



Ryszard Stemplowski

## Anti-Terrorism and Hegemony

The United States of America perceives trans-national terrorism (TnT) as a threat both to its internal security and to its role of hegemon. Its activities in the declared “war on terrorism” accelerate and modify the formulation of a new, comprehensive, post-Cold War and anti-terrorist strategy that includes the following three directions: (1) the introduction of new institutions and measures for direct prevention of TnT, and for prosecution; (2) the formulation of a new strategy of action at a global scale; and (3) the mobilisation of other states for cooperation in the implementation of American plans to combat terrorist organisations in the world. Such activities influence international politics and shape the role of hegemon in the world system.

New measures for TnT prevention and the prosecution of terrorists will have serious international implications if they involve an increase in state control over the flows of information, commodities, capital and people, as this might affect the international observance of Human Rights. It would be difficult for one government to criticise another for Internet censorship if they themselves wanted to control the Internet; it would be difficult to accuse other states of controlling bank accounts if one did it oneself, and so forth.

The USA’s new strategy will no longer emphasise nuclear deterrence, as terrorists and their resources are dispersed systems—they are not states with delineated borders and strategic resources whose location can be determined. Even in the case of Iraq, the country most often referred to as a *rogue state* and perceived by the majority of the American public as an appropriate

target for attack, a pre-emptive strike by the USA might bring a result that would be incompatible with the long-term objective. The overthrow of the current Iraqi regime and the destruction of its strategic resources could be a blow against the secular form of Islam and would strengthen religious fundamentalists in the Arab world. It is not known whether such an attack would be effective against Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. In addition, such an attack would weaken international pressure on India and Pakistan. And finally, a massive attack on Iraq does not at this time (yet?) have the explicit support of at least some EU states, notably the present coalition government in Germany. This does not imply agreement with the policies of Saddam Hussein. The Polish government cannot ignore the danger Saddam Hussein represents, but it might not have military intervention as its goal. Nevertheless, it should cooperate with the United States and the EU to avert the threat by all means available, even without the approval of some of the permanent Security Council members, in the case of a direct and real threat from Iraq.

The USA's new strategy cannot involve containment either, as was the case with its policy towards the USSR, because with TnT it is not possible to develop an operational definition of the target of such a strategy. Therefore, although it will not be confrontational in terms of inter-state relations, the mere fact of its departure from precisely formulated military and ideological principles of deterrence and containment does not make it, by the same token, an effective strategy for the hegemon.

There are no signs in the USA of focusing on the deep cutting structural roots of TnT, i.e. its economic and cultural origins. It is worth remembering that during the Cold War years, when the USA considered the threat from the USSR to be more grave than the danger now posed by TnT, the USA debated whether increased social radicalism and the appearance of revolutionary armed movements in Latin America were primarily a result of the activities of USSR agents or rather a result of Latin American underdevelopment and resultant poverty. It is not enough to say with hindsight that poverty occasionally breeds terrorism. It is necessary to answer the question why that poverty exists and what can be done to eradicate or alleviate it. Unfortunately, the vast majority of citizens of industrialised countries are not even aware of the terrible conditions in which hundreds of millions of people in the underdeveloped South happen to live—in Africa, Latin America and Asia. There are reasons for the present living

conditions of such huge masses of people. Part of the responsibility lies with the affluent societies. Suffice it to say that the global free market gives an edge to workers in the highly developed countries of the North at the expense of workers in underdeveloped countries; subsidies and customs tariffs protect the markets of the highly industrialised countries against goods from Southern countries; foreign debt has become a chronic condition, and so forth. Unequal development, i.e. the absence of sustainable development, is the main structural source of TnT. It is to be hoped that the September Earth Summit in Johannesburg will be more effective than the last one in Rio de Janeiro was.

In the meantime the activities of the USA are focused on direct war against terrorists, through (among others means) the transfer of anti-terrorist operations into the territories considered to be either the breeding ground or a sanctuary for terrorists. This is one of the reasons why the so-called anti-terrorist coalition is so important for the USA. This coalition is becoming a political tool for the USA. It is as yet poorly institutionalised and is a coalition only in rather a loose sense, but this is exactly what has helped American anti-terrorist activities to gain some sort of international legitimacy and what promotes the hegemony of the USA.

