VIRTUAL DIPLOMACY [1]: RETHINKING FOREIGN POLICY PRACTICE IN THE INFORMATION AGE

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> *Authors' note: The following article was written in August 2001, a month before the September 11 terrorist attacks against the United States. It, therefore, does not take into account many of the subsequent enhancements of the U.S. security apparatus. It does, however, identify prescient thinking about what comprises security in an increasingly interconnected world, thinking that ultimately informed much of the current administration's policies.*

1. Introduction

In the first week of the presidency of George W. Bush, former Defense Secretary and National Security Advisor Frank Carlucci visited newly appointed Secretary of State Colin Powell, urging him to implement cutting-edge information technology and modern management practices to renew a department, in Carlucci's words, "in an advanced state of disrepair." Days later, a commission led by two former senators, Democrat Gary Hart and Republican Warren Rudman, offered a sweeping blueprint for transforming the national security structure of the United States, warning that "without significant reforms, American power and influence cannot be sustained." These two initiatives to revive what has been viewed as a crippling diplomatic bureaucracy come at the heels of a dozen studies, criticizing the Department of State for its staunch adherence to obsolescence—centralized decision-making, obsessive secrecy and outdated technology. This view was also evident in a letter signed by about 1,500 State Department employees, affirming that the department is unfit to meet the emerging foreign affairs challenges and calling it "the weak link in the national security chain." At the core of the recent string of criticisms lies a paradigm shift in the diplomatic environment, influenced by the advent of revolutionary information and communications technologies. This shift has rendered irrelevant the

traditional diplomacy still practiced at the department and its diplomatic missions abroad. The purpose of this article is to review some of the recommendations of experts for restructuring foreign affairs practices by the United States in light of the trends shaping the diplomatic environment.

First, however, consider the practical enormity of the reinvention, reform, and reengineering task for the United States in terms of its Department of State alone. At the turn of the century, the United States had relations with some 180 nations, maintaining about 260 posts, including embassies, consulates and other offices— some employing less than a dozen people, others more than 2,000. About 9,000 citizens and some 30,000 foreign nationals work in those posts, and over 30 government agencies are represented abroad. At headquarters, the secretary of state oversees five undersecretaries who together manage 27 regional, functional and administrative bureaus and offices, employing nearly 6,500 people. While the costs involved in the modernization of the conduct of diplomacy may be high, inattention to the vociferous calls for change would prove an even riskier gamble in the long run.

2.   The Changing International Environment

Traditional diplomacy, according to Canadian diplomat Gordon Smith, is the art of advancing national interests by the practice of persuasion.[2] Today however not only the context but also the content of diplomacy has radically altered. The context of persuasion has expanded to include anyone anywhere connected to and affected by any of the information and communications media. And, even more disorienting, the realm of national interests now includes at the very least global economics, and, increasingly, international migration, environmental crises, terrorism, drug trafficking, weapons proliferation, and cyber harassment, all of which pose global threats but are suffered immediately and most profoundly at the local level. Therefore diplomacy, the practice of foreign affairs, is a subset of domestic policy, which is itself shaped by the expanded agenda of national security.

Twenty years ago, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye labeled this new globalized epoch "complex interdependence."[3] While acknowledging their prescience, they nevertheless point out in their subsequent 1998 *Foreign Affairs* article on the subject that information and communications technologies have not entirely transformed world politics to complex interdependence. Why? Because information does not flow in a vacuum but in an already occupied political space; and because, outside the democratic zone of peace, the world of states is not a world of complex interdependence.[4] Collective affirmations of primary identities have recently swelled around religion, nation, ethnicity, locality, all of which tend to break up societies based on negotiated institutions in favor of value-founded communities. Nevertheless, most experts recognize that complex interdependence has become increasingly costly

for states to ignore. Prudent states play by the rules required by both old patterns and new constructs. This cannot be stressed strongly enough.

