DICK CHENEY'S SONG OF AMERICA

Drafting a plan for global dominance

By David Armstrong

Discussed in this essay:

Defense Planning Guidance for the 1994–1999 Fiscal Years (Draft), Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1992
Defense Planning Guidance for the 1994–1999 Fiscal Years (Revised Draft), Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1992
Defense Strategy for the 1990s, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1993
Defense Planning Guidance for the 2004–2009 Fiscal Years, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2002

Few writers are more ambitious than the writers of government policy papers, and few policy papers are more ambitious than Dick Cheney's masterwork. It has taken several forms over the last decade and is in fact the product of several ghostwriters (notably Paul Wolfowitz and Colin Powell), but Cheney has been consistent in his dedication to the ideas in the documents that bear his name, and he has maintained a close association with the ideologues behind them. Let us, therefore, call Cheney the author, and this series of documents the Plan.

The Plan was published in unclassified form most recently under the title of *Defense Strategy for the 1990s*, as Cheney ended his term as secretary of defense under the elder George Bush in early 1993, but it is, like *Leaves of Grass*, a perpetually evolving work. It was the controversial *Defense Planning Guidance* draft of 1992—from which Cheney, unconvincingly, tried to distance himself—and it was the somewhat less aggressive revised draft of that same year. This June it was a presidential lecture in the form of a commencement address at West Point, and in July it was leaked to the press as yet another *Defense Planning Guidance* (this time under the pen name of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld). It will take its ultimate form, though, as America's new national security strategy—and Cheney et al. will experience what few writers have even dared dream: their words will become our reality.

The Plan is for the United States to rule the world. The overt theme is unilateralism, but it is ultimately a story of domination. It calls for the United States to maintain its overwhelming military superiority and prevent new rivals from rising up to challenge it on the world stage. It calls for dominion over friends and enemies alike. It says not that the United States must be more powerful, or most powerful, but that it must be absolutely powerful.

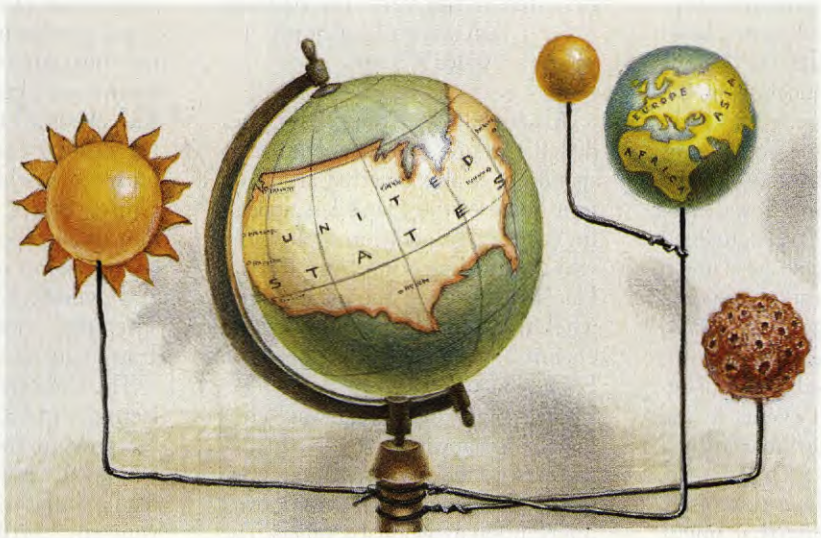
The Plan is disturbing in many ways, and ultimately unworkable. Yet it is being sold now as an answer to the "new realities" of the post–September 11 world, even as it was sold previously as the answer to the new realities of the post–Cold War world. For Cheney, the Plan has always been the right answer, no matter how different the questions.

Cheney's unwavering adherence to the Plan would be amusing, and maybe a little sad, except that it is now *our* plan. In its pages are the ideas that we now act upon every day with the full might of the United States military. Strangely, few critics have noted that Cheney's work has a long history, or that it was once quite unpopular, or that it was created in reaction to circumstances that are far removed from

David Armstrong is an investigative reporter for the National Security News Service.

the ones we now face. But Cheney is a well-known action man. One has to admire, in a way, the Babe Ruth–like sureness of his political work. He pointed to center field ten years ago, and now the ball is sailing over the fence.