The direct combating of terrorism is, no doubt, essential. However, Europeans are considerably more sensitive to the issue of the structural origins of TnT and take them into account in their attitude to American hegemony; the attitude of the most important EU member states, however, is shaped by existing shared interests. The stance of other European countries is less important, but the policy of the Republic of Poland does not pass unnoticed. Poland has become involved on the side of the USA without reservation. The Sejm has adopted a solidarity resolution with the USA; last November the President of the Republic of Poland convened an anti-terrorist conference attended by representatives of eighteen states, the significance of which was emphasised at the UN by Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs; and our armed forces were involved in the Afghan operation. Poland has once again expressed its support for the development of cooperation between NATO and the Russian Federation and even more so in establishing good relations between the EU and the Russian Federation. President George W. Bush told President Aleksander Kwa niewski, during the latter's visit in Washington in July, that the USA appreciated Poland's participation in the war on terrorism and considered Poland to be a friend, an ally and a partner. The word "partner" is

particularly important in this language. Now it is important for us to become partners in establishing sustainable development on a global scale.

The policy of creating an anti-terrorist coalition promotes the hegemony of the USA, but the very need to pursue such a policy results from weakened hegemony. The terrorist attack of September 11—which was certainly successful—was indicative of a questioning of the hegemony of the USA. Despite appearances and the prevalent opinion, it seems that the end of the Cold War and the transformation of the bipolar power system into a unipolar system, with the United States as the only superpower, have not strengthened the hegemonic position of the USA. This is due to the fact, that with the fall of the bipolar system, the entire global system became pluralistic. The USA is still indisputably the strongest country in the world, but it is now finding it more difficult to play the role of leader.

The situation would probably be different were it not for the long-term influence of yet another process: the deterioration of the economic position of the USA in the World System over recent decades. America's share of world exports has fallen despite an increase in its total exports. The annual outflow from the USA of capital for direct investments has also experienced a dramatic increase, but its share in the global flow of such investment capital has dwindled and so has its share of the total value of foreign direct investments. The share of the American dollar in international trade has also decreased. Economic inequality in American society has intensified to a degree that reminds one of seventeenth-century Netherlands and nineteenth-century England, i.e. the periods preceding the gradual decline of each of these hegemonic powers. At the same time imports are rising and annual figures for deposits at American banks by citizens of foreign states are exceptionally high (approximately equal to the adverse trade balance of the USA). However, the USA maintains its leading position in patenting (the bulk of which concerns high-tech industries) and primary research (in terms of numbers of publications, quotes and Nobel Prizes) as well as R&D. The military dominance of the USA is more and more unassailable. This is the only superpower in the modern world.

But the possibility, however remote, of the ultimate decline and loss of its position as the sole hegemon may soon incline the USA to seek a new solution. This might comprise the creation of a new Atlantic community. However, to fulfil its role it cannot be based on bilateral relations between the USA and selected NATO/EU

member states. The role of an enlarged EU, which does not aspire to the role of the sole hegemon, would then consist in (collective) participation in the establishment of such a community. Other NAFTA states would join in. The new Atlantic community would be able to cope with any challenge and as a result a new hegemonic system would come into being. The process of creating such a community has already commenced. One of its pillars is the undoubted potential of ideas which were born in the USA and led this country to the present position of power.

After the Great Depression (1929–1933) the New York Stock Exchange became more important than the Stock Exchange in London, but if the two were to merge, the new institution would dominate the international market. NATO has to undergo expansion in terms of functionality, somehow or other. The euro and the dollar may become linked by the mutual monetary board of the central banks of the USA and the EU. The European Union will transform its member states through the unification of state functions at the level of participation in con-federal cooperation. It will be long before the coordination of cooperation within the new community is shaped by the harmonisation of competition with cooperation, perfection of TnT prevention and protection of Human Rights, and adjustment of everything to the new hegemonic system. The closest allies in the new hegemonic community will be the Russian Federation, India, Australia and Brazil, with the possible addition of Japan. The new community would lead to common acceptance of new standards of international law sanctioning intervention in defence of Human Rights and perfecting international cooperation in the control of the movement of information, capital, goods and people. Conditions would be created for the definition of the concept of world system management.

However, if the USA does not regain its former economic predominance, which is almost certain, and if its current tactical and unilateral approach to TnT does not change, which is highly probable, and the creation of a new Atlantic community does not succeed or is too slow, or is not adopted as an objective by the USA and the EU, then the phenomenon of American isolationism might emerge and most probably another country or a group of countries will begin to come to the fore in the world system.

