

[Keynote Address for the Maxwell School of Syracuse University's 2005 Bantle/INSCT Symposium, "The Global War on Terrorism: Round 2"](http://www.house.gov/tauscher/media/speech-03-31-05.html)

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On March 31, House Armed Services Committee member Ellen O. Tauscher (D-CA) delivered the following keynote address at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University's 2005 Bantle/INSCT Symposium on the theme of "The Global War on Terrorism: Round 2."

The symposium included speeches from academicians, military leaders, and David Kay, one of the top United Nations weapons inspectors in Iraq. The second day's keynote speaker was television journalist Tom Brokaw.

The symposium is hosted by Montgomery Meigs, Louis A. Bantle Chair in Business and Government Policy. INSCT, one of the event's co-sponsors, is the new [Syracuse University Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism](#).

Below is text of the speech:

Thank you, General Meigs, Dean Mitchell Wallerstein and Bill Banks, for inviting me.

I am a great admirer of the Maxwell School and of Syracuse University. And having grown up in New Jersey – the cradle of civilization – I always enjoy opportunities to visit New York. I am very fond of New York having spent several years, during my youth, working on Wall Street. Currently, I serve on the Board of West Point and get to visit the campus each year.

And it is always wonderful to see my good friends Monty and Mary Ann Meigs. One of the true pleasures of my time in Congress has been the opportunity to meet real American heroes like Monty Meigs. His commitment this country, his dedication to his cause, and his supreme intelligence are an inspiration. You are very fortunate to have Monty and Mary Ann as part of the Syracuse family.

I am honored to be here with leading terrorism experts from here and abroad to discuss the most pressing issues of our time.

As you know, I serve on the Armed Services Committee and have traveled to the Middle-East four times since 9-11. I recently spent some time in Jordan training Iraqi women running for office in their January elections. And I am proud to represent two of our nation's three nuclear labs: Lawrence Livermore and Sandia, as well as Travis Air Force Base. This background gives me an appreciation for the security challenges facing our nation.

I appreciate this opportunity to share some of my observations on the war on terror and I look forward to your feedback.

We are at a crossroads in Iraq and in the war on terror.

Rep. Ellen Tauscher

While Iraqis have a legislative branch, they do not yet have an executive branch. It is hard to tell whether we are making any headway against the insurgents.

The Bush administration cannot agree on the size, scope or longevity of the force we are fighting.

Afghanistan is in danger of backsliding with the elections for their parliament postponed until the fall.

And, the administration's prosecution of the war on terror has stretched our military across the globe with few signs of successful resolution or additional assistance from our allies.

In *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers*, Paul Kennedy wrote that the United States suffers from 'imperial overstretch' and that "the sum total of the United States' global interests and obligations is nowadays far larger than the country's power to defend them all simultaneously."

This lesson, shared in 1987, still rings true today.

At the same time, our country is facing an unprecedented fiscal crisis. We have the largest budget deficit in history, our trade deficit continues to grow, and our currency is at its weakest level in years.

As a former Wall Street investment banker, I believe it is critical that we rebalance our portfolio of investments to strengthen our global position.

The people who live in my congressional district are very smart, educated and successful people – and they know just how serious our challenges are. They realize that we need to get serious about the national security and economic security issues that threaten our nation.

There are a number of specific challenges before us:

President Bush has committed us to two massive and resource intensive enterprises: prosecuting the War on Terror and exporting democracy. Neither has gone smoothly, but it is possible to be successful at both if we make some major adjustments.

In a first positive sign, the Pentagon's new National Defense Strategy recognizes the limits of U.S. power, the range of threats that require our attention, and the need for international cooperation to sustain American power. But, as the Strategy points out, we are vulnerable to a range of traditional, irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive threat from state or non-state actors.

Several bad decisions are also undermining our global position. The lack of planning for Iraq and the administration's inability to assemble a coalition of the capable translates into an ever deepening conflict. And, since 9-11, the administration's belligerent assertion of its right to strike preemptively has made the United States the focus of alarm in many countries rather than an attractive partner to solve global threats.

To satisfy the administration's costly global initiatives and meet the threats against us, we must:

- Address unsustainable military and fiscal positions.
- Define clear metrics for the war on terror.
- And radically change our nonproliferation policy.

In discussing the issue of military and fiscal overstretch, we must address the Army's desperate need for relief.

Currently, 311,000 U.S. service men and women are deployed in 120 countries with half in and around Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Some 40,000 Army guard and reserve serve in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan, often deployed for back to back rotations.

With growing casualties in Iraq and an increasingly unpredictable mission, recruitment is a serious problem. Earlier this month, the Pentagon raised the age limit from 34 to 40 for enlistment in the Army Guard and Reserve, in order to cast a wider net. Some 30 percent of the over 3,000 Individual Ready Reserve – servicemen who are called up to back fill currently deployed forces – failed to report for duty. The active-duty Army and Marines, and five of six reserve components all failed to at least meet some recruiting goals in the first quarter of the fiscal year.

