

Wrestling with Deterrence: Bush Administration Strategy After 9/11

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After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, many observers concluded that the central American strategies of the Cold War – containment and deterrence – no longer applied. Deterring suicide terrorists is a daunting challenge, as people who plan to kill themselves to carry out an attack have no reason to care about a threat to punish them after the fact. Deterring the organizations that send suicide terrorists is also difficult, because such non-state actors may ‘lack a return address’ against which to retaliate. As then Under Secretary of State John Bolton expressed it soon after 9/11, people willing to fly airplanes into buildings are ‘not going to be deterred by anything’.¹

Such doubts about deterrence were not new. In the 1990s, missile-defence advocates stressed the potential undeterrability of rogue states seeking weapons of mass destruction (WMD), especially states led by volatile dictators like Saddam Hussein or Kim Jong Il.² Reflecting such doubts about deterring terrorists and rogue states, in the year following 9/11 President George W. Bush and his administration articulated what became widely described as a new doctrine of preemption.³ Rather than rely on threats to respond after an attack, the United States would instead take preventive action to eliminate threats before they could materialize. The preemption doctrine seemed to signal the dismissal of deterrence. With the invasion of Iraq, the administration showed its willingness to act on this doctrine.

In January 2009, not long after this article is published, a new American president will take office. No matter who wins the election, the new administration will review existing American strategy and make adjustments based in part on its assessment of how well the Bush administration strategy has worked. In order for this assessment to be accurate, it will be important to have a clear understanding of what the Bush administration strategy has been. Ever since the unveiling of the Bush Doctrine, however, there has been considerable confusion about the role of deterrence in that strategy.

Despite widespread impressions to the contrary, the Bush administration has all along been deeply committed to deterrence. The American approach to deterrence in the George W. Bush years has actually displayed dual and potentially conflicting impulses: the administration has sought to make deterrence do both more and less than before.

Policy statements issued by the Bush administration and the American military have not rejected deterrence, but instead state that America has changed its approach to deterrence. They claim that the United States has moved away from a Cold War approach to deterrence to embrace a new concept called ‘tailored deterrence’. This approach seeks to enable the United States to craft different deterrent options to address different adversaries and situations. This claim of strategy change is also

exaggerated. There have been real changes in other areas of Bush administration foreign policy, but with respect to deterrence the administration's approach has more roots in the past than either the administration or its critics recognize. The fact that the administration's approach has built on developments in previous administrations, both Democratic and Republican, means that aspects of that approach are likely to endure after the administration leaves office.

All this suggests that, along with efforts to reconsider the relevance of deterrence, it is necessary to clarify the current status of deterrence. This article seeks to summarize United States government policy with respect to deterrence in the period since 11 September. After clarifying the Bush administration approach to deterrence, the article offers an assessment of that approach.

The article identifies four primary goals the Bush administration has sought regarding the role of deterrence in American strategy: to revitalize deterrence, to apply it to new policy objectives, to reduce US reliance on deterrence, and to change the way deterrence is practiced. One of these goals, the third, has involved a turning away from deterrence, while the others have all involved efforts to strengthen and broaden the reach of American deterrence. The apparent tension between asking deterrence to do both more and less is not contradictory within the way the Bush administration thinks about deterrence, however. This article will offer an interpretation that shows the different elements of the administration approach fit together coherently within a certain set of strategic beliefs.

Important elements of administration thinking make sense and are evaluated positively here. Other parts of the administration's approach are problematic. First, while Bush the administration has been wise not to rely exclusively on deterrence, it has been too sceptical about prospects for deterring rogue states and therefore has overestimated the need for the preventive use of force. Second, some parts of administration strategy tend to undermine deterrence. In particular, both the emphasis on preemption and oft-stated desires to bring about regime change actually undercut American efforts to deter attacks. Third, depending on how it is implemented, the idea of tailored strategy could lead the United States to overcomplicate its deterrent message, reducing its clarity. Finally, some parts of the American response to terrorism have made it appear that threats of terrorism can be effective in bringing about large changes in American policies. With respect to deterrence, it would be better to communicate a message that terrorism will not succeed in prompting the United States to make dramatic policy changes; doing so would help improve American efforts to apply 'deterrence by denial'.⁴

Overall, the Bush administration approach to deterrence has been simultaneously pitched too high and too low. At the high end, administration policy has emphasized vague threats of severe consequences for any actor who dares cross the United States, a posture this article will label 'systemic deterrence'. At the low end, the strategy of tailored deterrence calls for developing virtually personalized deterrent messages. It would be better to do more at a middle ground between these. The United States could announce that any actor crossing certain specific red lines (such as launching a WMD attack) will trigger certain specific responses (such as a conventional invasion to remove the offending regime from power). Bush administration declaratory policy has not given sufficient emphasis to such middle-range, situation-specific deterrent threats.

The Range of Interpretations

Some of the confusion about the role of deterrence stems from different connotations of the term itself. Most international relations scholars follow the definition put forward by Patrick Morgan: 'the threat of *military* retaliation to forestall a *military* attack'.⁵ President Bush and his advisors sometimes construe deterrence more narrowly to imply the threat of massive retaliation using nuclear weapons. The US Department of Defense (DOD) also has its own official definition: 'the prevention from action by fear of the consequences'.⁶ Ironically, the military's definition does not require that deterrence be military, let alone nuclear, in nature. Some doctrinal statements use the word deterrence in ways that seem even broader, making it virtually synonymous with any defensive or preventive measure. Apparent inconsistencies sometimes emerge because a speaker or publication slips between one usage and another; for example, dismissing the utility of massive nuclear retaliation but embracing some other form of deterrence.

It is important to allow for possible non-nuclear and even non-military forms of deterrence. Therefore, deterrence should be defined as preventing an action by influencing another actor's decision-making through creating an anticipation the action in question will lead to negative results or consequences.⁷ Adjectives can be used to make clear which version of deterrence one has in mind. Morgan's definition will be referred to here as classical or traditional deterrence, while massive nuclear retaliation will be labelled stereotypical Cold War deterrence (this is because, as discussed more fully below, it did not actually remain American strategy through the whole Cold War).

There has been an outpouring of scholarly publications since 9/11 examining the prospects for using deterrence against contemporary threats.⁸ Much of this work takes as its starting point a premise that the Bush administration either greatly diminished the role of deterrence or abandoned the strategy altogether.⁹ Shortly after the unveiling of the preemption doctrine, then Secretary of State Colin Powell and then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice both sought to refute this perception, stating that the administration still believed in the potential utility of deterrence for many situations and would set it aside only against certain threats where they doubted its effectiveness.¹⁰ Some studies accept this account and thus state that the administration maintained a role for deterrence, but would rely on preventive action instead for dealing with terrorism and perhaps rogue states as well.¹¹ Finally, a small number of studies discuss deterrence as a component of Bush administration strategy without any suggestion it was rejected for certain contingencies, but none of these has sought to summarize the full gamut of deterrence efforts in administration strategy.¹²

More recently, in March 2008, the *New York Times* proclaimed in a front-page headline that the Bush administration had revived the Cold War strategy of deterrence in a modified version for use against terrorism. The story reported that the administration had rejected any role for deterrence against terrorism in its first term, but begun identifying possible ways to apply deterrence in its second term.¹³ While there has been evolution in the administration approach, this story overstates the degree of change. Both the *Times* and most academic studies have underestimated the extent to which deterrence has been an element of Bush administration strategy throughout its two terms, even in dealing with asymmetric threats from terrorists and WMD-seeking rogue states. At

the same time, the administration still distinguishes its approach from what it considers the Cold War version of deterrence, and recurring rumours of a possible military strike on Iran's nuclear facilities suggest doubts about deterrence have also remained a part of the administration's outlook.

In short, there are widely varying interpretations of the role of deterrence in Bush administration strategy, and no study has fully summarized the administration's approach to deterrence. Hence, there is still a need to clarify administration strategy.

Prima Facie Evidence that Deterrence has Been a Goal

Before going into a detailed description, it is worth noting some of the indicators that deterrence has generally remained a goal of the Bush administration. Three types of evidence will be reviewed. First, some examples from actual policy behaviour will be briefly noted. Second, certain public and private comments by individual policy-makers, which reveal their underlying assumptions, will be discussed. Finally, official statements of strategy and doctrine will be reviewed.

First, from the evidence of behaviour, the Bush administration has accepted deterrence and containment as the best it can hope for against certain threats. In June 2006, as North Korea prepared to test-fire a long-range missile, two former Clinton administration officials called for a preemptive strike on the missile launch site. The Bush administration rejected preventive action in this case though, and some administration officials told the *New York Times* that they believed the logic of deterrence would work against North Korea.¹⁴ Though preventive action remains a possibility, as of this writing, American policy toward both North Korea and Iran, two of the three countries President Bush placed in the 'axis of evil', has officially emphasized diplomacy and in practice relied on deterrence.

9/11 as Implicit Deterrence Failure

Second, some comments by administration officials require an assumption that deterrence remains viable, even against terrorists. After 9/11, a popular line of analysis developed that presented the attack as the product of a failure by the United States to react forcefully to past terrorism, starting with the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983.¹⁵ Several administration officials have invoked this analysis in public comments. In an October 2005 speech to marines just back from Iraq, Vice President Dick Cheney declared, 'Time and time again ... the terrorists hit America and America did not hit back hard enough.' As a result, Cheney said, 'The terrorists came to believe that they could strike America without paying any price.'¹⁶

This analysis implies that tougher American responses to earlier terrorist attacks would have prevented 9/11. How would this have happened? By standing firm and hitting back harder, the United States would have convinced terrorists not to strike. Not to put too fine a point on it, this *is* deterrence. The way that many administration officials have thought about 9/11 thus requires an assumption that deterrence can be effective against terrorism.

Administration officials have talked about deterring terrorism as a post-9/11 goal as well, even in their private communications. In an October 2003 memo to his top aides, former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld sought to establish a metric for measuring progress in the war on terror, asking, 'Are we capturing, killing or *detering* and dissuading more terrorists every day than the madrassas and the radical clerics are recruiting, training and deploying against us?'¹⁷ In sum, their underlying assumptions have inclined Bush administration officials to believe that terrorism is not beyond the reach of deterrence.

Deterrence in Formal Policy Statements

Finally, official policy documents that deal with American strategy also testify to the continuing role of deterrence. In all, I have identified 22 documents from the George W. Bush years through March 2008 that address how the nation plans to deal with one or more elements of the overlapping problems of terrorism, rogue states, WMD proliferation, and homeland security (*see box*). These range from the broad focus and high-level guidance of the National Security Strategy (NSS) to narrow statements of military doctrine. All but one of the 22 documents explicitly name deterrence as an element of American strategy. The only exception is the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (NSCT) from the administration's first term, published in February 2003. However, the 2003 NSCT did embrace the related concept of compellence, as it called for pressuring state sponsors to stop their support for terrorism.¹⁸ Moreover, an updated NSCT, released in September 2006, does explicitly include deterrence as a strategic goal.¹⁹ All the other documents dealing with terrorism or homeland security also include deterrence as an objective. This suggests that whatever scepticism the administration had about deterring terrorism, it quickly set aside enough of that scepticism to decide to maintain deterrence as one item in the toolkit for the war on terror.

More broadly, the strategy documents make clear the administration never rejected deterrence altogether. The first major document it released, the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), listed deterrence as one of four major goals of US defence policy (along with assuring allies, dissuading competitors, and defeating adversaries if necessary).²⁰ Though completed before 9/11, the QDR was not released until after the attacks and could have been modified if the administration believed it necessary. In fact, the start of the war on terror did not lead the administration to alter its four main goals for defence strategy; these goals were explicitly reaffirmed in the NSS released in September 2002.²¹

Other documents confirm the continued interest in deterrence. The first major guidelines released by the newly created Department of Homeland Security (DHS) were sub-titled 'Prevention and Deterrence'.²² There is even a statement of military doctrine devoted solely to deterrence. Produced by the US Strategic Command, this document has now gone through two iterations: it was first released in 2004 as the Strategic Deterrence Joint Operating Concept, while version 2.0, now titled the Deterrence Operations Joint Operating Concept, was published in December 2006. Both iterations of this document state explicitly that the deterrence concept applies both to states and non-state actors (i.e., terrorists).²³

This section has shown *prima facie* evidence the Bush administration has maintained an interest in utilizing deterrence, including as a tool for dealing with terrorism. The next portion of this article seeks to clarify the key features of the administration's approach to deterrence.

