Reinventing Imperialism in the Wake of September 11

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The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 on New York and Washington D.C. are viewed by many as not only life changing but also world changing events. Like the landing of man on the Moon and the assassination of John F. Kennedy, those who are old enough to remember will doubtless be able to recall years from now precisely where they were and what they were doing when the news broke. And like other significant events that are thought to have altered the course of history, September 11 has become something of a reference point with people now speaking in terms of pre and post September 11. In fact, very little time had passed after the terrorist attacks before commentators paused to reflect and offer opinions on how the world had changed in the aftermath of the attacks. Post-September 11 high-rise architecture would be different to pre-September 11 high-rise architecture, likewise airline security and countless other affected arenas of concern. But the greatest speculation on how the world has changed has been reserved for the impact the terrorist attacks will have on the lives and daily routines of the general population. Western commentators in particular believe with conviction that, regardless of where one lives in this world, the events of September 11 will affect the manner in which a large percentage of the population goes about its daily business. While their might be some measure of truth in this assessment I am not entirely convinced, at least not for the reasons on offer.

There is no doubt that for many people, many millions in fact, their immediate personal world's have been altered significantly, perhaps even turned upside-down by the terror that was unleashed on September 11, no more so than for New Yorkers. And the same can now be said for the people of Afghanistan. I suspect, however, that for a good many of the world's six billion plus people their daily lives have scarcely changed and remain all too familiar. That is, for the large percentage of people on this planet afflicted by poverty and want, who or are too busy just getting by to concern themselves too much with events that are unfolding literally a world away, the post-September 11 world very much resembles the pre-September 11 one. Rather, I want to suggest that what has changed for many of these people and places is how they and their homelands have been classified by the United States led Western world in the wake of its self-declared 'war on terror', or more appropriately, its 'war on terrorism'.

A world divided

A headline on the front page of the *New York Times* of September 15, 2001 implored: 'US Demands Arab Countries Choose Sides'. In what I want to suggest is a regrettable development; this headline reflects a trend in sentiment that is gaining currency amongst leaders and commentators of the Western world. That is, the world is once again on the verge of being divided into opposing camps with the nations of the world being called upon to identify with and standby one or the other. Failing to come out explicitly in support of 'civilized' America and its 'civilized' allies means risking being classified as an 'uncivilized' sympathizer and harborer of 'barbarous' terrorists by default. Opting for some form of middle ground or abstaining from taking sides is not an option that is on offer. As US President George W. Bush declared in his address to a joint session of the US Congress nine days after the terrorist attacks: ' Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the

terrorists'.[1] For the Bush Administration it is simple as that, there is black and there is white, there are no shades of gray.

In the speech to Congress on September 20, 2001, Bush also declared that the terrorists responsible for the attacks on New York and Washington were 'the heirs of all murderous ideologies of the twentieth century… they follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism'. Then, being careful to avoid language that characterized the 'war on terrorism' as a 'clash of civilizations' or a war between the Judeo-Christian Western world and the Islamic East, Bush cast the war as a 'fight *for* civilization'. Leaving no observer in any doubt as to which side of the battle line the US occupied, the President confidently added that 'the civilized world is rallying to America's side'. [2] The casting of the attacks of September 11 as an assault by a 'barbarous' terrorist organisation and their sponsors on the entire 'civilized' world was widely echoed. For example, pledging his country's 'full solidarity' with the US, the German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder denounced the attacks as not just an attack on America 'but also against the entire civilized world.'[3] Likewise, on the day after the attacks *The Independent* of London editorialized that 'the terrorists can only truly be said to have won if civilized nations abandon civilized values'.[4]

Four months later in the State of the Union Address Bush reiterated that 'the civilized world faces unprecedented dangers'. Then, claiming to 'know their true nature' he declared that regimes like those in North Korea, Iran, and Iraq have 'something to hide from the civilized world. States like these and their terrorist allies', he continued, 'constitute an axis of evil' [5]. And with that the die was cast and the world was effectively divided into two spheres: a self-declared 'civilized' world fighting for the cause of 'good' was at war against an 'uncivilized' or 'barbarous' sphere of fundamentalist terrorists said to be acting in the name of 'evil'.

