



Doctoral School of Applied Political Science

Sebestyén L. v. Gorka:

***Content and End-State-based Alteration in
the Practice of Political Violence since the
End of the Cold War:***

- the difference between the terrorism of the Cold War and the terrorism of al Qaeda: the rise of the “transcendental terrorist”

Ph.D. Dissertation

In-House Dissertation Adviser:

Prof. András Láncki
Head, Political Science Institute,
Corvinus University
Budapest, HUNGARY

External Dissertation Adviser:

Prof. Stephen Sloan
Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy,
Temple University
Philadelphia, USA

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DISSERTATION SUMMARY

For more than two generations the world was defined in international political terms by the label, the *Cold War*¹. This phrase was shorthand for many phenomena, including the division of the East and West into two blocs and the ideologically-based definition of said blocs. Whilst we cannot state that the whole of the world was divided in an iron-clad fashion into two separate camps – the neutral and non-aligned nations representing a sizeable constituency – the fact remains that for North America, Western Europe, the USSR and the Soviet controlled satellite nations, the bipolarity of the Cold War geostrategic environment had an overarching impact upon several areas of policy, including national security, foreign affairs, defence and attitudes to the use of force.

The influence of the bipolar stand-off had a significant shaping effect with regard to how government was organised on both sides of the Iron Curtain and on the ways in which threat perceptions were managed and influenced national policies concerning security. Fundamentally, the effect can be summarised as follows:

Internally: National governments secured the law and order and domestic stability of their state system primarily through the agency of the police (or militia). These authorities were mandated to fight common crime and, in the West, to assist in the fight against terrorism. Additionally a threat was posed by the intelligence agents and subversives of the other bloc. As a result the domestic element of this threat was responded to with counter-intelligence agencies.

Externally: The threat of a conventional war (World War III) meant that the armed forces of each bloc had to prepare for a possible bloc on bloc conflict in which classic concepts of territorial defence against an outside aggressor were central. The external threat was dealt with fundamentally by means of intelligence. It was not

¹ The exact derivation and genesis of the phrase Cold War is disputed. Nevertheless, the first usage of the related seminal term, the *Iron Curtain*, is famously accredited to former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill during a speech he gave in Fulton Missouri immediately after the end of World War II.

adequate to simply prepare domestically for a war with the other bloc. To be able to deter and to prepare against the opposition it was necessary to gather pertinent information (intelligence) on the enemy. This intelligence could be either technical and military in nature – for example the nature and capabilities of a new piece of military equipment fielded by the opposing army – or political and economic, such as the inner workings and intentions of the enemy’s political elite, or government and the state given industrial sectors. This distinction led to the fact that each type of information was gathered by a separate authority, the former being military intelligence² and the latter being civilian intelligence.³

Whilst there were at times overlaps and problems on the periphery of the various mandates, on the whole these demarcations functioned well in practice, at least on the western side of the Iron Curtain. The army prepared for war, the police maintained domestic stability (law and order) and the military and civilian intelligence authorities fed important information into the decisionmaking apparatus of the political and military elites.

Now, however, we must recognise that the environmental conditions that so determined the architecture of national security have either disappeared or been radically altered in the last 17 years since the systemic changes in Central and Eastern Europe that represented the end of the Cold War. We can no longer speak coherently of opposing blocs, either in the military or ideological sense. The West’s national and international security apparatus – the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation included – was predicated upon the existence of a very specific enemy: the USSR and the Warsaw Pact. Neither political construct exists today, the Warsaw Pact having been dissolved at the initiative of the first post-Communist Prime Minister of Hungary, József Antall, and the USSR having dissolved itself on Christmas Day 1991, to be replaced by a multitude of independent nations and the much smaller Russian Federation. Since the historic events of 1989-91, the evolution

² For example in the US, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), or the Second Directorate of the General Staff in Communist Hungary.

³ For example the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in the US and MI6 in the United Kingdom.

of the international security environment has continued at a fair pace, to the point at which several former Communist satellite states of the USSR, Hungary included, are full status members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the premier of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, is seemingly one of the closest allies of the world's sole remaining superpower, the USA.