Box: George W. Bush Administration Strategy Documents

Source	Title	Released
White House		
	<i>National Strategy for Homeland Security</i>	July 2002
	<i>The National Security Strategy of the United States of America</i>	Sept. 2002
	<i>National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction</i>	Dec. 2002
	<i>National Strategy for Combating Terrorism</i>	Feb. 2003
	<i>Biodefense for the 21st Century</i>	Apr. 2004
	<i>The National Security Strategy of the United States of America</i>	Mar. 2006
	<i>National Strategy for Combating Terrorism</i>	Sept. 2006
	<i>National Strategy for Homeland Security</i>	Oct. 2007
Department of Homeland Security		
	<i>Guidelines for Homeland Security: Prevention and Deterrence</i>	June 2003
	<i>Securing Our Homeland: DHS Strategic Plan</i>	2004
Department of Defense		
	<i>Quadrennial Defense Review</i>	Sept. 2001
	<i>Nuclear Posture Review*</i>	Dec. 2001
	<i>The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America</i>	Mar. 2005
	<i>Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support</i>	Jun. 2005
	<i>Quadrennial Defense Review</i>	Feb. 2006
Joint Chiefs of Staff		
	<i>The National Military Strategy of the United States of America</i>	2004
	<i>Strategic Deterrence Joint Operating Concept**</i>	Feb. 2004
	<i>Joint Doctrine for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction</i>	July 2004
	<i>Doctrine for Joint Nuclear Operations***</i>	Mar. 2005
	<i>Homeland Security</i>	Aug. 2005
	<i>National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism</i>	Feb. 2006
	<i>National Military Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction</i>	Feb. 2006

*The *Nuclear Posture Review* is a classified report. Excerpts are available at www.globalsecurity.org

**Actually produced by US Strategic Command. A revised version, the *Deterrence Operations Joint Operating Concept*, was released Dec. 2006.

***After this draft proved controversial due to the potential targets it listed, the Defense Department withdrew the document and cancelled publication of the final version; the March draft is available at www.globalsecurity.org

Evolution of American Strategy Since 9/11

Since 11 September, the Bush administration has sought to accomplish four goals with respect to American use of deterrence: to revitalize deterrence, to extend its reach to new policy ends, to reduce reliance on it, and to change the way the United States practices deterrence.²⁴ The administration has also been concerned with ensuring that potential American adversaries will not be able to deter the United States.²⁵ This article does not address administration efforts to keep the United States from being deterred. The focus here is on American thinking about how to deter others, not about how others might deter the United States.²⁶

Bush administration thinking about how – and how much – the United States should use deterrence is usefully summarized in terms of the four goals noted above. First, many administration officials believed the foreign policy of the preceding Clinton administration had eroded the ability of the US to make credible threats. They wanted to project a tougher American image. Efforts to make the country appear strong and resolute would be useful for defence and coercive diplomacy as well as deterrence, but the ultimate goal appears to have been to prevent challenges in the first place. Hence, rather than a turning away from deterrence, the most fundamental instincts of the Bush administration led to a goal of strengthening deterrence.

Second, the administration has expressed interest in deterring more than just military attacks by other states. It has also sought to deter terrorist attacks, aid to terrorism by both states and private actors, the sharing of WMD technology, and even WMD acquisition by rogue states. In some ways, deterrence is being asked to do more than ever.

Third, administration officials do not believe deterrence can be depended upon to work against all threats. They hence sought to downgrade the weight given to deterrence and to create other strategic options. The same concerns that produced doubt about the reliability of deterrence have also prompted efforts to make deterrence more effective. Hence, fourth, the administration has sought the ability to develop deterrent postures tailored to each potential threat.

These four objectives were not primarily a response to 9/11. Rather, they were already part of administration plans prior to the terrorist attacks. If anything did change, it was the relative emphasis given to the various objectives in public. After 9/11, the administration moved the option of preventive action ahead of other alternatives to deterrence that it would otherwise have emphasized more, such as missile defences. This was a real policy shift, but it did not signal the abandonment of deterrence some have perceived.

Reduced Willingness To Rely on Deterrence

The review of policy here begins with discussion of the third goal identified above, the downgrading of deterrence, because this has received the most attention. Colin Gray colourfully captures the way most analysts perceive this shift in American strategy after 9/11: ‘The Bush administration did not formally retire deterrence as concept or policy, but it left observers in no doubt that in the global war that it declared against terrorism, deterrence generally would be left on the bench.’²⁷

The rhetorical discounting of deterrence reflected what administration officials and other commentators took to be a lesson of 9/11: the United States could no longer afford to let others strike first before taking action.²⁸ Over the course of 2002, the Bush administration developed this into a general doctrine that the United States would not depend on deterrence but would, if necessary, act preventively instead. Two public announcements – a graduation speech at West Point and the release of a new National Security Strategy – did the most to create an impression that the United States had abandoned deterrence. In his famous 1 June commencement address at West Point, President Bush declared:

For much of the last century, America's defense relied on the Cold War doctrines of deterrence and containment. In some cases, those strategies still apply. But new threats also require new thinking. Deterrence – the promise of massive retaliation against nations – means nothing against shadowy terrorist networks with no nation or citizens to defend. Containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons on missiles or secretly provide them to terrorist allies.

Yet even in this bluntest of comments, there was a potential ambiguity. Bush defined deterrence as 'massive retaliation against nations', leaving open the possibility that other steps might be available that could generate deterrent effects. The rest of the speech, however, made clear the president's preference for offensive action.²⁹

The most definitive articulation of the American position came with the publication of a new National Security Strategy in September 2002. The key section is worth quoting in detail:

Given the goals of rogue states and terrorists, the United States can no longer rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past. The inability to deter a potential attacker, the immediacy of today's threats, and the magnitude of potential harm that could be caused by our adversaries' choice of weapons, do not permit that option. We cannot let our enemies strike first.

- In the Cold War . . . [d]eterrence was an effective defense. But deterrence based only upon the threat of retaliation is less likely to work against the leaders of rogue states more willing to take risks, gambling with the lives of their people . . .
- Traditional concepts of deterrence will not work against a terrorist enemy whose avowed tactics are wanton destruction and the targeting of innocents; whose so-called soldiers seek martyrdom in death and whose most potent protection is statelessness. The overlap between states that sponsor terror and those that pursue WMD compels us to action. . . .

To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively.³⁰

Even in this most sweeping expression of doubt, the administration did not close the door on deterrence altogether. It described deterrence as 'less likely to work' on

rogue states rather than as impossible. It also highlighted that the doubts applied specifically to 'traditional', 'Cold War' approaches to deterrence. Yet the gist was also quite clear: in select cases, the United States would not count on deterrence and containment, but would choose the path of preventive war instead. About six months later, this is exactly what the United States did in Iraq.³¹

The combination of these doctrinal announcements and the Iraq war made it natural for observers to conclude that the Bush administration had in practice given up on deterrence and would now rely on the preventive use of force as a general rule. Though preventive attack has remained an option, given top officials' strategic beliefs, the administration was never likely to abandon deterrence. Instead, American policy has involved potentially conflicting impulses: the Bush administration has sought to rely on deterrence both less and more.

The Desire to Strengthen Deterrence

George W. Bush and his advisors entered office believing that Clinton administration foreign policy, starting with the withdrawal from Somalia after the deaths of 18 troops in Mogadishu, had left an image of US weakness. Shortly before Bush's inaugural, his designated Defense Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, told him the world would be watching how he would respond to his first foreign policy crisis: 'According to Rumsfeld, Bush responded that he was ready to lean forward, to erase any impression of American softness.'³²

This is exactly what the president sought to do after al Qaeda struck the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. In meetings with his advisors in the following days, President Bush repeatedly expressed his desire to send a message. On 13 September, for example, Bush told his National Security Council, 'We're going to hurt them [the Taliban] so bad that everyone in the world sees, don't deal with bin Laden.'³³ The president stated these goals publicly in a speech at the Citadel, exactly three months after 11 September:

Our military has a new and essential mission. For states that support terror, it's not enough that the consequences be costly – they must be devastating. The more credible this reality, the more likely that regimes will change their behavior – making it less likely that America and our friends will need to use overwhelming force against them.³⁴

Properly speaking, for states that already had a policy of supporting terrorism, the message was compelling rather than deterrent – it sought to force change in an existing course of action rather than prevent that action.³⁵ Compellence is related to deterrence though, in that both are coercive strategies that reflect similar thinking about how to influence others, and a posture that compels an existing state sponsor to drop its support for terrorism should also work to deter other states from initiating an effort to assist terrorist adversaries of the United States.

Although the above statements applied to state actors, the administration has also suggested that a posture of toughness will help deter non-state, terrorist actors as well. The National Security Strategy released in President Bush's second term declares that 'terrorists are emboldened more by perceptions of weakness than by demonstrations

of resolve. Terrorists lure recruits by telling them that we are decadent and easily intimidated and will retreat if attacked'.³⁶ The notion that demonstrations of resolve can discourage terrorism is a classic example of deterrence reasoning. President Bush's statement in his speech at the Citadel that if states assist terrorism 'the consequences ... must be devastating' also echoes classic deterrence reasoning; indeed, it sounds quite similar to the 'deterrence by punishment' model that most associate with the Cold War.

In short, at the same time the administration was publicly discounting the reliability of deterrence, it was also seeking to make the American deterrent posture more robust. Although these twin impulses can appear contradictory, they need not be. One can try to make deterrence work while also considering it fragile. As Assistant Secretary of Defense Peter Flory put it in Senate testimony in 2006, administration defence planners work from an assumption that 'Deterrence continues to be important, but uncertain.'³⁷ The uncertainty has prompted consideration of alternatives, including preventive action, but it has also motivated efforts to make deterrence more effective.

Three Levels of Deterrence

To disentangle the different threads of policy on deterrence, it is helpful to introduce some distinctions based on the idea that states can seek deterrence at different levels, similar to the levels of analysis in international relations theory. I propose distinguishing between a more general level, involving the image a state seeks to project to the world, and more specific levels, involving the declaratory strategies developed to deal with particular threats. At the most general level, the Bush administration has shown a predilection for deterrent thinking. When it comes to strategies for addressing certain specific situations, however, the administration has not been willing to count on deterrence always working. In short, the Bush administration has a deep commitment to presenting the strongest possible deterrent posture, but coupled with a belief that deterrence can still fail, requiring the use of other options in some situations.

Thus, when formulating case-specific strategies, the Bush administration has made it clear it would not always emphasize deterrence. In a larger context, though, deterrence was always a preeminent goal. As part of its overall posture toward the world, the Bush administration has sought to send the strongest possible signals of American capability and resolve. As noted, the administration has done so out of desire to enhance American ability not only to deter but also to compel. The underlying mode of reasoning that makes such strategies appear attractive, however, is basically deterrent in nature: it is the idea that if you demonstrate sufficient toughness, no one will mess with you. Even when administration officials have not called it deterrence, their deepest instincts have propelled them to what is essentially a deterrent mode of thought and action.

The distinction here is between deterrence as a specific stratagem and deterrence as a broader worldview. In discussing the strategic belief systems that policy-makers might hold, Robert Jervis made an influential distinction between what he labelled the deterrence and spiral models.³⁸ The deterrence model assumes there are dangerous aggressors and, if those aggressors think that defenders will not or cannot respond

effectively, they will strike when the opportunity arises. The core belief is that any sign of weakness, in capabilities or resolve, invites trouble. Superior strength and a demonstrated willingness to use it, however, will convince adversaries to hold back. The spiral model, in contrast, suggests that an overly strong or assertive posture can make a state appear threatening to others that are primarily concerned about their own security, possibly triggering action-reaction cycles that lead to unnecessary conflict. The spiral model counsels strategies of restraint and reassurance to avoid setting off such sequences of escalation.

These are general beliefs about how world politics work and, as such, they shape the way actors reason about specific strategic choices. A belief system that expects there to be dangerous actors and gives priority to the need to deter the threats they pose will naturally make deterrence appear to be an important strategy, and will lead to great concern with demonstrating strength and resolve. Such an outlook does not preclude other possible choices, however, including more aggressive options. If the threats are seen as truly menacing, preventive war may be deemed necessary. Stepping back from particular passages that downplay deterrence in specific speeches or strategy documents, and placing these in a larger context, it is clear that the Bush administration in important respects has a deterrence-model view of the world.

This suggests it would be useful to have terminology to make distinctions between deterrence at different levels. One hesitates to introduce more labels to a field that already has so many, but no existing terms correspond exactly to the distinction being made here. Patrick Morgan's notion of general deterrence comes closest; his point was that if deterrence is effective enough, potential adversaries never challenge a state in a way that triggers a crisis in which immediate deterrence becomes necessary.³⁹ But general deterrence most directly refers to how far back in time one achieves deterrent effect and is usually applied to a bilateral relationship. It still focuses on whether one particular target state is deterred, which is not the same as being able to deter all potential challengers.