New barbarians and savage war

A considerable part of the distinction drawn between the 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' worlds is based on the style of warfare employed by each: the former supposedly chivalrous and noble, the latter characterized as barbarous and cowardly. Just such a distinction has been drawn by the British military historian, Sir John Keegan when discussing Samuel Huntigton's 'clash of civilizations'[6] thesis in the wake of September 11. Keegan insists that Huntington misses a 'crucial ingredient', arguing that

> Westerners fight face to face, in stand-up battle, and go on until one side or the other gives in. They choose the crudest of weapons available, but observe what to non-Westerners may well seem curious rules of honor. Orientals, by contrast, shrink from pitched battle, which they often deride as a sort of game, preferring ambush, surprise, treachery and deceit as the best way to overcome an enemy. [7]

In the same article Keegan claims that 'Relentless as opposed to surprise and sensation, is the Western way of warfare. It is deeply injurious to the Oriental style and rhetoric of war making'. Following this he makes what he sees as the obvious link between the 'barbarians' of the past and the 'barbarians' of the present, declaring that 'Oriental war-makers, today terrorists, expect ambushes and raids to destabilise their opponents, allowing them to win further victories by horrifying outrages at a later stage'. Speaking of the al-Qaeda terrorist network elsewhere, Keegan observes that 'It's very… it's very Islamic, but particularly very Arab – and you can see that it has its roots in Islamic but particularly Arab Islamic style of war making that goes back to the seventh century AD. The surprise attack, victory, killing for its own sake'.[8]

Leaders of the Western world allied against al-Qaeda and its host's have been at pains to emphasize that the war on terrorism is not a war against the Islamic or Arab world. Likewise most have gone to lengths – Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi being a notable exception[9] – to ensure that they do not portray Islamic or Arabic civilization as inferior to Western civilization, but that does not mean that commentators in the West have felt obliged to follow suit. For instance, Keegan concluded his observations on the 'war on terrorism' with the following ill-considered diatribe.

> This war belongs within the much larger spectrum of a far older conflict between settled, creative, productive Westerners and predatory, destructive Orientals. It is no good pretending that the peoples of the desert and the empty spaces exist on the same level of civilisation as those who farm and manufacture. They do not. Their attitude to the West has always been that it is a world ripe for the picking. When the West turned nasty, and fought back, with better weapons and superior tactics and strategy, the East did not seek to emulate it but to express its anger in new forms of the raid and surprise attack.[10]

As alluded to above this distinction between the 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' worlds, along with Keegan's emotive invocation of a sense of Western civilizational superiority is not new. Both hark back to an era of the past when the exploring and soon to be imperial powers of Western Europe came into contact with the peoples of the New World and other civilizations nearer to home. It is evident in the writing of the late eighteenth century jurist Robert Ward, who would later serve in the British House of Commons and in executive posts. Ward noted that 'When the New World was opened to the spirit and adventure of the Old, it was reasonable to expect what was found; new laws and customs, as well as a new people and language'. [11] That is, new civilizations. Beyond the borders of Europe and the fledgling European settler colonies, however, much of the non-European world was widely thought to consist of uncivilized 'nations

that are still approaching to a state of nature'.[12] Expressing sentiments that were held by the

majority of his predecessors, contemporaries, and immediate successors alike, Ward stated:

> If we look to the *Mahometan* and *Turkish* nations… their ignorance and barbarity repels
> all examination, and if they have received any improvement since the days when they
> first set foot in Europe, it is probably from their connection with people professing the
> very religion which they most hate and despise. The same inferiority in this sort of
> conduct, is to be found even among the Chinese, so famed for eminence in every other
> branch of knowledge, and in the science of morals itself. Their wars have always been
> carried on with *Eastern* barbarity, and their known laws against strangers would alone
> demonstrate the point.[13]

Reflecting a similar sense of civilizational superiority when discussing the style of warfare

employed by the 'savages' of the New World, the British historian William Robertson wrote:

> When polished nations have obtained the glory of victory, or have acquired an
> addition of territory, they may terminate a war with honor. But savages are not
> satisfied until they extirpate the community which is the object of their hatred. They
> fight not to conquer, but to destroy. … If they engage in hostilities, it is with a
> resolution to never to see the face of the enemy in peace, but to prosecute the quarrel
> with immortal enmity. … With respect to their enemies, the rage of vengeance knows
> no bounds. When under the dominion of this passion, man becomes the most cruel
> of all animals. He neither pities, nor forgives, nor spares. … they proceed wholly by
> stratagem and ambuscade. They place not their glory in attacking their enemies with
> open force. To surprise and destroy is the greatest merit of a commander, and the
> highest pride of his followers.[14]