A host of disastrous consequences result from this overstretching of the military:

Governors are seeing their ability to protect their states from terrorism and natural disasters depleted as National Guard assets are deployed abroad. Equipment is running out and the Army has indicated that it will take two years after the end of hostilities to reconstitute pre-positioned stocks and make the Army whole again. The services are hiring more recruiters and considering expanding enlistment bonuses but those steps may be insufficient.

Critical steps must be taken:

- More troops are needed to stabilize Iraq, meet current commitments in Korea, and win the war on terror.
- Additional units would take the pressure off the guard and reserve.
- Raising end-strength and training active duty soldiers in high demand/low density specialties would allow us to rely less on our citizen soldiers and let them go back to growing the economy and protecting the homeland.

Additional active duty forces would improve recruitment and retention.

Stop-loss orders are keeping the Army at an artificially large size and we are likely to see a drop-off in retention when the orders are lifted.

Increasing end-strength needs to start now to hedge against future challenges. I have drafted legislation that would increase the number of our special forces - the specific people who have the skill sets that are in high demand in post conflict stabilization missions.

Whether or not the administration corrects its course could be the difference between driving off the cliff and rebuilding a military suited for the security challenges of the future.

Our military also faces fiscal overstretch.

The Pentagon's decision to rely on supplemental spending to fund military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan is unsustainable and passes on untold debt to our children.

We must start making hard choices in the defense budget and actually pay for the war on terror in regular order—not through two separate and bottomless checkbooks.

Congress recently passed an \$82 billion supplemental, bringing total emergency war appropriations to \$272 billion since the war began.

Not only is the administration avoiding hard trade-offs, but it is misleading the nation with the term “emergency.” Supplemental funding requests have included items that clearly don't fit in that category - whose costs are known - and others that are multi-year programs such as increased end-strength, modularity, and training Iraqi troops. In other words, commitments we've known about for a long, long time.

This irresponsibility will have serious repercussions for our children and grandchildren. The Bush Administration is currently operating under the largest budget deficit in our nation's history. The FY 2004 federal budget deficit was \$412 billion, or 3.6% of GDP. This is a dramatic turnaround from a federal budget surplus of 2.4% of GDP in FY 2000.

It's time that the Bush Administration face facts and budget responsibly—as past generations have. Previous administrations have taken the fiscally responsible route, and after an initial period of supplementals, budgeted for every war including World War II and Vietnam.

In addition to funding the war in the budget, we must ask a larger question: do our strategic objectives match our capabilities?

As Gordon Adams, a former White House budget official, points out, the military under the Bush administration is being used for everything from tsunami recovery, to counter-terrorism to full scale combat operations to military occupation, reconstruction and homeland defense.

Can we afford a strategy that makes the military responsible for all of America's forward engagement?

Adams points out “the bottom line of our current strategic planning is not just more forces, for longer time, in Iraq but more forces, in general, around the world.”

The answer to the funding problem cannot be to simply keep cutting transformational programs or robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Rep. Ellen Tauscher

It is also important that we consider counterterrorism and metrics for success.

The war on terror is not simply a question of body counts, but one of whether we are winning the war of ideas.

We may have captured or killed a third of Al Qaeda's top leadership but Bin Laden remains elusive. And from being our number one threat after 9-11, CIA Director Porter Goss says that Al-Qaeda is now "only one facet of the threat from a broader Sunni jihadist movement."

In Iraq, General Casey estimates that we killed or captured 15,000 fighters in the second half of 2004. Yet the head of Iraqi intelligence insisted that Iraq's insurgency consisted of 40,000 hardcore fighters and a total of more than 200,000 fighters. If that is the case, the administration's goal of training 200,000 Iraqi security forces by next fall is clearly inadequate.

CIA Director Goss also stated that "Iraq, while not a cause of extremism, has become a cause for extremists." That statement bears pondering.

How did we go from a single focus on Afghanistan to a situation where we are bogged down in another Muslim country which is not only a breeding ground - but a proving ground - for terrorists eager to earn their stripes while attacking American troops?

How did removing a dictator and his alleged arsenal of weapons of mass destruction turn into a war against a broader Sunni jihadist movement?

The President is correct to say, as he did earlier this month that "the best antidote to radicalism and terror is the tolerance rekindled in free societies." But peace and security must be part of those free societies.

The Iraqi candidates I met with in Jordan were pleased with Saddam's removal, but were deathly afraid of the chaotic security situation. One Iraqi woman told me about her son and bodyguard who were killed while serving as part of her protective detail. The Iraqi women I met are frustrated with America's inability to rebuild the country's economy, shattered first by Saddam's autocratic rule and second by the destructive shock and awe of our invasion.

