

## **Defining National Security in the 21st Century**

by Philip Lader, U.S. Ambassador to the Court of St. James's  
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More than 750,000 houses destroyed or badly damaged; debt of some 60 billion pounds sterling (in today's values) incurred; a third of Britain's gold reserves and its overseas assets seemingly evaporated.

Expectations of expanded health care, social security, and schooling opportunities. Five million people to demobilize and employ in civilian work; a new partnership with America to forge.

This was, lest we ever forget, the legacy of war which, in 1945, confronted the new Labour Party government which had won a landslide victory despite Churchill's heroic standing as a war leader.

We honor tonight the extraordinary "ordinary man" who led your nation to meet these challenges. The larger-than life Churchill and Roosevelt had knitted the wartime alliance between our forces and our peoples. Yet in a remarkable coincidence of history, the understated Clement Attlee and the new American President, Harry S. Truman, "the little man from Missouri," were to re-define national security for their era and to collaborate in shaping decades of international affairs.

What an honor it is for me to be the first American to submit an Attlee Lecture. A bit daunting, I must admit.

On occasions such as this, when I am somewhat nervous about the task at hand, I stop before leaving Winfield House and stand before a Gilbert Stuart portrait of the first person to hold my job, John Adams. I think what it was like for him presenting his credentials to George III and suggesting, "Why don't we simply let bygones be bygones." And my challenges are dwarfed by comparison.

Amongst us tonight are members of Lord Attlee's family and others who personally knew "Clem," if I may respectfully refer to him in this way. They, not I, should be at this podium.

Indeed, Lady Felicity Harwood, on this occasion in 1985, presented poignant accounts of her father's deep commitment to young people. But we all have favorite stories about this gifted, uncommon common man.

As an example to us all, "Clem" easily put aside his public responsibilities and worries when he was with his family. In September, 1939, Hitler had sent armored divisions and planes into Poland. Arthur Greenwood sought to consult with his leader, who was with his family in North Wales.

Here was a nation close to war, and the Leader of the Opposition was calmly reading to his children in a farmhouse with no telephone. His daughter Felicity knew only that the postman kept delivering telegrams. One of them was eaten by the family dog, Ting, before her father

saw it. The children rescued the scraps of paper from Ting's mouth and fit them together. Imagine their reaction when their father read, "War imminent. Arthur."

This incident recently took on new meaning for me, in the way that, in this dog-loving nation, pets can best keep us humble. When notified nearly three years ago that I would have the privilege of representing my country here, I was touched by the sadness of my younger daughter, then nine years old, in having to leave her school and friends. To compensate, I proposed that we would get her a dog as soon as we arrived in London.

But as you know, Winfield House was closed for renovations; and the lease for a temporary residence in Holland Park barred pets. You can picture Whitaker's disappointment and understand how her father's standing plummeted.

Two years later, we moved to Winfield House, and she promptly reminded me (as she had done almost weekly) about my promise. With the house's many antiques, my wife wisely suggested that we search for a pet which had narrowly failed the final examination for guide dogs.

Month after month, I phoned the Guide Dogs Association, only to be told that they had not yet found a lab which matched my psychological profile. (Do you realize how disconcerting that can be! Was it because I am an American? Or because of my profession's demands? Or was it my own eccentricities?)

Finally two weeks ago, the Executive Director rang. "Mr. Lader, if you are serious about a dog, we have found the one for you; but you must come for an interview tomorrow." I immediately cancelled my appointments. (Please do not repeat this story to the Foreign Office, lest certain officials think that America treats the FCO as subordinate to a yellow labrador.)

I pondered the questions I might ask: How often do you shed? What treats do you like? Tell me about your parents.

I arrived promptly for the interview, but learned that I was not to be asking the questions, but to be responding. And as the interview proceeded, I felt our prospects for qualifying grew dimmer and dimmer.

The interviewer knew only my name. "Philip, are you employed?" "Yes, I am."

"Who is your employer?" "The United States Government."

"Are you paid weekly?" "No, monthly."

"Does your salary adequately cover your expenses." "No."