In the wake of this long and unfortunate tradition, it is all too easy for Western leaders

and commentators to slip back into the habit of casting al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and their

supporters as some form of 'new barbarians' based on their style of waging war. By contrast of

course, the West with its laser guided 'smart' bombs that can be launched far from the realities of

a battle zones continues to think of itself as engaging in some form of noble or chivalrous

'civilized' form of warfare. The problems with this line of argument are obvious to most and do

not require examination in any great detail here; one need only be aware of terms like 'collateral

damage' to recognize that it is a false dichotomy.

The 'standard of civilization' in international society

The distinction drawn between 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' peoples of the world pointed to above was an article of faith that went virtually unchallenged in the West until the mid-twentieth century. In fact, we do not have to go too far back in history to find a time when the world was thought to be reasonably neatly divided between 'savage', 'barbarian', and 'civilized' peoples. In 1877 in the opening pages of his book *Ancient Society*, the lawyer-cum-anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan wrote, 'It can now be asserted upon convincing evidence that savagery preceded barbarism in all tribes of mankind, as barbarism is known to have preceded civilization'.[15] And that the 'three distinct conditions are connected with each other in a natural as well as necessary sequence of progress'.[16]

The distinction drawn between 'savages', 'barbarians', and the 'civilized' was not limited to anthropology, it also found expression in international law. For example, it would appear that the nineteenth century jurist James Lorimer was directly influenced by the work of Morgan and the French ethnologist Arthur de Gobineau. For Lorimer claimed, 'No modern contribution to science seems destined to influence international politics and jurisprudence to so great an extent as that which is known as ethnology, or the science of races'.[17] This led him to argue that 'As a political phenomenon, humanity, in its present condition, divides itself into three concentric zones or spheres – that of civilised humanity, that of barbarous humanity, and that of savage humanity'.[18] Which in turn brought him to conclude that 'the same rights and duties do not belong to savages and civilised men'.[19]

Arising out of the distinction between these spheres of 'civilized' and 'uncivilized humanity was a principle of international law – a still incipient body of law that was based largely on the European law of nations – that became known as the 'standard of civilization' in

international society.[20] Operating primarily during the European colonial period the 'standard of civilization' was a legal mechanism designed to set the benchmark for the ascent of non-European states to the ranks of the 'civilized' 'Family of Nations' and with it, their full recognition under international law. Based in large part on the capacity of any given people to govern themselves in such a manner that they may have the capacity to enter into and guarantee reciprocal relations with the nations of Europe, the legal standard is neatly summarized by Georg Schwarzenberger as follows:

> The test whether a State was civilised and, thus, entitled to full recognition as an international personality was, as a rule, merely whether its government was sufficiently stable to undertake binding commitments under international law and whether it was able and willing to protect adequately the life, liberty and property of foreigners.[21]

Despite this legal standard lingering on for longer than many of the colonial states and jurists of the day would have liked, the standard was eventually formally made redundant upon the settlement of World War Two. For the abrogation of the laws of war as witnessed by the nature of the totalitarian aggression perpetrated by members of the thought to be 'civilized' world, effectively put paid to any idea of maintaining a legal 'standard of civilization'. A principle that was further undermined by the subsequent evolution of nuclear weapons and the concept of mutually assured destruction,[22] and the rapidly emerging post-World War Two nationalist movements in many of Europe's colonial possessions.

Even prior to World War Two, however, a number of leading jurists of the time recognised that adhering to a standard of civilization was 'considered anachronistic and insulting by the growing number of non-European countries which were becoming for both political and legal reasons full International Persons and members of the Family of Nations'.[23] For example,