To capture the different levels at which deterrence can be pitched, I propose the labels systemic, middle-range, and individually tailored deterrence, with the latter two being variants of what I will call specific deterrence. Deterrence postures can exist along a continuum in terms of how narrow or broad they are. At the broadest end of the spectrum, the goal is to make deterrence apply system wide; the state hopes its reputation for toughness will be sufficient to deter any actor in the system from taking any unwanted action, perhaps without any explicit deterrent threats being made. This will be called systemic deterrence. The other two levels of deterrence can both be considered types of specific deterrence.⁴⁰ Specific deterrence involves publicly announcing a specific deterrent commitment. Different things can be made specific, including the actor to be deterred, the action to be prevented, or the promised response if deterrence fails. At its narrowest, deterrence becomes individually focused: the deterrent message is aimed at a specific, named actor, and the threatened response might also be unique to that actor. This could also be called actor-specific deterrence, but to stay consistent with the Bush administration's introduction of the term tailored deterrence, this most narrowly focused

posture will be called individually tailored deterrence. Finally, at an intermediate level between individually tailored and systemic deterrence, states can also have a declaratory strategy directed against a particular type of behaviour. This would be situation-specific rather than actor-specific deterrence. Because the deterrent message is not directed at an individual actor but at all actors who might contemplate taking the action one seeks to deter, situation-specific deterrence has a middle-range focus. These distinctions are helpful in clarifying how the Bush administration has approached deterrence and in identifying possible shortcomings in that approach.

Having labels to distinguish deterrence at different levels makes it possible to understand the seemingly schizophrenic nature of administration policy, which has sometimes seemed to dismiss deterrence and at other times sought to bolster deterrence. Within a deterrence-model worldview, these positions do not appear contradictory. This is especially the case if one draws a distinction between systemic and specific deterrence. A state might consider deterrence unreliable in a specific situation, leading it to undertake a preventive use of force. But an unwillingness to rely on specific deterrence need not imply the state has given up on systemic deterrence. At the systemic level of the deterrence model, taking military action can be seen not as an alternative to deterrence but as a way to send a salutary message that strengthens deterrence. The National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, for instance, outlines how US actions after a WMD attack could contribute to deterrence: 'An effective US response not only will eliminate the source of a WMD attack but will also have a powerful deterrent effect upon other adversaries that possess or seek WMD or missiles.'⁴¹

In short, the contrasting elements of Bush administration declaratory strategy appear coherent, not contradictory, when viewed through the lens of a deterrence-model belief system. Given such beliefs, it would be surprising if the administration ever intended to abandon deterrence. At the same time, though, the deterrence model also encourages concern about the possible fragility of deterrence. Thus, it is also not surprising that the administration would look both for new ways to bolster deterrence and alternative options for cases where deterrence might not be up to the task. In addition, their predilection for deterrent-model reasoning also made it natural to think about expanding the scope of deterrence to address new challenges.

Stretching Deterrence to New Tasks

Traditionally, deterrence as a national security strategy has involved trying to prevent military attacks by other states. Yet deterrent reasoning can be applied to other actors and other types of action. The Bush administration has tried to do just that. It has sought to apply deterrence to four additional contingencies: deterring attacks by non-state actors, deterring states and private actors from aiding terrorism, deterring states from acquiring the means to threaten the United States, and deterring states from transferring WMD.

In practice, deterrence as a strategy for dealing with terrorism is not new.⁴² Since 9/11, however, the Bush administration has made preventing terrorism a much higher priority. Going on the offensive to defeat terrorism receives primary emphasis in the

Global War on Terror (GWOT). But the administration has also tried to find ways to deter terrorism.

Official American strategy documents generally aver that '[t]he hard core of the terrorists cannot be deterred'.⁴³ However, American strategy envisions three potential ways to gain some degree of deterrence. One avenue is a by-product of improved homeland security. Efforts to improve security at high-value targets, to make it harder for terrorists to enter the country, and to increase the American ability to mitigate the consequences of any attack that does occur all make it less likely that terrorists can succeed in carrying out a spectacular attack. As early as the National Strategy for Homeland Security, released in July 2002, American planning documents have held that this type of 'deterrence by denial' can serve at least as a tactical deterrent, leading terrorists to give up on particular attacks they might otherwise have attempted.⁴⁴ Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Ryan Henry has explained the reasoning as follows: 'Terrorists place a higher value on the completion of their mission than on their own lives. A potential deterrent strategy is to convince them that they will not successfully accomplish their task.'⁴⁵

During the administration's second term, officials have also begun identifying creative ways of applying 'deterrence by punishment' against al Qaeda. Since the terrorist network does not possess any physical territory that can be held at risk, the basic idea has been to find possible equivalents. Counterterrorism officials have decided that the terrorists' image in the eyes of their fellow Muslims, especially in the virtual territory of cyberspace, is a possible source of deterrent leverage. If Islamist terrorists become convinced that a particular attack will be condemned by most Muslims and damage their reputation for acting consistently with the dictates of their religion, this might inhibit them from carrying out that attack. American officials have been seeking ways to make this result more likely. Combining these first two efforts at deterrence, the director of strategic plans and policy for the Joint Chiefs of Staff has suggested that terrorism by al Qaeda and its supporters can be deterred if they become convinced 'The goal you set won't be achieved, or you will be discredited and lose face with the rest of the Muslim world'.⁴⁶

The third way of applying deterrence to terrorism involves the second more general extension of deterrence noted above – deterring support for terrorism. This has been labelled 'indirect deterrence',⁴⁷ to distinguish it from efforts to deter attackers directly. Here, the administration has stressed the consequences for others who assist or enable terrorism, even if they themselves do not take part in an attack. This strand of administration strategy aims to deter third-party support for terrorism, in the hope this will prevent terrorism by keeping terrorist groups from obtaining the resources they need.

Deterrent messages have been aimed both at states that harbour or sponsor terrorist groups as well as at various private actors who support or assist terrorism, such as financiers of terrorist organizations. The move in this direction began on the night of 11 September itself, when President Bush declared that states that harboured terrorists would be held accountable.⁴⁸ This policy was formalized in written declaratory strategy in the 2002 NSS and the 2003 National Strategy for Combating Terrorism.⁴⁹ The 2002 National Strategy for Homeland Security extended this approach to include

individuals and not just states: 'We will pursue not only the individuals directly involved in terrorist activity but also their sources of support: the people and organizations that knowingly fund terrorists and those that provide them with logistical assistance.'⁵⁰

A third way in which the Bush administration has extended deterrence is not directly related to terrorism, but instead involves what it calls dissuasion. The administration's first QDR, released in fall 2001, included dissuasion as a major goal of US defence strategy. The QDR and subsequent NSS listed dissuasion separately from deterrence; together, these represented two of four key objectives, along with assurance of friends and allies and being ready to decisively defeat adversaries in the event of war. The NSS described the goal of dissuasion as being 'strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States'.⁵¹ Most observers interpreted dissuasion initially as being aimed at China: the Defense Department seemed to hope that if the United States maintained a large lead in advanced military technologies, China would give up trying to become a peer competitor.

Dissuasion gained another dimension when the national security focus shifted to rogue state WMD programs. The administration suggested that certain American defence efforts might convince rogue states it would no longer be worth trying to acquire such weapons. The Nuclear Posture Review stressed that 'Systems capable of striking a wide range of targets throughout an adversary's territory may dissuade a potential adversary from pursuing threatening capabilities.'⁵² The 2002 NSS stated that consequence management efforts could also help dissuade enemies from seeking WMD. As the 2006 NSS summed it up: 'We aim to convince our adversaries that they cannot achieve their goals with WMD, and thus deter and dissuade them from attempting to use or even acquire these weapons in the first place.'⁵³ The latter goal in effect represents an attempt to apply deterrence at an earlier point in time. In addition to seeking to deter use of weapons once a state has developed WMD, with dissuasion the administration has sought to deter certain states from even acquiring such weapons.⁵⁴ Maintaining separate labels is useful for clarifying the distinct end goals, but this should not obscure the fact that dissuasion is expected to work, in part, by an application of deterrent logic.

Fourth, after North Korea's nuclear weapon test in October 2006, President Bush declared that the United States would 'hold North Korea fully accountable of [sic] the consequences' if it provided nuclear weapons or materials to another actor. Administration officials described this as a deterrent signal. Such a doctrine could be seen as implicit in the broader effort to deter states from giving support to terrorism, but commentators generally interpreted this as a new policy, stretching deterrence to apply now to the possible sharing of WMD.⁵⁵

Although this was apparently the first time the president articulated this deterrent policy in public, it was not a new policy developed in response to the North Korean nuclear test. The goal of 'detering the transfer of WMD capabilities . . . to terrorists' appears in written declaratory policy as early as the February 2004 Strategic Deterrence Joint Operating Concept.⁵⁶ The September 2006 NSCT strongly implied

American willingness to retaliate against those who provide WMD used in a terrorist attack: 'We will make clear that terrorists and those who aid or sponsor a WMD attack would face the prospect of an overwhelming response to any use of such weapons.'⁵⁷

In order to make this policy viable, the administration has been investing in 'nuclear forensics' that could trace the nuclear materials used in an explosive device back to the original source, which could then be held accountable. As part of this effort, various government agencies have formed teams of experts dedicated to analyzing radioactive fallout and debris in the event of a nuclear detonation; some teams of scientists with radiation detectors are deployed around the country on a regular basis in part in the hope they would find a terrorist bomb before it is set off. Administration officials have explicitly described one of the goals of the various radiation detection and nuclear attribution efforts as being to establish deterrence.⁵⁸ The administration has made similar efforts to improve US ability to attribute the source of a biological attack, again in order to bolster deterrence against those who might use or transfer biological weapons.⁵⁹

How broadly this fourth extension of deterrence will be applied remains unclear. A major concern is whether retaliation would always be an appropriate response. In discussions with outside experts, administration officials have indicated they would be hesitant to launch retaliatory strikes to punish Russia or Pakistan should it turn out that terrorists had obtained leaked nuclear materials from one of those countries.⁶⁰ Even if it remains uncertain how widely the policy will be applied, however, it remains the case that the administration has made efforts to stretch deterrence to apply to the transfer of WMD. This is in addition to efforts to apply deterrence to the acquisition of such weapons, to other forms of assistance to terrorism, and to the actions of non-state actors as well as states. While not relying exclusively on deterrence, the Bush administration has tried to extend deterrent reasoning to a wider range of national security problems than ever.

A New Concept of Deterrence

Finally, for those situations where it still hopes to apply deterrence, the administration has sought to modify the United States approach in order to get as much leverage out of deterrence as possible. Discussions of this modified approach nearly always draw a contrast with the Cold War. Public statements and written documents imply that the Bush administration inherited a deterrence strategy that still rested largely on the threat of massive nuclear retaliation first articulated by Eisenhower and Dulles.

