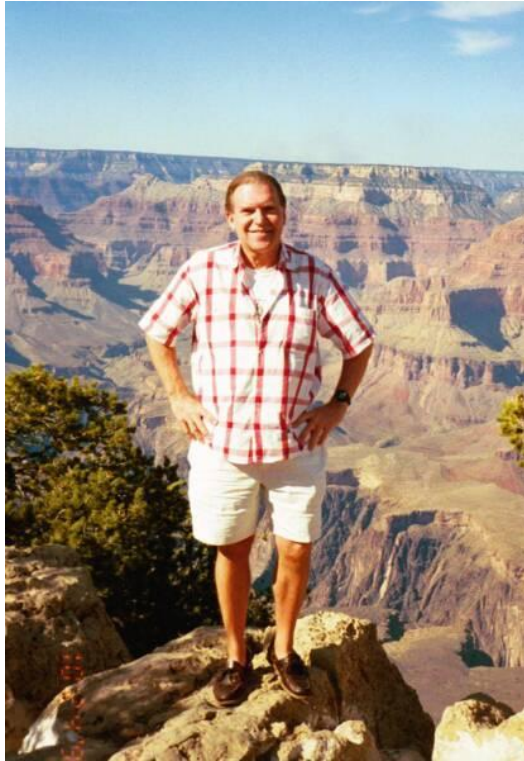

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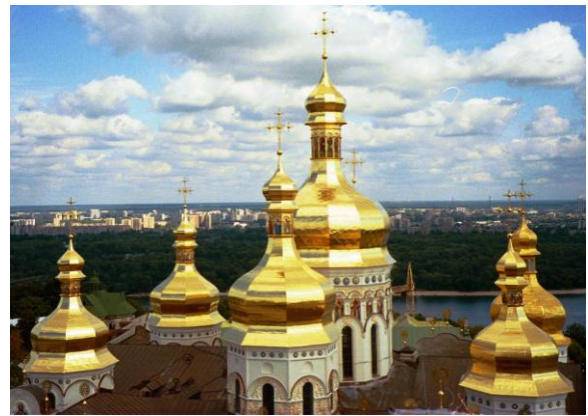
Inaugural Issue

Greetings from Jim Hamilton, Editor

[Let's make it a better world - welcome to my new website!](#)

Welcome and please visit my new website ["wde4u.com"](http://wde4u.com). Let's make it a better world. I want to make my contribution to making the world a better place to live. In order to do this I want to understand it better in all its aspects, see how it has worked, is functioning now and how it could work better. I want to share my ideas with others and also see what they have to offer in this regard. I am sharing some of my ideas, concepts, articles, favorite books, url's etc. and want to get your ideas in return, if you would like to. You

can download an article I published on keeping the professions honest, to ensure they are more forthcoming with the public at ["wde4u.com"](http://wde4u.com). This is my first newsletter. You can join my e-mail list and receive the next issues as soon as they are published. I want to share my ideas with others and also see what they have to offer in this regard. Please visit the website I am building.



Featured Article

We are now in the midst of a frenzied political campaign for president and vice-president of the United States. All issues are heightened to the extreme. Following is a cautionary article that has just appeared in Newsweek magazine:

The World Isn't So Dark

WORLD VIEW - by Fareed Zakaria

Published Sep 13, 2008

From the Newsweek issue dated Sep 22, 2008

Ever since WWII, America has tended to make its strategic missteps by exaggerating dangers.

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On the campaign trail, the debate over foreign policy has been muted of late. That might be because more-important topics like lipstick and hockey moms have taken center stage. But the contrasts between the presidential candidates also seem to have softened. Their differences over Iraq policy have shrunk as the place has stabilized somewhat and the Iraqi government looks for a timetable for U.S. withdrawal. Both candidates oppose Iran's nuclear ambitions and Russia's incursion into Georgia. Both support a vigorous fight against the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Yet there's clearly a fundamental difference in the way the two candidates see the world. The split might best be captured by asking a simple question: what kind of a world do we live in? Neither candidate has been asked this, and I doubt either would answer as frankly as I am suggesting, but here's my guess—drawn from their writings and speeches—about what each might say.

We live in a very dangerous world, John McCain would respond. In his eyes, Islamic extremism is the transcendent challenge of the age. Jihadist warriors—funded and supported by states that adhere to their views—pose the central threat to the United States. In the rise of China, Russia and India, McCain sees turbulence. Russia and China, being autocracies, represent a special danger. Moscow's attack on Georgia was, for McCain, the "first serious crisis since the end of the cold war." The role for America, in such an environment, is to

aggressively use its power — hard power — to fight evil, spread freedom and defeat the enemy. Otherwise we will lose the struggle for the 21st century.

