



## **WITH US OR AGAINST US**

### **4. The Problems of Success**

**MONTAGE: MEYER:** Load of balls. Complete Rubbish. There is no canine diplomacy over here. // **ARMITAGE:** We are often accused of being unilateralist, particularly by our European friends, and then when one asks the follow-up question to please point out the area in which we were being unilateralist, the conversation comes to a screeching halt

**ED: The war is won but success will bring its own problems. Afghanistan lies like a fabled land – it has been endlessly written about and analysed for so many weeks – and suddenly the borders are open. The Great Game is afoot – everyone scrambling for a presence in the newly liberated capital.**

**ED ON TODAY PROGRAMME:** We drove into Kabul from the East from Pakistan and the journey from the Khyber pass in an instructive lesson in this country's recent history. Almost immediately the hulks of some long abandoned Russian tanks mark what used to be the front line during the Soviet occupation. The local Mujahadeen commander in those days was we were told one Osama bin Laden.

**ED: The caretaker unlocks the gates of the British embassy in Kabul, and on November 19<sup>th</sup> a British envoy touches down at Bagram**

**ED: The key lies as much outside Afghanistan's borders as it does in Kabul. Each of Afghanistan's six neighbours has its own agenda – the United Nations now has the task of persuading them to work together. The Secretary General, Kofi Annan.**

**ANNAN:** If the countries had not co-operated it would have been difficult, because right from the beginning we said we should get the neighbours to stop backing different horses and work with us in moving everyone in the same direction and establish an interim administration, and miraculously it worked.

**ED: Events in Afghanistan are being closely watched in coalition capitals. History is already being written by the victors. The alliances America has built in central Asia were knocked up in a hurry in the rush to war – now comes the task of building something more enduring. Paul Wolfowitz is Donald Rumsfeld's number two at the Pentagon.**

**WOLFOWITZ:** One of the questions that we encountered was sometimes I think occasionally explicit - more often than not implied in some way - but well when the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan you withdrew your interests from this part of the world, is that going to happen when al-Qaeda is defeated because we still live here and we can't live with that kind of thing so they need some sense of long-term certainty. At the same time we don't want to exaggerate what our future role should be. We don't want to get a whole new set of players concerned that we're going back to playing the great game of central Asia of the 19<sup>th</sup> century - we're certainly not interested in that.

**ED: In London, Tony Blair's communications director Alastair Campbell is celebrating a war well spun. At the heart of the strategy, a co-operation with Washington so close that at times the White House and Downing Street seem like different arms of the same government.**

**CAMPBELL:** The prime minister was due to be in parliament and you know the news was coming through that the Taleban were just you know falling and falling and falling and falling. And we had sent through - through Tucker Eskew, the guy from the White House who was working here - we had given him a copy of what the prime minister intended to say and the word came back that the Americans felt, we weren't yet in a position to say that the Taleban had, you know had fallen as it were. So we changed it, we changed the tone, so that kind of discussion was happening all the time. (Trans-Atlantic editing almost?) Well it was just, you know, we were very open about that kind of thing and the lines that we were taking. Tucker was at every single morning meeting that I chair.

**ED: The British Prime Minister feels his strategy has been vindicated – that by enlisting so early in the American cause he has earned influence over American policy. The special relationship working as it should do.**

**BLAIR:** I think what happened in Afghanistan was a good example. I think there was some reluctance in certain quarters to have a Security Force in Afghanistan. There were issues to whether America would remain committed in the long term for that. Those issues are resolved. You will always find in this relationship between Britain and America, there will be parts on the Left, because they are anti-American, who will oppose it, and there will parts on

the Right who for very opportunistic reasons want to sow problems between a British Labour Prime Minister, and a Republican American President.

**ED: But there is unfinished business. In early December coalition forces are engaged in the mountains of Tora Bora - a rump of al-Qaeda troops are holding out in caves in the white mountains that run along the border with Pakistan and Osama bin Laden is said to be among them.**

**BBC ARCHIVE NEWS VC31172:** This was the last push - Afghan troops rolled into battle to finish off al-Qaeda from the ground. The Americans took care of the air. Today the blasts swept across these hilltops for miles. The top Afghan commander here told us al-Qaeda has been defeated. This is a big victory he said - we've killed two hundred men, we've captured all their bases, their caves, their ammunition and those who've escaped have nowhere left to hide.

**ED: But of bin Laden, there is no sign. The National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice.**

**RICE:** Well, I don't know if we know who did or did not escape at Tora Bora. (What's your instinct, though? Do you think he's still alive?) I don't know. I really don't. I think that he isn't commanding al-Qaeda in the way that he once was. It may be that he's alive, it may be that he isn't. But our goal always was to break up this network, and to deny it the kinds of benefits that an organisation like this gets from being on the territory of a country. They, in a sense, the al-Qaeda hijacked Afghanistan. And they had all the benefits of territoriality -- they had territory, they had training, they had financial networks, they had communication networks. Whatever they're doing, they're doing with far less efficiency.