Since it seems that the geopolitical environment has altered so radically, the question of what exactly then does national security mean and what are the new threats naturally arise. We know that the threat of a politically driven WWII-type conflict is no longer the driving issue. For several years after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the practitioners of national security suffered a malaise of competing and often less than fully credible theories being foisted upon them by the academic world. Whilst some of these attempts to explain the post-Cold War system made their authors very rich and famous⁴, none of them enjoyed unequivocal and unanimous recognition on a scale comparable to the universally accepted description of the previous four decades as a bipolar system of competing ideological blocs. There is one important reason for this: there was no overarching threat as there had been under the Cold War. That is not to say that there was an absence of threats to national security. There were many such perceived challenges.

⁴ The most influential attempts to make the world more understandable after the loss of the 'Red Menace' were Francis Fukuyama's concept of 'The End of History', which posited the glorious victory of "market-democracy" over all and Samuel P. Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' argument that future conflict would be religiously or culturally defined. See Francis Fukuyama: "*The End of History*", *The National Interest*, Summer 1989 and Samuel Huntington: "*The Clash of Civilizations*", *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993, vol.72, no.3, or the two books that grew from each essay.

For the sake of accuracy it should be noted, however, that the modern, post Cold War theory of civilisational clash did not begin with Huntington. It was first internationally coined by the leading western scholar of matters Muslim, Bernard Lewis. A controversial figure, who will be discussed later in this study, Lewis wrote at length on the concept in a piece entitled "*Roots of Muslim Rage*" in the September 1990 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*. The article was reprinted in the Summer 2001-2002 issue of *Policy* and can be accessed at <http://www.cis.org.au/policy/summer01-02/polsumm01-3.pdf>. (All footnoted internet references are correct as of September 2007)

What then should governments and their authorities be tasked to do with regards to securing the safety of their populations? This question was not an easy one to answer, at least not prior to September 11th 2001 due to the many choices. The list of threats and new tasks included:

- ethnic cleansing
- mass migration
- environmental disaster
- peacekeeping
- information warfare
- proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)
- resource conflict (water and oil foremostly)
- so-called "rogue nations"
- religious fundamentalism (including radical sects)
- China
- Pandemic disease (such as AIDS or Avian Flu)
- international organised crime
- terrorism

The problem with this list was firstly its length in comparison to the far simpler and coherent threat perception and mission statement of the Cold War environment, and secondly, that until recently there was heated debate as to how one should prioritise its elements. What should nations focus their attention on more, ethnic cleansing or organised crime, WMD or environmental catastrophe? There was no clear sense of whether one threat was more overarching than all the others.

Since September 11th 2001, however, there seems to have been a change in threat perceptions, at least from the point of view of the United States, NATO's leading member and the only post-Cold War superpower. After the coordinated attacks that

left almost 3,000 innocents dead, this most influential of nations has decided that the geostrategic environment has a new order to it, that a new form of globalised, “hyper-terrorism”⁵ fuelled by Islamic extremism is the new overarching threat to the security of the western world, and that from now on a country must be judged as good or evil based solely on its stance with regard to the new “*Global War on Terrorism*” (GWOT). September 11th was said by many to provide the clarity with which the new geostrategic environment can be described and understood. To quote Charles Krauthammer, transnational terrorist groups⁶ such as al Qaeda are now the overarching concern of national security and pose “an existential threat”⁷ to the United States and its allies.

FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES

The primary supposition of this dissertation is that the United States of America’s current threat perception is valid. It is not my purpose here to judge the veracity of this assessment, whether or not hyper-terrorism is or is not the most important post-Cold War threat. Central to this paper is the question of what exactly is this new

⁵ A term first coined by the French security analyst François Heisbourg. The term Hyper-terrorism is meant to communicate the assessment that groups such as Osama bin Laden’s al Qaeda are radically more capable and therefore more of a threat to democratic governments than previous “more classic” terrorist groups, that they are interested in mass casualty attacks. See Heisbourg's influential yet rather apocalyptic work: *La fin de l'Occident? L'Amérique, l'Europe et le Moyen-Orient*, [The End of the West? America, Europe, and the Middle East], Odile Jacob, Paris, 2005 and Sebestyén L. v. Gorka: “*Hyper-Terrorism*”: *the Globalisation of Terror*” JANES Terrorism and Security Monitor, Special Report, JANES, April 2003.