The administration portrayal of Cold War deterrence betrays mixed emotions. On the one hand, the administration expresses strong reservations about the stereotypical Cold War version of deterrence. The threat to destroy whole societies through nuclear counterstrikes is deemed both morally suspect and no longer credible. This rejection of the original Cold War approach pre-dated 9/11. On 1 May 2001, President Bush gave a speech at the National Defense University in which he declared:

Cold War deterrence is no longer enough. To maintain peace, to protect our own citizens and our own allies and friends, we must seek security based on

more than the grim premise that we can destroy those who seek to destroy us. . . . Deterrence can no longer be based solely on the threat of nuclear retaliation.⁶¹

On the other hand, strategy documents evince some nostalgia for the Cold War. They present it as a time when the United States had a single adversary, the Soviet Union, that was well understood and predictable, and therefore fairly easy to deter. Today, in contrast, deterrence guidance is based on the premise the United States confronts 'multiple, less well understood adversaries . . . whose political, cultural, and idiosyncratic differences' make it harder for the United States to deter them.⁶² The administration and top military planners have assumed that, because the security environment has changed, deterrence strategy also has to change: 'as the character and composition of our principal challengers change, so too must our approaches to deterrence'.⁶³ They have described their intention as being to craft '21st century deterrence'.⁶⁴

Efforts to modify American deterrence strategy were well underway even before 9/11.⁶⁵ Strategy documents initially referred to the results as a 'new concept of deterrence'.⁶⁶ In their initial descriptions of the new concept, then Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz emphasized the forward deployment of forces to make possible the swift and decisive defeat of any attempt at aggression. They argued that the prospect of 'total defeat' would be the most effective deterrent to misbehaviour.⁶⁷

The administration, however, never felt comfortable relying on any single approach to deterrence. The diversity of potential threats, they concluded, required the flexibility to craft different deterrent packages. As a result, all the guidance documents emphasize the need to increase the range of available options.⁶⁸ This is sometimes described as providing a 'portfolio' from which the president can choose.⁶⁹

Efforts to move in this direction are most fully reflected in the administration's Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), completed in late 2001. It subsumed the old nuclear triad of land-based missiles, sea-based missiles, and bombers within a broader 'new triad' that comprises offensive strike forces, active and passive defences, and a responsive defence infrastructure. In this new triad, nuclear weapons were combined with non-nuclear strike forces in the offensive leg. With respect to deterrence, the theory was that the new triad would give the United States the ability to scale threats up or down, and to include nuclear weapons or not, depending on the targets the United States seeks to hold at risk. As the NPR described the logic: 'Nuclear attack options that vary in scale, scope, and purpose will complement other military capabilities. The combination can provide the range of options needed to pose a credible deterrent to adversaries whose values and calculations of risk and of gain and loss may be very different from and more difficult to discern than those of past adversaries.'⁷⁰

Eventually, the administration labelled its approach 'tailored deterrence'. Elaine Bunn credits the 2006 QDR with the first use of the actual term.⁷¹ However, administration language and thinking had been evolving in this direction for several years. As early as his 2002 Annual Report, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld discussed the goal

of being able 'to tailor . . . deterrent strategies'.⁷² The 2006 QDR succinctly summarizes the administration's view of how it has shifted strategy 'From "one size fits all" deterrence – to tailored deterrence for rogue powers, terrorist networks and near-peer competitors.'⁷³

Some presentations of the strategy describe tailoring in terms of the three categories of actor listed in the preceding quote. However, most depictions of the strategy emphasize the goal of developing individually tailored deterrents. Major General Richard Newton, then director of plans and policy at US Strategic Command, explained at a 2005 conference that 'Deterrence plans should be adversary and scenario specific.'⁷⁴ The fullest presentation of the intended US approach comes in the December 2006 Deterrence Operations Joint Operating Concept. As a goal for deterrence implementation, it lists:

Tailoring Deterrence Operations to Specific Adversaries in Specific Strategic Contexts: . . . Specific state and non-state adversaries . . . require deterrence strategies and operations tailored to address their unique decision-making attributes and characteristics under a variety of strategically relevant circumstances. Such tailored deterrence strategies and operations should be developed, planned, and implemented with reference to specific deterrence objectives that identify who we seek to deter from taking what action(s), under what conditions (i.e., Deter adversary X from taking action Y, under Z circumstances).⁷⁵

To make tailored deterrence workable, strategy documents call for improving abilities to understand the values and perceptions of potential adversaries in order to ascertain what threats might deter them, and for having a wide range of capabilities from which to develop options appropriate for threatening those targets.⁷⁶ Defence officials also hope to tailor communications individually as well. In Senate testimony summarizing DOD thinking, Assistant Secretary Peter Flory indicated that 'declaratory statements will also need to be tailored'.⁷⁷

This concern with individually tailoring deterrence springs from the same sources as the doubts about the reliability of deterrence. The root problem is the concern that other actors have values so different from those of Americans that they might attack in the face of threats that would effectively deter the United States. In particular, there is concern that terrorist and rogue state leaders do not value the lives of their people, so they will not be deterred by threats to impose great costs on their societies.⁷⁸ To make deterrence as effective as possible, therefore, the administration believes the United States must try to understand and hold at risk what each individual target actor values most.

Evaluation

Transnational terrorism and WMD proliferation pose daunting challenges, and any president who has wrestled with how to keep the country safe from these threats should be evaluated with due regard for the magnitude of the challenge. Given continuing uncertainties about what works best, several elements of Bush administration strategy appear prudent and worth maintaining. First, despite what some of its critics

(and supporters) seem to think, the Bush administration did not actually jettison deterrence as an element of strategy, and it was right not to do so. For whatever contributions it can still make to protecting American security and avoiding unnecessary war, it is important to get as much as possible out of deterrence.

Second, the impulse to broaden the ways in which the United States seeks to apply deterrence is sound. It is unrealistic to expect that a single deterrent threat could be effective across all actors and situations. Third, the administration is also wise not to rely exclusively on deterrence and to instead place deterrence more equally alongside other tools of strategy.⁷⁹ Deterrence by itself is not likely to be sufficiently effective against all sources of threat to provide the level of security the United States hopes to enjoy. Overall national strategy should involve a broader range of approaches than just containment and deterrence.

If the goal is to get as much mileage as possible out of deterrence, however, the Bush administration approach still leaves room for improvement. This article thus concludes with a critique of Bush administration strategy. This critique makes five points: the administration has not changed the US approach to applying deterrence as much as it claims; it has underestimated the prospects for deterrence success against rogue states; it has adopted other policies that are likely to undercut American deterrence efforts against these states; it is at risk of over-tailoring declaratory policy; and some parts of the administration response to terrorism have weakened US efforts to apply deterrence by denial against this threat.

Not So New

Whether or not the administration's approach to deterrence is really new is not as important as how well the strategy is likely to work. To assess the strategy, however, it is helpful to have an accurate historical understanding. If something presented or interpreted as radically new actually has important roots in the past, then past experience becomes more relevant for assessing that policy. Elements of continuity also reveal that a strategy is not simply an idiosyncratic product of a single administration, meaning parts of the strategy are likely to be maintained after it leaves office.

Some aspects of the Bush Doctrine are distinctive. The administration has placed greater emphasis on preventive action than most of its predecessors. It has also been more willing to undertake prevention that is larger in scope – not just air strikes, but invasion and regime change as well. Yet, there are also elements of continuity. Several commentators see the preemption doctrine as a further development of the Clinton administration's 1993 Counterproliferation Initiative, which sought to improve American military capability to respond to regional WMD proliferation.⁸⁰ Consideration of preventive action against terrorism likewise goes back to at least mid-1980s debates in the Reagan administration.⁸¹

With respect to tailored deterrence, though, the administration has repeatedly presented its strategy as a sharp break from the past. According to the second-term National Security Strategy, 'The new strategic environment requires new approaches to deterrence and defence. Our deterrence strategy no longer rests primarily on the

grim premise of inflicting devastating consequences on potential foes.⁸² This summation is misleading, because it contains three significant exaggerations.

First, administration statements have implied President Bush inherited an approach based solely on the threat of massive nuclear retaliation. In Senate testimony in July 2001, then Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz asked, 'If Saddam Hussein had the ability to strike a Western capital with a nuclear weapon . . . would we really want our only option in such a crisis to be destroying Baghdad and its people?'⁸³ Such statements ignore several decades of evolution away from this posture. A declaratory policy giving exclusive emphasis to massive retaliation had already ended by the 1960s. The Kennedy administration's adoption of 'flexible response' signalled a desire to have conventional options to employ below the nuclear threshold. In the 1970s, then-Defense Secretary James Schlesinger announced that the United States would add 'limited nuclear options' to its war plans as well, based on the idea the president should have the ability to order nuclear strikes that would not necessarily result in the complete destruction of the other side. Even the premise behind tailored deterrence is not new. A very similar strategy was introduced, ironically enough, by a president who was a *bête noire* to many hawks and conservatives – Jimmy Carter. The 'countervailing strategy', formalized by Carter in Presidential Directive 59, arose from efforts to craft deterrence not around what would deter the United States, but what would deter the Soviet Union. The strategy called for holding at risk those targets valued most by the Soviet leadership, especially structures that would enable Soviet leaders to survive and maintain Communist Party control of the country.⁸⁴

Second, while the administration has sought a variety of non-nuclear deterrent options, it definitely has not taken nuclear weapons off the table. National Security Presidential Directive 17, the classified version of the National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, instructed that 'The United States will continue to make clear that it reserves the right to respond with overwhelming force – including potentially nuclear weapons – to the use of [weapons of mass destruction] against the United States, our forces abroad, and friends and allies.'⁸⁵ The administration seeks the most extensive possible menu of both nuclear and non-nuclear options and will adopt a non-nuclear alternative in situations where that appears to be the most effective deterrent, but it has not repudiated the 'grim' option of using nuclear weapons.

Third, public statements and written guidance routinely suggest that the threat 'to impose severe consequences'⁸⁶ is still an element of the US deterrent posture. As noted above, President Bush himself, in his December 2001 speech at the Citadel, declared that for state sponsors of terror 'the consequences . . . must be devastating'. President Bush and his aides have sought to focus threats on regimes rather than their societies, and their version of massive retaliation will not necessarily involve nuclear weapons. These are important distinctions for limiting the number of civilian lives that might be lost in a retaliatory strike. Nevertheless, the underlying logic is still that of deterrence by punishment, coupled with an assumption that the more overwhelming the threatened response, the more effective deterrence will be. Bush administration deterrence strategy does not rely exclusively on punishment; it also incorporates more extensive use of deterrence by denial than did many previous

administrations. However, once one separates deterrence by punishment from the assumption it had always implied a threat of complete nuclear destruction, it is clear the Bush administration has continued to embrace traditional forms of deterrence by punishment as well. In sum, there is less change in the administration approach to deterrence than it claims.

If there is anything new, it is the new triad introduced by the NPR. The new triad eliminated much of what remained of a long-standing separation between nuclear and conventional weapons in military planning. It suggested either option could be chosen, depending mainly on its expected military effectiveness against the intended target. At the declaratory level, at least, this is a break from the past, and it is a dangerous one.⁸⁷ It ignores the widespread perception of nuclear weapons as a category apart whose use is 'taboo' and instead makes nuclear weapons appear militarily useful.⁸⁸ The NPR also contradicts nonproliferation commitments previously made by the United States. For these reasons, the new triad could end up encouraging nuclear proliferation.⁸⁹

Overstating the Need for Preemption

This article has shown that the preemption doctrine did not imply the abandonment of deterrence. Some situations, however, do boil down to an either/or choice. Its declaratory posture and actions in Iraq suggest the Bush administration sees the preventive use of force as preferable to deterrence in at least some cases of rogue states seeking WMD. The problem is that this preference has flowed from underestimating America's ability to deter WMD-armed states.

The main argument for preventive military action is usually the observation that deterrence might fail, followed by the claim the United States should not take the risk of being hit first. While it is true that deterrence might fail, this should not be the end of the analysis. Although perfect deterrence cannot be guaranteed, rogue states are still good candidates for deterrence. Moreover, a chance of deterrence failure does not by itself make the case for prevention. Preventive attacks can also fail, and can involve potentially significant costs and risks. In addition, not all deterrence failures are equal: some are more devastating; others are relatively more bearable. Hence, it is important to evaluate the pros and cons of both deterrence and prevention. Fear of deterrence failure should not supplant a rational policy analysis that estimates the probabilities of success or failure and the likely costs and risks of each alternative.

In contrast, the Bush administration after 9/11 proceeded as though the threat environment made it no longer possible to indulge in traditional policy analysis. The most vivid example is a widely reported comment by Vice President Cheney. In response to intelligence that Pakistani nuclear scientists had met with al Qaeda leaders, according to journalist Ron Suskind, Cheney argued, 'If there's a one percent chance that Pakistani scientists are helping al Qaeda build or develop a nuclear weapon, we have to treat it as a certainty. . . . It's not about our analysis, or finding a preponderance of evidence. It's about our response.'⁹⁰ It is obviously important to take seriously even a low probability chance that al Qaeda might acquire a nuclear weapon. The administration, however, also seems to have applied this 'one percent doctrine' to Iraq, and it could come up again in the case

of Iran or some other regional power seeking to develop WMD. With respect to rogue states, an ability to imagine the possibility that deterrence might fail and the state might use WMD does not eliminate the need for careful policy analysis.

First, it is important to estimate, if only roughly, the actual probability of deterrence failure. Although deterrence success cannot be guaranteed, there is little basis for concluding that deterrence failure is likely when dealing with rogue states. Most dictators value their own lives, want to stay in power, and want to have a state to rule over.⁹¹ They will not generally take actions they think have a high probability of leading to their death or the destruction of their country. It does not take much awareness of the world to understand that attacking the United States with nuclear weapons is likely to lead to such a result. For a situation in which the United States would be reluctant to respond with nuclear weapons, there are also conventional options. If the United States made it clear that it will not pursue forcible regime change preventively, it could make the option of regime change a purely deterrent threat. The United States could threaten to impose regime change, but only in response to a rogue state use of WMD or transfer to terrorists. This would provide an additional source of deterrence that does not rely on the threat of nuclear retaliation.⁹²

Historical evidence suggests that deterrence has a good chance of working. There are many past cases in which hard-liners argued for preventive attack, yet none of these cases ended with a failure to deter WMD use. Early in the Cold War, some people advocated preventive war against the Soviet Union before it acquired the ability to strike the United States with nuclear weapons.⁹³ Yet, despite the brutality Josef Stalin or the occasional erratic and reckless behaviour of Nikita Khrushchev, deterrence did not fail against them or any subsequent Soviet leader. Arguments arose again for striking preventively before China got the bomb.⁹⁴ Chairman Mao was another ruthless dictator, and the upheaval of the Cultural Revolution created doubts about the rationality of Chinese leaders, but despite concerns about whether it could be deterred, China has never used nuclear weapons.