Before the Plan was about domination it was about money. It took shape in late 1989, when the Soviet threat was clearly on the decline, and, with it, public support for a large military establishment. Cheney seemed unable to come to terms with either new reality. He remained deeply suspicious of the Soviets and strongly resisted all efforts to reduce military spending. Democrats in Congress jeered his lack of strategic vision, and a few within the Bush Administration were whispering that Cheney had become an irrelevant factor in structuring a response to the revolutionary changes taking place in the world.



More adaptable was the up-and-coming General Colin Powell, the newly appointed chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As Ronald Reagan's national security adviser, Powell had seen the changes taking place in the Soviet Union firsthand and was convinced that the ongoing transformation was irreversible. Like Cheney, he wanted to avoid military cuts, but he knew they were inevitable. The best he could do was minimize them, and the best way to do that would be to offer a new security structure that would preserve American military capabilities despite reduced resources.

Powell and his staff believed that a weakened Soviet Union would result in shifting alliances and regional conflict. The United States was the only nation capable of managing the forces at play in the world; it would have to remain the preeminent military power in order to ensure the peace and shape the emerging order in accordance with American interests. U.S. military strategy, therefore, would have to shift from global containment to managing less-well-defined regional struggles and unforeseen contingencies. To do this, the United States would have to project a military "forward presence" around the world; there would be fewer troops but in more places. This plan still would not be cheap, but through careful restructuring and superior technology, the job could be done with 25 percent fewer troops. Powell insisted that maintaining superpower status must be the first priority of the U.S. military. "We have to put a shingle outside our door saying, 'Superpower Lives Here,' no matter what the Soviets do," he said at the time. He also insisted that the troop levels he proposed were the bare minimum necessary to do so. This concept would come to be known as the "Base Force."

Powell's work on the subject proved timely. The Berlin Wall fell on November 9, 1989, and five days later Powell had his new strategy ready to present to Cheney. Even as decades of repression were ending in Eastern Europe, however, Cheney still could not abide even the force and budget reductions Powell proposed. Yet he knew that cuts were unavoidable. Having no alternative of his own to offer, therefore, he reluctantly encouraged Powell to present his ideas to the president. Powell did so the next day; Bush made no promises but encouraged him to keep at it.

Less encouraging was the reaction of Paul Wolfowitz, the undersecretary of defense for policy. A lifelong proponent of the unilateralist, maximum-force approach, he shared Cheney's skepticism about the Eastern Bloc and so put his own staff to work on a competing plan that would somehow accommodate the possibility of Soviet backsliding.[1]

As Powell and Wolfowitz worked out their strategies, Congress was losing patience. New calls went up for large cuts in defense spending in light of the new global environment. The harshest critique of Pentagon planning came from a usually dependable ally of the military establishment, Georgia Democrat Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Nunn told fellow senators in March 1990 that there was a "threat blank" in the administration's proposed $295 billion defense budget and that the Pentagon's "basic assessment of the overall threat to our national security" was "rooted in the past." The world had changed and yet the "development of a new military strategy that responds to the changes in the threat has not yet occurred." Without that response, no dollars would be forthcoming.

Nunn's message was clear. Powell and Wolfowitz began filling in the blanks. Powell started promoting a

[1] *During the elder Bush's tenure as CIA director in the 1970s, Wolfowitz had served on a panel of defense experts known as "Team B," which concluded that U.S. intelligence was vastly underestimating the scale of the Soviet threat—an opinion he had yet to revise in 1990.*

Illustration by Ray Bartkus

Zen-like new rationale for his Base Force approach. With the Soviets rapidly becoming irrelevant, Powell argued, the United States could no longer assess its military needs on the basis of known threats. Instead, the Pentagon should focus on maintaining the ability to address a wide variety of new and unknown challenges. This shift from a "threat based" assessment of military requirements to a "capability based" assessment would become a key theme of the Plan. The United States would move from countering Soviet attempts at dominance to ensuring its own dominance. Again, this project would not be cheap.

