

USSR's Third World Orphans: detering desperate dependents

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In his 1991 State of the Union address, President George Bush proclaimed, as was his custom, that 'we have before us the long-held promise of a New World Order'.¹ Like Presidents Wilson and Truman before him, President Bush sought to build a stable, lawful peace on the foundation of military victory. Many doubt whether this goal is attainable, and suspect that a more reasonable hope is, in the phrase of the editors of the *New Republic*, 'the chance of a less chronic disorder' in the Middle East and elsewhere.² Even if far short of a new world order, any new orderliness would be salutary in the chaotic, unipolar confusion of our immediate post-cold war era.

But even the achievement of this modest goal may remain elusive. Stanley Hoffmann has explained why collective security, as practised in the Gulf War, is unlikely to be repeated soon or often:

The new world order may . . . remain just a slogan or, worse, a sardonic label applied to a situation far more chaotic than the world of the cold war . . . If, in a world of shaky regimes, contested borders, ethnic upheavals and religious revivals, every act of aggression requires the mobilization of three-quarters of a million troops, many sent across the seas to face well-armed troublemakers and obtain their unconditional surrender, there will be very few cases of collective security.³

This is why, in Hoffmann's view, even the relatively modest goal of 'avoiding new world disorder' will be achievable only if '[a]ggression and the temptation of states to export internal difficulties, as Saddam Hussein did on Aug. 2 . . . [is] deterred rather than repressed.'⁴ Our goal in this article is to explore why the Soviet collapse may lead certain Third World states to export domestic chaos, and to offer suggestions for preventing this type of violence.

Unfortunately, deterring disorderly conduct of the sort exhibited by Iraq in August 1990 will not be easy, because aggression of this nature is nearly impossible to anticipate. Washington failed to realise until the last minute the importance of sending signals that could have had a deterrent effect on Saddam Hussein. Some messages were sent: the US cautioned repeatedly that it had no opinion on border issues *as long as disputes were settled peacefully*; and, on 24 July 1990, six naval warships from the Joint Task Force were deployed in the Gulf, two near the Kuwaiti shore, in response to the military build-up on the Iraq-Kuwait border.⁵ Clearly, however, these measures were insufficient, and even unequivocal warnings failed to attract the desired attention. Iraqi Scud missile attacks against Haifa and Tel Aviv were undertaken despite numerous Israeli threats of certain retaliation, some

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implying the possible use of nuclear weapons.⁶

During the entire episode, specialists of various sorts raised such questions as: Is Saddam Hussein completely ignorant of what he is facing? Is he suicidal? Is he 'crazy' in some other ways?⁷ These avenues of inquiry demonstrated just how little we could foresee. They were expostulations of perplexity, even disbelief, not explanations of Iraqi decision making in the face of failed allied designs to deter them. It bodes ill for future attempts at avoiding new world disorder that, in this first worldwide crisis and conflict after the cold war, the USA and its allies were unable to predict the onset or nature of the crisis, nor the war that would be required to resolve it. Where should we turn for relevant understanding which might enhance our ability to predict new world disorder, and thus to deter it?

Schematically, the answers in this article come in four parts. First, despite the undoubted novelty of post-cold war international relations, *history* provides relevant insights. In fact, as the article argues, there are striking reverberations between the darkest moment of the cold war—the Cuban missile crisis—and the first post-cold war crisis. A closer look at new data regarding Cuba's position in October 1962, exposed and vulnerable following (what the Cubans took to be) Soviet capitulation, shows that the odd Iraqi enthusiasm for the 'mother of all battles' has some characteristics eerily in common with Fidel Castro's contingent request that the Soviets launch their nuclear arsenal against the USA. Second, we turn to *psychology*, not of a technical sort, but rather a common sense analysis of the psychological evolution of leaders from anxiety to desperation—that is, to a point where deterrence no longer has its intended effect because disaster appears to be inevitable. Third, we look broadly at *the present*, looking for a class of states that would seem to be most at risk for creating the kind of disorder identified by Hoffmann. Here we focus not on the end of the cold war as the source of much that is new and perplexing, but rather on the consequences of the Soviet collapse for Moscow's former clients and other potential pariahs. Fourth, and finally, we address *the future*, and envision ways in which today's troublesome countries could become tomorrow's desperate despots.