Obama's sense of the world is more optimistic. The dangers are real but not so all-encompassing. Obama speaks less of Islamic extremism in general and more of Al Qaeda and its affiliated groups specifically. He points out that compared with the cold war—when thousands of Soviet nuclear missiles were pointed at American cities—the threats we face today are reduced. He argues that most people in the Islamic world want development and a better life, not jihad. America's promise remains alive even in these countries.

America's role, for Obama, is to restore its military strength, fight Al Qaeda and its ilk, and deter rogue regimes like Iran. But it is also to stay calm, because in overreacting to dangers, we often cause new problems and crises. To lump together all Islamist groups is to exaggerate and misunderstand the threat. The Iraq War, for Obama, is a prime example of an alarmist overreaction, one that had the United States launch an unprovoked invasion of a country and rack up huge costs. If America can keep its cool and provide the help that countries really seek—in development, modernization and democracy-building—then we will gain in both security and legitimacy.

There is some truth to both visions of the world, but in my view the reality is much closer to Obama's—more so than most

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American politicians seem willing to admit. We live in remarkably peaceful times. A University of Maryland study shows that deaths from wars of all kinds have been dropping dramatically for 20 years and are lower now than at any point in the last half century. A study from Simon Fraser University finds that casualties from terrorism have been steadily declining since 9/11. It is increasingly clear—look at their voting from Indonesia to Iraq to Pakistan—that very few Muslims anywhere support Islamic fundamentalists. More countries than ever before now embrace capitalism and democracy.

It's also worth noting that ever since World War II, the United States has tended to make its strategic missteps by exaggerating dangers. During the 1950s, conservatives argued that Dwight Eisenhower was guilty of appeasement because he was willing to contain rather than roll back [communism](#). The paranoia about communism helped fuel McCarthyism at home and support for dubious regimes abroad. John Kennedy chose to outflank Nixon on the right by arguing that there was a dangerous missile gap between the Soviets and the United States (when in fact the United States had almost 20,000 missiles and the Soviets had fewer than 2,000). The 1970s witnessed a frenzied argument that the Soviet Union was surpassing the United States militarily and was about to "Finlandize" Europe. The reality, of course, was that when neoconservatives were arguing that the U.S.S.R. was about to conquer the world, it was on the verge of total collapse.

Since end of the cold war, similar alarms have been sounded several times. In the 1990s, the Cox Commission argued that China was building a military to rival ours, citing numbers that soon proved to be bogus. Then there's Saddam Hussein, who was described as a powerful and imminent threat to the United States. In fact, the greatest problem that we have faced in Iraq is its weakness, its utter dysfunction as a state and a nation. Rhetoric about transcendent threats and mortal dangers grips the imagination of the American people. But it also twists U.S. foreign policy in ways that can prove to be extremely costly to the country and the world.

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On the Merits of Unilateral Incursions into Pakistan by the U.S. without the Consent of the Government of Pakistan

Re: The following podcast:

An Apology Due to Obama?

Posted By John Podhoretz On September 10, 2008 (10:36 PM) In [Contentions](#)

[The New York Times is reporting that](#)

President Bush secretly approved orders in July that for the first time allow American Special Operations forces to carry out ground assaults inside Pakistan without the prior approval of the

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Pakistani government, according to senior American officials.

The classified orders signal a watershed for the Bush administration after nearly seven years of trying to work with Pakistan to combat the Taliban and Al Qaeda, and after months of high-level stalemate about how to challenge the militants' increasingly secure base in Pakistan's tribal areas.

American officials say that they will notify Pakistan when they conduct limited ground attacks like the Special Operations raid last Wednesday in a Pakistani village near the Afghanistan border, but that they will not ask for its permission.

It is worth recalling that in his first major foreign-policy address, in August 2007, Barack Obama proposed raids against al-Qaeda in Pakistan without consultation, and making:

“the hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. military aid to Pakistan conditional, and I would make our conditions clear: Pakistan must make substantial progress in closing down the training camps, evicting foreign fighters, and preventing the Taliban from using Pakistan as a staging area for attacks in Afghanistan.

I understand that President Musharraf has his own challenges. But let me make this clear. There are terrorists holed up in those mountains who murdered 3,000 Americans. They are plotting to strike again. It was a terrible mistake to fail to act when we had a chance to take out an

al Qaeda leadership meeting in 2005. If we have actionable intelligence about high-value terrorist targets and President Musharraf won't act, we will.”

If the story is correct — and it reads like an official leak — the July date indicates Bush approved this plan while Musharraf was still in power. (He resigned his office in August.) He was, however, vastly weaker and more compromised this past July than he was when Obama made his speech in 2007.

I was among many people who ridiculed the Obama proposal at the time, on the grounds that a) no nation violates the territorial integrity of an ally, even if that ally is problematic, and b) Obama's bellicosity seemed entirely unbelievable, given that he spoke in the wake of his remarks about meeting with the leaders of the world's worst regimes “without preconditions.” On the latter point, he was and remains wrong and foolish.