Powell's argument, circular though it may have been, proved sufficient to hold off Congress. Winning support among his own colleagues, however, proved more difficult. Cheney remained deeply skeptical about the Soviets, and Wolfowitz was only slowly coming around. To account for future uncertainties, Wolfowitz recommended drawing down U.S. forces to roughly the levels proposed by Powell, but doing so at a much slower pace: seven years as opposed to the four Powell suggested. He also built in a "crisis response/reconstitution" clause that would allow for reversing the process if events in the Soviet Union, or elsewhere, turned ugly.

With these new elements in place, Cheney saw something that might work. By combining Powell's concepts with those of Wolfowitz, he could counter congressional criticism that his proposed defense budget was out of line with the new strategic reality, while leaving the door open for future force increases. In late June, Wolfowitz, Powell, and Cheney presented their plan to the president, and within a few weeks Bush was unveiling the new strategy.

Bush laid out the rationale for the Plan in a speech in Aspen, Colorado, on August 2, 1990. He explained that since the danger of global war had substantially receded, the principal threats to American security would emerge in unexpected quarters. To counter those threats, he said, the United States would increasingly base the size and structure of its forces on the need to respond to "regional contingencies" and maintain a peacetime military presence overseas. Meeting that need would require maintaining the capability to quickly deliver American forces to any "corner of the globe," and that would mean retaining many major weapons systems then under attack in Congress as overly costly and unnecessary, including the "Star Wars" missile-defense program. Despite those massive outlays, Bush insisted that the proposed restructuring would allow the United States to draw down its active forces by 25 percent in the years ahead, the same figure Powell had projected ten months earlier.

The Plan's debut was well timed. By a remarkable coincidence, Bush revealed it the very day Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait.

The Gulf War temporarily reduced the pressure to cut military spending. It also diverted attention from some of the Plan's less appealing aspects. In addition, it inspired what would become one of the Plan's key features: the use of "overwhelming force" to quickly defeat enemies, a concept since dubbed the Powell Doctrine.

Once the Iraqi threat was "contained," Wolfowitz returned to his obsession with the Soviets, planning various scenarios involving possible Soviet intervention in regional conflicts. The failure of the hard-liner coup against Gorbachev in August 1991, however, made it apparent that such planning might be unnecessary. Then, in late December, just as the Pentagon was preparing to put the Plan in place, the Soviet Union collapsed.

With the Soviet Union gone, the United States had a choice. It could capitalize on the euphoria of the moment by nurturing cooperative relations and developing multilateral structures to help guide the global realignment then taking place; or it could consolidate its power and pursue a strategy of unilateralism and global dominance. It chose the latter course.

In early 1992, as Powell and Cheney campaigned to win congressional support for their augmented Base Force plan, a new logic entered into their appeals. The United States, Powell told members of the House Armed Services Committee, required "sufficient power" to "deter any challenger from ever dreaming of challenging us on the world stage." To emphasize the point, he cast the United States in the role of street thug. "I want to be the bully on the block," he said, implanting in the mind of potential opponents that "there is no future in trying to challenge the armed forces of the United States."

As Powell and Cheney were making this new argument in their congressional rounds, Wolfowitz was busy expanding the concept and working to have it incorporated into U.S. policy. During the early months of 1992, Wolfowitz supervised the preparation of an internal Pentagon policy statement used to guide military officials in the preparation of their forces, budgets, and strategies. The classified document, known as the *Defense Planning Guidance*, depicted a world dominated by the United States, which would maintain its superpower status through a combination of positive guidance and overwhelming military might. The image was one of a heavily armed City on a Hill.

The *DPG* stated that the "first objective" of U.S. defense strategy was "to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival." Achieving this objective required that the United States "prevent any hostile power from dominating a region" of strategic significance. America's new mission would be to convince allies and enemies alike "that they need not aspire to a greater role or pursue a more aggressive posture to protect their legitimate interests."

Another new theme was the use of preemptive military force. The options, the *DPG* noted, ranged from taking preemptive military action to head off a nuclear, chemical, or biological attack to "punishing" or "threatening punishment of" aggressors "through a variety of means," including strikes against weapons-manufacturing facilities.