We are all too familiar with the old patterns, but what characterizes the new construct? According to James Rosenau, we are undergoing a decentralized fusion of global and local interests, which he calls "*fragmegration,*" a concept that juxtaposes the processes of fragmentation and integration occurring within and among organizations, communities, countries, and transnational systems such that it is virtually impossible not to treat them as interactive and causally linked." With fragmegration comes the dispersion of authority away from states and the growing role of decentralized governments, nongovernmental organizations, media, social movements and other transnational non-state networks as primary international actors.[5] What seems most to characterize this transition period and perhaps the emerging paradigm is the profusion of asymmetrical relationships between state and non-state actors, including activities sponsored or carried out by such diverse supra-individuals as software mogul Bill Gates, global financier George Soros, globetrotting diplomat and former US President Jimmy Carter, media emperor Ted Turner, and terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden.

The new contenders for international power are information mobilizers that coalesce around issues and augur ill or well depending on one's point of reference in the global network. These contenders are most notably represented by the already internationally powerful multinational corporations and loose communities and coalitions of non-governmental and international organizations, citizens and groups displaying a variety of allegiances, including expatriates and diasporas. Although they do not have the official power to recognize or withhold recognition from states, with leverage bolstered—because extended and accelerated—by an able use of networks, they often influence states to do so. Loose coalitions, in particular, represent the international public at its most mobilized and articulate. One need only think of the landmine ban campaign, which effectively established a global policy on the basis of pressure from a network of diverse groups scattered around the world. The lack of group or community homogeneity and hierarchy among these global, popular campaigns confounds states and foreign ministries. All too often, they scramble to project an authoritative position—via competition or cooperation, or both—in this fluid international landscape.

Few thinkers have understood and written about the dialectic that informs the political transition from territory-based power to network-based power as well as French diplomat and political philosopher Jean-Marie Guéhenno. In *The End of the Nation-State* he declares, "Territorial sovereignty is no longer sacrosanct." "We have lived in the two-dimensional world of territorial power," Guéhenno asserts, "and we are entering what one could call the three-dimensional world of network power." The

integrity, power, and security of the nation-state are challenged by multinationals from above and by ever-shifting coalitions of networked interest groups from below. The ability of nation-states to tax and to require duties associated with citizenship—the basis of a state's power, its treasure and its armies—is seriously threatened by opportunities afforded by information and communications technologies. On the one hand, responding to economic opportunities, multinationals locate themselves in tax friendly environments regardless of "national interest." On the other hand, individuals live conveniently or by force of economics or politics as expatriates and diasporas all over the world. Both exert political pressure not only on their native countries but also on other nation-states as well.[6]

The reigning political requirement within this shifted international paradigm is transparent and accountable governance. Transparency necessarily guides not only official relationships but also the relationships between public and private sectors and among individuals. Because each state's public has expanded far beyond the state's geographical borders and its collective values, each state, by way of accessing its citizens far and wide, renders itself accountable to all publics, not least of which is the indefinite but potent international community. The appearance of official transparency is required and at the same time states have realized that the playing field has so flattened that they must pitch their case before all of these publics, including even such individuals—the same as any other viewing constituency—like Iraqi President Sadaam Hussein or North Korean leader Kim Jung Il, who represent nations considered as sponsors of international terrorism by the United States. Thus, the potency of regimes stands or falls according to public opinion polls derived from what Guéhenno calls the mediazation of a wired world.

Although fragmegration threatens nation-states' conventional hold on power, savvy states should recognize these new conditions as an opportunity to implement revolutionary approaches to global affairs strategies and management. To date however, nation-states, confused by their loss of authoritative hold on conventional power, do not yet recognize that power as such is not devolving to other institutions but to the means to coalesce in order to pursue common interests. What states lose in control, they could regain in influence.