History: the evolution of old world desperation

On 23 November 1990, Cuban leader Fidel Castro released previously undisclosed correspondence between himself and Soviet General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev.⁸ This gesture was Castro's contribution to ongoing discussions between American, Soviet, and Cuban scholars and participants in the 1962 missile crisis, and was prompted by a request from US participants in the process that the Cuban government begin to declassify documentation relevant to Soviet–Cuban decision making. The letters were exchanges at the height of the missile crisis, and reveal that Castro took the extraordinary step of calling for an all-out nuclear strike against the USA if, as seemed increasingly likely to Castro, the USA invaded Cuba. In the cable of 26 October 1962, he told Khrushchev that 'If [the Americans] manage to carry out an invasion of Cuba, . . . then that would be the moment to eliminate this danger forever. . . . However harsh and terrible the solution, there would be no other.'⁹

Khrushchev was shocked, and in the ensuing flurry of cables between Moscow and Havana, the Soviet leader tried to explain that Cuba would be incinerated in the early hours of a nuclear war between the superpowers. Then, on 31 October, Castro, still reeling from what he took to be Soviet abandonment and *naïveté* in accepting the pledge from president Kennedy that the US would not invade, wrote as follows:

We knew, and do not presume that we ignored it, that we would have been annihilated, as you insinuate in your letter, in the event of nuclear war. However, that didn't prompt us to ask you to withdraw the missiles; that didn't prompt us to ask you to yield . . . There are [now] many Cubans who are at this moment experiencing unspeakable bitterness and sadness.¹⁰

It is well to remember that these desperate words were actually communicated from one leader to another in the missile crisis of 1962. At that moment, for Fidel Castro, the cold war was suspended: the Soviets had capitulated and in the process they had sold Cuba down the river; the USA was poised to destroy his regime; and there was absolutely nothing he could do to prevent the attack. His choice, as he saw it, was between the total destruction of his country and martyrdom for world socialism, and meaningless death and destruction. In refusing Castro's request outright, Khrushchev was, from the Cuban point of view, condemning the probable US liquidation of the Cuban Revolution to meaninglessness.

What lessons do the Cubans now derive from this brush with Armageddon? It is sobering. In the editorial accompanying the release of the Castro–Khrushchev correspondence, the author (widely believed to be Castro) says that 'the greatest danger faced by our country at that time was not nuclear extermination but surrender . . . that is the lesson that inspires us in the face of new challenges . . .'¹¹

Psychology: anxiety, desperation and rationality

In the conclusion to the film *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, Butch and The Kid, after being pursued and finally surrounded, are trapped in a hut in the Bolivian hills with no way to escape from the lawmen who have hunted them down. With their backs to the wall, and no way out, Butch and The Kid decide that death with honour is preferable to death without honour. They come out of the hut shooting, trying to take at least a few of the lawmen down with them. As they emerge from their hut, smiling, guns blazing, the hills come alive with thunderous gunfire. The frame is frozen, the film ends, and the credits roll. Interestingly, the viewer is filled not with incredulity at this obviously desperate and suicidal act, but with admiration for its heroism in the face of unbeatable odds. This is because by this point in the film, we are 'inside' the protagonists, somewhat as we can now more easily get 'inside' Castro's mind, then and now, due to the publication of his letters to Khrushchev.

What can we say about behaviour such as is depicted in the film, or such as Saddam Hussein's enthusiasm for the 'mother of all battles', or Fidel Castro's contingent request to Khrushchev to launch Soviet nuclear weapons at the USA?

Are they desperate? Undoubtedly. But are they irrational? They are not, or at least they appear not to be once we know something about the stories those who are desperate are telling themselves. For if they truly believe that their choices have been reduced to death with honour or death with humiliation, then the first option becomes the rational choice.