⁶ Unfortunately the adjectives most often used to pin-point the existential threat so cited are Muslim, Islamic or Islamist terrorism, with Global Jihadism becoming more and more popular as well. All of these descriptions do a great disservice to law-abiding Muslims everywhere and also add an undeserved sense of quasi religious legitimacy to murderous terrorists that have little in common with the teachings of the Koran or Mohammed. As a result I will shy away from using such popular yet inflammatory phrases and will employ what I believe to more accurate labels, such as *transcendentally informed terrorists*.

⁷ See the various pieces by Krauthammer in the National Interest, such as: “*Neoliberalism and Foreign Policy*”, The National Interest, Fall 2004. Excerpt available at www.inthenationalinterest.com/Articles/October2004/October2004Krauthammer.html.

threat and how new is it really. In order to answer these questions it is first necessary to grasp the key term and to come to terms with it. The word *terrorism* seems so familiar. We see it every day in the news, during discussions, but do we really know what it means?

The first fundamental problem with any study of the phenomenon of terrorism is the inadequacy of the label and the lack of a long-established school of study of terrorism. To begin with it must be recognised that the word terrorism is in no way a value-free and scientifically discrete term. When used it bears with it a subjective loading which means that the person who calls someone else a terrorist is making a moral judgement, not just a description. Secondly, as a field of scientific study, research into terrorism has been an orphan child for too long. Surprisingly the systematic study of the phenomenon did not begin in earnest until approximately 35 years ago. Even then academia was unsure as to where to place terrorism. It went from being considered an area for analysis by historians, to a field of criminology or sociology and so forth. Only recently has the field been truly adopted and made a sub-set of political science. In doing so it was recognised that the term terrorism was not scientific enough, or neutral enough and therefore today we speak rather of the study of *political violence*.

But still the question remains, what do political scientists understand today by the term political violence, or terrorism? Unfortunately, in part as a result of the messy history of the study of the phenomenon and other more political factors, today there are a multitude, scores of definitions of what terrorism is and there is no universal agreement at all on the subject.⁸

This dissertation deals in some detail with the struggle to arrive at a definition for terrorism and will provide its own recommendation. At this preliminary stage I wish to simply list several characteristics or elements I believe to be essential components. Subsequently I am of the opinion that modern terrorism, or political violence, must demonstrate some or all of the following elements:

⁸ For example, the FBI has one definition, so does the PENTAGON, as does the British Criminal Code, or the French Criminal Code, just to name a few existing definitions.

- there must be a political or religious goal or end-state in the minds of the group perpetrating a terrorist act
- terrorism must involve the use or the threat of the use of violence
- terrorists do not follow the recognised laws of war
- one can only speak of terrorism if it is being executed by a minority in opposition to a legitimate government, or majority
- the inculcation of fear in a populace is a core element of terrorism. As a result the media, electronic and otherwise, is of great use to the terrorist in spreading his message of intimidation.⁹

In addition to this quasi-definition it should be noted that today there exist two schools of thoughts within the realm of study of political violence with regard to who can be deemed a terrorist. The first school sees the label of terrorist as having application only with regard to non-state actors and groups, such as the Provisional IRA, Basque ETA and al Qaeda. Others see the label as having application not only with respect to sub-state groups but to states and leaders also, examples being Pol Pott, Stalin and Hitler. I tend to believe that it is simpler to understand the latter group as dictators that use tools of terror, and reserve the label of terrorist for non-state formations, but there is no ultimate decision yet within the field and this is a subjective decision. It should be remembered, however, that any definition of terrorism is only useful in so much as it does not apply to phenomena we would otherwise not wish to label as such. Subsequently, any good definition must not be so broad as to be applicable to acts of common crime, for example, whose motives are purely financial and have no political or ideological component.

⁹ Brian Jenkins the leading terrorism expert is famous for stating that the modern terrorist is not interested in having as many people as possible die as a result of his acts, but is interested far more in having as many people as possible watching his actions (via the media) in order to have his message be communicated as wide as possible. Discussions with Dr. Jenkins, Orlando, Florida, November 2nd-5th 2005. See also footnote 14 below.