The *DPG* also envisioned maintaining a substantial U.S. nuclear arsenal while discouraging the development of nuclear programs in other

countries. It depicted a "U.S.-led system of collective security" that implicitly precluded the need for rearmament of any kind by countries such as Germany and Japan. And it called for the "early introduction" of a global missile-defense system that would presumably render all missile-launched weapons, including those of the United States, obsolete. (The United States would, of course, remain the world's dominant military power on the strength of its other weapons systems.)

The story, in short, was dominance by way of unilateral action and military superiority. While coalitions—such as the one formed during the Gulf War—held "considerable promise for promoting collective action," the draft *DPG* stated, the United States should expect future alliances to be "ad hoc assemblies, often not lasting beyond the crisis being confronted, and in many cases carrying only general agreement over the objectives to be accomplished." It was essential to create "the sense that the world order is ultimately backed by the U.S." and essential that America position itself "to act independently when collective action cannot be orchestrated" or in crisis situations requiring immediate action. "While the U.S. cannot become the world's 'policeman,'" the document said, "we will retain the preeminent responsibility for addressing selectively those wrongs which threaten not only our interests, but those of our allies or friends." Among the interests the draft indicated the United States would defend in this manner were "access to vital raw materials, primarily Persian Gulf oil, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, [and] threats to U.S. citizens from terrorism."

The *DPG* was leaked to the *New York Times* in March 1992. Critics on both the left and the right attacked it immediately. Then-presidential candidate Pat Buchanan portrayed it as giving a "blank check" to America's allies by suggesting the United States would "go to war to defend their interests." Bill Clinton's deputy campaign manager, George Stephanopoulos, characterized it as an attempt by Pentagon officials to "find an excuse for big defense budgets instead of downsizing." Delaware Senator Joseph Biden criticized the Plan's vision of a "Pax Americana, a global security system where threats to stability are suppressed or destroyed by U.S. military power." Even those who found the document's stated goals commendable feared that its chauvinistic tone could alienate many allies. Cheney responded by attempting to distance himself from the Plan. The Pentagon's spokesman dismissed the leaked document as a "low-level draft" and claimed that Cheney had not seen it. Yet a fifteen-page section opened by proclaiming that it constituted "definitive guidance from the Secretary of Defense."

Powell took a more forthright approach to dealing with the flap: he publicly embraced the *DPG*'s core concept. In a TV interview, he said he believed it was "just fine" that the United States reign as the world's dominant military power. "I don't think we should apologize for that," he said.

Despite bad reviews in the foreign press, Powell insisted that America's European allies were "not afraid" of U.S. military might because it was "power that could be trusted" and "will not be misused."

Mindful that the draft *DPG*'s overt expression of U.S. dominance might not fly, Powell in the same interview also trotted out a new rationale for the original Base Force plan. He argued that in a post-Soviet world, filled with new dangers, the United States needed the ability to fight on more than one front at a time. "One of the most destabilizing things we could do," he said, "is to cut our forces so much that if we're tied up in one area of the world ... and we are not seen to have the ability to influence another area of the world, we might invite just the sort of crisis we're trying to deter." This two-war strategy provided a possible answer to Nunn's "threat blank." One unknown enemy wasn't enough to justify lavish defense budgets, but two unknown enemies might do the trick.

Within a few weeks the Pentagon had come up with a more comprehensive response to the *DPG* furor. A revised version was leaked to the press that was significantly less strident in tone, though only slightly less strident in fact. While calling for the United States to prevent "any hostile power from dominating a region critical to our interests," the new draft stressed that America would act in concert with its allies—when possible. It also suggested the United Nations might take an expanded role in future political, economic, and security matters, a concept conspicuously absent from the original draft.