"Do you own a home in London?" "No."

"Do you rent one." "Sort of."

"How large is your house?" "Thirty-six rooms."

"Is your salary adequate to meet your housing costs and other living expenses?" "No."

"Where is your house?" "Central London."

"Do you have a garden for the dog to play in?" "Yes."

"How large is your garden?" "Fourteen acres."

"How frequently are you away from the home for business travel?" "Two or three days each week; but my family will help care for the dog."

"Since the dog would then be your common responsibility as well, would you characterize your family as close-knit?" "Yes."

"How often do you have dinner together?" "Once every two or three months."

Somehow, I passed the examination, and a frisky Shakespeare now resides at Winfield House, fortunately with more of an appetite for dog biscuits than for furniture or telegrams.

### *His Personality and Legacy*

"Little Clem" needed no guide dogs interviewer to prompt humility. He, and Truman, demonstrated that men perceived to be "small" can prove to loom large over the life of nations. You remember, of course, the rhyme,

"Few thought he was even a starter  
There were many who thought themselves smarter  
But he ended PM  
CH and OM [Companion of Honor and Order of Merit]  
An earl and a knight of the garter."

At close hand in the coalition government, the War Cabinet appreciated the Deputy Prime Minister's gifts.

In Truman's words, as he reflected on their meeting at Potsdam, "I had come to know him well. Attlee had a deep understanding of the world's problems, and I knew there would be no interruption in our common efforts."

In these annual Attlee Lectures since 1983, far more authoritative commentators than I have delved into Clement Attlee's personality and legacy.

His common sense, integrity and intelligence - his character - were so well portrayed by Lord Jay, Kenneth Harris, and Lord Mayhew. They explained why the British people respected his moral fiber and altruistic spirit, born from his experiences in London's East End and his service as Mayor of Stepney.

Tony Benn related the Attlee measures to address social concerns. How appropriate it is that the Foundation bearing his name distinguishes itself in treating eye disease in India, sponsoring drug rehabilitation at home, and supporting young people at risk.

Sir David Hunt captured Attlee's talent for deflating egos, though always with humility. Peter Hennessy expanded this theme to the "statecraft" of Clement Attlee. How Attlee strengthened the American alliance was examined by Lord Sherfield. Lord Roll and Lord Jenkins addressed post-war European integration and the interdependency of nations today.

### *National Security*

In this context, therefore, this American Ambassador addresses the subject of "Defining National Security in the 21st Century." This is done with some risk when one remembers some of Prime Minister Attlee's encounters with my predecessors.

Invited to dinner by Ambassador Robert Bingham, an American press baron, Attlee thought, as he noted in his autobiography, that this was an "unlikely recreation" for Labour MPs. When asked whether he had done any big game hunting, Attlee answered, in his taciturn manner, "Yes." When pressed as to what he had shot, he replied laconically, "Germans."

Perhaps he took particular pleasure in needling my counterparts of his time. On an American lecture tour, he was asked, "How is your Socialist medicine getting on?" He replied, "First class. How's your Socialist sewage system getting on . . . or do you stick to the old bucket?"

Attlee and Truman, who had been Vice President only 82 days when he became President, were men comfortable with themselves. Their innate modesty was born not of self-doubt, but of self-confidence. But they understood their times in a manner worthy of our aspirations.

At a Washington dinner in October, 1945, after their historic meeting to discuss atomic power, Attlee proposed a toast which inspires my observations tonight:

"We all stand here for freedom, but we know that freedom may be attacked from many sides. Freedom needs to be retranslated every generation. Things that menace one epoch pass away; something else may menace it in another . . . ."

We, for years, have had the Channel to protect us; you, for years have had the Atlantic - but as we know today, the discoveries of science are transcending seas and transcending oceans. We must not let anything rob us of our freedom, and of our democracy. . . ."

Security, like freedom, "needs to be retranslated every generation." Let me then develop three conclusions:

The security of the United States and the United Kingdom are indispensable to the world's peace and security.

Though we are strong, we are less secure than we may believe ourselves to be. The dangers are real. The threats are different.