The situation created by the attack of September 11, 2001, has facilitated cooperation between the USA and the Russian Federation, and in the case of the latter has also allowed public

confirmation of its strategy of rapprochement with the USA and the most important European states. As far as Russia's relations with the USA are concerned, this involves, among other things, exchange of important intelligence information, commencement of cooperation in terms of securing energy supplies, mutual acceptance of conditions allowing the United States to build a new antiballistic missile defence system and the stationing of American troops in some of the countries formed after the fall of the USSR, and the development of cooperation between NATO and the Russian Federation. Some Russian experts hold the view that cooperation in Afghanistan has brought the two countries closer strategically. This promotes the hegemony of the USA, but is also beneficial for the EU and other NATO states, and undoubtedly for the Russian Federation. Russians will be preoccupied with preserving the territorial integrity of the federation rather than worrying about its loss of imperial control over its immediate neighbours.

Relations between the Russian Federation and China have been subordinated to this strategy. The Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations, Friendship and Cooperation of July 2001 and the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation immediately preceding the above Treaty did not create an alliance, but aimed to promote economic cooperation (particularly the important export of Russian weapons and space technology) and the creation of a multi-polar world (implying an objection to the hegemony of the only superpower), leading one to expect a high level of uniformity with respect to the policy of the USA. But how different were the reactions of the Russian Federation and China to the September 11 attack! China demanded that the role of the UN Security Council be deemed to be of key importance in combating terrorism and most strongly objected to the construction of the American antiballistic missile defence system against the so-called rogue states. For other reasons (the territorial dispute with Japan, in the context of the conflict in Chechnya and the threat of similar internal conflicts), the Russian Federation will for a long time remain passive in relations with Japan, to the great detriment of Russia's strategic position and to the benefit of the USA's policy towards Japan.

While the Russian Federation's level of development disqualifies it as a rival for the USA, during his presidential campaign George W. Bush described China as a strategic competitor. However, since the elections, the President and his

administration have not been using this term. At a meeting with Jang Zemin (the “summit” of APEC countries in 2001), President Bush expressly stated that he considered China not an enemy, but a friend. An observer might wonder what he meant by these words. At any rate, the USA does not wish to antagonise China and has accepted its attempts to join the WTO. Apart from the series of well-known phenomena and events that have made the development of relations difficult in the past, the stance on Taiwan remains the major cause of dissent. Meanwhile, the USA is building a network of connections covering the majority of China’s neighbours, on the basis of bilateral relations. The fight against terrorism may facilitate it, and even Pakistan, an anti-India partner of China, has come under the influence of the USA. China’s position is currently shaped primarily by its sustained and rapid economic progress towards the creation of a market economy and the development of its armed forces, given the institutional development of the economy, which is closer to the European and American model than the Japanese and Korean one; and the war on terrorism may provide an excuse for pacification of the Uygurs in Xinjiang. Important relations connect China with the USA, Japan, India and the Russian Federation. Relations with the USA have priority as they are the most difficult, but in the long run Japan is the real challenge, because its position will undergo very dramatic changes, as will China’s position.

Japan is China’s biggest trading partner and the development of Southern and Eastern China would be considerably more difficult without the partnership with Japan. China is also receiving financial assistance from Japan in the form of loans which already amount to a total of 2.7 trillion (*sic*) yen. It is worth noting that, when this assistance amounted to 200 billion yens annually, China itself granted assistance to other countries amounting to 48 billion yen per annum on average. However, in recent years, instead of expressions of gratitude, the Japanese have more often heard criticisms levelled at the Japanese government because of the content of Japanese school history books or because of the visits of the Japanese Prime Minister to the Shintoist temple of Yasukuni, commemorating war-time acts by the Japanese. China has also expressed its discontent with Japan’s reaction to the September 11 attack, which consisted in changing the rules governing action by the Self-Defence Forces. It appears that Japanese public opinion resented Chinese criticism of school history books, i.e. criticism of Japan’s conduct during wartime hostilities against China. (It will

soon have to face China and Korea's compensation claims.) The Japanese government took this reaction of public opinion as an excuse to reduce its financial assistance to China this year, unofficially explaining this change by reference to the financial difficulties Japan was experiencing. Nevertheless, this year the Prime Minister is not going to the nationalists' temple and the day of Japan's capitulation will not be so officially commemorated.

For Japan, relations with the United States of America are most important. In terms of military security Japan is dependent on the USA. In economic terms it is its partner (half of Japan's trade with the industrialised countries is with the USA), with a persistent favourable trade balance for Japan.