**ED: The Pentagon has been congratulating itself on a new model for making war but Tora Bora leaves its leaders sounding defensive. After all, back in the earliest days of the war on terrorism the President said Osama bin Laden was "wanted, dead or alive". Paul Wolfowitz.**

**WOLFOWITZ:** From the beginning Rumsfeld in one of the first meetings I remember with the President, Rumsfeld emphasised 'Don't make this about one man. It's not about one man and if we focus on just one man it will be a big mistake'. Obviously if there is any one man who deserves to be brought to justice he's the one but it's a long list - there are a lot of others.

**ED: Washington's hawks and doves are already squaring up for a fight about the lessons of the campaign. Does it mean that America can now act alone, do as she pleases, wherever and whenever she pleases? In the months to come that argument will be at the heart of the debate about the next front in the war on terrorism - against Iraq. Richard Haass, the State Department's strategic thinker and Afghan crisis manager, has been publicly making the case for an America that listens to allies.**

**HAASS:** I think no doubt there are those who were saying we can do things on our own, but I think that probably exaggerates the reality. Yes, when it comes to fighting wars, we can do a great deal on our own. We have both the quality and the quantity of weaponry and skill on the part of our soldiers that's unmatched. But for any sizeable engagement, we still need

bases in the area, we still need over-flight rights. And then even in a place like Afghanistan, even if you can largely carry out the military phase of the crisis on your own, what about the post-military phase -- the diplomacy, the economic reconstruction, the peacekeeping in Afghanistan? So I think the lesson that somehow we have -- the United States has enormous unilateral options is simply the wrong lesson to learn. I think it's actually just the opposite.

**ED: It is December, and in the Middle East the Palestinians feel themselves the victims of a new mood in Washington. It is not so very long ago that they were being courted with talk of a Palestinian state. Now the phone isn't ringing. Nabil Sha'ath, is a senior member of Yasser Arafat's Cabinet.**

**SHA'ATH:**

**ARCHIVE:** Loaded with 50 tonnes of weapons including anti-tank missiles and computer rockets. Israel says they've been supplied by Iran for Yasser Arafat's Palestinian authority. It is an embarrassment even a humiliation for Arafat whose denials of personal knowledge of the shipment may both be true and also another indication that he may not be in full control.

**ED: But many of the allies America gathered in that remarkable coalition that brought together China, Russia and the nations of the Middle East fall away one by one.**

**MEDLEY: AMBASSADOR WANG YING-FAN** not use such language. **AMBASSADOR SERGEI LAVROV** We don't believe that this is the way to fight terrorism. **CROWN PRINCE ADVISOR ADEL AL-JUBEIR:** That was the view of the United States, we don't share it.

**ED: And viewed through the robust eyes of the number two at the American State Department, Richard Armitage – the implied threat is working wonders.**

**ARMITAGE:** We were actually quite surprised that the words "axis of evil" brought forth some sturm und drang it seemed so patently obvious to the naked eye as to not be worthy of much comment. But having said that, I'll note that the three members of the "axis of evil" club in recent months have all made some rather interesting gestures: the Iranians turned over certain al-Qaeda members to the Afghan Interim Authority; the North Koreans returned a two-year hostage, a Japanese reporter, to the Governor of Japan, and has indicated a willingness to talk to the United States; and the Iraqis have desperately sought to engage the United Nations in some sort of way to work themselves out of the cul de sac they put themselves in regarding UN inspectors. So it seems to me that the "axis of evil" comment worked.

**ED: But this is not just one of those rows among friends which will dissipate in the glow of the next successful adventure in diplomatic co-operation. It touches a raw nerve – opens a wound that will stay unhealed all summer long.**

**In a newspaper interview published on February 9th the EU External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten accuses America of an “absolutist and simplistic” stand towards the rest of the world – Europe, he says has a duty to stop Washington going into “unilateralist overdrive”.**

**PATTEN:** My remark was perhaps saltier than it would have been in other circumstances because a very nice, very competent journalist from the Guardian came in to interview me just after a senior official in the State Department had criticised Europe's attempts to begin to develop a relationship with the moderates in Iran and I thought that was a pretty silly bit of criticism so I wasn't in the most mellow of moods and it just didn't seem to me that whatever the different problems posed to the international community by North Korea, by Iraq, by Iran, that there was in any sense a sort of conspiracy between them. There are after all other governments which are probably bigger weapons proliferators and there are some others who have perhaps been as involved or more involved with terrorism. So I didn't think that as a statement of policy it was the best remark I had ever heard, though I recognise that sometimes things are said for rhetorical effect.