Such desperate states of mind in leaders, while rational from their point of view, are likely to lead to actions which appear, to outsiders, to be suicidal at worst, reckless at best. But we should note carefully what we actually mean when we characterise actions as suicidal or reckless: we mean the action cannot be deterred. It is too late, precisely because the situation has been defined as yielding only an absolutely perverse pair of options, both of which lead to death and destruction.

That is why preventing new world disorder required by Hoffmann cannot begin at the moment of desperation. Because leaders will not be deterred easily, we must pay closer attention to an entire process. In 1962, Castro perceived that the Soviet Union had abandoned him and his revolution to the inevitable US aggression, and that he had no control over events, and no effective options. We now know that these beliefs led to genuine desperation. In the Iraqi case, much has been made of inveterate domestic instability and the insecurity of Saddam Hussein following the war with Iran, and of how his anxiety was heightened tremendously by what he took to be the implications of Soviet capitulation in the cold war.¹² While some observers attribute his grab of Kuwait to greed, we argue that the invasion, as well as his enthusiasm for a war whose outcome could only be the destruction of Iraq, resulted from a combination of opportunity *and* insecurity. The way to minimise new world disorder, given these examples, is to prevent the anxiety of potentially troublesome countries from evolving into desperation, as it did in the 1962 missile crisis, and as it apparently did in the Gulf crisis and war.

The present: anxious regimes

When Moscow's support could be counted on, there was little risk after 1962 that a Soviet client could simply be annihilated. Because of Moscow's collapse, however, the same elements that shaped Fidel Castro's desperation—fear of total destruction and internal instability after abandonment by Moscow, and lack of control over the situation due to the seriousness of the regional threat—could lead to disaster for former Soviet clients.

Moscow's former clients are entering a period of uncertainty. They fear regime-threatening crises and face the prospect of dire emergency on their immediate horizons. North Korea and Cuba, especially, are on the leading edge of a multidimensional process of deterioration whose ingredients include unrelenting anti-American rhetoric, untimely ideological commitment, and aging charismatic leaders. Former Soviet clients cannot avoid anxiety about Moscow's demise at a time of increased regional instability. Some find themselves ideologically on the losing side of history, facing potentially ominous identity crises as well as hard choices between political and economic liberalisation on the one hand, and regime survival on the other.

Clients are deteriorating at different speeds and for different reasons. The demise

of socialist ideology, for example, has far-reaching implications for the Cuban revolution but is almost irrelevant in Damascus. At the same time, all seem vulnerable to new forms of instability. For these potential (and in the case of Iraq, actual) losers in the world after the cold war, the onset of a crisis could contribute to the evolution of situations so perverse as to seem to their leaders to warrant steps which, to outsiders, might appear to be suicidal. The trick, to reiterate, is to prevent manageable, deterrable anxiety from evolving into desperation and dangerous, 'suicidal' behaviour. Why, then, might former Soviet clients appear to be at risk of becoming too desperate to deter? They seem to have four reasons to be worried.

Economic endgame

Moscow's collapse has ushered in the end of soft currency bartering and cheap energy, and brought cutbacks in aid. In Cuba, coffeemakers have been rationed, not to conserve plastic, but to reduce consumption of electricity.¹³ Hard currency trade requirements will increase Vietnam's oil bill by at least \$250 million per year, though Hanoi's access to World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and Asian Development Bank credit remains blocked by the US embargo.¹⁴ The economic hardships that Soviet withdrawal is bringing to America's new friends in Eastern Europe are also being felt by its old adversaries.

Military abandonment

A second set of problems concerns military transfers and the protection from external threats, as Moscow's former clients can no longer count on easy access to military hardware or superpower protection. Long before the August 1991 *coup*, former Soviet clients began to suspect that the rug could be pulled out from under them.¹⁵ Now that handouts have been curtailed across the board and their patron has collapsed, former Soviet clients have nowhere to turn to preserve their security.