The first step in matching objectives with capability is to curtail empty rhetoric.

The President's inaugural pledge to "end tyranny around the world" rings hollow when we fail to uphold the rule of law either in the cells of Abu Ghraib or those of Guantanamo.

Our promise to bring democracy and freedom to Iraq is undermined by our failure to demand the same of Pakistan and Russia.

This double standard builds resentment and makes it more difficult to achieve our foreign policy goals. While the promotion of democracy has always been in our strategic interest, we risk tripping ourselves with overblown rhetoric.

Elections in the Palestinian territories and in Iraq have changed the climate throughout the Middle East, spurring greater debate about constitutional reform, women's rights, and human rights. But the world has too often seen a backlash against democratic movements. I am skeptical of the investment in public diplomacy to improve our image worldwide.

Often, it is the policies we pursue that aggrieve our allies and our enemies—like rejecting the Kyoto Treaty, withdrawing from the ABM Treaty, rewarding authoritarian regimes—not the way these policies are presented.

The average Iraqi is probably less impressed that President Bush has hired Karen Hughes out of retirement to burnish our image in the Middle East than he would be if someone could just turn the electricity on in his home for more than four hours.

Winning the war on terror also means respecting the rule of law and the Geneva Conventions, if only to protect our servicemen who are deployed abroad in unprecedented numbers.

We need to increase the share we spend on foreign aid and make it a central part of our strategy to fight terror.

The regional combatant commanders understand this. My friend, General Jim Jones, head of European command, recently told the Armed Services Committee that “transnational extremists have demonstrated an interest in exploiting areas where nations are already struggling with resource scarcity, weak national institutions, poverty and inexperienced militaries.”

His counterpart for Pacific Command, Admiral Fallon said “our long term effort is focused on strengthening the region's democratic institutions' economic, social and physical security.”

One place to start is to support the findings of the British-convended Commission for Africa, which calls for an extra \$25 billion in annual aid for the continent. If the U.S. would provide \$12 billion of that sum it still would only represent 0.1 percent of the U.S. economy. But it would make a world of difference in an area where life expectancy has fallen to 46 years because of the AIDS crisis.

Lastly, we need a sea change in our approach to nonproliferation.

The greatest danger to the United States continues to be that nuclear material and technology fall into the hands of terrorists or rogue nations.

Unfortunately, the Bush administration has undermined the consensus against nuclear weapons.

The President is pursuing an ideologically driven agenda to rehabilitate nuclear weapons, erase the taboo that covered their use, and make them a centerpiece of our defense strategy.

The Pentagon has re-defined the terms of the debate: Nuclear weapons like the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator are no longer measured by how well they defeat specific real world threats but in terms of what abstract capability they might provide.

Reductions in the nuclear stockpile are no longer real reductions; they are reductions in deployed nuclear weapons.

The administration took no punitive action when it was discovered that Pakistan's top nuclear scientist had been running a black market in the world's most deadly weapons, sending mixed signals to all would-be proliferators. North Korea and Iran continue to develop their nuclear capabilities unchecked and India and Pakistan still threaten South Asia with nuclear conflict

There are several steps we should take in the long term:

- First, the administration must renew its commitment to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Since the signing of the Treaty, more countries have given up nuclear weapons than have begun them. Nuclear arsenals are also smaller than before due to the success of arms control regimes.
- We also need to support a verifiable fissile cutoff treaty and the eventual ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.
- In addition, it's critical that we increase funding for nonproliferation programs.
- And we must directly engage the world's most dangerous nuclear hotspots with all of the tools that we have at our disposal.

There are programs at the Pentagon, the State Department and the Energy Department that have the authority to spend resources outside of Russia and the former Soviet states to reduce the nuclear threat in countries like Pakistan. These agencies should make critical strides in this direction.

Some cooperative nonproliferation efforts are underway in Iraq and Libya and the United States recently agreed to assist Albania with the destruction of its chemical weapons.

There are other countries where some limited steps should be taken to develop or improve a threat reduction program. In India and Pakistan, first steps might focus on enhancing physical security and guard force reliability. In China, small-scale cooperation in the area of export-control and related issues has already begun.

As I said at the start, the challenges we are discussing today are among the most serious our country faces.

It is imperative that we get our hands and minds around the terrorist threat we face. And it is essential that we pursue military, diplomatic and economic policies that deal in a real and serious way with this threat.

Responsible budgeting, increasing the size of the military, increasing foreign aid and improving our nonproliferation efforts will not produce results today. However, over time they will

strengthen America's security posture and leave us in a better position to face tomorrow's threats.

I want to again thank General Meigs, Dean Wallerstein and Bill Banks for inviting me here today. I appreciate the opportunity to share my views with you and I look forward to answering any questions you have. Thank you.