The controversy died down, and, with a presidential campaign under way, the Pentagon did nothing to stir it up again. Following Bush's defeat, however, the Plan reemerged. In January 1993, in his very last days in office, Cheney released a final version. The newly titled *Defense Strategy for the 1990s* retained the soft touch of the revised draft *DPG* as well as its darker themes. The goal remained to preclude "hostile competitors from challenging our critical interests" and preventing the rise of a new superpower. Although it expressed a "preference" for collective responses in meeting such challenges, it made clear that the United States would play the lead role in any alliance. Moreover, it noted that collective action would "not always be timely." Therefore, the United States needed to retain the ability to "act independently, if necessary." To do so would require that the United States maintain its massive military superiority. Others were not encouraged to follow suit. It was kinder, gentler dominance, but it was dominance all the same. And it was this thesis that Cheney and company nailed to the door on their way out.

The new administration tacitly rejected the heavy-handed, unilateral approach to U.S. primacy favored by Powell, Cheney, and Wolfowitz. Taking office in the relative calm of the early post–Cold War era, Clinton sought to maximize America's existing position of strength and promote its interests through economic diplomacy, multilateral institutions (dominated by the United States), greater international free trade, and the development of allied coalitions, including American-led collective military action. American policy, in short, shifted from global dominance to globalism.

Clinton also failed to prosecute military campaigns with sufficient vigor to satisfy the defense strategists of the previous administration. Wolfowitz found Clinton's Iraq policy especially infuriating. During the Gulf War, Wolfowitz harshly criticized the decision—endorsed by Powell and Cheney—to end the war once the U.N. mandate of driving Saddam's forces from Kuwait had been fulfilled, leaving the Iraqi dictator in office. He called on the Clinton Administration to finish the job by arming Iraqi opposition forces and sending U.S. ground troops to defend a base of operation for them in the southern region of the country. In a 1996 editorial, Wolfowitz raised the prospect of launching a preemptive attack against Iraq. "Should we sit idly by," he wrote, "with our passive containment policy and our inept covert operations, and wait until a tyrant possessing large quantities of weapons of mass destruction and sophisticated delivery systems strikes out at us?" Wolfowitz suggested it was "necessary" to "go beyond the containment strategy."

Wolfowitz's objections to Clinton's military tactics were not limited to Iraq. Wolfowitz had endorsed President Bush's decision in late 1992 to intervene in Somalia on a limited humanitarian basis. Clinton later expanded the mission into a broader peacekeeping effort, a move that ended in disaster. With perfect twenty-twenty hindsight, Wolfowitz decried Clinton's decision to send U.S. troops into combat "where there is no significant U.S. national interest." He took a similar stance on Clinton's ill-fated democracy-building effort in Haiti, chastising the president for engaging "American military prestige" on an issue "of little or no importance" to U.S. interests. Bosnia presented a more complicated mix of posturing and ideologies. While running for president, Clinton had scolded the Bush Administration for failing to take action to stem the flow of blood in the Balkans. Once in office, however, and chastened by their early misadventures in Somalia and Haiti, Clinton and his advisers struggled to articulate a coherent Bosnia policy. Wolfowitz complained in 1994 of the administration's failure to "develop an effective course of action." He personally advocated arming the Bosnian Muslims in their fight against the Serbs. Powell, on the other hand, publicly cautioned against intervention. In 1995 a U.S.-led NATO bombing campaign, combined with a Croat-Muslim ground offensive, forced the Serbs into negotiations, leading to the Dayton Peace Accords. In 1999, as Clinton rounded up support for joint U.S.-NATO action in Kosovo, Wolfowitz hectored the president for failing to act quickly enough.

After eight years of what Cheney et al. regarded as wrongheaded military adventures and pinprick retaliatory strikes, the Clinton Administration—mercifully, in their view—came to an end. With the ascension of George W. Bush to the presidency, the authors of the Plan returned to government, ready to pick up where they had left off. Cheney, of course, became vice president, Powell became secretary of state, and Wolfowitz moved

into the number-two slot at the Pentagon, as Donald Rumsfeld's deputy. Other contributors also returned: Two prominent members of the Wolfowitz team that crafted the original *DPG* took up posts on Cheney's staff. I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, who served as Wolfowitz's deputy during Bush I, became the vice president's chief of staff and national security adviser. And Eric Edelman, an assistant deputy undersecretary of defense in the first Bush Administration, became a top foreign policy adviser to Cheney.[2]