Condominium

Former Soviet clients are no longer able to preserve a niche for themselves by playing the superpowers off against one another. The Sandinistas were grateful that Washington cut aid to the Contras, but the negotiating process they were forced into by the reduction of Soviet support ultimately cost them control of Nicaragua.¹⁶ And Cambodia is being forced to share power with opposition factions including the hated Khmer Rouge. Multilateral conflict resolution may be designed to address regional instability. But by excluding the felt needs of certain regimes from the collaborative benefits of the post-cold war order, or by forcing them to comply with externally imposed regional security arrangements, wealthy and powerful countries may inadvertently generate more anxiety than they know.

Regional isolation

A fourth concern is that the idiosyncratic, hierarchical nature of some former

Soviet clients' political systems may limit the potential for participation in regional integration or the development of meaningful bilateral ties. In Syria, for example, unconfirmed reports claim that up to 50,000 troops were needed to muzzle violent, popular resistance to the country's participation in the UN coalition, and dozens may have been killed.¹⁷ Drawn out attempts to bring North Korea in from the cold war also illustrate the type of constraints faced by those who advocate expanding regional integration and bilateral relations.¹⁸

While Moscow's former clients face the challenges described above, previous cold war bastions of American interest such as Israel, Pakistan, South Korea, Taiwan, and others know that the US can more easily choose to abandon them now that containment of Soviet expansion is no longer the monolithic goal of American foreign policy. Even if the USA does not fall into post-cold war isolationism (as predicted by scholars like William Pfaff, who also anticipated the end of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe), American dependents realise that unqualified aid and protection may no longer be forthcoming, especially after the substantial price required to liberate Kuwait.¹⁹ Washington may deintensify cold war relationships and sacrifice concerns of staunch cold war clients as it pursues its own bilateral interests with the Soviet Union or other countries. In the last three years alone the USA suspended economic assistance to Yugoslavia, cut off military aid to the Nicaraguan contras and Pakistan, removed diplomatic recognition from the Cambodian opposition coalition, stood by as the Liberian and Somalian Presidents were overthrown in violent *coups*, and allowed relations with Israel to deteriorate to unprecedented depths.²⁰

However, most American dependents, unlike former Soviet clients, seem strong enough and sufficiently attuned to reality to avoid becoming victims of their own unmanageably rapid internal deterioration and the simultaneous prospect of abandonment and isolation.²¹ Israeli restraint during the Gulf War, for example, illustrates how the country's relationship with Washington, the leadership's ability to suppress retaliatory instincts for the sake of its longer term interest in seeing the Iraqi army destroyed by the USA, and the state's legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens, helped the regime preserve national security. Had Saddam Hussein possessed nuclear weapons, however, or used chemical weapons, Israel may have become sufficiently desperate to attack Iraq pre-emptively, or in retaliation.

The future: from anxiety to desperation

As a result of the end of the cold war, there has been an 'unlocking effect' in which all Third World nations face a new freedom of action. No longer forced to take sides in the bipolar competition, or to be a target of that competition, they have greater incentives for opportunism, but are more vulnerable to the opportunism of neighbours. And, as in the past, some may provoke war in an attempt to divert attention from domestic instability or to promote loyalty to the regime.²² Given the precarious situations in which Moscow's former clients, in particular, already find themselves, it is not terribly difficult to determine what they fear. They know that in a crisis, their countries' very existence may be threatened and that they may be isolated regionally and internationally. When the chips are down, they

may not have any options, or anyone to turn to. Two types of threats come to mind.

First, the cold war's end has 'unlocked' the USA, and former Soviet clients are concerned about American enthusiasm for enforcing the rules and regulations of a US-proclaimed new world order. They realise that the USA may now roam unchecked by Russia, and that it seems to be freeing itself from burdensome military obligations in Europe. When President Bush said that the US military will never again fight with its hands tied behind its back, many in the Third World perceive this statement to be a euphemism for the USA's delight over Moscow's inability to deter conventional conflict. Since there is no one to resist US aggression, the argument goes, there are fewer reasons than formerly to limit the use of force and threats to use force.

