

do a lot more to prevent war than simply wringing our hands while we read the newspapers. And I think we can.

First, we have to abandon the notion that all U.S. policy begins and ends behind the butt of a gun. Now some will stand up and say, Well, that is just Jim McDermott, the doctor, who believes we don't have to use guns to fight for peace. Well, I have some company.

I would like to enter into the RECORD a story carried earlier this week in the Asia Times. It reports on the first conference held by the Center for New American Security. Ambassador James Dobbins, who was special envoy to Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo under President Clinton and special envoy to Afghanistan under the current President Bush said that this was about U.S. policy in Iran: "I reject the theory that the implicit threat of force is a necessary prerequisite to successful diplomacy."

Let me read the news story:

"Looking back on 40 years of U.S. diplomacy, Dobbins, now director of the Rand International Security and Defense Policy Center, concluded that the conventional wisdom about the need to back up diplomacy with your adversaries with force is wrong.

"I can say that most of it was not conducted against a background of threat of force," said Dobbins, "and when the threat of force was introduced, diplomacy failed."

"In a line that got applause from the more than 750 people attending the conference, Dobbins said his solution was to 'deal with Iran.'"

I urge everyone to read this story and I urge the administration and the Congress to start asking tough questions and demanding straight answers while there is still time.

We have seen what strikes in Iraq did back in the 1980s. We saw a strike in Syria a few months ago, and we are going to wake up one morning with another problem on our hands if we don't start asking serious, tough questions of this administration.

[From the Asia Times, Jun. 17, 2008]

DEAL, DEAL, DEAL WITH IRAN
(By Gareth Porter)

WASHINGTON—The assumption that the United States should exploit its military dominance to exert pressure on adversaries has long dominated the thinking of the US national security and political elite. But this central tenet of conventional security doctrine was sharply rejected last week by a senior practitioner of crisis diplomacy at the debut of a major new centrist foreign policy think-tank.

At the first conference of the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), ambassador James Dobbins, who was former president Bill Clinton's special envoy for Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo and the George W. Bush administration's first special envoy to Afghanistan, sharply rejected the well-established concept of coercive diplomacy.

Dobbins declared in a panel on Iran policy, "I reject the theory that the implicit threat of force is a necessary prerequisite to successful diplomacy."

Looking back on 40 years of US diplomacy, Dobbins, now director of the Rand Inter-

national Security and Defense Policy Center, concluded that the conventional wisdom about the need to back up diplomacy with adversaries with force is wrong. "I can say that most of it was not conducted against a background of threat of force," said Dobbins, and when the threat of force was introduced, "diplomacy failed".

In diplomatic dealings with the Soviet Union, however, Dobbins said, "We never threatened to use force."

Dobbins complained that the debate over diplomacy with regard to Iran has been between those who are ready to use military force now and those who "say we should talk with them first". Advocates of diplomacy, he said, have to "meet a high threshold—they have to offer the reversal of all Iranian positions". In effect, they have to deliver Iranian "capitulation", said Dobbins.

Although very different from the Soviet Union as a threat, Dobbins observed, Iran is similar in that "we can't afford to ignore it and we can't overrun it". Real diplomacy in regard to Iran, he argued, would result in "better information and better options".

In a line that got applause from the more than 750 people attending the conference, Dobbins said his solution was to "deal with Iran".

The Dobbins argument represents the first high-profile challenge by a veteran of the US national security community to a central tenet of national security officials and the US political elite ever since the end of the Cold War.

The recently established CNAS has strong connections with former Clinton administration national security officials and the Clinton wing of the Democratic Party. CNAS president Michele A. Flournoy and chief executive officer Kurt M. Campbell both held positions in the Clinton Defense Department. William J. Perry and Madeleine K. Albright, Clinton's secretaries of defense and state, respectively, gave opening remarks at the conference.

The Clinton wing of the Democratic Party and of the national security elite has long associated itself with the idea that the threat of military force—and even force itself—should be at the center of U.S. policy in the Middle East. Key figures from the Clinton administration, including Perry, Albright, former United Nations ambassador Richard Holbrooke, former assistant secretary of state James P. Rubin and former deputy national security adviser James Steinberg, lined up in support of the Bush administration's invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Flournoy and Campbell have already made it clear that CNAS' orientation will be to hew the common ground uniting the national security professionals who have served administrations of both parties. Flournoy co-authored an op-ed with former Bush administration deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage two days before the CNAS conference, and Armitage also introduced the conference.