Thinking differently about the nature of power is perplexing to say the least. The Information Age-fostered "hard power" (or coercion) versus "soft power" (or persuasion) distinction has turned conventional theories about national security inside out. Popular persuasion in lieu of hardball coercion is neither an easy sell to nation-states (beyond a necessary overlay for optics in the toolbox of national defense) nor once grasped, learned and implemented with aplomb. According to this perspective, today, having the means to promulgate the most persuasive information to the most people the most rapidly turns out to be as important, if not more important, than a

first-strike weapon system. Above all, access, information, and connectivity are essential components of wielding this new power to influence. This particular power is evanescent, associated with recognizing and pursuing a common objective, then re-forming with another collective or group in order to actualize another objective. Not so easy for a state to develop and manage a deliberately fluid and inconstant set of policies to govern theaters of operation from the local to the global.

Rosenau describes this coalescing phenomena as "spheres of authority" (SOA). He argues that SOAs have begun to supercede nation-states in terms of mobilizing and wielding effectual power.[7] Guéhenno portrays this phenomenon as the principal dynamic of a new "imperialism," which he likens to Rome's loose global empire. Instead of an authentic political space, collective solidarities will form and dissolve based on dominant perceptions and resulting interests—like multiple organisms, they morph protean-like according to conditions and needs. "It is a field of forces, of imbalances, in which the will to increase the number of one's connections is counterbalanced by the fear of losing control of the networks that have already been set up … a gigantic stock exchange of information that never closes," writes Guéhenno. "The more information there is," he continues, "the more imbalances there are: as in a great meteorological system, a wind that creates a depression here, causes high pressure elsewhere."[8]

In a similar vein, Information Age analysts John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt observe that diplomats will have to realize that a new realm is emerging—the noosphere, a global "realm of the mind"—that may have a profound effect on statecraft. Second, they say that the information age will continue to undermine the conditions for classic diplomacy based on realpolitik and hard power and will instead favor the emergence of a new diplomacy based on what they call noopolitik (nu-oh-poh-li-teek) and its preference for soft power. Noopolitik, they write, is an approach to diplomacy and strategy for the information age that emphasizes the shaping and sharing of ideas, values, norms, laws, and ethics through persuasion. "Both state and non-state actors may be guided by noopolitik; rather than being state-centric," argue Arquilla and Ronfeldt, "its strength may well stem from enabling state and non-state actors to work conjointly." "The driving motivation of noopolitik cannot be national interest defined in statist terms," they opine. "Realpolitik pits one state against another," conclude Arquilla and Ronfeldt, "but noopolitik encourages states to cooperate in coalitions and other mutual frameworks."[9]

Noopolitik is an approach to statecraft that can be undertaken as much by non-state as by state actors. Noopolitik makes sense in today's networked world because knowledge is the coin of the realm, permeating the multiple levels of the local to global infrastructure in ways that classic realpolitik cannot rival. That said, governments are currently structured to conceive, plan, and operate according to

realpolitik within an exclusive nation-state construct. How will they, particularly the United States, make the transition between realpolitik and noopolitik policymaking and practice?

3.   Peering into the Crystal Ball: Threats and Conflicts Up to 2015

If we accept the findings of intelligence analysts and independent experts, globalization and the quality of governance are shaping the diplomatic environment. Thus, transnational issues and an increasingly interconnected world require governments to develop greater communication and collaboration between their national security and domestic policies, according to this recent National Intelligence Council report entitled *Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future with Nongovernment Experts*. Furthermore, cooperation will be essential to identifying threats and to developing interdisciplinary responses to counter them.[10]

