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Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq

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Montaperto keenly states China's overarching political dilemma as: "How does a rising nation committed to achieving reunification and a world class level of economic development so order its external relations that it is able to achieve its objectives and not provoke the opposition of a suspicious great power that possesses overwhelming comprehensive national power?" Four particular issues are claimed as critical in defining the evolving character of the China-U.S. relationship: counterterrorism, Taiwan, participation in international and multilateral organizations, and proliferation and arms control. Arguably, this short list should include missile defense, which strikes directly at the credibility of China's deterrent, in turn striking at U.S. freedom of action, U.S. intentions vis-à-vis China, and the nature of the bilateral relationship. Nevertheless, Montaperto makes the most salient point in the chapter when he concludes that both the Taiwan issue and the future character of the U.S. nuclear posture (including missile defense) strike directly at Chinese vital interests. On these matters, Montaperto claims, Beijing will not compromise, putting these two issues in a transcendent category of their own in the bilateral relationship.

With characteristic clarity, Brad Roberts outlines both the broad paths open to China's nuclear force over the coming decades and identifies the external and internal factors that will drive the decision making in choosing what Beijing calculates is the appropriate path. This chapter is perhaps the best in the book, giving the most accurate assessments regarding the current shape of the Chinese force, as well as the motivators and challenges to its evolution and maturation.

Roberts makes the good point that regardless of external stimuli, such as U.S. development of missile defense, the Chinese force will modernize along a certain predictable baseline. Beyond that baseline, the greatest driver to the size and character of China's future nuclear force will be the exact character of the coevolving U.S. national missile defense architecture. Since that architecture's final shape is uncertain, so is, to a large extent, the final shape of China's nuclear force.

Finally, Roberts lays out three broad paths along which the Chinese nuclear force may evolve: one defined largely by modernization and incremental response to U.S. missile defense, another in which China "sprints" to a window of maximum strategic leverage (particularly with an eye to a Taiwan conflict) vis-à-vis the not-yet-fully-mature "new triad" of the 2003 Nuclear Posture Review, and a third that would posture China for Eurasian nuclear superiority and avoid any near-term competition with the United States. Roberts concludes by offering a bit of very penetrating advice on dissuasion: a prudent course for the United States, especially with respect to missile defense, might be characterized by some amount of transparent restraint, attempting in the process to engender reciprocal restraint by China in its nuclear force evolution.

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Fukuyama, Francis, ed. *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2006. 262pp. \$21.95

Given that Francis Fukuyama publicly retracted his support for the 2003 invasion of Iraq, it is not surprising that his edited volume *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq* should be generally critical of America's reconstruction efforts in those two countries. Still, readers of every perspective will find this volume a collection of well informed and insightful critiques of the American-led efforts at nation building in both countries, one that offers numerous useful caveats for the future.

Minxin Pei, Samia Amin, and Seth Garz offer an overview of the profound challenges of nation building. The record is not encouraging. For the fifteen reconstruction efforts America has concluded since 1989, a full eleven have failed to establish and sustain democratic governments. Based on their analysis, the oft-cited examples of Japan and Germany are not representative.

Also, institutional shortcomings abound in the U.S. government. Michèle Flournoy observes that, outside the military, the U.S. government lacks a systematized effort to identify lessons learned from past experiences. Learning from such failures, while politically awkward, may be of crucial importance in the long struggle against terrorism. Sadly, there are also many institutional failures. Fukuyama observes that, strikingly, the United States put more effort into preparing for oil fires and a refugee crisis for the 2003 invasion of Iraq, largely because these were the challenges that arose during the 1991 liberation of Kuwait.

One unfortunate aspect of the book's organization is the considerable overlap between the six chapters that focus on Iraq and Afghanistan. In the three chapters on Afghanistan, foci more

readily emerge. S. Fredrick Starr's discussion of the prelude to international involvement in Afghanistan, Marvin Weinbaum's assessment of the social impediments to reconstruction, and Larry Goodson's treatment of provincial reconstruction teams are all distinctive contributions.

The chapters on Iraq, however, are more vulnerable in this regard. There is certainly virtue in having three knowledgeable authors—Larry Diamond, Johanna Mendelson Forman, and James Dobbins—opine on all aspects of these occupations. However, when one reads for the third time that disbanding the Iraqi army was a serious mistake, the revelation has by then lost some of its punch.

Diamond's piece on Iraq, though critical of the Bush administration, must receive special consideration, given that Diamond worked with the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in early 2004. His criticisms, in particular of the CPA, are often telling. Still, he argues that many of the Iraqis he met genuinely crave opportunities for democratic political expression, and he believes that analysts and politicians who promote the idea of propping up a benevolent strongman "do not grasp the divisions and aspirations in Iraqi society."

Nation building can be a dangerously tempting enterprise; the clearly malignant nature of such governments as Saddam Hussein's can generate unwarranted optimism regarding a society's susceptibility to political reengineering. As Fukuyama argues, the United States must be "far more cautious" about how it engages in such vastly complicated endeavors.

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