

Notes from Keynote address by Sen. Gary Hart to the Security Symposium 10 Oct 2002

In 1947, George Kennan articulated the doctrine that would guide American foreign policy for decades: the “containment of communism doctrine”. This doctrine organized almost all of domestic, foreign, and defense policy. For example, highways were justified as a “defense transportation system”. But the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1991 created a vacuum. (It’s always easier to be organized against something than for something, especially in the US.) Neither party has (nor have any foreign policy thinkers) filled this vacuum. We are reactive. We desperately need a new central organizing principle.

Pres. Bush and VP Cheney finally released a 35pp report describing the doctrine of pre-emption. The US will not allow any international rivals.

We must understand our historical context: these are extraordinarily revolutionary times. Four revolutions are happening now:

- 1) The internationalization of financial commerce and markets (and controls) which some people call globalization. Central banks will no longer be able to control national economies. Revolution will continue, this revolution can’t be reversed.
- 2) The information revolution, which is on par with the industrial revolution. (1) and (2) will enhance economic divisions. Trading nations are benefiting tremendously; the have-nots are falling further behind. The digital divide is growing. Are our foreign policy thinkers even chewing on this?
- 3) The declining sovereignty of the nation-state. For example, Yugoslavia - we reacted, did not anticipate. If the bargains between the state and the citizens are broken (the state can no longer protect citizens), then where is a citizen’s loyalty, with individual states or with a global community? Does the US go it alone or do we join the international community? This relationship between the citizen and the state was set up by the Peace of Westphalia (1648) – if that breaks down, where do we go?
- 4) A fundamental change in the nature of conflict. There used to be rules for conflict, set up in the Geneva Convention (i.e. uniforms, prisoner’s rights, return prisoners of war after a conflict is over)...this was civilized, legal warfare. But 9/11 is the “beginning of a new age:” no rules of war, no warning, no political agenda (like a demand for territory, etc.) other than the killing of Americans.

Most policy thinking has been linear. But after the Cold War ended, military and foreign policy didn’t change explicitly. Pres. Clinton never had a policy. Sandy Berger actually stated that “we will respond to events as they arise.” At least Pres. Bush has a policy. In my [Hart’s] editorial in the New York Times last week, I [Hart] criticized the Democrats for not having a foreign policy since Vietnam. No framework or construct. Democrats must now respond to the Bush initiative. Remember that no individual, no single policy or party has all the truth. Engaged citizens are the backbone of democracy...what can **I** do for the country?

Hart-Rudman Commission:

1993: Hart asked Pres. Clinton to appoint a panel to think about national security. Nothing.

1997: Congressman Gingrich demanded, Pres. Clinton responded. This was not just another commission, but rather 14 of the most experienced foreign policy people, coming from NATO, the Army, Lockheed-Martin, Congress, the House foreign relations committee. Between the 14, there were 250 years of foreign policy experience. We were mandated in October 1998 to report in 2 ½ years. All the work was done in public, open hearings, expert testimony, resulting in 3 public reports.

9/15/99: “New World Coming” report concluded that the US will be attacked, on US soil.

Spring 2000: framework

1/31/01: Summary went to Pres. Bush, with recommendations. All documents sent to each member of Congress. 50 recommendations in five categories.

- 1) Recommended the organization of a Dept. of Homeland Security. Administration finally acted 18 months later.
- 2) Recapitalize American education, especially scientific education. Defense risk in falling behind in science and technology.
- 3) Reorganize the “dysfunctional institution” known as the State Department. DoD needs to think differently.
- 4) Reorganize Congress. Too many subcommittees to actually get any work done.
- 5) Best people are staying away from the government; in the military, civil service, diplomatic core, the caliber has been declining. Get people back into public service so they don’t see the government as the enemy.

There is a role here for science and technology. Protection of infrastructure. Cyber warfare threatens transportation, finance, energy, communications. Help policy makers understand the nature of the beast. **DON’T WAIT FOR A POLICYMAKER TO CALL YOU UP. THINK CREATIVELY NOW AND PULL THEM IN.** And there is a role for journalists. The media are supposed to be the connection between the government and the people. “The First Amendment was enacted so the American people could know their business.” When one of the Hart-Rudman reports was released, the big news was Elian Gonzales.

We, Americans, are brilliant reactors, but horrible pro-actors. We don’t believe in thinking ahead. This is a totally new century, and we must think accordingly.