And for this new century, security must be redefined by both our nations.

### *An Illustration of the Challenges*

Attlee and Truman realised that security is defined by more than military strength. In the past decade, our two nations have increasingly turned our attention to the economy, to the environment, to social problems.

We were not wrong about the non-military aspects of security. Opening markets, stewardship of the environment, the stability of a vast global financial system: These are all essential to peace and prosperity in the 21st century.

But we may be less secure than we sometimes believe ourselves to be.

With the Gulf War, and Bosnia, and Kosovo, we have begun to understand that regional instability will continue to be a problem and indeed may well intensify.

Helicoptering through the Bosnia countryside with General Guthrie and talking with some of the 30,000 NATO and associated troops on the ground there, I understood better how deep-seated are some of the emotions behind these conflicts. When I asked dozens of refugees why they had come back to their smoldering villages, the answer was always the same: "My ancestors are buried here. This is my home."

However such sentiments influence our re-definitions of security, our recent experience demonstrates the critical importance of the first peacetime military alliance in my country's history: NATO, a handiwork of Attlee, Truman, and their colleagues who were "present at the creation."

At this time one year ago, after Contact Group meetings in London, an attempt was underway at Rambouillet to negotiate a peaceful solution to the crisis in Kosovo. We all know the outcome.

But do we remember why became involved?

NATO's Supreme Commander, General Wes Clark, who was a fellow student at Oxford when I was there, told me of an incident that occurred in November, 1998. With a respite in the fighting between the Serbs and the Kosovars, the General went to Belgrade to confer with Milosevic, who -- after signing off on his promises to NATO (which he broke) and offering brandy -- began to talk philosophically. "We know how to deal with the problem of these Albanians," he said. "We've done this before."

"When?" and "What did you do?," the general asked.

The response was chilling. "In 1946. . . . We killed them. We killed them all. It took several years, but eventually we killed them all. And then we had no problem."

NATO's response was, still, diplomacy, but backed by force. We never abandoned hopes for a diplomatic outcome and did not seek simply to crush the enemy. Milosevic was isolated; pressure was applied through the air campaign; and NATO's resolve remained strong. The refugees returned home.

*Kosovo's Lessons*

What have we learned?

First, while trade and commerce tie us more closely together and increasingly shape international relations, they have not supplanted security agreements and multilateral organizations. It is necessary, essential, to work closely with other countries in pursuit of common goals.

NATO, the European Union, the UN, the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe all are critical to the extensive consultation and planning required to confront - better, to prevent - security threats.

And of these, NATO remains the key political and security link between North America and Europe. Its current strategic concept, agreed upon at the Washington summit in April 1999, embraces

- Broader appreciation of what constitutes security interests;
- Emphasis upon deterrence and rapid response;
- A technological imperative; and
- Adoption of a European Security and Defense Identity within the Alliance.

At the Brussels meeting of NATO foreign ministers this past December, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott urged that

"There should be no confusion about America's position on the need for a stronger Europe. We are not against; we are not ambivalent; we are not anxious. We are for it. We want to see a Europe that can act effectively through the Alliance or, if NATO is not engaged, on its own."

We American officials have consistently supported ESDI with three conditions ("the three 'D's"):

- No decoupling of Europe's security from that of its North American allies;
- No duplication of effort or capabilities; and
- No discrimination against those Allies who are not EU members.

But Lord Robertson, your former Defense Minister and now NATO Secretary-General, has another formulation, "the three I's":

- Indivisibility of the trans-Atlantic link;
- Improvement of capabilities; and
- Inclusiveness of all Allies.

Attlee might have preferred that approach.

As the public leadership of President Clinton and Prime Minister Blair demonstrated in Kosovo, our two nations worked together particularly well - in military, political, and diplomatic activity. We shared critical intelligence, closely coordinated combat resources in the air campaign, and made quiet preparations to do more if necessary.

This close collaboration is nothing new. In my home state of South Carolina is one of America's oldest military colleges, The Citadel. On its campus, the Royal Navy's White Ensign flies next to the Stars and Stripes above a monument to the HMS Seraph.