Information and communications technologies have profoundly contributed to transform the international system and not all to the good. These technologies will continue to drive the global economy, to empower non-state actors, as well, the report warns, as to facilitate illegal and destabilizing activities by rogue states, organizations and individuals. Moreover, the networked global economy distributes information, ideas, values, capital, goods and services to people unevenly. Its reach and benefits are not available to groups, countries and regions already facing economic stagnation, political instability and cultural alienation. Further distancing from the values and conventions that in effect hard-wire the world's liberal democracies exaggerates the destabilizing conditions and violent expressions of political, ethnic, and religious extremism. Even advanced nations however will be at risk of succumbing to financial volatility and enduring a widening economic gap as they become increasingly interdependent. As a result, the United States and other developed nations will be drawn to focus on "old-world" problems at the same time as focusing on managing the "new-world" challenges.[11]

3.1   What Kinds of Threats and Conflicts Loom Ahead?

War among northern developed countries is unlikely in the future. Far more probable are frequent small-scale internal upheavals to less frequent regional interstate wars among southern developing countries. For instance, regional rivalries and antagonisms such as India-Pakistan and the Middle East will demand the attention of the international community. Internal conflicts tied to religious, ethnic, economic or political identities will remain at current levels or possibly increase. Illegal and destabilizing activities by disaffected nation-states, terrorists, arms dealers, drug traffickers and organized criminals can escalate, and the lethality of these conflicts can increase, given the availability of weapons of mass destruction, longer-range

missile delivery systems and other technologies diffused or transferred unhampered across porous geopolitical borders and into their hands. [12]

Occupied with domestic issues that easily take precedence over messy international crises, which offer costly no-win engagements, developed nations will minimize their direct involvement by delegating to the United Nations and regional organizations the management of such conflicts. Growing transnational problems will require international or multilateral cooperation to handle a range of issues from economic volatility, migration, scarce resources, humanitarian, refugee and environmental crises, terrorism, all the way to cyber threats. When the international response fails, the United States will be called to broker solutions, negotiating with a wide array of state and non-state actors.[13]

The report concludes that although nation-states will continue to have a dominant role in the international system, governments will have diminished control over flows of information, diseases, migrants, weapons and financial transactions across their borders. The fate of nation-states will increasingly be linked to adaptation to the emerging global trends and to the quality of governance provided to citizens. Effective governance, in turn, will depend on the ability and agility of nation-states to engage in partnerships with non-state actors to exploit the opportunities and manage the vulnerabilities and threats in the globalized diplomatic environment.[14]

4.   Institutionalizing Change: The Current State of US Diplomacy and Beyond

The two most recent calls for reform among the US foreign policy agencies, Carlucci's State Department reform proposal [15] and the *US Commission on National Security/21st Century Report*,[16] saw the light of day at an opportune time, coinciding with newly inaugurated President George W. Bush's appointment of new secretaries of state, defense, and treasury, and a national security advisor. Each proposal is the latest in a recent surge of attention to the lack of alignment between the prevailing international conditions and these foreign affair agencies' Cold War mission, practices and tools. Each proposal builds on the findings of preceding reports; accordingly, the views and recommendations made in the two pioneering reports, *Reinventing Diplomacy in the Information Age*, published by Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) [17] and *Equipped for the Future: Managing U.S. Foreign Affairs in the 21st Century*, funded by the Henry L. Stimson Center,[18] both in October 1998, are adopted, adapted, and extended in the Carlucci and national security commission 2001 reports.

Reinventing Diplomacy is the product of a blue-ribbon panel under the able direction of a former administrator of the now-defunct United States Information Agency, Barry Fulton. The panel's report recommending drastic reforms in the culture,

management, priorities, and information and communications technologies at the State Department has clearly influenced the Carlucci report. *Reinventing Diplomacy* offers six strategies to turn around the antiquated practices of the foreign affairs department. It calls for an end to the culture of secrecy and exclusivity that shrouds diplomatic practice, by placing greater emphasis on public awareness and opinion and on broader participation and networking, while balancing the requirements of security and openness. The second and third strategies involve reforms of management and human resources practices—replacing the hierarchical structure with a network management model, and overhauling workforce policies. These changes require a concomitant information technology strategy. The last two proposed strategies define the strategic priorities of diplomacy. Namely, the report emphatically recommends engaging publics at home and abroad and promoting US policies and values, as well as expanding global markets and supporting US businesses in activities abroad, as ways of advancing the national interests of the United States in a globalized environment.[19]