Hersh Lauterpacht was highly critical of Lorimer's distinction between 'civilized', 'barbarous', and 'savage' societies, declaring, 'Modern international law knows of no distinction, for the purposes of recognition, between civilized and uncivilized States or between States within and outside the international community of civilized States'.[24] Commenting on this juncture in the debate Schwarzenberger appears to miss the irony in his statement that, 'At this point doctrine reaches the other extreme. The standard of civilisation has vanished, and States are supposed to be under a legal duty to recognise even non-civilised States and their governments'.[25] According to R.G. Collingwood's comments, the standard was not only inappropriate and redundant, but had long been so. For when speaking of the 'dichotomy of civilized and barbarous societies' in a lecture delivered in 1940, he emphatically exclaimed: 'There are still people who accept it; but to accept it in the middle of the twentieth century is a sure sign of retarded development: of being a century and a half behind the times in your habits of thought'.[26]

The rationale behind the emergence of a 'standard of civilization' in international society and its subsequent entrenchment international law, is related by Schwarzenberger as follows:

> Once civilisation is related to the basic types of human association, it is no longer necessary to be content with the mere enumeration and description of a bewildering number of civilisations. It is then possible to evaluate and to measure individual civilisations in the light of a universally applicable test of the degree of civilisation which any such particular endeavour has attained. This criterion gives the key to understanding whether, and to what extent, democratic States may claim to be more civilised than totalitarian or authoritarian systems; why it is useful [for legal purposes] to distinguish between groups which are called savage, because they have not yet reached any appreciable stage of civilisation, and groups which may be termed barbarian because they have forsaken civilisation'.[27]

At first sight the 'standard of civilization' in international society might appear to be a reasonably innocuous principle. In reality, however, the clear-cut legal distinction between the 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' worlds and the unavoidable interactions between the two gave rise

to the unequal treaty system, or the system of capitulations and the right of extraterritoriality. As Charles Alexandrowicz noted, 'International law shrank into a Euro-centric system which imposed on extra-European countries its own ideas'.[28] And as an article of international law the 'standard of civilization' privileged the place of European or Western civilization, as it 'discriminated against non-European civilizations and thus ran on parallel lines with colonialism as a political trend'.[29]

Reinventing imperialism

The characterization of the attacks of September 11 as an 'attack on civilization' by 'barbarians' and the subsequent casting of the 'war on terrorism' as a war between the 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' worlds, bears the hallmarks of a reinvigorated or resurrected 'standard of civilization' for the twenty-first century. Larry Diamond takes further steps in this direction in his articulation of the 'civilized' – 'uncivilized' dichotomy, undertaken as part of a project outlining the criteria a state must meet in order to be considered a legitimate member of the 'civilized' community of states. Diamond's criteria for what constitutes a 'decent' or 'civilized' state is not so far removed from the criteria used in the era referred to above. Nor is the logic underpinning it so different from that articulated by Schwarzenberger. For Diamond the fully civilized world is made up of those states or 'good societies' that he designates as 'civic communities'. That is, those societies that have 'strong, effective institutions of governance to enforce and reproduce civic behaviour'. Societies that he sees as based on a 'culture of trust, cooperation, reciprocity, respect, restraint, tolerance and compromise'.[30] The uncivilized world on the other hand, is full of what he calls 'predatory societies', societies that are 'the inverse of the civic community'. That is, societies that 'have weak, porous states that are prone to [or on the

verge of] complete collapse'. These are societies in which 'the line between the police and the criminals is a thin one, and may not exist at all'.[31]

According to Diamond, in order to deprive the 'Islamic Bolsheviks' – presumably the al-Qaeda, Taliban, and like minded forces – 'masquerading as religious warriors, of the popular support, political sympathy and state sponsorship they need to threaten civilized countries', we must eliminate these 'predatory societies'. And the best way of achieving this is through the establishment of 'institutions of "horizontal accountability"… [a] process by which some state actors hold other state actors accountable to the law, the constitution and norms of good governance'.[32] (At least in this respect Diamond's plan is a little more nuanced than Keegan's, who, when asked to expand on what he meant by 'we have to attempt to eliminate' the threat, replied: 'Oh kill them I think. Actually get rid of, physically get rid of them'.[33]) In essence, what Diamond is doing is putting forward a case for greater US involvement and intervention in the 'predatory societies' of the world. For in his view 'the United States remains the indispensable country in the quest for democracy and good governance', and as the self-proclaimed 'leading civic community' it has 'an obligation… to the world to lead the way'.[34]