On the former point, though, he was, apparently, precognitive, and may be due an apology.

Reply to above podcast: By James R. Hamilton, 9/14/08

Regarding the merits of incursions into northwest Pakistan adjacent to Afghanistan -- if we know for sure exactly where Bin Laden is, a solitary drone strike may be appropriate, if we know we can preferably capture, or kill Bin Laden, with concurrent notification to the Govt. of Pakistan. But remember Nixon's incursions into Cambodia to hit

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the North Vietnamese supply lines? They destabilized the friendly gov't there, to the point it fell and Pol Pot took over and started his genocide of over 2 million of Cambodia's citizens (a country with a very small population, of around 8 million, I believe, at the time.) War is murder in a semi-organized fashion, usually indeterminate in the destruction that befalls the civilian population. Killing always unleashes more killing by the other side in unpredictable size and momentum.

Important lesson learned: In the late 1980's the U.S. Government secretly trained and armed about 150,000 Taliban fighters in Pakistan with the latest weapons shipped to them to wage war in Afghanistan to ultimately defeat the Soviet military occupying that country. This ultimately led to the fall of the Soviet Union a couple years later. President Bhutto of Pakistan (recently assassinated by the Taliban) sent a message to then President George H.W. Bush, saying, "You have created a Frankenstein!" Bin Laden who was one of those Taliban fighters in Afghanistan, financed by the U.S., a few years later gained control of that Frankenstein and used it to attack the U.S. on its own soil on 9/11/2001. If I were President of the U.S. I would strongly resist the temptation to spread conflicts into neighboring countries, even if they happen to have "friendly" governments at the time.

I believe that from the beginning, after 9/11 we were on the wrong track in combating terrorism. By starting

preemptive wars in other countries we lost the sympathy and support of not only our traditional allies but also the support of other countries with large Moslem populations who felt and still feel more threatened by the Taliban and Al Qaeda than we are, since they are in their midst, such as in Indonesia, the country with the largest Moslem population in the world, but also a democracy with a non-sectarian constitution, which actively tracks down terrorists within its borders and imprisons and tries them in its court system. My strong preference would be to work primarily to strengthen the working links and sharing of information between national police departments (to include other national security agencies supporting the police function) . We should then laud the police of other countries, when they track down and capture people with records of terrorism.

In principal, I am against war as an instrument of national policy. Our objective, rather should be to make it obsolete, by our example as individuals and as a nation, promoting instead internationally supervised arbitration to settle international disputes of every kind, economic, territorial, etc. It took a long time to abolish slavery as an international system...but eventually we did. We should set the same objective with regard to use of war and the threat of war as an instrument of foreign policy. War and the threat of war are a stain on the human race just as much as slavery. The two go hand-in-hand if you think about it. In my view, the human race can never call itself "civilized" as

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long as we engage in the planning for and actual organized and premeditated killing of members of our own species, usually with enthusiasm that makes fans at a football game look timid and mild-mannered. And then we lie to ourselves and to others that it was all in our best interest, and then after all the killing and maiming of combatants and innocent bystanders, we negotiate the terms of the next period of "temporary peace" patting ourselves on the back for the advantage we gained by the organized carnage in the arbitration that always follows war.

This will make me very unpopular among many, just as it has made former President Jimmy Carter so unpopular in both parties, but in my view we must begin this arbitration in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict seriously now and stop letting Israel determine our foreign policy there and in the world. The extreme unfairness meted out to the Jews of the world (mostly by Christians) does not justify their meeting out such suffering and pain to the Palestinians under their collective "boot". The unfairness of the occupation of the Palestinians into Bantustans, like in South Africa by the Afrikaner former govt. is the major source of terrorism we now are experiencing, and supported by so many private citizens throughout the Middle East, even in those countries with govts. which are "friendly" to us and allied with us. We must, must see through a successful arbitration of this issue as our first, first priority. Everything else we do is just tinkering around the problem without fixing it. "Holy" crusaders like G.W. Bush and

Sarah Palin are the worst possible types to have in high office at this time. Warriors like Sen. McCain who see the military and its aggressive use to fix "problems" will likely continue to throw "gasoline" on the fire.

This would be my advice to both Obama and McCain but they are both unlikely to do so due to the resistance and serious threats they would face. But I believe Obama conceptualizes the problem and given time would work toward these objectives.

Reminder:

The purpose of this Newsletter is to promote discussion and exchange of views. Please share your ideas by posting them on my blog: <http://wde4u.blogspot.com>. If you received this newsletter from a friend, please feel free to provide your e-mail address to www.wde4u.com on the contact page so that you will be placed on our mailing list and receive subsequent issues automatically. If you have an article you would like to have published here, please send a copy to jimhamilton@wde4u.com.

Let's enjoy life to it's fullest, seek reason, balance, peaceful resolution of conflicts, and leave this earth in a better condition than we found it.