DISSERTATION HYPOTHESIS

In studying the phenomenon of political violence for well over a decade now, I have come to the conclusion that existing classifications of terrorism are inadequate. The variety demonstrated by various groups and actors has led me to the conclusion that one must employ a new additional categorisation when discussing groups that employ methods of political violence in the post-Cold War environment. I have labelled the two sub-divisions of terrorist, the Rational and Pragmatic and the Irrational, or Transcendental Terrorist and define them as follows:

RATIONAL, PRAGMATIC TERRORIST

The rational terrorist organisation has as its ultimate goal the realisation of a state of affairs that is fundamentally feasible and realistic. As a result there is the possibility for a political or diplomatic solution to the root grievance. The opposing government can – should it so wish – choose to negotiate with such a group. (Examples include the Provisional IRA, ETA and the PLO).

IRRATIONAL, TRANSCENDENTAL TERRORIST

The irrational terrorist has as his end goal the realisation of a state-of-affairs that is not obviously feasible or realistic and which is completely antithetic to the opposing government. There is no possibility for a political resolution or even negotiations. (Example: the Aum Shinrykio destructive cult of Japan that executed the poison gas attack on the Tokyo metro in 1995¹⁰).

¹⁰ The sarin gas attack executed on the Tokyo metro by Aum in 1995 was in fact preceded by several unsuccessful biological agent attacks prepared by the private laboratories the cult had established with millions of dollars of its funds. For a journalistic account of the history of the cult see David E. Kaplan and Andrew Marshal: *“The Cult at the End of the World”*, Arrow Books, London, 1996. For a scholarly and detailed analysis see the relevant section in Richard A. Falkenrath, Robert D. Newman and Bradley A. Thayer: *“America’s Achilles’ Heel: nuclear, biological, and chemical terrorism and covert attack”*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1998.

My Hypothesis is fourfold:

1. *Irrational terrorist actors have become more numerous since the cessation of the Cold War*
2. *Governments are sorely limited in the selection of tools that can be used in the face of such actors*
3. *The Irrational or Transcendentally informed terrorist represents a wholly different category of threat, since due to the fact that he is completely uninterested in political resolution, he can justify the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction.*
4. *Osama bin Laden typifies the new threat and poses a challenge which we cannot adequately deal with given existing Westphalian state structures and national security divisions of labour.*

My dissertation validates these hypotheses by demonstrating:

- a) **How national security has evolved as a function of the modern nation-state.**
- b) **What the difference is between the geostrategic environments of the Cold War and the post-September 11th 2001 state-of-affairs.**
- c) **Who Osama bin Laden is and how novel an organisation al Qaeda is and,**
- d) **What should be done to reform Westphalian security architectures so as to make them applicable to the new threat environment that has been shaped by the rise of the Irrational/Transcendental Actor and the globalisation of security.**

My conclusion will be that the existing hierarchical nation-state structures which were created as a by-product of the establishment of the modern nation-state must be flattened and made interdepartmental (SuperPurple). Additionally they must be refocused to be able to function internationally with our agencies of other countries, if we are to be able to manage the transnational threat to our safety that globalised hyper-terrorism represents. †

† **A Note on Sources:** As is noted in the main body of this text, the systematic study of the phenomenon of terrorism surprisingly only began very recently in historical terms, in truth and in earnest only from the 1970s onwards. Additionally, whilst there are exceptions (foremostly French writers, some of which are cited), the vast majority of specialist literature in this field derives from the world of Anglo-Saxon political science. Therefore, although this dissertation is being submitted to a Hungarian educational institution as part of a Hungarian doctoral program, the reader will see that the vast majority of citations are from British or American writers and sources since the study of terrorism is not a developed field in Hungary and most Hungarian language publications on the topic are translations of English-language works or were written for the general public and not the scientific community. Where I do touch upon issues less part of the core canon - such as the historical evolution of the nation-state - I will make recourse to relevant Hungarian authors, (such as Jenő Szűcs, for example).

INTRODUCTION

*"Whatever blood is poured onto the battlefield could be wasted
if we don't follow it up with understanding what victory is."*

General Anthony Zinni

"How Do We Overhaul the Nation's Defense to Win the Next War?"¹¹

National security understood as a concept that defines a set of activities to be executed by the state has - it is argued - changed in meaning considerably in the last fifteen or so years. The loss of the stabilised overarching bipolarity that was the international system of the Cold War and the loss of nuclear deterrence as a practical tool has resulted in a challenge to established ways of providing for national security. At the same time, in place of Cold War bipolarity, it can be said that a new level of globalisation has defined the evolution of western civilisation¹².