Not all commentators have bothered to dress-up their calls for greater US-led Western intervention in 'predatory' or 'failed' states that are the well-spring of terrorists in quite such diplomatic language as that used by Diamond. Max Boot, an editor at *The Wall Street Journal* unabashedly proposes that 'A dose of US imperialism may be the best response to terrorism'. For as far as he is concerned 'the September 11 attack was a result of insufficient [American] involvement and ambition. The solution is to be more expansive in the US's goals and more assertive in their implementation'. Apparently, 'Afghanistan and other troubled lands today cry

out for the sort of enlightened foreign administration once provided by self-confident Englishmen in jodhpurs and pith helmets.' [35]

It would appear that Boot has something of a rose-colored perspective of the so-called 'enlightened foreign administration' once undertaken in far-flung corners of the globe in the name of the British Empire. Boot is not alone, however, in directly and explicitly calling for the return of some form of imperialism, similar calls are coming from a reasonably wide, albeit notably solely Western range of voices. Niall Ferguson, the conservative British historian argues that the 'US must make the transition from informal to formal empire'. For him 'There is no excuse for the relative weakness of the US as a quasi-imperial power. The transition to formal empire from informal empire is an affordable one'. And he seems to have no real qualms about 'imposing your [American/Western] values and institutions on others' as part and parcel of the process. The precedents have already been set, 'the new imperialism is already in operation in Bosnia, Kosovo, [and] East Timor', and it is now time for the empire to expand.[36]

Apparently Philip Hensher agrees. Writing in the usually undeniably and unequivocally liberal *Independent* on the neo-imperialist sentiment sweeping the West and Britain in particular, Hensher claims that a 'responsible imperialism… might stand a chance of solving Afghanistan's problems'. Looking back on history with the same rose-colored perspective as Boot, he goes so far as to postulate that 'the current state of affairs in Afghanistan arises from their success over the years in fighting colonizers off'. If only 'they had been subjugated as India was', he argues, 'investment and the exchange of ideas might have produced a tradition of parliamentary democracy and some kind of substantial infrastructure'. Then, making the self-righteous claim that 'now, our zeal is on behalf of democracy and justice', he draws the outlandish conclusion that there is 'no doubt at all that the ordinary Afghan would benefit to a colossal degree from the

imposition of our cultural, political and even religious values'.[37] (As noted above, not all commentators have felt the need to hide their unjustified personal sense of belonging to a superior civilization. While certain sectors of British society in particular appear to have a longing for the 'good old days' of the Empire).

The most detailed account yet advocating the resurrection of some form of imperialism is that outlined by Robert Cooper, a senior British diplomat and the shaper of British Prime Minister Tony Blair's new doctrine of internationalist interventionism.[38] Not unlike Diamond, Cooper sees the post-Cold war era as being characterized by the presence of 'two new types of state'. On the one hand 'there are now states… where in some sense the state has almost ceased to exist a "premodern" zone where the state has failed and a Hobbesian war of all against all is underway'. Of which he cites countries such as Somalia and Afghanistan as prime examples. On the other hand 'there are the post imperial, postmodern states who no longer think of security primarily in terms of conquest'. The classic examples of these he suggests, are the states of the European Union and Canada.[39] On top of this 'of course there remain the traditional "modern" states who behave as states always have, following Machiavellian principles and raison d'ètat' where 'countries such as India, Pakistan and China' are representative of the category.

Cooper proposes that the postmodern world has 'to get used to the idea of double standards'. Cooperation amongst themselves, but in dealing with the 'old-fashioned kinds of states outside the postmodern' there is a 'need to revert to the rougher methods of an earlier era – force, pre-emptive attack, [and] deception'. Like Diamond's 'predatory societies', Cooper's 'premodern world is a world of failed states. Here the state no longer fulfils Weber's criterion of having a monopoly on the legitimate use of force'. For 'in such areas chaos is the norm and war is a way of life. In so far as there is a government it operates in a way similar to an organized

crime syndicate'. Also in common with Diamond is the argument that these 'premodern' states 'can provide a base for non-state actors who may represent a danger to the postmodern world… notably drug, crime, or terrorist syndicates'. 'What is needed' to respond to these threats, he insists, 'is a new kind of imperialism', or what he calls 'defensive imperialism': a brand of imperialism that is supposedly 'acceptable to a world of human rights and cosmopolitan values'. This 'postmodern imperialism' comes in two varieties: the first is what he calls the 'voluntary imperialism of the global economy'. It is conducted under the guise of multilateralism via the International Financial Institutions like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organisation. The second genus of 'postmodern imperialism' is what Cooper refers to as the 'imperialism of neighbors'. In a situation where 'misgovernment, ethnic violence, crime' and the like threaten the stability and governability of any given state, which in turn threatens the stability of neighboring states, those neighboring states are authorized to intervene to 'create something like a voluntary UN protectorate' to return stability to the region. This, he argues, is the sort of neighborly imperialist project that has been undertaken by Europe in Bosnia and Kosovo, and the sort of 'defensive imperialism' being employed in Afghanistan by the West.