Cheney and company had not changed their minds during the Clinton interlude about the correct course for U.S. policy, but they did not initially *appear* bent on resurrecting the Plan. Rather than present a unified vision of foreign policy to the world, in the early going the administration focused on promoting a series of seemingly unrelated initiatives. Notable among these were missile defense and space-based weaponry, long-standing conservative causes. In addition, a distinct tone of unilateralism emerged as the new administration announced its intent to abandon the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia in order to pursue missile defense; its opposition to U.S. ratification of an international nuclear-test-ban pact; and its refusal to become a party to an International Criminal Court. It also raised the prospect of ending the self-imposed U.S. moratorium on nuclear testing initiated by the President's father during the 1992 presidential campaign. Moreover, the administration adopted a much tougher diplomatic posture, as evidenced, most notably, by a distinct hardening of relations with both China and North Korea. While none of this was inconsistent with the concept of U.S. dominance, these early actions did not, at the time, seem to add up to a coherent strategy.

It was only after September 11 that the Plan emerged in full. Within days of the attacks, Wolfowitz and Libby began calling for unilateral military action against Iraq, on the shaky premise that Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network could not have pulled off the assaults without Saddam Hussein's assistance. At the time, Bush rejected such appeals, but Wolfowitz kept pushing and the President soon came around. In his State of the Union address in January, Bush labeled Iraq, Iran, and North Korea an "axis of evil," and warned that he would "not wait on events" to prevent them from using weapons of mass destruction against the United States. He reiterated his commitment to preemption in his West Point speech in June. "If we wait for threats to fully materialize we will have waited too long," he said. "We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans and confront the worst threats before they emerge." Although it was less noted, Bush in that same speech also reintroduced the Plan's central theme. He declared that the United States would prevent the emergence of a rival power by maintaining "military strengths beyond challenge." With that, the President effectively adopted a strategy his father's administration had developed ten years earlier to ensure that the United States would remain the world's preeminent power. While the headlines screamed "preemption," no one noticed the declaration of the dominance strategy.

In case there was any doubt about the administration's intentions, the Pentagon's new *DPG* lays them out. Signed by Wolfowitz's new boss, Donald Rumsfeld, in May and leaked to the *Los Angeles Times* in July, it contains all the key elements of the original Plan and adds several complementary features. The preemptive strikes envisioned in the original draft *DPG* are now "unwarned attacks." The old Powell-Cheney notion of military "forward presence" is now "forward deterrence." The use of overwhelming force to defeat an enemy called for in the Powell Doctrine is now labeled an "effects based" approach.

[2] *Zalmay Khalilzad, who served as assistant deputy undersecretary of defense during the first Bush Administration, wrote a book during the Clinton interval expressing the core concepts of the original* DPG. *Khalilzad argued that the United States should "preclude the rise of another global rival for the indefinite future," and "be willing to use force if necessary for the purpose." Khalilzad joined the inner circle of the current administration as a special assistant to the president and today serves as a U.S. special envoy to Afghanistan.*

Some of the names have stayed the same. Missile defense is back, stronger than ever, and the call goes up again for a shift from a "threat based" structure to a "capabilities based" approach. The new *DPG* also emphasizes the need to replace the so-called Cold War strategy of preparing to fight two major conflicts simultaneously with what the *Los Angeles Times* refers to as "a more complex approach aimed at dominating air and space on several fronts." This, despite the fact that Powell had originally conceived—and the first Bush Administration had adopted—the two-war strategy as a means of filling the "threat blank" left by the *end* of the Cold War.

Rumsfeld's version adds a few new ideas, most impressively the concept of preemptive strikes with nuclear weapons. These would be earth-penetrating nuclear weapons used for attacking "hardened and deeply buried targets," such as command-and-control bunkers, missile silos, and heavily fortified underground facilities used to build and store weapons of mass destruction. The concept emerged earlier this year when the administration's *Nuclear Posture Review* leaked out. At the time, arms-control experts warned that adopting the *NPR*'s recommendations would undercut existing arms-control treaties, do serious harm to nonproliferation efforts, set off new rounds of testing, and dramatically increase the prospects of nuclear weapons being used in combat. Despite these concerns, the administration appears intent on developing the weapons. In a final flourish, the *DPG* also directs the military to develop cyber-, laser-, and electronic-warfare capabilities to ensure U.S. dominion over the heavens.