In a complimentary mode, the Stimson Center's *Equipped for the Future: Managing US Foreign Affairs in the 21st Century* makes a vigorous appeal for international engagement and a corresponding State Department reform. If "America is to be engaged in the world as it must," the report explains, "then the real questions become how it must be engaged, and what structures and institutions will most efficiently and effectively allow the nation to achieve its goals." At one point, it calls for an expanded and more inclusive promotion of national interests abroad, including tapping into, engaging with, and supporting the myriad individuals and groups conducting international relations—business people, governors and mayors, sports and entertainment figures, charitable and humanitarian organizations. It concludes with a sobering admonition to Congress about providing stable and adequate levels of funding: "Diplomacy on the cheap," the report warns, "is simply failed diplomacy," adding that "it costs money to maintain peace—that is, knowing how, when, and with whom to make the person-to-person contacts to persuade, cajole, and influence decisions in the direction of peace." Especially noteworthy in terms of the ultimate influence these two reports had on the current administration was the participation on the Stimson Center panel of Frank Carlucci, Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell—the latter two, the new Bush administration's national security adviser and secretary of state, respectively.[20]

The report of the US Commission on *National Security/21st Century* attempts to meet the profound challenges facing conventional notions about national security implicit in the two earlier analyses. National interests and national security are the counterpoint of the nation-state's foreign policy agenda, which is itself a subset of domestic policy as that policy responds to the reality of our complex global

interdependence. In other words, all government agencies in some way conduct foreign affairs and are thus foreign affairs agencies. In the commission report preface, Gen. Charles Boyd, executive director of the commission, underlines the gravity of the stakes at risk and the boldness required to meet the challenge, as he describes the commission's mission:

> "[T]hinking out a quarter century, not just to the next election or to the next federal budget cycle. … searching out how government *should* work, undeterred by the institutional inertia that today determines how it *does* work … conceiving national security not as narrowly defined, but as it ought to be defined to include economics, technology, and education for a new age in which novel opportunities and challenges coexist uncertainly with familiar ones."[21]

The commission, a 14-member expert body, was charged to take a broad view of national security during a three-year, phased process. Convened in 1997, it is the first commission to conduct an overall review of national security strategy since 1947. It sought to reverse what it perceived as the loss of global influence and critical leadership by the United States. Pointing out that "dramatic changes in the world since the end of the Cold War of the last half-century have not been accompanied by any major institutional changes in the Executive Branch," it deplores the lack of a comprehensive national security strategy to guide policymaking and resource allocation. The report decries several interrelated trends—the policymaking role that the National Security Council has gradually assumed, the continued predominance of military concerns driving the intelligence community in the post-Cold War period, the growth in size and activities and failure to privatize many support activities of the Department of Defense. It is time, the commission emphasizes, for an overarching strategy to drive the development and implementation of national security policy under the leadership of the president and in accordance to a national security budget, "focused on the nation's most critical strategic goals."[22]

That "new age" according to the commissioners requires that multilateral cooperation govern policy formulation and implementation. Recognizing the United States has a special international role because of its power, wealth, and interests, the commissioners point to the cultural and political values that promote political pluralism, freedom of thought and speech, and individual liberty that make the United States first among equals. They hastily add however that

> "as the prime keeper of the international security commons, [the United States] must speak and act in ways that lead others, by dint of their own interests, to ally with American goals. … If it is too arrogant and self possessed," affirm the commissioners, "American behavior will invariably stimulate the rise of opposing coalitions … Tone matters."[23]

In other words, noopolitik and soft power are the means by which global stability, thus national interests, is secured and national security thereby maintained.