Similarly, in the 1950s Western leaders compared the Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser to Hitler.⁹⁵ In the 1960s Egypt used chemical weapons in a conflict in Yemen. Yet Nasser and his successor, Anwar Sadat, never used chemical weapons in their country's wars with Israel because they realized Israel could retaliate in a variety of ways, including, perhaps as early as 1967, with nuclear weapons. Saddam Hussein also used chemical arms in the Iran-Iraq war and against Iraqi Kurds. It is generally accepted, however, that American and Israeli deterrent messages convinced Saddam not to use chemical or biological weapons, which he still possessed at the time, in the 1991 Persian Gulf War.⁹⁶ Despite all the doubts expressed about Saddam, in all the years he remained in power he never used WMD against a country that could either hit back in kind or overthrow him. The same is true of North Korea. Despite its confrontational rhetoric and doubts about the sanity of the North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il, North Korea has never taken its brinkmanship to the point where it appeared to be preparing to launch a nuclear attack.

These examples cannot prove that rogue states will always be deterred from using WMD; just because something has always happened a certain way in the past does not mean it will always happen that way in the future. The historical record does tell us something about the odds of deterrence failure however. It suggests that the chances of deterring rogue state WMD use are quite good.

Indeed, because the United States enjoys such a large military advantage over such states, they might even be more susceptible to deterrence than was the Soviet Union. In the Cold War, American deterrence ultimately rested on the threat to destroy the Soviet Union even at the risk the United States would be destroyed in kind. In contrast, the United States can defeat rogue states using purely conventional means if it prefers (although, as Iraq shows, the challenges of post-war occupation and reconstruction can be daunting). Moreover, although Iran or North Korea might gain the ability to hurt the United States badly, they clearly will lack the capability to destroy the United States even in response to its use of nuclear weapons. Contrary to claims that current state adversaries are harder to deter, American conventional and nuclear superiority make deterrence more likely to work, not less likely.⁹⁷

Deterrence sceptics argue the situation is different today because of global terrorism. The Bush administration has repeatedly expressed concern that a rogue state might give WMD to terrorists in the hope it could avoid detection as the source of the attack.⁹⁸ As with any potential scenario for deterrence failure, this possibility cannot entirely be ruled out. Several considerations make it unlikely however. Once possession passes to a terrorist organization, the state would lose control over the weapons and could not guarantee they would be used as the state wants. If a terrorist group becomes angry at its state sponsor, the WMD might even be used against the rogue state itself. Hence, states have good incentives to maintain control of their weapons.

In addition, a rogue state would not be sure that it could escape retaliation. As discussed above, the Bush administration has been investing in the forensics of determining WMD origins, thereby improving the odds of correct attribution. Hence, there is a fair chance a rogue state would suffer consequences if it provided WMD to terrorists. No one who fears that a rogue state will do so anyway has ever made clear what objectives a rogue state might want to achieve that it values enough to take the risk of what might be a highly punishing retaliation.

The historical record, although more limited, again reinforces a conclusion that rogue states can be deterred from giving WMD to terrorists. Pakistan has long given support to groups that carry out terrorist attacks against India as part of the conflict over the disputed Kashmir territory. Yet even in the years when the A.Q. Khan network was providing assistance to state proliferators, Pakistan did not allow nuclear weapons to fall into the hands of the militant groups it was supporting. The Middle East fits the same pattern. A number of Middle East states are suspected of having chemical weapons. Although many support various Palestinian militant groups or the Hezbollah militia in Lebanon, there is no public evidence that any state in the region has ever given chemical weapons to one of these groups for use against Israel.⁹⁹

It is true that deterrence can fail, but this does not mean that deterrence is likely to fail. Both logical analysis and empirical evidence point to a conclusion that the odds are quite low that deterrence will fail against a rogue state in a way that leads to a WMD attack on the United States. In addition, though, it is also relevant to consider the potential costs if an attack does occur.

Because the term WMD includes the words 'mass destruction', it gives the impression that any use of WMD would kill large numbers of people. This is not necessarily the case. Unless the attacker is very sophisticated, some types of WMD – chemical or biological agents, or a radiological 'dirty bomb' – would not be likely to produce mass casualties. When a Japanese cult released nerve gas in a Tokyo subway in 1995, their attack killed 12 people. The anthrax-tainted letters mailed soon after 9/11 killed five people. These are 17 innocent people who did not deserve to die, and it would be possible for a chemical or biological attack to be much more deadly, but it is still the case that the use of WMD is not automatically apocalyptic.

The worst-case scenario, a nuclear bomb detonated in a US city, would indeed cause massive death and destruction. Even this nightmare case, however, involves much less than was at stake during the Cold War. In the US–Soviet confrontation, deterrence failure might have meant the destruction of the United States or even the end of human civilization. In contrast, although nuclear terrorism or a rogue state WMD attack would be an immense disaster, most Americans would not be directly harmed and the country would clearly survive. Any deterrence failure is undesirable, but if the scenario does not involve a potential risk to the country's survival, a breakdown in deterrence is not necessarily the worst possible outcome. It is hence important to estimate the likely magnitude of the negative consequences so these can be weighed against the possible costs and risks of other options such as preemption or preventive war.

In short, the risk of a deterrence failure does not by itself make the case for prevention. The likely results of the preventive use of force must also be evaluated. Like deterrence, preventive attacks can fail – for example, faulty intelligence can lead to a failure to identify all the key targets. As the results to date in Iraq show, taking preventive action can also be costly. In addition, any future military strike against another Muslim country would play into al Qaeda's propaganda that the United States is anti-Muslim and could easily serve to increase terrorism rather than reduce it.

The fear that deterrence might fail therefore does not prove that preventive use of force is a better choice. It is necessary to evaluate both options fully, estimating each one's probability of success and associated costs and risks, and then compare the two options against each other (and, ideally, against other options). Because the Bush administration has underestimated the chances for deterrence success, it has overstated the need for preventive action.

This does not mean that prevention is never justified. Rather than a rogue regime deliberately providing WMD to terrorists, the greater danger may be leakage from a state with gaps in its control of its WMD materials. Military intervention might be required to prevent potential leakage. In cases where states lack the ability to

maintain control of WMD materials, however, cooperative measures to improve their capacity or to remove dangerous materials with their permission are likely to be better options.¹⁰⁰

Undermining Deterrence

While not willing to rely on it exclusively, the Bush administration has been trying to strengthen deterrence. Some other aspects of administration policy, however, have the unfortunate effect of undermining deterrence. Part of the problem arises from recurring suggestions that the United States will pursue regime change as a way to end tyranny, especially in the remaining two members of the 'axis of evil'. When the emphasis on regime change is combined with the preemption doctrine, it tends to undercut American deterrent efforts.¹⁰¹

The Bush administration has described it differently: they have claimed the preemption doctrine strengthens deterrence. The possibility that states might be hit preventively, they have suggested, will make states view seeking WMD or supporting terrorists as less attractive. Thus, prior to the Iraq war, a senior administration official stated that one reason for discussing preemption so openly involved 'a deterrent element for the bad guys'.¹⁰² Several strategy documents also link the preemption doctrine to deterrence; they suggest that threats to take out adversaries' WMD programs will, because such strikes can prevent states from gaining any benefits from possessing WMD, contribute to deterrence by denial.¹⁰³ In this view, even a decision to carry out preventive action can contribute to deterrence. For example, then Defense Secretary Rumsfeld argued in 2005 that American action in Afghanistan and Iraq had bolstered deterrence:

The world has seen, in the last 3 and 1/2 years, the capability of the United States of America to go into Afghanistan . . . and with 20,000, 15,000 troops working with the Afghans do what 200,000 Soviets couldn't do in a decade. They've seen the United States and coalition forces go into Iraq. . . . That has to have a deterrent effect on people.¹⁰⁴

Although some dissuasive effect is possible, the combination of describing regime change as a goal and threatening preventive military action tends more strongly to undermine deterrence. By giving certain countries reason to fear they will be objects of American military action no matter what they do, provided their governments remain autocratic, this strategy removes any incentive for those governments to exercise restraint. This reflects a long-recognized point in deterrence theory: as long as the other side considers the potential consequences of its actions, its choice of whether to attack or not will depend on its comparison, however rough or implicit, of those two alternatives. Classic deterrence aims to ensure that the costs to the other side of attacking outweigh its benefits. Deterrence can still fail in these circumstances, however, if the other side evaluates the consequences of not attacking as even worse.

Recognizing this, Thomas Schelling pointed out more than 40 years ago that any deterrent threat must be paired with an assurance: 'To say, 'One more step and I shoot', can be a deterrent threat only if accompanied by the implicit assurance, 'And

if you stop I won't.'¹⁰⁵ Deterrence can fail when such assurance is not given or is not believed, even when the deterrent threat itself is credible. The doctrinal emphasis on prevention, when paired with a goal of regime change, weakens the credibility of American assurances.¹⁰⁶ Rogue states have come to believe they may be attacked or invaded even if they do not attack the United States or transfer WMD to terrorists, or even make preparations for an attack. In short, they do not feel adequate assurance that, if they obey American deterrent warnings, they will not still find themselves the object of US military action. In this situation, they might not perceive any benefits in refraining from challenging US deterrent commitments.

Some doctrinal documents produced by the military acknowledge this risk. The Deterrence Operations Joint Operating Concept explicitly warns that certain offensive postures or operations could trigger deterrence failure.¹⁰⁷ The DO-JOC even proposes efforts to reduce the costs and/or increase the benefits of adversary restraint as a way to complement deterrence by punishment and denial. At the highest levels of the Bush administration, however, the public comments of civilian officials have given the impression they either do not recognize this problem or else do not attach much weight to it. They have apparently concluded that it is better to keep up the pressure on dictatorial regimes and to maintain a posture of American readiness to initiate preventive attacks at any time.

For states that have not yet built nuclear weapons, the American posture actually increases their incentives to acquire nuclear weapons, because they may believe having their own nuclear arms is the only way to deter the United States.¹⁰⁸ With respect to Iran, the posture may also be encouraging them to deepen their ties with terrorists and insurgents, as another way of being able to threaten retaliation against any American preventive strike (although they also have many other reasons for supporting Hezbollah and Shiite militias in Iraq). For a state that does possess WMD, if this state comes to believe that an American preventive attack or invasion is imminent, this gives it an incentive to launch its weapons before those weapons are destroyed in a US first strike.¹⁰⁹ The policies of preemption and regime change, therefore, are more likely to weaken deterrence than to bolster it. If the United States wants to maximize the chances of deterrence success, it will have to soft-pedal the option of preventive use of force and pull back from the goal of regime change.

Risks in the Tailored Approach

The intuition behind tailored deterrence makes sense. Different actors have different motivations and worldviews, and it is not likely that a single deterrent threat will prevent all types of unwanted behaviour. There is a potential risk in tailored deterrence however. Depending on how much the United States seeks to tailor deterrence to each individual case, there is a danger of overdoing it. Attempts to craft highly individualized, nuanced messages might increase the chances of miscommunication in which the deterrent signal gets lost in the noise of excessive tailoring. A simple, clear, public, oft-repeated deterrent threat might have a better chance of being communicated successfully. This will likely require a lesser degree of tailoring, so that the United States can develop deterrent postures geared to certain general categories of actor or behaviour, such as rogue state WMD use.

Tailored deterrence reflects a belief that different actors have different strategic cultures and their leaders have widely varying personalities. This assumption of great differences in actors' values, perceptions, and tolerance for risk is not only the reason for seeking to tailor deterrence, it is a major reason why the Bush administration discounts the reliability of deterrence. They think it will be hard for the United States to figure out how to deter actors who have strategic cultures and personalities dissimilar to those of America and its leaders.