Pentagon insiders viewed the Panama invasion in December 1989 as a large-scale, international drug bust, and in a perversion of its code name 'Just Cause', nicknamed it 'Just Because'. But to many observers, Panama was the middle step in a process that began in October, 1983 with the invasion of Grenada. Desert Storm, which consigned the lessons of the Vietnam war to oblivion, is regarded as a meaningful third step. Where will these incursions end, many former Soviet clients wonder?

Second, the recently declassified Castro–Khrushchev letters suggest that ABC (atomic, biological, and chemical) weapons may be used during post-cold war regional crises. While scholars such as Kenneth Waltz argue that deterrence in the Third World may be robust, the present authors fear this may not be the case. Although the stability of *superpower deterrence* reduced the likelihood of cataclysmic war for several decades, the US–Soviet experience may be a poor guide for predicting the stability of *Third World deterrence* in the new era. Saddam Hussain refrained from attacking coalition forces or Israeli cities with his chemical arsenal, but it seems clear in retrospect that he calculated (correctly) that Iraq would survive the recent war. Fidel Castro, on the other hand, concluded in October 1962 that Cuba was about to be completely destroyed, leading to his contingent request for a nuclear first-strike.

The steadfast decay of desperate Third World regimes may contribute to crises and spirals of escalation in which neighbours come to fear that one or more opponents is about to use ABC weapons against them first. There have been only six times in history when ballistic missiles actually were used, and all six cases, including the Nazi V-2 campaign of 1944–45, appear to have been motivated by similar, if in some cases less extreme, feelings of vulnerability, the kind of vulnerability that a small Third World country could again experience but that Washington, lacking a history of disputed borders and regional animosity, would probably fail to anticipate or understand.²³ If leaders become convinced of the imminence of hostilities, they could suddenly find themselves on a path of narrowing options, in which the previously unthinkable would begin to seem plausible, or, in the worst case, even preferable.²⁴ Such is the logic of pre-emption: once it is determined, accurately or not, that an adversary may soon decide to launch, then pre-emption becomes almost irresistible, as leaders re-define their principal problem as 'use them or lose them?'

Importantly, therefore, it is not only true that unconventional weapons may be used in post-cold war crises. Equally disturbing, the bare presence of these weapons

may, in regions gripped by nascent instability, add an important contribution to the rising risk of desperation in the first place. Although estimates vary, 11 Third World countries are thought to deploy medium- or long-range ballistic missiles, and several others deploy short-range systems. Cruise missile technology soon will become available to many Third World countries. (A total of 25 may already have missiles or development programmes.)²⁵ Approximately 10 Third World nations are confirmed owners of chemical weapons, and 11 or more others may possess or be developing them.²⁶ Up to seven in the Third World may be working on the development of biological weapons,²⁷ three or four possess or could quickly assemble nuclear weapons, and six or seven others pursue serious nuclear weapons development programmes.²⁸ In addition to former Soviet republics, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Libya, North Korea, Pakistan, South Africa, South Korea, Syria, and perhaps others currently or soon may have both medium- or long-range missiles *and* unconventional weapons, despite multilateral efforts to slow the pace of proliferation.²⁹

Why the US should care

Some specialists believe that the end of the cold war has greatly reduced threats to American security and interests emanating from the Third World. They predict that future violence will stay contained and limited to specific regions, and that the USA will not be drawn into a conflict in which it must decide between getting bogged down or losing the confidence and loyalty of allies.³⁰ For these reasons, John Chipman concludes that, aside from humanitarian concerns, violence in the Third World now fails to pass the 'so what' test. 'In fact', he says, 'much regional conflict simply does not matter.'³¹

There are certainly instances when small-country desperation is almost completely unrelated to US security. As rebel forces concluded their final march on Monrovia, Liberia, in the summer of 1990, President Samuel Doe became so desperate that he sent a letter to President Bush confessing to personal corruption and begging for immediate rescue.³² Yet, despite significant human suffering that was graphically, if briefly, dramatised in the US media, neither the *coup* itself nor Doe's personal demise (he was dismembered after his defeat) has implied anything, one way or the other, for American security interests.