To date, this report is the most comprehensive and far-reaching, sounding themes reminiscent of Rosenau's fragmegration and Guéhenno's three-dimensional world of network power, and proposing overarching objectives for US foreign and national security policy. While maintaining "homeland defense," the commission advises, the US government should ensure "social cohesion, economic competitiveness, technological ingenuity, and military strength." It should also seek the integration of the key major powers, particularly China, Russia and India, into the mainstream of world politics, as well as promote, along with others, the networked global economy and contribute to the effectiveness of international institutions and international law. Alliances and other cooperative mechanisms must be adapted to partners who are interested in affirming their autonomy and responsibility. Ultimately, the commissioners assure us, the United States will be best served by supporting international efforts designed to tame the disintegrative forces at work everywhere.[24]

Two particular areas illustrate the commission's understanding of what is risked if sufficient attention is not paid to current global changes. First, emphasis of "homeland defense" strategies could appear curious in the context of a serious appreciation for the effects of globalization except that physical borders and cyber borders have become more, not less, critical in protecting the infrastructures that allow the global economy to flourish. As important as the geographical integrity of the homeland is, cyber integrity links us with the rest of the globe. The geographical and the cyber entities are today inseparable. Community is lived both physically and virtually, horizontally and vertically. We are irretrievably *fragmegrated*.

The second area that receives emphasis is national education, which the commissioners go so far as to characterize as in a state of crisis. Such emphasis is reminiscent of President John F. Kennedy's concern for education as a national security issue, charging his generation to prepare to put a man on the moon. Of course, his injunction came during the hottest period of the Cold War and at time when space exploration had become a major area of contest, commonly known as the space race. The Soviet Union had launched the world's first artificial satellite in 1957, revealing a technological gap that provided the impetus for increased funding not only for aerospace endeavors, but more broadly, for technical and scientific education. This commission's call to arms is no less urgent.

National homeland defense and science education enhancement are two recommendations, which, if not understood within the context of the commissioners' overall thinking, could seem tired, even retrospective. In fact, they are the opposite and need serious, immediate attention by all US citizens, not just the government.

The commission's other recommendations single out specific governmental branches as needing top to bottom reform to reengineer themselves to plan and react more coherently, efficiently, and effectively. To that end, the commission's last recommendation reminds us of the nearly forgotten, but critical role Congress plays in foreign policy development and implementation. Here the commission recommends a full review of the role of Congress in national security and foreign policy, with the objective of streamlining the budgetary process and oversight responsibilities and improving continued consultation and coordination required between the executive and legislative branches of government. This recommendation dovetails with the Carlucci report, which puts as much emphasis on congressional responsibility in guiding the State Department's reform as it does on the reform it calls for at State.

Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations and CSIS, Carlucci's Independent Task Force on State Department Reform inextricably ties the future successful retooling of State to Congress' oversight, making both accountable to each other and to US citizens. Carlucci's "resources for reform" plan has reportedly gathered support from Powell and members of Congress, leading to, if not optimism then, a degree of guarded hope for change. According to this plan, substantial resources will be necessary for reform inasmuch as reform will be necessary to obtain resources from Congress. It is an exchange arrangement whereby the State Department would receive the considerable funds to upgrade computers, telecommunications and security in exchange for streamlining the department's management, rebuilding its credibility as the center of foreign policy-making and implementation, and improving coordination with Congress.

The report of the task force led by Carlucci recognizes that current interagency coordination for policy development and implementation is ineffective. Additionally, bifurcation of policy-making and budget management, a culture of secrecy, low morale, inattention to staff recruitment and development, obsolete information and communications infrastructure, dilapidated and insecure facilities, and the diminished authority of ambassadors to oversee resources and staffs of many agencies housed in missions abroad plague the department. Persuading both sides of the exchange relationship would be a Herculean task even for a secretary of state of Powell's prestige and admitted interest in information and communications technologies.

Powell is said to be an avid user of the Internet and believer in the power of information and communications technologies to transform individuals, organizations and strategies through the exchange of ideas.