A paper by Flournoy and two junior co-authors ostensibly calling for a new U.S. "grand strategy" is notable for its reluctance to go too far in criticizing the Bush administration's policies. It argues that the current US positions in Iraq pose the "real threat of strategic exhaustion" and calls for "rebalancing risk", but offers no real alternative to indefinite continuation of the Bush administration's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Instead, it urged the "rearticulation" of goals in both Iraq and Afghanistan by replacing the "maximalist language used in past years" with "pragmatism".

But the choice of Dobbins to anchor a panel on Iran indicates that the Clinton wing of the Democratic Party and of the national

security community now has serious doubts about the coercive diplomacy approach to Iran that has dominated policy thinking since the beginning of the Clinton administration.

A paper on Iran policy co-authored by Campbell and released at the conference reflects a new skepticism toward the threat of an attack on Iran as a way of obtaining Iranian cooperation. It argues that U.S. military threats against Iran "have had the opposite effect" from what was desired, hardening the resolve of Iranian leaders to enrich uranium and giving the Islamic regime greater credibility with the Iran people.

The paper also reflected an unwillingness to dispense entirely with the military option, however, proposing that the United States "de-emphasize, but not forswear, the possibility of military action against Iran".

The paper advised against even taking the military threat off the table in return for Iran's stopping its nuclear program, on the ground that Washington must be able to use that threat to bargain with Iran over "stopping its support for terrorism".

The principal author of the paper, James N. Miller, who is senior vice president and director of studies at CNAS, explained in an interview after the conference that he believes Dobbins' assessment of the problem is "about right". Miller said the threat to use force against Iran to coerce it on its nuclear program "is not useful or credible now".

But Miller said he would not give up that threat, because the next president might enter into serious negotiations with Iran, and Iran might refuse to "play ball" and go ahead with plans to acquire nuclear weapons. If the president had a strong coalition behind him, he said, "The use of force is an option that one should consider."

The idea that diplomatic negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program must be backed by the threat of war is so deeply entrenched in Washington that endorsement of it seems to have become a criteria for any candidate being taken seriously by the national security community.

Thus all three top Democratic hopefuls supported it during their primary fight for the Democratic nomination.

Addressing the American Israel Public Affairs Committee convention in early 2007, Hillary Clinton said that, in dealing with the possibility of an Iranian nuclear capability, "no option can be taken off the table". Barack Obama and John Edwards also explicitly refused to rule out the use of force against Iran if it refused to accept U.S. demands to end its uranium enrichment program.

HISTORIC FISCAL CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. Speaker, shh, there's a secret. I have a secret. It's a secret that the leadership in this House doesn't want the people to know; but I'm going to tell you anyway. This Nation, this Federal Government, is in a historic fiscal crisis right now.

It was announced earlier this week that the deficit for this fiscal year which we are in is projected now to reach \$470 billion. Now, Mr. Speaker, for most people when you talk like this, these numbers are so huge they sound arcane. What does that mean.

Well, it is half a trillion dollars which I think most people know is a lot of money. Let me put it in perspective.

If we reach that level by the end of September, this will be by far the largest single year deficit in American history. Let me repeat that. We are currently in a year in which we will likely reach the largest deficit in 1 year in U.S. history.

But it doesn't seem to stop there because also this week the Appropriations Committee released their spending request for the next fiscal year, for fiscal year 2009. And they requested to spend 7.7 percent more than this year; 7.7 percent more. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the appropriations request is made up of 12 separate bills, 12 separate areas of the government. They propose an increase in spending in all 12. They are not proposing to keep the same or reduce spending anywhere in spite of the largest deficit in American history.

And because of the economic doldrums that we are currently in, revenue right now is basically flat. It is not rising very much. And entitlement spending, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, is going up by nearly 6 percent a year all by itself automatically if we don't do anything over the next 5 years.

So you don't have to be a rocket scientist to say okay, if revenues are staying the same and we are increasing some spending by 7.7 percent and the rest by nearly 6, the deficit is going to go up. So with the way things are projected, we could have a deficit of \$600 billion, maybe \$700 billion next year. And what are we doing about it in this House, well, we are just trying to make it worse.

Yesterday in a very broad, bipartisan vote, there was a vote to spend an additional \$261 billion over the next 2 years, much of which is not included in the numbers that I just gave you. So \$261 billion more. Deeper debt, bigger deficits.

Now some of the things that were included in that bill yesterday are priorities. One of them was continuing to support the troops in Iraq. I personally support that. But we have to make choices. There have to be priorities. We can't spend on everything. We should support the troops in completing their mission in Iraq, but we should cut something else so we are not making the taxpayer be the loser on all of this.