At the same time, however, we believe that advocates of the rosy, 'so-what' view can retain it only by ignoring the psychology of desperation and its consequences: anxiety over survival of the regime, leading to (apparently) extravagant risk-taking, leading to crises, war, entrapment, (apparently) suicidal behaviour and resulting catastrophe. Such behaviour, even in the absence of ABC weapons, may matter a great deal to Washington because of its interest in pursuing long-term multinational cooperation, preventing violence directed at the USA, and avoiding entanglement in regional wars.

Because potentially desperate leaders represent defiance and a willingness to go down fighting, preferring destruction with honour to humiliation and defeat, they have the ability to mobilise anti-American sentiment in the Third World, thus jeopardising opportunities for long-term cooperation and consensus-building needed

to address issues of global security, environment and economics. Such leaders may also try to use blackmail to achieve their ends.³³ Even Saddam Hussein, a leader seemingly devoid of redeeming qualities, had much of the Muslim world behind him during the Gulf crisis and war solely, so it appears, because of his willingness to play 'David' to the US 'Goliath'.

Desperate leaders can inflict serious environmental damage, sponsor economic sabotage or assassinations, and strike American troops deployed abroad or overseas installations, as the Libyans did in 1986 when they attacked the American military facility at Lampedusa with two Scud missiles.³⁴ Owing to the emergence of long-range missiles in the Third World, it seems unwise for Americans to rule out the possibility in a future crisis or war of a military attack directed at population centres in the USA. In the Cuban case, it has been reported by Cuban defector General Rafael del Pino that after the American invasion of Grenada, Castro ordered Cuban fighter-bombers to be programmed to strike at the Turkey Point nuclear power plant in South Florida.³⁵ In the event of a US attack on the island, the threat of such a response is far from incredible, given what we know of the Castro-Khrushchev correspondence and the lesson Castro appears to draw from the event: no surrender.

Finally, a desperate leader could drag the USA into an unintended war by attacking nations the USA values (Israel, South Korea, and Taiwan come immediately to mind), and could ignite cross-regional conflict by using medium- or long-range missiles to attack other regions. A partial example of this phenomenon occurred when Iraqi missile attacks against Tel Aviv and Haifa incited Palestinian guerillas in southern Lebanon to try to open up a symbolic second front against Israel.³⁶

Déjà vu, '62?

Let us review the argument. First, the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 embodies the central features of the new world situation. To the USA, it represents the moment the cold war was suspended, the lost opportunity to construct a 'new world order' a generation earlier than the present effort. But to Cuba, and to other potentially troublesome countries, the *Cuban* Cuban missile crisis represents the abyss of desperation that occurs when a threat from one regional power is coupled with capitulation of an important ally, leaving the client abandoned, completely vulnerable to its neighbour's designs. Second, the anxiety currently felt in the capitals of much of Third World is real and, from their perspective, realistic. It is no longer inconceivable that they could be removed from the map. Third, it is virtually impossible to deter (what will appear to the USA to be) reckless, even suicidal actions on the part of leaders once they reach the conclusion that their options are meaningless annihilation or martyrdom. Fourth, as the missile crisis case shows in principle, and as the Gulf crisis and war show in fact, desperate behaviour can have consequences that concern the interests of the USA. Finally, the anxiety in these states must be accepted as a fact and dealt with constructively, before anxiety turns to desperation, leading to new world disorder and danger.

The question is: how? What can be done now, before another crisis or war is upon us? Some argue that cold war-style containment should be applied to Third

World pariahs, and that they should be sealed off, isolated, and forced to face the internal contradictions of their systems. While this approach may have eventually 'worked' with the Soviet Union after several dangerous East–West crises, the Cuban experience in the missile crisis reveals why it is dangerous and likely to fail in the Third World: the superpowers were secure enough, and the issue of Soviet missiles in Cuba sufficiently episodic and clear, that both could enthusiastically back away from the brink. But Castro, ignored, isolated and feeling backed into a corner, began, as we now know, seriously to contemplate the viability of a nuclear launch against the USA. Thus the Cuban missile crisis contains two sets of lessons for the post-cold war era: that deriving from fear of the collapse and abandonment of a needed ally, and that arising in a crisis because of the inexorable logic of pre-emption. For we must remember: Cuba was, by October 1962, both abandoned by its ally, the Soviet Union, and was the site of perhaps one-third of all Soviet nuclear weapons; a doubly dark prescription for disaster.