It is nothing less than a mystery as to why so soon after it was relegated to the pages of history as a retrograde and largely racist concept, that imperialism is once again being dusted off and coated in a new sheen of respectability. While it might no longer be portrayed simply as 'the white man's burden', it is not too far removed from that, for John Lloyd argues that 'contemporary imperialism' is largely about 'reconstituting a kind of neo-colonial directory of states willing to bear the rich man's burden'.[40]

Baring Cooper's argument in mind while reflecting on British Prime Minister Tony Blair's speech to the British Labour Party three weeks after the terrorist attacks of September 11,

it is apparent that a Blair led Britain is ready and willing to lead the charge in taking on this 'burden' of 're-order[ing] the world around us'. [41] And one does not have to use too much imagination to hear the echoes of Britain's imperial past in Blair's desire to make the 'war on terrorism' a 'fight for justice' that 'brings[s]…[the] values of democracy and freedom to people around the world'. A re-ordering that Blair believes can reach all corners of the globe under 'the moral power of a world acting as community'. Needless to say, the shape that this proposed 're-ordered' world will take will be one that is agreed upon and designed by the United States and Britain to the exclusion of virtually all other interests. Likewise the task of seeing it realised will be one led by the United States with Britain acting as its all too willing deputy, with other less powerful allies endorsing the proposed plan as if they were in a position to do otherwise.

However, given the hubris and rhetoric emanating from some of the more hawkish elements within the Bush Administration about the willingness to go it alone, if need be, in its broadly defined pursuit of terrorists, Blair's neo-Kantian grand vision for humanity might not get much of a hearing. Based on its unchallenged status as the world's lone superpower, identities within the US are casting the terrorist attack on America on September 11 as something like 'the new Rome meets the new barbarians'.[42] Charles Krauthammer, for instance, believes that the US does not need to dress-up its newly found interventionist penchant in the sky blue berets of the United Nations. He states:

> In the liberal internationalist view of the world, the US is merely one among many – a stronger country, yes, but one that has to adapt itself to the will and needs of "the international community"…. This is folly. America is no mere international citizen. It is the dominant power in the world, more dominant than any since Rome. Accordingly, America is in a position to reshape norms, alter expectations and create new realities. How? By unapologetic and implacable demonstrations of will.[43]

Conclusion: Imperialism, coming to a neighborhood near you?

The 'predatory societies' identified by Diamond, like Cooper's 'premodern states', and the manner of 'barbarous' warfare singled out by Keegan are, in many ways, reminiscent of Robert Kaplan's apocalyptic premonition of the future of our planet as outlined in his influential and widely read article *The Coming Anarchy*. Based upon observations made during travels in troubled West Africa, Kaplan claims that 'West Africa provides an appropriate introduction to the issues, often extremely unpleasant to discuss, that will soon confront our civilization'. In the failed states of the region, he claims a 'premodern formlessness governs the battlefield, evoking the wars of medieval Europe prior to the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, which ushered in the era of organized nation-states'.[44] Kaplan also suggests that soon 'Arab countries, like most African ones, will be ungovernable through conventional secular ideologies'.[45]

Following Thomas Homer-Dixon, Kaplan asks us to 'think of a stretch limo in the potholed streets of New York City, where homeless beggars live. Inside the limo are the air-conditioned post-industrial regions of North America, Europe, the emerging Pacific Rim, and a few other isolated places, with their trade summitry and computer-information highways. Outside is the rest of mankind, going in a completely different direction'. 'We are, Kaplan continues, 'entering a bifurcated world'.[46] In this respect the divided world that Kaplan envisioned might just have materialized, or be very close to it, but it is not for the reasons that he foresaw. It is a divided world of the West's own making, one predicated on Bush's insistence that in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the nation's of the world 'are [either] with us [America], or you are with the terrorists'.[47] Unlike Kaplan, however, whom advocated putting up the barriers and isolating the affluent Western world from the spiraling chaos of the 'premodern' world, the tragedy of September 11 has convinced the West that this is not a viable option. And

so, it is determined to intervene in the 'uncivilized' world where and whenever it can to eliminate future threats.