Why?

During World War II, HMS Seraph rescued a French general, but he felt such animosity toward the British that he refused to embark in a British ship. No American vessel was available, so a U.S. Navy officer assumed temporary command of the Seraph, which briefly became the USS Seraph. She had two captains and flew two flags, to mark the extraordinary cooperation between two longstanding allies.

That kind of cooperation will be just as necessary in this new century as it was then or in Attlee's times.

A second lesson from Kosovo is that, if contemporary military campaigns are more likely to be allied efforts, our technologies must be interoperable. Our defense industrial base in America comprises about 350 businesses; Europe has 650. Consolidation is inevitable; but will it be trans-Atlantic or Eurocentric?

That question will be decided not by governments, but by capital markets, assessments of optimum shareholder value, mergers and acquisitions that will shape the consolidation of Europe's industrial base. If the result is a distancing and increased competition between American and European defense companies, how realistic is the vision of increased interoperability?

The geopolitical lesson of the 20th century - which Attlee and Truman understood - is that, when Europe and America act together, we advance our interests and our values more effectively than when we act alone.

### *New Threats*

But there are new threats beyond Kosovo's lessons.

That is apparent to teenagers in Manchester, England, or Manchester, New Hampshire, in Glasgow or Gary, in Cardiff or Columbia. All of them were raised in an era of car bombers in America and plutonium merchants halfway around the world. They eat popcorn before screens of cyber terrorists and drug cartels. They have witnessed dictators and ethnic cleansing on nightly television. They instantaneously click their way to other continents.

The Web, silicon chips and satellites, mice and palm-tops, anthrax, encryption: these and countless other terms, unfamiliar to Attlee, have made us dramatically aware that our security concerns today are global.

Good and bad actors, alliances and rogue states, organized crime and terrorists can have global reach. Biological and chemical weapons, financial contagion, environmental pollution, and cyber-crime threaten peace and security with global consequences.

Natural disasters which de-stabilize entire regions, militant religious and other extremist groups, nationalists and secessionists: all pose threats to the interests of the United States and the United Kingdom.

Travel in less developed nations makes apparent potential resentment against Western power and culture.

New technologies, though they may seem benign, allow an increasing number of states - and even small fanatical groups - to inflict enormous damage on unsuspecting civilians.

Silent, invisible threats to our IT infrastructure - catastrophic terrorism -- could cause dire commercial disruptions or threaten civilians in public transportation and health. Weapons of mass destruction are proliferating.

Anthrax - a colorless, odorless, tasteless spore that infects lungs and kills 90 percent of untreated victims - is "the top choice in biological weapons for germ warfare." Ten countries, we are told, today have developed anthrax weapons.

Dissatisfied groups in faraway places and terrorists whose names we have never heard, with cultures vastly different from our own, may resort to shocking forms of violence and destruction. Remember the 1995 Japanese cult's gas attack on the Tokyo subway, the 1993 World Trade Center bombing?

The number of new states, autonomous zones, and international protectorates is growing: strife is a recurring theme in their histories. Global television coverage has made humanitarian disasters, regional crises, ethnic and religious strife, and the eruption of suppressed nationalism regular staples of evening dinner conversation.

Other threats to peace are not necessarily related to hostilities. Fifteen countries will suffer severe water shortages in the next two decades. What does this mean for our security interests?

Still more threats are related to the same technological breakthroughs which are drawing the world together. Productivity and communications are, indeed, increasing geometrically. A transnational cyberclass generation now chats and shops and even - somehow - falls in love electronically.

Yet, as a result, the gulf between rich and poor - in my own nation, perhaps in yours, and certainly, between nations - is increasing at a threatening pace. That Grand Canyon; the potential resentment of new technologies and their associated new wealth; instantaneous and sometimes volatile capital flows, bioethics, and electronic anonymity: all pose both moral questions and security concerns.

At the G-8 Summit in Cologne last year, an initiative was announced which, with earlier debt relief commitments, provides for a reduction of up to 70% of the total debts for heavily indebted poor countries. In September, President Clinton, taking U.S. efforts a step further, directed the Administration to make it possible to forgive 100% of the debt these countries owe the United States when repayment is impractical and the funds alternately will be used to finance basic human needs. Attlee would undoubtedly nod approvingly of a definition of security that embraces such action.