It seems like every week in this place, in fact I believe every week here we have either added a new program, new spending or a new entitlement. And hardly ever do we reduce the spending on something else to pay for it.

Now we are spending well over \$3 trillion a year in the Federal Government. You would think that some of that \$3 trillion is not something that we absolutely need. And we need to be reducing those things and setting priorities. If this is more important than this, then we spend on this and don't spend on this because we can't spend on it all.

But unfortunately what is happening around here is all right, I have my spending program, and another Member has their spending program, and so what's the compromise? I know, let's spend both. I get to spend what I want to spend and you get to spend what you want to spend, and those are the compromises we have been reaching in this place recently. Great deal. Politicians win; special interests win; taxpayer loses.

Mr. Speaker, this has got to stop. We have to stop the spending, and when we set priorities on things that we want to spend money on, we have to cut something else.

You know, the last thing I have here is: Are we going to have the highest tax rate in the world? Senator OBAMA recently proposed to lift the cap now on Social Security and Medicare taxes for incomes above \$250,000 and repeal all of the tax cuts that were put in place in this century in 2001 and 2003. If both of those things Senator OBAMA has approved become law, the highest tax rate in the United States will be 54.9 percent. It will be the fourth highest tax rate in the industrialized world. We will be exceeded only by France, Sweden and Denmark. Oh, and by the way, all three of those countries are currently moving to reduce their tax rates because they see what that kind of tax burden will do, is doing to their economy and to brain drain from their countries.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that people will not keep this a secret but will tell everybody.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, not so many years ago two famous American artists, Josh Stone and Dionne Warwick, created a song called, "What's it all about, Alfie?" Here is how the song began:

"What's it all about, Alfie?

Is it just for the moment we live?

What's it all about when you sort it out, Alfie?

Are we meant to take more than we give?"

On June 19 this week, 2008, the New York Times lead story said quite a bit about taking. The headline reads, "Deals With Iraq Are Set To Bring the Oil Giants Back." I hope every American reads the lead story in the New York Times this week, June 19, a story written by Andrew Kramer.

Here is some of what it says. It says Exxon Mobil, Shell, Total, and BP, along with some other companies like Chevron, and a number of smaller oil companies, are in talks with Iraq's oil ministry for no-bid contracts, I repeat, no-bid contracts to service Iraq's largest fields. The no-bid contracts are unusual for the industry. Many experts consider these contracts to be their

best hope for large-scale increases in production over there. And it talks a lot about the politics of global oil and how other places like Bolivia and Venezuela and Russia and Kazakhstan aren't so friendly to the United States anymore as we become totally dependent on imported fuel. And it says that the biggest prize everybody is waiting for is the development of these new oil fields.

But of course we have to be careful because these mother lodes are threatened by insurgents who don't like the fact that western companies are coveting their resources. And here we live in a country now where gas is over \$4 a gallon. It would be so easy just to take it. And as the song says, are we meant to take more than we give?

Technically, these no-bid deals, more no-bid from this administration, are structured as service contracts. As such, they do not require the passage of an oil law setting out terms for competitive bidding. The legislation has been stalled by disputes among Shiites, Sunni and Kurdish parties over revenue sharing and other conditions inside that country where their parliament is in turmoil and cannot pass a hydrocarbon law. And thus, outsiders come in and are covetous of those resources. The whole process is designed to circumvent the legislative stalemate. I might say, how convenient. How convenient.

And so Americans should ponder the connection between our dependence. Now almost 75 percent of what people pump into their tanks comes from resources from other places, and think about how serious we had best be as a country to become energy independent here at home so we can restore our independence again because every American family that can't afford to drive to work anymore or go on vacation is less free than they were a year ago.

And the year 1998 is very important because that is the year when America began importing over half of what we consume. Every year we become less and less free.

It is really sad what is happening in the world. I mourn for my country as we approach Independence Day that she is not free. And the way we are going to fix this is for Americans to really understand the nature of our predicament.

I would prefer not to send America's finest to wars over oil, but that is exactly what we have done. And it will cost upwards of a trillion dollars already to pay for their deployment. It is important to think about the words to that song: Are we meant to take? I really think we are meant to create. The way this country was born out of people's highest ideals, to create a Nation that could be self-sustaining within its own borders without all these interlocking, foreign entailments that George Washington warned us about over 200 years ago. Maybe some Americans have forgotten, but we shouldn't