Rumsfeld spelled out these strategies in *Foreign Affairs* earlier this year, and it is there that he articulated the remaining elements of the Plan: unilateralism and global dominance. Like the revised *DPG* of 1992, Rumsfeld feigns interest in collective action but ultimately rejects it as impractical. "Wars can benefit from coalitions," he writes, "but they should not be fought by committee." And coalitions, he adds, "must not determine the mission." The implication is the United States will determine the missions and lead the fights. Finally, Rumsfeld expresses the key concept of the Plan: preventing the emergence of rival powers. Like the original draft *DPG* of 1992, he states that America's goal is to develop and maintain the military strength necessary to "dissuade" rivals or adversaries from "competing." With no challengers, and a proposed defense budget of $379 billion for next year, the United States would reign over all it surveys.

Reaction to the latest edition of the Plan has, thus far, focused on preemption. Commentators parrot the administration's line, portraying the concept of preemptory strikes as a "new" strategy aimed at combating terrorism. In an op-ed piece for the *Washington Post* following Bush's West Point address, former Clinton adviser William Galston described preemption as part of a "brand-new security doctrine," and warned of possible negative diplomatic consequences. Others found the concept more appealing. Loren Thompson of the conservative Lexington Institute hailed the "Bush Doctrine" as "a necessary response to the new dangers that America faces" and declared it "the biggest shift in strategic thinking in two generations." *Wall Street Journal* editor Robert Bartley echoed that sentiment, writing that "no talk of this ilk has been heard from American leaders since John Foster Dulles talked of rolling back the Iron Curtain."

Preemption, of course, is just part of the Plan, and the Plan is hardly new. It is a warmed-over version of the strategy Cheney and his coauthors rolled out in 1992 as the answer to the end of the Cold War. Then the goal was global dominance, and it met with bad reviews. Now it is the answer to terrorism. The emphasis is on preemption, and the reviews are generally enthusiastic. Through all of this, the dominance motif remains, though largely undetected.

This country once rejected "unwarned" attacks such as Pearl Harbor as barbarous and unworthy of a civilized nation. Today many cheer the prospect of conducting sneak attacks—potentially with nuclear

weapons—on piddling powers run by tin-pot despots.

We also once denounced those who tried to rule the world. Our primary objection (at least officially) to the Soviet Union was its quest for global domination. Through the successful employment of the tools of containment, deterrence, collective security, and diplomacy—the very methods we now reject—we rid ourselves and the world of the Evil Empire. Having done so, we now pursue the very thing for which we opposed it. And now that the Soviet Union is gone, there appears to be no one left to stop us.

Perhaps, however, there is. The Bush Administration and its loyal opposition seem not to grasp that the quests for dominance generate backlash. Those threatened with preemption may themselves launch preemptory strikes. And even those who are successfully "preempted" or dominated may object and find means to strike back. Pursuing such strategies may, paradoxically, result in greater factionalism and rivalry, precisely the things we seek to end.

Not all Americans share Colin Powell's desire to be "the bully on the block." In fact, some believe that by following a different path the United States has an opportunity to establish a more lasting security environment. As Dartmouth professors Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth wrote recently in *Foreign Affairs*, "Unipolarity makes it possible to be the global bully—but it also offers the United States the luxury of being able to look beyond its immediate needs to its own, and the world's, long-term interests. . . . Magnanimity and restraint in the face of temptation are tenets of successful statecraft that have proved their worth." Perhaps, in short, we can achieve our desired ends by means other than global domination. ■

Answers to the September Quiz, "Southern Exposure"

1 Spaniards; **2** Chewing coca leaves; **3** Trade; **4** The ax; **5** Incan; **6** Liberty; **7** Samuel Johnson; **8** Juan Perón; **9** United Fruit Company; **10** Peru; **11** Rubber; **12** Laborers; **13** Yellow fever; **14** Simón Bolívar.