**ARMITAGE:** We are often accused of being unilateralist, particularly by our European friends, and then when one asks the follow-up question to please point out the area in which we were being unilateralist, the conversation comes to a screeching halt, because it's very difficult. I could ask you the same question. (Just -- well -- ) It came to a screeching halt again, too. Let the record show.

**ED: The Bush administration is relentless in pursuit of its agenda. The state department now has a senior official charged with public diplomacy in the Arab world, and Christopher Ross is sent on a tour of the Middle East. The message he comes back with is unambiguous – but it goes unheard in Washington.**

**ROSS:** Virtually every person, every group we talked to used the opportunity of meeting with us to communicate through us to Washington that there was great unhappiness in the Arab world over the way in which we were handling particularly the Palestinian-Israeli crisis and

what in the Arab world is seen - and I think what everywhere is seen - as the very real plight of the Palestinian people. (What was your response here when you brought that message back?) It confirmed the impression that people had. It did not result in a change of policy, but then we did not expect it to.

**ARAB LEAGUE SUMMIT:** [ARABIC + APPLAUSE DIPS]

**ED: March 27<sup>th</sup> leaders of the Arab world gather for a summit in Beirut. On the table a peace plan drawn up by Saudi Arabia. It is the brain child of Crown Prince Abdullah, and it is born of frustration with America's attitude. Adel al-Jubeir is the Crown Prince's advisor.**



**ED: Britain urges a different course of action – but this time it doesn't work. The coin forged through transatlantic co-operation cannot always buy the president's ear. The Foreign Secretary Jack Straw.**

threatened by Saddam Hussein I mean do you believe.. he has weapons of mass destruction.) Well no I don't, I don't feel threatened by anybody but I don't, he, well we do know that he's had chemical weapons, he's used those before on, in his war between Iraq and Iran and on, on the Kurds. Nuclear capability I really don't know, I doubt it, to be quite honest at this stage.

**ED: It is a fractious summer, and in the quiet of the holiday months each contribution to the debate rings loud around the world. Paul Wolfowitz at the Pentagon was one of those who began pushing the case for action against Iraq in the week immediately after September 11<sup>th</sup>.**

**WOLFOWITZ:** One can never be happy here if there are problems with allies and yet there are always problems with allies. We get over a lot of them.. . .But I am not surprised when issues are as big as the ones we're dealing with that they are going to be disagreements. However, the fact that we share very common perspectives about goals and what's desirable makes me much more optimistic. When the president talks about building a better world beyond the war in terrorism, he doesn't have a vision of the world that's radically different from what our European allies have so we are debating tactics and if one tactic is successful then everyone will come around and agree ok we are at the right end and if it is not successful then the . . .we try it and it's not successful then I guess we'll go and try something else.

**Ed: America still has apparently rock solid support from one quarter – and a new Bush-Blair doctrine is in the making – the concept of pre-emptive self defence.**

**BLAIR:** What has changed in relation to Iraq or any other part of the world is the clear understanding that if there is a threat it has to be dealt with and cannot be ignored, and we shouldn't wait until that threat then materialises. (A lot has been said about the impact of 11 September and what has happened since on relations between Britain and the United States, which have obviously been very close - some as you know have said too slavish from our point of view. Leaving the rhetoric aside, can you give me an illustration of perhaps one occasion when you feel you have influenced American policy as a result of that closeness, and one when they have influenced our policy.) First of all, our relationship with America is not one of us pleading with America and America deciding whether to change its mind or not. It's just not like that at all. It is a strategic partnership based on shared co-operation and values. We share basically the same world perspective and values. For example, when we worked with America to deliver a new 8.8(a)-0.2(ke1between Russi delpzG:O,t that as we)llse.

talk but to do then you get listened to. (What do you make of the poodle stories in the British Press?) Load of balls! Complete rubbish. You know, there is no canine diplomacy over here.

**ED:** As the summer draws to a close, the issue of Iraq dominates the diplomatic landscape – but look ahead and there are yet more battles to be fought in the service of the Bush Doctrine - that declaration of war on terrorism spelt made on the evening of September 11<sup>th</sup> itself. Iraq's neighbour Iran is also on the list of nations judged to be with the terrorists and not with America.

**RICE:** It is very clear that Iran is not on the side of peace. It can't say that it is worthy of

terrorism. We are party to the work against terrorism, but we have other items that we have to cater to.

**ED: Chris Patten is the EU's Commissioner for External Relations.**

**PATTEN:** I have a view of America and of America's international leadership which presupposes that Americans understand the importance if you are the biggest kid on the block of establishing a moral consensus for what you want to do, and I think America is much mightier when it does that, much mightier when it shows that, I think, beguiling humility.

**ED: America has terrorism on its mind – and Iraq in its sights.**

**BUSH AT UN:** We cannot stand by and do nothing while dangers gather. We must stand up for our security, and for the permanent rights and the hopes of mankind. By heritage and by choice, the United States of America will make that stand. And, delegates to the United Nations, you have the power to make that stand, as well.