

B466. "Forming a Global Authority: A World Government Response to Terrorism." *The Futurist*, (November-December, 2004) pp. 12-13.

Ever since I was a student in the early 1950s, I have been told that a world government is a dream of dewy-eyed idealists, a vision no serious person would pursue. To a certain extent, one exists now in the form of a coalition of nations organized by the United States in response to the events of September 11, 2001. I believe this will evolve further into what I call a Global Safety Authority (GSA), an authority run by the United States and its allies but encompassing most of the nations of the world. Such an authority--born out of antiterrorism initiatives in the United States and fueled by international agreements to facilitate world peace--would have as its core missions antiterrorism, deproliferation of weapons, and humanitarian intervention.

The GSA's primary division, the Antiterrorism Department, would combine the intelligence and police services of some 170 nations, who would work together in as seamless a way as the FBI and the New York City Police Department cooperated in the aftermath of the World Trade Center attack. Since then, 55 nations have changed their domestic laws to accommodate the global pursuit of terrorists. Special Forces, CIA agents, and U.S. military forces grid the world in attempts to reach this goal. There is hardly a phone call or e-mail sent anyplace in the world that is not scanned by computers in the United States, the United Kingdom, or Australia to share with like-minded governments worldwide.

The GSA's Deproliferation Department would labor to remove weapons of mass destruction from rogue nations and prevent their additional manufacture. Progress is already being made in this direction: Such weapons have already been eliminated in Libya, and Iran and North Korea are next in line. Seventeen nations recently agreed to share information about the movement of suspected cargoes, and several naval forces are cooperating to board and search ships suspected of carrying the material needed to make nuclear weapons or the bombs themselves, especially around North Korea.

The goal of the Humanitarian Interventions Department is to prevent genocide and ethnic cleansing. It would provide the hard power needed to back up UN resolutions, and it works out which nations will send troops to places such as Liberia, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sudan. Moreover, as part of its endeavors, initiatives would be undertaken to form standby regional forces in order to avoid delays in preventive actions.

The fact that the new and growing global government was born out of force and that the GSA would not be accountable to a global representative body or electorate does not mean that force would be central to its being or that it need remain unaccountable. Historically, many nations that were forged by force--including the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy--gradually developed democratic regimes.

But why would the major powers behind the GSA, especially the United States, submit to a global parliament, say in the form of a restructured United Nations or a new global council composed of representatives of democratic governments? "Submit" is a strong term. However, seeking approval and taking into account the views of such a body is far from a visionary notion.

In a world where more people follow the news and are politically active, the perceived legitimacy of one's actions has become surprisingly important. As events in 2003 and 2004 have demonstrated, acting without UN approval cost the United States dearly in realpolitik terms, including military support from allies, sharing of financial burdens, and public support at home. In one year, the Bush administration was forced to move from declaring that the United Nations was on "the verge of irrelevancy" to repeatedly seeking a UN endorsement for the U.S. presence in Iraq. Moreover, the United States needed the backing of the United Nations to legitimate elections and to work out the transition for Iraq to become a self-governing nation.

One cannot expect in the near future for the world to be run like a democratic state. However, as more governments of UN member states are democratized, the voice of the General Assembly will be more compelling. And if the Security Council were to become more representative of today's global power structure, its resolutions would hold more weight. Thus, the United Nations may well become an even more important source of legitimacy than it currently is.

The net result would be nothing more than an "antagonistic partnership." The United Nations would continue to chastise various powers for not following its lead closely enough, and the powers that be would complain that the United Nations is still ignoring crucial facts on the ground. However, at the same time, both would recognize that they complement one another. Without the powers invested in the GSA, the United Nations would be toothless. And without UN prescriptions, the GSA's uses of force would be considered illegitimate bites into democracy. That is, both sides may well take each other more into account while still trying to follow their own paths, thus jointly fashioning a better world government than if each were operating independently.