To avoid a repeat of Castro's understandable but regrettable reaction, we take our cue from Stanley Hoffmann, who wisely says that, in the process of avoiding new world disorder, to say nothing of desperation and disaster, 'an ounce of prevention is worth a ton of punishment'. Here are some concrete measures that come to mind, according to which we might lower the odds of post-cold war, Third World desperation:

- Do not settle for explanations which require a leader, or a people, to be 'crazy'. Usually, this is an anti-explanation, revealing a lack of understanding as to the stories the ostensibly 'crazy' leaders are telling themselves. The better we understand the local rationales, the more clearly we will see where leaders are, on the road from merely anxious to truly desperate.
- Do not appease desperate leaders, or let them use desperation as an excuse to get away with unacceptable behaviour. It is important to recognise the elements that can lead to desperation, and to try to anticipate and prevent suicidal conditions before they materialise. However, if any lesson has been learned from the last two administrations' coddling of Saddam Hussein, it seems clear that while addressing the sources of anxiety (such as economic distress, domestic instability, and regional tension) it is important to maintain a simultaneous deterrent posture against unacceptable actions.
- Practice constructive political engagement with pariahs, just as the USA once tried to do with the repressive regime in South Africa. The USA has nothing important to lose, for it has already won the cold war. Pursue the diplomatic opening with Vietnam, and consider opening up full relations with other potentially troublesome states including Cuba and North Korea, thereby depriving their leaders of the US ogre image they may be using to resist change. Recognition should take priority, now at the end of the cold war, over other policy objectives, because pariahs are unlikely to moderate their behaviour if excluded by a system that denies their legal right to exist. Cease economic and trade embargoes where possible, and encourage pariahs to join the world economic community.
- Help build regional mutual deterrence regimes by encouraging local confidence-building measures, such as the India–Pakistan agreement not to attack each

other's weapons facilities. Explore incentives for future arms control efforts and information exchanges, should regional adversaries become secure enough to pursue such options. Again be patient, realising that the evolution of the US–Soviet verification regime took decades. The importance of reinforcing non-proliferation regimes already in place is underscored by the possibility that desperate, isolated leaders may use their nuclear weapons.

- Do not help clients bolster deterrence with missile defence systems. Even though these systems may be necessary during crises, they can be used offensively, provoking greater desperation, and they should not be deployed during peacetime. In addition, stop violating multilateral arms sales limitations that were established after the Gulf War.

We now know from new data on the missile crisis that it is perfectly possible for a leader to decide contingently to choose all-out nuclear war. Theorists of nuclear deterrence have for many years discussed the differences between rational and irrational behaviour. Yet few have been able to articulate circumstances in which a sane individual could come to see nuclear war as a viable option. Now, however, we know that it has happened. And we are fortunate that Fidel Castro did not control nuclear missiles in 1962. We also know from the Gulf War, the first post-cold war event of major significance, that it is possible for a leader in this new world order to act repeatedly in ways that lead to certain destruction and chaos. This too has happened. This being the case, it may be wiser to forget trying to forge a new world order and to concentrate instead on avoiding related, but idiosyncratic, new world desperation and disorder.

Notes

¹ Fred Barnes, 'Brave new gimmick', *The New Republic*, 25 February 1991, p 15.

² *The New Republic*, 18 March 1991, p 10.

³ Stanley Hoffmann, 'Avoiding new world disorder', *New York Times*, 25 February 1991, p A19.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Judith Miller & Laurie Mylroie, *Saddam Hussein and the Crisis in the Gulf*, New York: Times Books, 1990, p 17; Nora Boustant & Patrick E. Tyler, 'U.S. pursues diplomatic solution in Persian Gulf crisis; warns Iraq', *Washington Post*, 25 July 1990, p A17. Miller & Mylroie say the deployment occurred on 24 July. Boustant & Tyler imply it took place on July 23.