As a critique of neo-realist theory and rational choice approaches, this perspective has some merit. Those approaches assume that different actors are more alike than they really are. But the opposite error is also possible. One should not reject a premise that all actors are essentially the same in favour of an opposite premise that other actors are wholly different and alien. We have a better ability to understand other actors and what might deter them than a culturalist approach implies. Most rogue state leaders are dictators who want to hold onto power and preserve their state because it is their base of power. They differ from most democratic leaders, but they are not completely indecipherable. As a result, there are generic threats that could be effective across different states in the 'rogue' category.

In contrast, taken to an extreme, tailored deterrence might actually be less effective. Take the case of North Korea. Although much about 'the hermit kingdom' remains mysterious, one fact that is well known is Kim Jong Il's affection for movies. From the perspective of tailored deterrence, this might imply that the best way to deter Kim would be to threaten to destroy all prints of his favourite movie or to deny him the ability to import film stock with which to produce movies in North Korea. Although this example might seem fanciful, it is in line with an analysis by the political psychologist Jerrold Post, whose work has been one source of the thinking behind tailored deterrence. After noting not just Kim's love of movies but his taste for expensive French cognac, Post suggests, 'Kim's idiosyncratic leadership is an exemplar of the new deterrence that is tailored to the specific nature of the adversary . . . In particular, that which threatens Pyongyang and the hedonistic lifestyle of Kim and his cronies will be particularly threatening.'¹¹⁰

Tailored deterrence is still evolving and important details likely remain classified. The strategy as implemented might not look like the example in the previous paragraph. Yet something like tailored deterrence seems likely to outlive the Bush administration, and the question of how far to individualize deterrent messages will be an issue for any version of a tailored approach. All the written statements of declaratory policy emphasize the goals of holding at risk things valued by the individual leader or leadership group in question and tailoring deterrent messages to specific actors. If it is possible to find a unique threat that will make deterrence effective in an individual case, then deterrence should incorporate that individualized threat. In many cases, however, common sense will suggest certain general threats that have a good chance of being credible. Threatening rogue state leaders with regime change if they misbehave, or with nuclear retaliation in the worst-case scenarios, seems more likely to get through to them and to work than a threat to cut off their cognac imports or some other threat tailored to an idiosyncratic aspect of their national culture or individual personality. As Patrick Morgan observes, classic deterrence

can be attractive 'because it cuts through [the] complexities' of fully understanding the other side and enables a state to 'simplify by *dictating* the opponent's preferences'.¹¹¹

There is another advantage to making deterrence threats generic rather than personal. Precisely because deterrence threats are threats, they can provoke strong emotions in the recipient. A generic threat, declaring that any state that takes a certain action will meet with a certain response, will probably arouse less hostility than a personal threat. A state that refrains from challenging the deterrent commitment can pretend the generic threat was directed at other states and not at it. An actor-specific threat allows no such out. The more personalized the threat, the more likely it is to arouse emotions that could lead to defiance on the part of the target. This could make a personalized deterrent message more likely to fail relative to a more generic framing of the deterrent message.

As noted above, it is possible to think of a deterrent strategy being formulated at different levels of generality, ranging from systemic to individually tailored. At the highest level, a posture of toughness is intended to deter all possible challenges system-wide. At the lowest level, each case is unique: for each individual actor and each unwanted action it might take, one puts together what amounts to a personalized deterrent message. Deterrence strategy in the Bush administration has emphasized both the highest and lowest levels too much, and it has not done as much as it could at the intermediate level I have labelled situation-specific deterrence. Rather than becoming preoccupied with the need to craft a different message for each individual actor, deterrence in declaratory strategy should have a more middle-range focus, highlighting the specific types of action the United States most wants to prevent. Unlike systemic deterrence, which relies on a vague threat of potentially devastating consequences for any unwanted action, situation-specific deterrence would detail more precisely the red lines that should not be crossed and spell out more explicitly the consequences to be expected. The threatened response would be generic, applying to any actor that crosses the red line, rather than being tailored to vary by individual actor, though of course it would be possible to add individually tailored elements to the baseline deterrent posture. Bush administration declaratory strategy sometimes implies the only alternative to individually tailored deterrence is a return to a one-size-fits-all threat of massive nuclear retaliation. This is simply not the case. One can specify a variety of particular actions one wishes to deter and specify different responses for the different actions, some of which might involve nuclear options and others not.¹¹²

One middle-range deterrent posture should be directed at rogue states and the specific actions of either using WMD or transferring them to terrorists. Fears of possible WMD use or transfer were the main drivers leading to the Bush Doctrine, so they should be separated from other activities the United States might wish to prevent and given the main emphasis in declaratory statements. The primary deterrent threat should be a conventional invasion to bring about regime change, followed by criminal proceedings against the political and military leaders most responsible. The possibility of a nuclear response should remain on the table as a backup threat that the United States would be willing to employ in response to truly mass casualty

attacks or as an intrawar deterrent against further WMD attacks. To be effective, such deterrent threats will need to be paired with assurances the United States will not seek forcible regime change or initiate a preventive attack in the absence of WMD use or transfer or intelligence indicating imminent use. Compared to its general emphasis on toughness and doctrinal focus on tailored deterrence, the Bush administration has done little to develop this kind of middle-range, situation-specific deterrent posture. Without greater use of simple, clear messages that say ‘if any state does X, we will do Y’, the United States is unlikely to get as much leverage as it might out of deterrence.

Detering Terrorism

After some initial scepticism, the Bush administration began seeking ways to apply deterrence against terrorism. Most of the measures the administration has embraced – from threatening consequences against states that harbour terrorists to seeking to improve physical security and consequence management capabilities inside the United States – make good sense. For terrorist organizations themselves, rather than those who provide support to them, the administration has recognized that the threat of punishment is hard to employ and has properly shifted the emphasis to deterrence by denial (though, as noted above, counterterrorism officials have begun to identify some novel approaches to punishment). The administration has mostly focused on measures that would improve tactical deterrence – aiming to convince terrorists that particular attacks will not succeed. Yet there might be ways to achieve a degree of strategic deterrence through a denial strategy as well.¹¹³ Unfortunately, some other aspects of the American response to terrorism tend to undermine efforts to achieve strategic deterrence.

At the strategic level, deterrence by denial would aim to convince terrorists and potential terrorists that terrorism will fail to bring about the end goals they want. If groups become convinced that they have no chance to achieve progress toward their objectives through terrorism, they will be less likely to employ it. Achieving this form of strategic deterrence will take a long time, and it still might not work against those for whom destruction is an end in itself. For these reasons, the offensive campaign of the war on terror remains necessary. To the extent that strategic deterrence by denial can be bolstered, however, it is worth pursuing.

To apply denial at this level, it helps to see terrorism as a two-step strategy. First, terrorists use violence to create fear. Second, terrorists try to manipulate that fear to bring about a government or societal response that gives them something they seek. A denial strategy should aim to break both links in this chain. To do this, governments must be careful not to overreact to terrorism. When governments adopt a wide range of drastic measures in response to terrorism, they make terrorism appear effective. They signal to terrorists that terrorism will succeed in producing fear and that this fear will succeed in prompting far-reaching government responses. From a deterrence standpoint, it would be better to send the signal that terrorism will not cause societies to change themselves or lead governments to overturn laws or policies they have long valued.¹¹⁴

Governments face a dilemma here. Some steps to improve security are clearly necessary to reduce the chances of further terrorist attacks and reassure the public. But the more actions a government takes, and the more drastic those actions, the more it sends a message that terrorism gets results. Some American actions after 9/11, including the war in Afghanistan, were necessary to reduce the chances of further al Qaeda atrocities. Other aspects of the American response to terrorism, however, make it appear that terrorism can force the United States to change its laws and abandon its principles. These actions weaken efforts to develop deterrence by denial.

Some restrictions on civil liberties, including elements of the USA PATRIOT Act and the National Security Agency's warrantless surveillance program, are intended to improve intelligence against terrorism, but they also suggest that terrorism can coerce democracies into reducing their cherished freedoms. The Department of Homeland Security's colour-coded alert system and some administration public statements have also tended to maintain the public's anxiety level in a way that is not helpful. A more measured response to terrorism and greater efforts to downplay the terrorist threat and calm public fears would send a message that terrorism will not provoke the responses terrorists seek. In short, simply by not overreacting to terrorism, states can help deter terrorism by demonstrating that it does not work.¹¹⁵ Some aspects of Bush administration policy and rhetoric have reduced American abilities to maximize such strategic deterrence by denial against terrorism, and appropriate policy adjustments could strengthen deterrence.

Conclusions

There was a widespread perception that, after 9/11, the United States had abandoned the strategy of deterrence. This is not accurate. In important respects, the Bush administration has remained deeply committed to deterrence throughout its time in office. This article has identified four administration goals regarding American use of deterrence: to strengthen the credibility of deterrence, to extend deterrence to new tasks, to reduce reliance on deterrence, and to move toward a new concept of tailored deterrence.

On the surface, these goals can be in tension, because they reveal the administration has simultaneously tried to make deterrence do both more and less. Within the administration's strategic beliefs, however, these impulses are not contradictory. Given its embrace of the deterrence model and beliefs about differences in strategic culture, the administration was primed to see deterrence as important yet fragile.

The problems of terrorism and WMD proliferation only heightened these concerns. These new threats made deterrence an urgent necessity while also making it hard to be confident that deterrence would work. The view that deterrence remains important has prompted efforts to bolster American credibility and to extend deterrence to address new policy objectives, such as deterring state assistance to terrorist networks. The belief that other actors hold such different values that it is hard to ensure deterrence success has led to efforts to tailor deterrence while also enhancing administration interest in alternatives like the preventive use of force.

The Bush administration has faced challenging and serious security threats, and some of the strategic measures it has adopted are prudent and should be continued. Bush administration strategy, however, does not get as much leverage from deterrence as should be possible. The preemption doctrine and regular expressions of interest in regime change tend to undermine deterrence by reducing America's ability to offer credible assurances. The states the United States most wants to deter have come to fear that even if they comply with American deterrent signals they will still find themselves the object of American coercion or attack. This is unfortunate, because even though deterrence failure remains possible, the odds are good that rogue states can be deterred. This suggests that the administration's declaratory policy has emphasized the possibility of the United States acting preventively too much, and it would be worth paying more attention to how best to maintain deterrence. The administration strategy of tailored deterrence represents a serious effort to address this issue, but runs a risk of making deterrent threats too individualized. Greater use of situation-specific threats would usefully address a neglected middle ground between the administration's emphasis on projecting an image of strength at the highest level of strategy and its intention to craft individually tailored deterrence packages at the lowest level.

Effective deterrence against terrorism is more problematic, and the administration rightly recognized that deterrence cannot be the central prop in dealing with al Qaeda. Yet, even against terrorism, a degree of deterrence is possible, and Bush administration strategy has clearly embraced deterrence as a goal against terrorism. But more can be achieved here as well. In particular, some parts of the response to 9/11 have made it appear that terrorism is effective in producing fear and generating significant changes in government policy. To achieve some deterrence by denial at the strategic level, it would be better to send a message that terrorism is not effective and will fail in the end. A more measured government response and a greater willingness to stand firm on core principles would help strengthen deterrence against terrorism.

In the current security environment, deterrence cannot and should not play as central a role in American strategy as it did during the Cold War. It can still make a contribution to dealing with the threats from terrorism and WMD-armed rogue states, however, and it has remained an important element of American strategy in the George W. Bush years, even after 9/11. The task now is to get the maximum possible benefit from deterrence, and in this regard there is still room for improvement. Although it cannot be made foolproof, with certain adjustments to current American doctrine, it should be possible to develop a more effective deterrent strategy.

