off approach to ensuring our security. 85 percent of the nation's critical infrastructure is owned or controlled by the private sector.
- The administration's 2004 budget cut \$2 billion from crime prevention and public safety programs, and the proposed 2005 budget cuts \$805 million from emergency responders.
- 70% of the ports slated to meet container security standards did not meet the July 1, 2004 target.
- The chemical industry has stalled any efforts at increasing security at the 123 facilities where a release of chemicals could threaten more than one million people.
- A recent Council on Foreign Relations report estimates that federal, state, and local first responder funding will fall short by about \$100 billion over the next five years.

Lack of Emphasis on Intelligence Reform

- Three years after the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. government hasn't yet created a unified terrorist watchlist to guide law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

Failure to Attack Root Causes

- The Bush White House has given scant attention to root causes of international terrorism and the social and political contexts in which such terrorism thrives, including repressive regimes, failed states, and the poverty and inequality that can create conditions of support for terrorist acts.

NEW FRAMEWORK

A different strategy would not fight a "war on terrorism" but would treat terrorism as an ongoing threat that needs to be tackled through a strong, coordinated strategy focused upon strengthening civilian public sectors and nurturing the international cooperation necessary for preventing and responding to terrorist attacks. Although the military has a clear role to play, it should be a supporting actor in terrorism policy.

Strengthen Border Security

- Shift funds from the Defense Department to the Container Security Initiative to increase port container inspection tenfold.
Cost: \$5 billion per year.
- Double Coast Guard and Border Patrol programs.
Cost: \$11 billion per year.

Protect Critical Infrastructure

- Put spent reactor fuel into dry hardened storage.
Cost: \$3.5 to \$7 billion over the next 10 years.
- Establish minimum requirements for improvement of security and reduction of potential hazards at chemical plants and industrial facilities.
- Increase the number of food inspectors and their resources to increase security at food processing facilities.

Support First Responders

- Increase federal support for first responders.
Cost: \$10 billion per year.
- Train National Guard units to facilitate collaboration with state civil authorities and include exercises with local emergency responders.

Keep Terrorists from Obtaining Weapons

- Fully fund WMD threat reduction programs.
Cost: \$1.5 billion per year.
- The Leahy Law prohibits U.S. military assistance to foreign military units that violate human rights. It should be made permanent and extended to apply to all weapons transfers.
- Strengthen and support the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Fissile Material Control Regime, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Attack Root Causes

- Enhance U.S. capability of responding quickly to failing states by expanding support for peacekeeping initiatives through the U.S. Army's Peacekeeping and Stability Operations and expanding military assistance to strengthen other countries' efforts to engage in peacekeeping operations.
- End U.S. financial and military backing for the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.
- Reduce dependence of the U.S. and its allies on oil imports from repressive governments.