Another example of re-defining security was posed at the millennium's first session of the United Nations Security Council. Vice President Gore opened the session:

"[T]he heart of the security agenda is protecting lives," he said, "and we now know that the number of people who will die of AIDS in the first decade of the 21st century will rival the number that died in all the wars in all the decades of the 20th century. This meeting demands of us that we see security through a new and wider prism, and forever after, think about it according to a new, more expansive definition."

Similarly, in this new world, many traditional concepts of deterrence and counter-response are anachronistic. Think of the consequences of a biological agent digested into a respiratory and nervous system, conveying a highly contagious virus across hemispheres at jet speed. No missile launch site to be found; no chemical residue that can be traced; no rental truck receipts leading to clumsy suspects. No defense other than deterrence through preparation.

Alfred North Whitehead admonished us, "It is the business of the future to be dangerous." I submit these risks not to scare, but to illustrate the urgency of our governments' efforts at re-defining security.

Attlee would not have been intimidated. "I think the British have the distinction above all other nations," he said, "of being able to put new wine into old bottles without bursting them."

#### *Arms Control*

Let me not appear to avoid the subject of arms control. President Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright shared the keen disappointment of many Americans and our allies when the U.S. Senate rejected the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty last autumn. Some commentators have used the vote to proclaim the death of arms control. But as Secretary Albright observed, "the obituaries are premature." The United States Government is committed to bringing the CTBT into force.

More than 150 countries are signatories. The United States ended nuclear testing seven years ago; the moratorium on nuclear testing continues; and the Clinton Administration is encouraging all other states to do the same.

#### *Attlee's Example*

It is apparent by now that this businessman-turned-diplomat does not share Attlee's penchant for brevity. R. Mostyn Pritt tells the tale to make this evident. As a young backbencher in 1947, he was studying cricket scores on the ticker-tape machine outside the Member's Smoking Room when the Prime Minister passed. They exchanged brief remarks. Impressed by his friendly reception, Pritt sent Attlee a 50-page candid memorandum on the government's shortcomings.

The eager MP received the following reply:

"Dear Pritt,

Thank you for your note.

Yours sincerely,

C.R. Attlee

PS: No further correspondence will be entered into."

Though other important matters of national security certainly have not been addressed by this Lecture, given the late hour, "no further correspondence will be entered into."

Should I have commented on the differences between our nations on some security issues, notwithstanding the remarkable geopolitical alliance we enjoy?

Should I have addressed security questions likely to be raised in the Presidential race?

Should I have speculated on what Attlee would have said on National Missile Defense, the privatization of DERA, genetically modified foods, the WTO, or the EMU?

The reason for these omissions also is derived from an Attlee story. In December, 1950, amidst dire news from Korea, as you will recall, President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee had some perceived differences over atomic weapons. After their successful meeting in Washington, Truman invited Attlee to join him at a Constitution Hall concert. The young performer, Margaret Truman, drew enthusiastic applause.

The next day, at 5:30 am, the President opened his copy of the Washington Post to a scathing review of his daughter's performance. Like any proud father, he responded with a blistering letter to the critic.

Although the editors decided to take no action, a copy of Truman's letter appeared on the front page of the local tabloid.

"Mr. Hume:

I've just read your lousy review of Margaret's concert. It seems to me you're a frustrated old man who wishes he could have been successful. Someday I hope to meet you. When that happens you'll need a new nose, a lot of beefsteak for black eyes, and perhaps a supporter below! Westbrook Pegler (a columnist of the day), a gutter snipe, is a gentleman alongside you. I hope you'll accept that statement as a worse insult than a reflection on your ancestry.

Harry Truman."

History does not record Prime Minister Attlee's review of the concert.

Clement Attlee's quiet courage and strength of character inspire us today. And he has taught me when, sometimes, it is best not to comment at all.

Thank you for the privilege of being with you this evening.