As stated at the beginning of this article, what has changed for a large percentage of the world's population post-September 11 is not so much the routine of everyday life, but the way they now find themselves and their homeland as being categorized as 'uncivilized', 'predatory', and or 'premodern'. And as such, they are said to pose a dangerous threat to the 'civilized' world. In fact, Diamond identifies only 'thirty countries in the world that are stable, liberal, advanced industrial democracies', or 'predominantly civic rather than predatory', which means that the vast majority of the world's population lives outside of the so-called 'fully civilized' sphere.[48] For these people, the threat to their immediate security comes not so much from terrorist networks like al-Qaeda – although it obviously continues to pose a real threat to many countries which must be neutralized – but more from a wounded superpower determined to exact what it believes to be a commensurate measure of 'justice' in its 'new Cold War on terrorism'.[49]

Given Diamond's assessment of the limited extent of the 'civilized' world and Cooper's warning that 'Usama bin Laden has now demonstrated for those who had not already realised, that today all the world is, potentially at least, our neighbor', the chances that any given country is being targeted for intervention is high, very high. In the months since the September 11 terrorist attacks the Bush Administration has already sent US forces to assist in the identification and weeding out of terrorists in the Philippines, Bosnia, Georgia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, while a US navy vessel patrols off the coast of Somalia. The warning is all too clear, as the majority of the states of the world fall outside the Western constructed boundaries of the 'civilized world' all are, potentially at least, candidates for Western 'neighborly imperialism'.

The intent here is not to deny that the terrorist attacks of September 11 were a horrendous crime for which those responsible must pay the price. But there are lessons to be learnt all-round, waging war or threatening to occupy the numerous countries that the West believes may be host to future threats is not the appropriate response. Reviving some form of imperial rule which could potentially be imposed on the majority of the non-Western world will only serve to alienate a large percentage of the global population while ensuring that the world remains divided and the 'war on terrorism' is an endless one.

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ENDNOTES

[1] US President George W. Bush, Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People, September 20, 2001. Transcript at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/print/20010920-8.html> 21st September, 2001.

[2] Bush, Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People, September 20, 2001.

[3] 'NATO Lines Up Russian Support', *New York Times (on the Web)*, September 13, 2001. <http://www.nytimes.com/> 14th September, 2001.

[4] *The Independent*, September 12, 2001.

[5] US President George W. Bush, State of the Union Address, January 29, 2002. Transcript at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/print/20020129-11.html> 1st February, 2002.

[6] See Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, 1993, pp. 22-49; and *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Touchstone Books, London, 1998.

[7] John Keegan, 'Why the West will win', *The Age*, 9th October 2001. For more on this issue of warfare, see Martin van Creveld, *On Future War*, Brassey's, London, 1991, esp. Chapter 7 'Future War'.

[8] Sir John Keegan, interviewed on *Foreign Correspondent*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 10th October 2001. Transcript at <http://www.abc.net.au/foreign/stories/s387060.htm> 11th October 2001.

[9] While in Berlin on Wednesday September 26, 2001, Berlusconi stated: 'We should be conscious of the superiority of our civilization, which consists of a value system that has given people widespread prosperity in those countries that embrace it and guarantees respect for human rights and religion. This respect certainly does not exist in Islamic countries'. He also claimed that the attacks of September 11 were an attack 'on our civilization'. Following the uproar caused by his remarks Berlusconi later retracted them and claimed he had been misquoted and taken out of context. The damage had been done, however.

[10] John Keegan, 'Why the West will win',

[11] Robert Ward, *An Enquiry into the Foundation and History of the Law of Nations in Europe from the Time of the Greeks and Romans to the Age of Grotius* [1795], 2 Volumes, Garland Publishing Inc., New York & London, 1973, reprint of 1795 edn, Vol. 1, p. 136.

[12] Ward, Vol. II, p. 2.

[13] Ward, Vol. II, pp. 3-4. Italics in original.