The disequilibrium between Japan's military and its economic security is the result of the Second World War and the Japanese adaptive genius.

It is usual to emphasise that, unlike Germany, as a nation Japan has never entirely disowned its military and expansionist past. This has serious repercussions especially on its relations with China. There are also some Britons who cannot forget their military defeats and the treatment of British war prisoners. The attitude to the Japanese in the countries of Southern and Eastern Asia is ambivalent, as the rejection of Japanese dominance and the concept of a common sphere of welfare was once accompanied by a deeper aversion to European colonisers: the French and the British. Now rivalry between the USA, China and Japan is developing there, whereas the European presence is reflected in economic relations with the EU. Because (alongside their economic development) the countries of Southern and Eastern Asia are becoming more and more active in the political and international arena, the likelihood of their subordination to the United States is low. The question about the rivalry between Japan and China in this region is, however, becoming more and more important, but this rivalry is now taking place at the economic level and to the advantage of Japan—for the time being. Memories of the World War II in this region are receding into the background, but they will continue to be used as a tactical instrument of diplomacy, especially in relations involving the Korean states and Indonesia.

The USA does not assign China the same role as the former USSR, i.e. that of enemy, but at the same time there is no system in Asia capable of integrating Japan within itself, as the EU did with respect to Germany. Hence the dilemma in USA policy: how to

maintain its dominant position towards Japan and at the same time increase Japan's role in the war against terrorism?

Already, during the War in the Gulf War, Japan has expressed its solidarity with the United States and its allies by contributing 13 billion dollars to this operation. Instead of being met with gratitude, its policy was termed "checkbook diplomacy". Now, in response to the expectations of the USA after the attack of September 11, Japan's policy has been expressed in the introduction of changes to the rules of Self-Defence Forces and the commencement of preparations to introduce new rules for the announcement of states of emergency. Therefore, solidarity now consists in the development of the Self-Defence Forces and the extension of their remit to include actions outside Japan. Prime Minister Koizumi has travelled to China and the Republic of Korea to dispel any potential fears. Critics of this anti-terrorist policy, however, perceive it as an unconstitutional reconstruction of the Japanese Armed Forces. It can be viewed differently, however. As Japanese democracy is becoming stronger, the inevitability of the achievement of full sovereignty by the state of Japan is becoming more apparent. This is accompanied by the process of Japan expressing its economic strength in the form of military power. Japan views even its security policy as an instrument of economic expansion, as it is the second largest world economy (the yen does not play so important a role because the prices of Japanese export goods and services are given in dollars). Japan is experiencing a crisis, particularly as regards the functioning of financial institutions in relation to the regulation and amount of internal debt, but it will cope with it by continuing the modernisation process and pursuing a more and more active foreign policy. Japan also aspires to permanent membership of the UN Security Council. It is a G-7/G-8 member. It plays a major role in the ASEM, which as an EU member Poland will join. Incidentally, it should be noted that the recent visit of His Majesty the Emperor to Poland is a very small element—but politically a very necessary one—of its overall strategy.

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the opening-up of Japan to cooperation with the West. It was a semi-forced opening, which Japan wished to transform into relations with the world on Japanese terms. Its defeat in World War II led to another opening, which was initially established on American terms but later more and more on Japanese ones, especially in the areas of technology (innovativeness, the ability to adopt foreign technology, and

primary research) and economics. Now the third stage in the establishment of Japan's position in the global system may be opening. Can Japan become a pretender to the position of hegemon in the global system?

While the present hegemon, i.e. the USA, is being militarily attacked (TnT), the Far East's potential candidate for the hegemon is not being attacked at all. The present hegemon exports its culture, whereas the potential candidate does not, and there is no non-European France opposing the setting up of some kind of global Japanese mass culture. The exported culture of the hegemon leads to the obliteration of the identities of small groups, whereas this potential candidate recognises such identities and does not provoke resistance. Modernisation according to the models of western culture leads to the erosion of the institution of the family in its traditional shape and undermines the prevalent paternalism, whereas Asian values foster an opposing model and do not give rise to any objections among most of the world's population. To be more precise, the direction of change in Asia is similar to that of Europe or the USA, but the pace of transformation is considerably slower, and this allows for the acceptance of the new with few conflicts. The potential candidate for the role of hegemon does not arouse passion in the terrorist or an overt massive objection and it is not accused of military expansionism, promoting unequal growth or cultural imperialism. It is gaining, however, an ever-stronger economic and technological position, and by using the war on terrorism, it may paradoxically release itself from the military dominance of the USA. Will it manage to become a rival to the USA and a pretender to its hegemonic position before China does?

