



World war: Let's not make these mistakes again

By **WILLIAM C. KASHATUS**

LAST THURSDAY, when President Bush addressed the nation before a joint session of Congress, he declared war on terrorism, the most elusive enemy this country has ever known.

There are, however, some important lessons that the Bush administration can learn from the earlier "wars to end all wars" — WWI and WWII.

Be prepared to stop an aggressor before it attacks the United States. Contrary to the myth that FDR knew that the Japanese were going to attack Pearl Harbor but failed to warn the military commanders so that Americans would unite behind the war effort, the military ignored many warning signals because they underestimated the Japanese ability to attack a target as far away as Hawaii.

Only the smoldering remains of the U.S. battleships taught the so-called "greatest generation" to be more vigilant. That influenced U.S. policy for the rest of WWII,

Korea, Vietnam and the international confrontations of the 1960s.

Despite advances in military technology and intelligence, our government seems to have forgotten that lesson. The CIA says that it was aware of the presence in this country of Osama bin Laden's followers. If so, then they underestimated the ability of the terrorists to launch the devastating attacks of Sept. 11. We cannot afford such negligence again.

Build and maintain alliances based on collective interests. In WWI, President Wilson followed an independent course. He rejected military liaison with other nations, proposed peace terms without consulting the Allies and refused to compromise with the Senate. Not only did those failures cost Wilson U.S. involvement in the League of Nations, but paved the way for the WWII. Roosevelt learned from his mistakes.

During WWII, FDR agreed to military liaison, establishing an Anglo-American Joint Chiefs of Staff sitting in Washing-

ton. He and his successor, Harry Truman, stated war aims in clear terms that were understood and mostly accepted by the Allies. Both presidents treated the Senate with respect, thereby securing passage of the U.N. Charter by a vote of 89 to 2.

In the current crisis, the Bush administration must build an international coalition based on both collective security and economic support. Terrorist cells exist in as many as 60 nations, including the United States. We must cultivate the support of those countries by including them in the decision-making process in the war on terrorism, rather than blaming some of them for "harboring" extremist groups.

Be careful to protect the civil liberties of all Americans, especially Muslims. Rights and freedoms have been reduced or suspended during all wars. But there was a massive disregard for basic rights in both world wars. During WWI, Congress passed the Espionage Act and Sedition Act to discipline anyone who questioned administration policies. While

2,168 people were prosecuted and 1,000 convicted under these laws, that does not include the thousands of German-Americans who were unofficially persecuted.

And we all know about the 100,000 Japanese-Americans who were evacuated to internment camps during WWII.

We cannot succumb to the same thinking that would have us believe that all Muslims are terrorists. Many Muslim scholars and clerics have already condemned the attacks, pointing out that Islam is a peaceful religion, literally meaning "peaceful submission" to the will of Allah. Terrorism is a perversion of Islam.

To deny any American the basic freedoms guaranteed by our constitution is to denigrate the "freedom-loving way of life" the defense of which Mr. Bush says is the reason for our offensive against terrorism. ★

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