[14] William Robertson, *The History of America*, Volume II, 12th edition, Cadell and Davies, London 1812, pp. 149-154.

[15] Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society* [1877], The Belknap Press of Harvard UP, Cambridge MA, 1964, p. 5.

[16] Morgan, p. 11.

[17] James Lorimer, *The Institutes of the Law of Nations*, II Vols., William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1883, Vol. I, p. 93.

[18] Lorimer, Vol. I, p. 101.

[19] Lorimer, Vol. I, p. 13.

[20] See Gerrit W. Gong, '*The Standard of 'Civilization' in International Society*', Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1984.

[21] Georg Schwarzenberger, 'The Standard of Civilisation in International Law' in *Current Legal Problems*, George W. Keeton and Georg Schwarzenberger (eds.), Stevens & Sons Ltd., London, 1955, p. 220.

[22] Schwarzenberger, pp. 229-234.

[23] Gong, p. 84.

[24] H. Lauterpacht, *Recognition in International Law*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1947, p. 31, note 1.

[25] Schwarzenberger, p. 227.

[26] R.G. Collingwood, 'Appendix 2: What 'Civilization' Means' in *The New Leviathan*, David Boucher (ed.), Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992, p. 486.

[27] Schwarzenberger, pp. 218-219.

[28] Charles Henry Alexandrowicz, *The European-African Confrontation: A Study in Treaty Making*, A.W. Sijthoff, Leiden, 1973, p. 6.

[29] Alexandrowicz, p. 6.

[30] Larry Diamond, 'Winning the New Cold War on Terrorism: The Democratic-Governance Imperative', Institute for Global Democracy, Policy Paper No. 1, March 2002, pp. 6-7. At <http://www.globaldem.org/> 15th April, 2002.

[31] Diamond, pp. 7-8.

[32] Diamond, pp. 10-11.

[33] Keegan, interviewed on *Foreign Correspondent*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 10th October 2001.

[34] Diamond, p. 14.

[35] Max Boot, 'Colonise wayward nations', *The Australian*, October 15 2001, p. 13.

[36] Niall Ferguson, 'Welcome the new imperialism', *The Guardian*, October 31, 2001.

[37] Philip Hensher, 'Let's be honest: we need to impose our imperial rule on Afghanistan', *The Independent*, 17 October, 2001. For a critical response to the articles by Ferguson and Hensher, see Maria Misra, 'The Empire strikes back', *New Statesman*, 12 November, 2001, pp. 25-27.

[38] Robert Cooper, 'The new liberal imperialism', *The Observer Worldview*, Guardian Unlimited Observer, April 7, 2002, at <http://www.observer.co.uk/worldview/story/0,11581,680095,00.html> 10th April 2002.

[39] Given the recent successes of far right parties in France, Austria, and other EU states, Cooper's casting of them as 'post-modern' might be somewhat premature.

[40] John Lloyd, 'The return of imperialism', *New Statesman*, 15 April, 2002, p. 22.

[41] Tony Blair, 'The power of community can change the world', speech by the Prime Minister to the Labour Party conference, Brighton 3rd October 2001. At http://www.labour.org.uk/lp/new/labour/docs/LONGSPEECHES/TBCONFSPEECH2001.TXT See also Tony Blair and Foreign Minister Jack Straw's chapters in Mark Leonard (ed.), *Re-Ordering the World: The long-term implications of September 11th*, Foreign Policy Centre, London, 2002.

[42] Jospeh Nye, 'The new Rome meets the new barbarians', *The Economist*, March 23rd, 2002, pp. 23-25. For an opposing perspective, see Lewis H. Lapham, 'The American Rome: On the theory of virtuous empire', *Harper's Magazine*, August 2001, pp. 31-38.

[43] Charles Krauthammer, 'The Bush Doctrine: In American foreign policy, a new motto: Don't ask. Tell', *Time*, March 5, 2001, p. 42.

[44] Robert D. Kaplan, 'The Coming Anarchy', *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 273, No. 2, February 1994, p. 46

[45] Kaplan, p. 70.

[46] Kaplan, p. 60.

[47] George W. Bush, Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People, September 20, 2001.

[48] Diamond, pp. 9-10. The thirty countries are the 24 countries of Western Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, and Japan.

[49] The term is Diamond's.