> "As a member of the Board of Directors of one of these transforming companies,
> America Online, I had a unique vantage point in which to watch the world start

to transform itself," he testified to Congress. "America Online and its various services have over 100 million people connected electronically," Powell added, "[t]hey can Instant Message; they can e-mail; they can trade photos, papers, ideas, dreams, capital, likes and dislikes, all done without customs posts, visas, passports, tariffs, guard towers or any other way for governments to interfere."[25]

What is needed, exhorts the Carlucci report, is a presidential directive on foreign policy reform to emphasize that such reform is a top national security priority: "No government bureaucracy is in greater need of reform than the Department of State." Other findings call for issuing guidance to reaffirm the role of the secretary of state as the principal adviser to the president on US foreign policy and as the director of a department responsible for foreign policy-making and implementation; reinforce the ambassador's coordinating authority in their missions abroad; and reinstate the national security advisor as the principal coordinator who oversees and integrates the various elements of a national security policy and its budget.[26]

These reports necessarily involve more than the Department of State as their foci in their discussion of needed reform in the US foreign policymaking institutions. These include the US Congress, National Security Council, and US Agency for International Development. So, too, the Department of Defense, and the implications of its own internal reviews, merits a fuller discussion of its role as a foreign policy implementer. That discussion, however, is beyond the scope of this paper.

5. Seizing Foreign Affairs Reforms: What, When, and How Much?

Since the inauguration of President George W. Bush, actions taken by the White House and debates in Congress suggest that the time for foreign affairs reform has finally arrived. The fate of its depth, extent and ultimate impact remains in the hands of the leading national security decision-makers and implementers. Presently, the reorganization of the National Security Council and the willingness of members of Congress to invest in the modernization of the State Department reflect an acknowledgement of the need to reorganize, driven mostly by perceptions of threats and conflicts in the global environment. But, why would reform work now? In congressional testimony, Carlucci optimistically summed it up: "You've got the right leadership. You've got the right Congress. It's the right time."[27]

Less than a month after taking office, on February 13, 2001, Bush issued his first National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD-1) on the subject of the organization of the National Security Council (NSC), defining national security as "the defense of the United States of America, protection of [the country's] constitutional system of government, and the advancement of United States interests around the globe."[28] It reaffirmed the advisory role of the NSC and its focus on "the integration of domestic,

foreign, and military policies relating to national security," according to the National Security Act of 1947, as amended.

The recent structural modifications to the NSC, also spelled out in NSPD-1 reflect, as in past presidential administrations, management styles, personal relationships and, in this discussion, more importantly, changing requirements. The new NSC has been described as a leaner and less visible body focused on both "geopolitics" and "geoeconomics," or "old world" and "new world" issues, under the leadership of Condoleezza Rice. Interestingly, today's NSC is reminiscent of that of President George H. Bush, who reorganized the body to include a Principals Committee, Deputies Committee, and eight Policy Coordinating Committees (PCCs). The current Bush administration has adopted a similar structure but instead of eight PCCs, the NSC encompasses six regional PCCs and eleven functional PCCs. The regional ones are: Europe and Eurasia, Western Hemisphere, East Asia, South Asia, Near East and North Africa, and Africa. The functional PCCs focus on democracy, human rights, and international operations; international development and humanitarian assistance; global environment; international finance; transnational economic issues; counterterrorism and national preparedness; defense strategy, force structure and planning; arms control; proliferation, counterproliferation and homeland defense; intelligence and counterintelligence; records access and information security. As a result, the system of Interagency Working Groups adopted under the Clinton administration was abolished by NSPD-1, transferring the oversight of the ongoing interagency activities to relevant regional or functional PCCs. Also, NSPD-1 upholds an expanded attendance at NSC meetings as established under the Clinton administration. Thus, the NSC meetings include the secretary of the treasury, the president's assistant for economic policy (who is also head of the National Economic Council), the president's chief of staff and his national security adviser.