Unfortunately, with the advent of modern history's worst terror event: al Qaeda's trifold attack of September 11th 2001 (or simply '9/11'), it may also be argued that the further spread of Western culture and business interests, in other words "globalisation", has not only acted as a catalyst for extremist, fundamentalist terrorism, but has also in its own way facilitated the spread of organisations such as

¹¹ Address to Forum 2003, Marine Corps Association and the U.S. Naval Institute. <http://www.mca-usniforum.org/forum03zinni.htm>. Zinni continued the address by saying:

"There's only one time in our history that we really, truly understood [victory]. Harry Truman and George Marshall understood it. Woodrow Wilson tried to get us to understand it, but we refused and we were doomed to fight again in a second great war. We didn't understand it after the collapse of the Soviet Union. And we have failed in Vietnam, in places like Somalia; and we're in danger of failing again, to get it and to understand itwe have got an entire region of the world that is chaotic and in turmoil, and we have just seen the beginnings of it. For decades more, we're going to be dealing with this problem. You're going to be fighting terrorists, you're going to be fighting against failed or incapable states that are sanctuaries for problems. You're going to try to rebuild nations. You're going to deal with crises and threats that threaten our people and our property. And it's all going to be mixed into one big bag. "

¹² It should be noted that globalisation as discussed today is not a novel phenomenon. Every instance of technological advance that has ramifications for speed of travel and communications can be seen as an instance of heightened globalisation, be it the invention of the steam engine, the telegraph or the jet airliner.

al Qaeda and helped increase their deadliness. In dealing with this new, globally enabled threat, we must identify the nature of the enemy, his aims and thought processes, if we are to defend ourselves effectively against similar attacks.

Post Cold War Trends

Whilst the previous threat of strategic thermonuclear exchange under a World War Three (WWIII) scenario no longer obtains, one national security task-set has been inherited from the Cold War era, namely, fighting international terrorism. Whilst superficially the characteristics of terrorist organisations and a terrorist atrocities appear to be unchanged, under closer scrutiny there are several quite evident transformative phenomena that allow one to differentiate between the terrorism of the Cold War and much of today's political violence.

To begin with there has been a resurgence in terrorism that is not purely political in nature. The purely ideologically motivated and politically driven terrorism of the 1970s and 80s is seemingly becoming rarer and rarer. The classic terror groups represented by the likes of the Provisional IRA (PIRA) or ETA are waning in significance. Or at least they are being challenged in their monopoly of political violence by groups with religious or even apocalyptic missions that are not country or region specific. The most shocking of examples of this evolution prior to 9/11 was the Japanese cult of Aum Shinrykio, whose claim to fame is that of being the first non-state actor to successfully deploy a chemical weapon against innocent civilians. This group had as its ultimate aim a global usurpation of power through a series of chemical and biological weapon attacks, after which the cult would globally prepare for the apocalypse predicted by the cult's half-blind prophet/leader Shoko Asahara.

After this arguably seminal event, Aum's sarin attack on the Tokyo subway in 1995, came September the 11th, an attack which was ingenious in so far as in this case a weapon of mass destruction's (WMD) lethality was extracted from technology that was otherwise innocuous, not a weapon at all, but a form of mass transit (the jet

airliner). Together these attacks describe a proto-trend that is supported by quantitative statistics pertaining to terror attacks in the last decade.

If one compares annual data concerning attacks against US interests globally (America being the prime target of international terrorism), it is clear that the frequency of individual terrorist attacks has been dropping gradually since the end of the Cold War, yet the lethality of subsequent attacks is increasing¹³. This bucks the popular observation made by perhaps the most famous living terrorism analyst, Brian Jenkins, that terrorists are less interested in having a lot of people die, but rather “in having a lot of people watching”¹⁴. This move to greater lethality by a handful of actors leads some to conclude that in the search for “more bang for your buck” it is inevitable that sooner or later terrorists will seek WMD capability. This will be discussed later.