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NOTES

1. William J. Broad, Stephen Engelberg, and James Glanz, 'A Nation Challenged: The Threats; Assessing Risks, Chemical, Biological, Even Nuclear', *New York Times*, 1 November 2001.
2. See, for example, Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC), 'Opening Statement of Senator Jesse Helms', *Ballistic Missiles: Threat and Response*, Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 15 April 1999 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2000), p. 2.
3. As many commentators have pointed out, what the Bush administration labelled preemption was really closer to preventive war. For that reason, except when the context requires using the administration's own wording, this article will generally use terms like 'preventive action' instead of preemption. For a summary of the differences and an argument that the Bush doctrine is more preventive than preemptive, see Lawrence Freedman, *Deterrence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), ch. 6, esp. p. 102; and Jack S. Levy, 'Preventive War and the Bush Doctrine', in Stanley A. Renshon and Peter Suedfeld (eds.), *Understanding the Bush Doctrine* (New York: Routledge, 2007).
4. Glenn Snyder introduced the now famous distinction between 'deterrence by denial' and 'deterrence by punishment'. Deterrence by punishment works by threatening to retaliate in a way that makes the costs of an action outweigh the benefits. Denial, in contrast, deters by convincing a would-be attacker that its attack will not succeed and is hence not worth attempting. See Glenn H. Snyder, 'Deterrence by Denial and Punishment', Research Monograph No. 1, Princeton University Center of International Studies, 1959; Glenn Snyder, *Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961).
5. Patrick M. Morgan, *Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis*, 2nd ed. (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1983), p. 29, emphasis in original.
6. Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, Joint Publication 1-02, 12 April 2001 (as amended through 17 October 2007), p. 160, available at www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf.
7. I explain the reasons for adopting this broader concept of deterrence more fully in Jeffrey W. Knopf, 'Three Items in One: Deterrence as Concept, Research Program, and Political Issue', in T.V. Paul, Patrick M. Morgan, and James J. Wirtz (eds.), *Complex Deterrence: Theory and Practice in a New Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming).
8. Some of the best work includes Paul K. Davis and Brian Michael Jenkins, *Deterrence and Influence in Counterterrorism: A Component in the War on al Qaeda* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2002); Colin S. Gray, 'Maintaining Effective Deterrence', Strategic Studies Institute monograph, August 2003; Patrick M. Morgan, *Deterrence Now* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Freedman, *Deterrence* (note 3); Ian R. Kenyon and John Simpson (eds), special issue of *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (April 2004); Robert F. Trager and Dessislava P. Zagorcheva, 'Deterring Terrorism: It Can Be Done', *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Winter 2005/06); Derek D. Smith, *Deterring America: Rogue States and the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); and James H. Lebovic, *Deterring International Terrorism and Rogue States: US National Security Policy after 9/11* (London: Routledge, 2007).
9. For example, two senior scholars then at the Brookings Institution claimed that the administration had 'effectively abandoned a decades-long consensus that put deterrence and containment at the heart of American foreign policy'. Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), p. 125.
10. Colin L. Powell, 'The Administration's Position With Regard to Iraq,' testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 26 September 2002, available at www.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2002/13765.htm; Condoleezza Rice, 'A Balance of Power that Favors Freedom', Wriston Lecture, 1 October 2002, Manhattan Institute, New York, available at www.manhattan-institute.org/html/wl2002.htm
11. This is, for example, the interpretation of several essays in Renshon and Suedfeld, *Understanding the Bush Doctrine* (note 3).
12. For example, a useful overview by David Yost focuses on strategic programs but says little about other elements of the administration's attempts to apply deterrence. David S. Yost, 'New Approaches to Deterrence in Britain, France, and the United States', *International Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 1 (January 2005).
13. Erik Schmitt and Thom Shanker, 'US Adapts Cold-War Idea to Fight Terrorists', *New York Times*, 18 March 2008, p. A1.
14. David E. Sanger, 'Don't Shoot. We're Not Ready', *New York Times*, 25 June 2006, Section 4, p. 1.

15. Other examples commonly cited include the withdrawal from Somalia, the lack of response to the bombing of the Khobar Towers, weak counterstrikes after the bombing of two US embassies in Africa, and the lack of response to the attack on the USS *Cole*. See, for example, Jonathan Schachter, *The Eye of the Believer: Psychological Influences on Counter-Terrorism Policy-Making* (RAND, 2002), ch. 4, esp. table on p. 87, www.rand.org/publications/RGSD/RGSD166, accessed 12 May 2005. Others argue that bin Laden's reasoning was just the opposite. They say bin Laden sought to provoke the United States into overreacting, hoping that a US military invasion of an Arab country would prove his propaganda that the United States is an enemy of Islam and enable him to recruit more Arabs and Muslims to his cause. See Brian M. Jenkins, 'The Organization Men: Anatomy of a Terrorist Attack', in James F. Hoge, Jr., and Gideon Rose (eds), *How Did This Happen?* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), p. 14; Jessica Stern, 'Keep American Muslims on Our Side', *New York Times*, 10 September 2006, Week in Review, p. 13; Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), p. 331.
16. Sam Coates, 'Weak Responses Led to 9/11, Cheney Asserts', *Washington Post*, 4 October 2005, p. A18. Cheney repeated these claims in at least one other speech; see David E. Sanger, 'Does Calling It Jihad Make It So?' *New York Times*, 13 August 2006, section 4, p. 4.
17. Donald Rumsfeld, Memo to Gen. Dick Myers, Paul Wolfowitz, Gen. Pete Pace, Doug Feith, 16 October 2003, reprinted in Adam Garfinkle (ed.), *A Practical Guide to Winning the War on Terrorism* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2004), p. xxvi, emphasis added.
18. National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, February 2003, pp. 15, 17–18, 21. Available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030214-7.html>
19. See <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nsct/2006/>
20. Quadrennial Defense Review Report, 30 September 2001, available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/qdr2001.pdf>
21. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, September 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2002/index.html>
22. US Department of Homeland Security, The Office for Domestic Preparedness Guidelines for Homeland Security: Prevention and Deterrence, June 2003. In homeland security parlance, these two objectives are often referred to jointly using the abbreviation 'preDET'. See <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/docs/ODPPrev1.pdf>
23. US Department of Defense, Deterrence Operations Joint Operating Concept, Version 2.0, December 2006, available at www.dtic.mil/futurejointwarfare. Because version 2.0 was only a modest update of the *Strategic Deterrence Joint Operating Concept*, I only count the two versions as one item in coming up with a count of 22 relevant documents.
24. This list represents my interpretation and manner of describing administration policy. There is no administration statement that depicts administration objectives in exactly this way.
25. The administration has stated that it believes some rogue states are seeking WMD 'to deter us from responding to aggression against our allies in regions of vital interest' (National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, December 2002, p. 1). The motivation for the preemption doctrine is hence not just to forestall any possibility that regional adversaries would launch a WMD attack against the United States or supply WMD to terrorists, but also to prevent regional actors from acquiring the means to deter the United States from acting militarily in their region.
26. For a recent study that addresses this concern in detail, see Smith, *Deterring America* (note 8).
27. Gray, 'Maintaining Effective Deterrence' (note 8), p. 7.
28. For an analysis of 'lessons of 9/11' as a factor in support for the Iraq war, see Jeffrey W. Knopf, 'Misapplied Lessons? 9/11 and the Iraq Debate', *The Nonproliferation Review*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Fall/Winter 2002).
29. President George W. Bush, Graduation Speech, US Military Academy, 1 June 2002, www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/print/20020601-3.html, accessed 28 July 2005.
30. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, September 2002, chapter V, quote from p. 15. Available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf>
31. The exact mix of motivations for the Iraq invasion remains a subject of debate, and there were other reasons given for the invasion including removing a brutal dictator and installing a democracy in the Arab world. Yet the threat from Iraq's alleged WMD received the most emphasis in the administration's public case for war, and administration officials repeatedly rejected the idea that deterrence and containment would work against Saddam, so it is reasonable to describe Iraq as at least partly a case of preventive war.
32. Evan Thomas, 'The 12 Year Itch', *Newsweek*, Vol. 141, Issue 13, 31 March 2003, accessed via ProQuest.

33. Quoted in Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), p. 63; see also p. 98.
34. Remarks by the President at the Citadel, Charleston, South Carolina, 11 December 2001, www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/12/20011211-6.html
35. Wyn Q. Bowen, 'Deterrence and Asymmetry: Non-State Actors and Mass Casualty Terrorism', *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (April 2004).
36. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March 2006, p. 10, available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006>
37. Prepared Statement of Peter C.W. Flory, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy, for Hearing Regarding Global Strike Issues, Before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Strategic Forces Subcommittee, 29 March 2006, armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2006/March/Flory%20SF%2003-29-06.pdf
38. Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), ch. 3.
39. Patrick M. Morgan, *Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis*, 2nd ed. (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1983).
40. I borrow this term from the fields of law and criminology, where theories of crime prevention distinguish between 'general' and 'specific' deterrence. Because the term general deterrence is already in use in international relations with a different meaning than I want to convey, I have suggested systemic deterrence as the term to contrast with specific deterrence. I first learned of the legal terminology on deterrence from Alan K. Dershowitz, *Why Terrorism Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 17–18.
41. National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, December 2002, p. 3, available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/12/WMDStrategy.pdf>
42. For a summary of efforts by the Reagan administration to develop a strategy to deter terrorism, see David Tucker, *Skirmishes at the Edge of Empire: The United States and International Terrorism* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997), pp. 31ff. The Clinton administration also listed deterrence as the first objective of its counterterrorism strategy. See Presidential Decision Directive 39, 'US Policy on Counterterrorism', 21 June 1995, available at www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd39.htm, last accessed 9 April 2008.
43. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March 2006, p. 12. See also National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, September 2006, p. 11.
44. Office of Homeland Security, National Strategy for Homeland Security, July 2002, pp. 17, 29. The first-term National Security Strategy, usually cited as signalling the shift from deterrence to preemption, also explicitly endorsed this approach to deterring terrorism: 'While we recognize that our best defense is a good offense, we are also strengthening America's homeland security to protect against and deter attack' (NSS, Sept. 2002, p. 6). Just one paragraph prior to the section on p. 15 usually quoted as evidence for the downgrading of deterrence, the strategy calls for '[e]ffective consequence management' because '[m]inimizing the effects of WMD use against our people will help deter those who possess such weapons' (p. 14). See www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/nat_strat_hls.pdf
45. Ryan Henry, 'Deterrence and Dissuasion in the 21st Century', Opening Keynote Address, *Implementing the New Triad: Nuclear and Non-Nuclear Forces in Twenty-first-century Deterrence*, Final Report from the 36th Joint Conference of the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis and the Fletcher School, 14–15 December 2005, p. 4, www.ifpa.org/pdf/IFC36.pdf, accessed 21 February 2007.
46. Erik Schmitt and Thom Shanker, 'US Adapts Cold-War Idea to Fight Terrorists', *New York Times*, 18 March 2008, quote on p. A12.
47. Alexander L. George, 'The Need for Influence Theory and Actor-Specific Behavioral Models of Adversaries' *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 22, No. 5 (Dec. 2003), p. 465.
48. President Bush stated, 'We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them' (Statement by the President in His Address to the Nation, 11 September 2001, www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-16.html). As noted above, this posture had both compellence and deterrence purposes.
49. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, Sept. 2002, p. 6; National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, Feb. 2003, pp. 11, 15, and esp. 17ff.
50. National Strategy for Homeland Security, July 2002, p. ix.
51. National Security Strategy of the United States, September 2002, p. 30.
52. Nuclear Posture Review Report [Excerpts], 8 January 2002, p. 12, available at www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.pdf. See also Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, National Military Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, 13 February 2006, pp. 5–6, 17–18, which explicitly threatens possible offensive operations as a way to dissuade states from acquiring WMD, available at www.defenselink.mil/pdf/NMS-CWMD2006.pdf

53. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, Sept. 2002, p. 14; The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March 2006, p. 18.
54. I thank George Robinson for first pointing out to me this interpretation of dissuasion.
55. Thom Shanker and David E. Sanger, 'Making Good on Bush's Vow Will Require Detective Work', *New York Times*, 13 October 2006, p. A10.
56. US Strategic Command, Strategic Deterrence Joint Operating Concept, February 2004, p. 4.
57. National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, September 2006, p. 14.
58. William J. Broad, 'New Team Plans to Identify Nuclear Attackers', *New York Times*, 2 February 2006, p. A17; Matthew B. Stannard, 'New Tools for a New World Order: Nuclear Forensics Touted as Method to Trace Bomb Materials, Deterrent for Rogue Nations', *San Francisco Chronicle*, 29 October 2006, p. A19; Eric Lipton, 'New Detectors Aim to Prevent Nuclear Terror', *New York Times*, 9 February 2007, p. A1; Ralph Vartabedian, 'How the US Seeks to Avert Nuclear Terrorism', *Los Angeles Times*, 6 January 2008, p. A1.
59. Homeland Security Presidential Directive-10, Biodefense for the 21st Century, 28 April 2004, available at www.dhs.gov/library/assets/HSPD10Biodefensefor21stCentury042804.pdf, accessed 12 May 2008, p. 6.
60. One reason for hesitation is that Russia and Pakistan could strike back. The United States would probably choose instead to seek their cooperation in identifying the specific source of nuclear materials used by terrorists and tracking where any additional bombs might be. David E. Sanger and Thom Shanker, 'Response to Nuclear Threats Hinges on Policy Debate', *New York Times*, 8 May 2007, p. A9.
61. Quoted in Keith B. Payne, 'Bush Administration Strategic Policy: A Reality Check', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 5 (October 2005), p. 775.
62. US Strategic Command, Strategic Deterrence Joint Operating Concept, February 2004, p. 5.
63. US Department of Defense, The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America, March 2005, p. 7. Available at www.congr.gov/pdf/library/Copy%20of%204%20national%20defense%20strategy%202005.pdf
64. A Powerpoint presentation by Ryan Henry, principal deputy under secretary of defense for policy, contains a slide with a side-by-side comparison of 'Cold War deterrence' and '21st century deterrence'. See 'Deterrence and Dissuasion for the 21st Century', presentation to IFPA-Fletcher Conference, 14 December 2005, slide 4, www.ifpafletcherconference.com/oldtranscripts/2005/Ryan_Henry.ppt#283, accessed 27 Feb. 2007.
65. See Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, Testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee: Defense Strategy Review, 21 June 2001, www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2001/s20010621-secdef2.html
66. National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, December 2002, p. 1
67. Quote from Paul Wolfowitz, 'Building a Military for the 21st Century', prepared testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee [on the Quadrennial Defense Review], 4 October 2001, accessed through LexisNexis Academic, web.lexis-nexis.com, on 1 August 2005. See also Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2004), p. 33, and the 2001 QDR, esp. pp. 20, 25.
68. Even the 2001 QDR called for a 'wider range of military options' (p. 12).
69. J.D. Crouch, assistant secretary of defense for international security policy, 'Special Briefing on the Nuclear Posture Review' News Transcript, 9 January 2002, www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2002/t01092002_t0109npr.html, accessed 11 September 2003; Joint Chiefs of Staff, The National Military Strategy of the United States of America, 2004, p. 12, available at www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2005/d20050318nms.pdf
70. Nuclear Posture Review [Excerpts], 8 January 2002, p. 7. (note 52).
71. M. Elaine Bunn, 'Can Deterrence be Tailored?' *Strategic Forum*, No. 225, January 2007, p. 1, available at www.ndu.edu/inss.
72. Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to the President and Congress*, 2002, p. 87, available at www.dod.mil/execsec/adr2002/pdf_files/chap7.pdf, accessed 26 June 2007.
73. US Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report, 6 February 2006, preface, p. vi.
74. Major General Richard Newton, Speaker Transcript, 36th Annual IFPA-Fletcher Conference on National Security and Policy, 14-15 December 2005, www.ifpafletcherconference.com/oldtranscripts/2005/newton.htm, accessed 8 March 2007.
75. DO-JOC (note 23), p. 44, underlining in original.
76. For a discussion of the challenges to meeting these goals, see Bunn, 'Can Deterrence Be Tailored?' (note 71).

77. Prepared Statement of Peter C.W. Flory (note 37), p. 11.
78. For example, the Strategic Deterrence Joint Operating Concept lists as an explicit assumption that 'the perceived value of human life varies among cultures, influence groups, and organizations' (p. 10). In an interview shortly after he left office, Keith Payne, who as deputy assistant secretary of defense oversaw the Nuclear Posture Review, said Cold War-style nuclear threats would not deter the leaders of some US adversaries because 'they don't see their citizens as citizens' and hence are not concerned about what happens to them. David Ruppe, 'Former Bush Official Advocates Low-Yield Weapons Research', *Global Security Newswire*, 11 June 2003, www.nti.org/d_newswire/issues/2003/6/11/6p.htm, accessed 22 January 2008.
79. The shift from deterrence as an overriding concern to deterrence as one tool among many is a major theme in Freedman, *Deterrence* (note 3).
80. Lyle J. Goldstein, *Preventive Attack and Weapons of Mass Destruction: A Comparative Historical Analysis* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), pp. 5–7; Robert S. Litwak, *Regime Change: US Strategy through the Prism of 9/11* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), pp. 57–61.
81. Tucker, *Skirmishes at the Edge of Empire* (note 39), pp. 31–5.
82. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March 2006, p. 22.
83. Quoted in Lebovic, *Deterring International Terrorism and Rogue States* (note 8), p. 83. Lebovic notes that this ignores conventional options, a point I take up below.
84. Scott D. Sagan, *Moving Targets: Nuclear Strategy and National Security* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), ch. 1.
85. The classified version was shown to the *Washington Times*. Nicholas Kralev, 'Bush Signs Paper Allowing Nuclear Response: White House Makes Option Explicit to Counter Biological, Chemical Attacks', *Washington Times*, 31 January 2003, available at www.nicholaskralev.com/WT-nuke-response.html, accessed 27 June 2007.
86. The National Military Strategy of the United States of America, p. 12. For an alternative formulation along the same lines, see the 2006 QDR, p. 31.
87. Bush administration officials have denied they were 'blurring the line between conventional and nuclear weapons, making nuclear use more likely' (Statement of Ambassador Linton F. Brooks, Under Secretary of Energy, before the Senate Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, 24 March 2004, p. 7, www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/congress/2004_h/040324-brooks.pdf, accessed 11 April 2008). Brooks argued the United States had for much of the Cold War possessed low-yield nuclear warheads – presumably meaning there were nuclear weapons not much greater in explosive power than the largest conventional bombs – and this had never provoked nuclear use. He also stressed that the administration had retained a policy under which only the president can order use of nuclear weapons. But this ignores two other changes. First, US Strategic Command has gone from an exclusively nuclear mission to one that now incorporates a number of non-nuclear tasks. This has diluted an organizational culture that previously treated nuclear weapons as requiring unique handling. Second, on paper, the act of combining nuclear and non-nuclear strike forces in a single leg of the new triad sends a message to military planners that they should consider both options as equally available. This also enhanced the perception of other countries that the United States considered nuclear weapons more militarily usable than in the past, and it is their perceptions that will affect their behaviour.
88. On the nuclear taboo, see Nina Tannenwald, *The Nuclear Taboo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). On potential consequences of breaking the taboo, see George H. Quester, *Nuclear First Strike: Consequences of a Broken Taboo* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006). For an argument that the NPR is unlikely to weaken the taboo, see Charles L. Glaser and Steve Fetter, 'Counterforce Revisited: Assessing the Nuclear Posture Review's New Missions', *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Fall 2005), pp. 113–15. However, they consider only the effects of expanding the list of potential targets for nuclear weapons and not the message sent by combining nuclear and conventional strike forces in the offensive leg of the new triad.
89. Jean du Preez, 'The Impact of the Nuclear Posture Review on the International Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime', *The Nonproliferation Review*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Fall/Winter 2002); Jeffrey W. Knopf 'Nuclear Tradeoffs: Conflicts between US National Security Strategy and Global Nonproliferation Efforts', in James J. Wirtz and Jeffrey A. Larsen (eds), *Nuclear Transformation: The New US Nuclear Doctrine* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
90. Ron Suskind, *The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America's Pursuit of Its Enemies since 9/11* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), p. 62.

91. This point has been made often by critics of the preemption doctrine. See for example David Holloway, 'Deterrence, Preventive War, and Preemption', in George Bunn and Christopher F. Chyba (eds), *US Nuclear Weapons Policy: Confronting Today's Threats* (Stanford, CA: Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2006), p. 57.
92. Although he expresses some reservations about it, Patrick Morgan concludes that the threat to impose regime change through conventional means is better than the threat of nuclear retaliation for deterring WMD attacks. *Deterrence Now* (note 8), pp. 269–76, esp. p. 276. Litwak also advocates threatening regime change as a deterrent against transferring WMD to terrorists. *Regime Change* (note 77), pp. 317, 335.
93. Marc Trachtenberg, 'A "Wasting Asset": American Strategy and the Shifting Nuclear Balance, 1949–1954', in Sean M. Lynn-Jones *et al.* (eds), *Nuclear Diplomacy and Crisis Management* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990).
94. William Burr and Jeffrey T. Richelson, 'Whether to "Strangle the Baby in the Cradle": The United States and the Chinese Nuclear Program, 1960–1964', *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Winter 2000/01).
95. On Nasser as an analogous case to Saddam, see Nicholas D. Kristof, 'Hitler on the Nile', *New York Times*, 25 February 2003.
96. There is disagreement, however, over whether Saddam was deterred by veiled nuclear threats or by the prospect the United States would march on Baghdad and remove him from power. For a discussion of the Israeli deterrent effort, see Gerald M. Steinberg, 'Parameters of Stable Deterrence in a Proliferated Middle East', *The Nonproliferation Review*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Fall-Winter 2000). For a discussion and sceptical evaluation of the US deterrent effort, see Scott D. Sagan 'The Commitment Trap: Why the United States Should Not Use Nuclear Threats to Deter Biological and Chemical Weapons Attacks', *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Spring 2000).
97. Lebovic, *Detering International Terrorism and Rogue States* (note 8), also makes this argument (p. 82).
98. In the West Point commencement address that unveiled the preemption doctrine, President Bush gave as one reason for preemption the possibility that deterrence will not work because 'unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can . . . secretly provide them to terrorist allies'. Graduation Speech, US Military Academy, 1 June 2002, www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/print/20020601-3.html, accessed 28 July 2005.
99. Litwak notes that Iran has not given chemical weapons to Hezbollah despite being its primary sponsor. *Regime Change* (note 77), p. 304.
100. Preemption in its traditional meaning, as distinct from preventive war, could also be justified in a case where intelligence provides warning of an imminent attack. There can be other motivations for military action as well. The Bush administration also made humanitarian arguments for invading Iraq, pointing to the desirability of removing a brutal dictator like Saddam, and it claimed the operation would help spread democracy. These are separate issues from prevention however; they involve humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion, while prevention involves forestalling possible attacks. Prevention can also be intended to keep the other side from gaining an ability to deter the United States. But unless being deterred from regional action is even worse than being attacked by WMD, all of the above analysis applies even more strongly to prevention for this reason.
101. This has been one of the most commonly raised concerns regarding the Bush Doctrine. See the sources cited in the remainder of this section.
102. Quoted in Michael R. Gordon, 'Threats and Responses: Strategy; Serving Notice of a New U.S. Poised to Hit First and Alone', *New York Times*, 27 January 2003.
103. Doctrine for Joint Nuclear Operations, p. I-6; National Military Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, p. 17; DO-JOC (note 20), p. 41.
104. Ann Scott Tyson, 'US Gaining World's Respect From Wars, Rumsfeld Asserts', *Washington Post*, 11 March 2005, p. A4.
105. Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 74.
106. This is one of the main arguments in Litwak, *Regime Change* (note 77). See pp. 10, 95–6, 121, 330–1.
107. DO-JOC (note 20), esp. pp. 10 (fn. 5), 27–8, 37.
108. Others who have warned that Bush administration strategy could encourage proliferation include Smith, *Detering America* (note 8), pp. 115, 120; Holloway, 'Deterrence, Preventive War, and Preemption' (note 88), p. 60; and Lebovic, *Detering International Terrorism and Rogue States* (note 8), pp. 37–8.

109. On this danger, see also Jasen J. Castillo, 'Nuclear Terrorism: Why Deterrence Still Matters', *Current History*, Vol. 102, No. 668 (December 2003), p. 428; Smith, *Deterring America* (note 8), pp. 36 and 110; and Lebovic, *Deterring International Terrorism and Rogue States* (note 8), p. 71.
110. Jerrold M. Post, 'Deterrence in an Age of Asymmetric Rivals,' in Renshon and Suedfeld, *Understanding the Bush Doctrine* (note 3), pp. 162, 168.
111. Morgan, *Deterrance Now* (note 8), pp. 66–7, emphasis in original.
112. This implies less emphasis on 'calculated ambiguity' than has been the norm in recent US administrations. While a degree of calculated ambiguity can be useful, this should not extend to the point of refusing to identify red lines, as it has long been recognized that failure to communicate one's deterrent commitments is a source of deterrence failure. An element of calculated ambiguity can be retained by leaving some uncertainty about the threshold at which one will consider an activity to have crossed a red line or by identifying more than one possible response and leaving unclear the point at which an action will provoke a harsher rather than less severe response.
113. For a thoughtful discussion of how to apply deterrence by denial against terrorism at the tactical, operational and strategic levels, see James M. Smith and Brent J. Talbot, 'Terrorism and Deterrence by Denial', paper presented at the joint ISAC-ISSS annual meeting, Denver, CO, 27–29 October 2005.
114. As far back as 1975, David Fromkin observed that terrorism only works if it gets people or governments to do things out of fear that the terrorists cannot do for themselves. He counselled that we should resist 'pressure to abridge our laws and liberties in order to suppress the terrorists'. 'The Strategy of Terrorism', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (July 1975), see esp. p. 693; quote at p. 697.
115. Many other studies have reached this same conclusion. It is, for example, the final conclusion in Lebovic, *Deterring International Terrorism and Rogue States* (note 8), p. 182.