On the legislative side, the willingness of Congress to support reform of the State Department was tested during hearings on the Carlucci report earlier in 2001. Although Senate and House members expressed support for the report's recommendations, members questioned the level of the department's commitment, readiness, accountability and transparency expected by Congress. One House member pointed out that many of the reforms advocated by the Carlucci report do not require additional resources, citing the report's recommendations to right-size US missions abroad, to strengthen the authority of the ambassadors and to improve interagency coordination. The same member also noted that funding for embassy construction, security and information technology had already been provided over the last three years and criticized what he described as the department's resilience to change. "I suggest to you," the member continued, "that the most relevant question now before this committee is not, 'Have we provided enough money?' But rather, the question is,

'Is the State Department up to the task of responsibly managing the money it's been given and the mission given to it by the Congress?'" In the Senate, members affirmed the department's need for additional funding. Even so, their questions reflected a concern about issues dealing with human resources policy, internal management, roles and responsibilities among foreign affairs and defense entities, and interagency coordination.[29]

A month after these hearings, on March 12, 2001, the Bush administration proposed an almost 14 percent increase in funding for the State Department in fiscal year 2002 beginning in October 2001. The administration's budget proposal stresses two priorities, both of which affect diplomatic and consular operations—that is, hiring additional foreign and civil service officers and the acquisition of modern information technology. A third priority contained in the proposed budget is to bolster embassy security and provide for the construction of several new embassies. The proposed increase—from the current $6.6 billion to $7.51 billion—was regarded as a clear victory for Powell. Now, as the congressional member mentioned earlier inquired, "Is the State Department up to the task of responsibly managing the money … and the mission given to it by the Congress?"

6.   Conclusions

In the foreseeable future, although the United States will likely continue to be a hegemon with economic, technological, military and diplomatic influence unparalleled in the world, diplomacy will be even more complicated than it is today. The United States will be forced to respond to problems on both sides of the widening global gap, when the benefits of globalization will leave many behind. In this context, states and their foreign affairs ministries will encounter "old world" and "new world" threats and conflicts, and will need to practice both realpolitik and noopolitik. It is the only prudent course for them to take in this increasingly complex interdependent globe. If the current Bush administration is to succeed in the conduct of diplomacy, it must find a formula that refits the foreign affairs structure to the transforming diplomatic environment.

It is too early to tell if US foreign policy-makers have the sufficient political will to enact and implement the recommendations of blue-ribbon commissions integrated by prestigious scholars and talented practitioners. Despite worthy predecessors, neither the Carlucci nor the National Security Commission report however is ultimately sufficient in itself. The changes the world and the United States—as the principal global player—are undergoing are too fundamental and we are in the midst of them. Consequently, everything so far proposed is necessarily too little, too late. Yet we are saved by the reality that everyone is in the same situation. That said, attending to the recommendations made in the sweeping national security commission's report and

implementing the Carlucci report's practical action plan for the State Department cannot but help aid the foreign policy establishment's transition into the Information Age. Early indications from initial reform activities both at State and the National Security Council suggest that these reports have not fallen on deaf ears. There's promise of a serious effort afoot, finally.

DISCLAIMER: The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Institute of Peace, which does not advocate specific policies.

Notes:

[1]   At its broadest, the term "virtual diplomacy" signifies the altered diplomacy associated with the emergence of a networked globe. At its narrowest, "virtual diplomacy" comprises the decision-making coordination, communication and practice of foreign affairs as they are conducted with the aid of information and communications technologies in the wake of the changes brought about by the computer and telecommunications industries.

[2]   Gordon Smith, "Reinventing Diplomacy: A Virtual Necessity," *Virtual Diplomacy Series* (February 25, 1999). Available at http://www.usip.org/oc/vd/vdr/gsmithISA99.html, accessed July 30, 2001.

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