It appears to me that, instead of competing for hegemony with China against the USA, Japan will develop a strategic partnership with the USA and the EU, and will engage in foreign policy liaison primarily with the UN. Political democracy in Japan and the civil society, in conjunction with the free market and comprehensive international exchange, are bringing their results, whereas the "war on terrorism", which gives Japan an opportunity to develop its state defence function and to harmonise its economic policy with its security policy, will now increase the probability of creating the concept of such a partnership. This tendency would favour the movement for the global coalition of cultures and the creation of a new type of Atlantic community, i.e. the hegemonic duo of the USA and the EU.

Strategic development of such a hegemonic community is a postulate rather than a fact. USA plays the key role. Since Poland is a partner, it also has to bear it in mind, in order to give the concept of the anti-terrorist coalition a deeper and more positive meaning and to promote the American focus on cooperation. Sustainable development must involve everyone, as otherwise it will be impossible to achieve equilibrium. The coalition of cultures begins with the cultures close at hand, but it must include all cultures. This cannot be done single-handedly, even by the strongest state in the world<sup>1</sup>.

Source: *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, t. 2, nr 4 (8), 2002, p. 5–14.

---

<sup>1</sup> Publications of the Institute employees on trans-national terrorism in chronological order: R. Stemplowski, S. Dębski and a team of the Institute analysts, "Po terrorystycznym ataku w USA", (After the Terrorist Attack in the USA) *Biuletyn PISM*, No. 21-2001 [published on September 12 and 17, 2001]; H. Głębcki, "Azja środkowa po 11 września 2001 roku" (Middle Asia After September 11, 2001), *Biuletyn PISM*, No. 22-2001; K. Bałon, J. Dołga, R. Tarnogórski, "Akt terrorystyczny w Nowym Jorku oraz Waszyngtonie dnia 11 września 2001 roku. Aspekty prawne międzynarodowe", (The Terrorist Act in New York and Washington of September 11, 2001. Legal and International Aspects), *Biuletyn PISM*, No. 23-2001; J. Chodor, K. Chudy, J. Dołga, E. Posel-Czyż, "Zwalczanie terroryzmu w krajach Unii Europejskiej (RFN, Wielka Brytania, Hiszpania, Francja)" (Combating Terrorism in the European Union States [Germany, Great Britain, Spain and France]), *Biuletyn PISM*, No. 24-2001; R. Stemplowski, "Transnarodowa harmonizacja bezpieczeństwa i rozwoju ograniczy transnarodowy terroryzm", *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, vol. 1, No. 3 (3) 2001, p. 5–9, the English version: "Trans-national Harmonisation of Security and Development Will Curb Trans-national Terrorism", *The Polish Foreign Affairs Digest*, vol. 1, No. 1 (2) 2002, p. 139–143; S. Dębski, B. Górka-Winter (eds), "Perspektywy współdziałania Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z państwami Europy środkowej i Wschodniej w zakresie zapobiegania terroryzmowi i jego zwalczania" (Prospects of Cooperation of the Republic of Poland with Central and Eastern European States in Terrorism Prevention and Combat), *Biuletyn PISM*, No. 26-2001 [published on October 29, 2001]; A. Gradziuk, "Ekonomiczne skutki wydarzeń z 11 września 2001 roku dla Azji Południowo-Wschodniej" (Economic Consequences of the Events of September 11, 2001 for South-East Asia), *Biuletyn PISM*, No. 32-2001; B. Górka-Winter, "Stan przygotowania do obrony przed atakiem biologicznym" (State of Preparations for Defence against a Biological Attack), *Biuletyn PISM*, nr 78-2002; R. Stemplowski (ed.), *The Trans-national Terrorism in the World System Perspective*, PISM, Warsaw 2002; R. Stemplowski, "W stronę koalicji kultur", *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, vol. 2, No. 2 (6) 2002, p. 5-14; the English version "Towards the Coalition of Cultures", *The Polish Foreign Affairs Digest*, vol. 2, No. 2 (3), 2002, p. 145–155; in the press—E. Posel-Czyż, R. Stemplowski, *Responses in Poland to the September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 Attack in the United States*, materials from the conference Global Challenge—Regional Responses: Central Europe after 11<sup>th</sup> September, Budapest, June 14–15, 2002.