⁶ 'Israel vows to respond to attack', *New York Times*, 10 January 1991, p A18.

⁷ Daniel Goleman, 'The experts differ on dissecting psyches', *New York Times*, 29 January 1991, p B5.

⁸ *Granma* (Cuban Community Party Daily), 23 November 1990.

⁹ *Granma Weekly Review* (English language), 2 December 1990, p 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Efraim Karsh & Inari Rautsi, 'Why Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait' *Survival*, 33(1), January/February 1991, pp 18–30; Former Iraqi diplomats quoted in 'The mind of Hussein', *PBS Frontline*, 26 February 1991.

¹³ Howard W French, 'Cuba, hurt by falling Soviet imports, makes field hands of office workers', *New York Times*, 1 December 1990, p 3.

¹⁴ Steven Erlanger, 'Vietnam leaders reported deeply divided', *New York Times*, 31 January 1991, p A6.

¹⁵ Jane Perliz, 'Africa fears its needs will become secondary', *New York Times*, 27 December 1989, p A6; Jaehoon Ahn, 'Soviet upsets North Koreans at seminar', *Washington Post*, 21 May 1990, p A15; 'US–Soviet team effort in Ethiopia', *Christian Science Monitor*, 15 June 1990, p 20; Andy Pasztor, 'Soviet military cut on Vietnam', *Wall Street Journal*, 26 January 1990, p B5B; David Remnick, 'Native son', *New York Review*

- of Books, 14 February 1991, p 7; *Moscow News*, 18 February 1990, p 13.
- ¹⁶ Robert A Pastor, 'The United States and Central America after the Cold War: seal, peel, or repeat the sphere of influence?' Prepared for the MacArthur Conference on Superpower Conflict and Cooperation in the Third World, University of California at Berkeley, 4–6 October 1990, pp 10–11.
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- ¹⁸ James Sterngold, 'North Korea faults Roh and Gorbachev', *New York Times*, 8 June 1990, p A3; FBIS-EAS, 7 June 1990, p 9; 'North Korea cancels talks with south', *New York Times*, 19 February 1991, p A3. David E Sanger, 'Japan says talks with Korea stall', *New York Times*, 26 May 1991.
- ¹⁹ William Pfaff, *Barbarian Sentiments*, New York: Hill and Wang, 1989, pp 13–14. Also Jerry W Sanders, 'Retreat from world order', *World Policy Journal*, 8(2), Spring 1991.
- ²⁰ David Binder, 'US is suspending aid to Yugoslavia', *New York Times*, 19 May 1991, p 10; Steve Coll, 'Rifts appear in US–Pakistan alliance', *Washington Post*, 22 October 1990, p A13; *New York Times*, 19 July 1990, p A1.
- ²¹ Edward E Azar & Chung-in Moon, 'Legitimacy, integration and policy capacity: the "Soft ware" side of Third World national security', p 96, in *National Security in the Third World*, Edward E Azar & Chung-in Moon, (eds), Hants: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 1988.
- ²² Jeffrey Herbst, 'War and the state in Africa', *International Security*, 14(4), Spring 1990, pp 117–139.
- ²³ For a list of cases, see Martin Navias, 'Ballistic missile proliferation in the Third World', Adelphi paper number 252, summer 1990, p 33: German campaign of 1944–45; Iran–Iraq war. 1980–88; Afghan government use of Scuds against resistance forces, 1989–90; Egyptian and Syrian launch of Scuds against Israeli military facilities during 1973 war; Libyan attack on American facility at Lampedusa, 1986. Also Gulf War, which took place after publication of Navias.
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- ²⁹ Isaacs, op cit note 26; Navias, op cit note 23, pp 29–30; Smith, op cit note 26; Laurence Zuriff, 'Confronting ballistic missile proliferation', *Brown Foreign Affairs Journal*, Spring 1991, 3(2), p 54.
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