These are not the only observable metamorphoses. Together, al Qaeda and Aum can be taken as examples of a return to religiously or apocalyptically motivated terrorism, as opposed to solely politically motivated violence. Interestingly such groups are well known in the grander scheme of terrorist history, the Zealots, Thuggees and Assassins being the most famous of examples but their like have been mostly conspicuous in their absence during the modern phase of terrorism’s evolution. The return of such actors is significant in that such groups are more likely to have aims that are less regionally specific, aims which are more global in nature. Aum’s have already been discussed. In the case of al Qaeda, whilst Osama bin Laden has at times made very specific, geographically delimited demands (most often in connection with removal of US troops from Saudi soil and the establishment of a free and independent Palestine) these demands fit into the larger declarative aim

¹³ For example, if one treats 1995, with the Tokyo metro Sarin gas attack and the Oklahoma City bombing as the exception to the rule, then between 1992 and 1997, the average number of victims of a terrorist attack was 4.46. For the years 1998 until 2003, the average number of terrorist victims per attack jumped to 13.71. In 1992 the number of victims per attack was 2. In 2003, the number was 20.5 victims per terrorist attack. See the appendices to the annual reports by the US State Department entitled reports “*Patterns of Global Terrorism*” and the summary table at Appendix I.

¹⁴ This is part of Jenkin’s broader description of “terrorism as theatre.”

of destroying all of Western civilisation as it is deemed by bin Laden to be heretical and antithetical to Islam. As a result bin Laden and his ilk apparently obfuscate the line between purely political and purely faith-based violence.

The resurgence of religiously or apocalyptically motivated actors is all the more significant because groups with such holistic, faith-based world views and aims must be handled in a different fashion by the authorities than those with purely political goals and motivations. A terror group with “rational” and feasible goals, such as the annexation of Northern Ireland by Eire, or the creation of an independent Basque-land, can in fact be negotiated with. There exist tools other than law enforcement or armed force with which to handle such actors, such as third party intermediary intercession or secret negotiations between the terrorists and the government. We have seen this in the case of PIRA and the Good Friday Accords, for example. But a terrorist group which extols global demands which can never be feasibly achieved can only be responded to with force and interdiction. The state is sorely limited in the tools it can deploy against such enemies.

A third set of phenomena regards targeting. Here it may be too early to prove the existence of a large-scale trend, but with the second and successful attempt against the World Trade Centre (WTC), - following the earlier truck-bomb attempt in 1993 - al Qaeda at least, has demonstrated a determination to attack highly symbolic targets. This author believes the logic behind this tactic is clear. Terrorism is, like guerrilla warfare, always the tool of choice of weaker actors that cannot win a stand-up fight against their nation state adversary. As a result they will rarely, if ever, be in a position to exact lethal damage to the vital interests or functioning of the state they have pitted themselves against. This is why fear has to be the overarching goal, a fear which can be directed as a tool in applying greater and greater political pressure upon the targeted authorities until policies are changed. In this inculcation of fear, the attack of universally recognisable symbols – such as the Pentagon and WTC – is invaluable, especially in this age of live, global cable and satellite news services. Thanks to the likes of CNN, NBC, BBC, etc., Osama bin Laden was able to send his message of fear to as wide an audience as possible in the fastest time imaginable. Add to this last element of media exploitation, the recent rise of media outlets which

challenge the ‘white man’s’ news monopoly, e.g. Al-Arabiya and al Jazeera Television, and we now have channels which in fact may be favourable to the terrorist and act as a force-multiplier in the globalisation of his message¹⁵.

The New International Scene

It is difficult to think of a terrorist group that can vie in global reach with al Qaeda. Yes, the PLO and other Arab terror groups had and still have international connections. Yes the PIRA was able to operate in both Northern Ireland and the UK mainland and on the continent, as well as depend upon strong support from NORAD in the United States. Yet the stretch of these groups pale by comparison to the current master of so-called hyper-terrorism, Osama bin Laden.

Growing as it did out of the Arab Service Bureau (MAK) and the recruitment of mujahedeen from all over the globe, al Qaeda was international from the start. Then there came the various headquarters and training facilities established one after another in Pakistan, the Sudan and Afghanistan. Of course these had to be moved due to political and international pressures, yet the ability to “up sticks” so often and remain functional demonstrates distinct flexibility and makes for a very international trail of operations. Then, of course, there is the way in which al Qaeda’s operatives, after initial training, were globally dispersed. Post 9/11 arrests in the UK, France, Germany and Italy reinforce this attribute of global flexibility. But this flexibility, this globalisation is not limited to safe-houses and cells in the West but, according to scholarly and unclassified Intelligence Community (IC) accounts, the organisation, functioning as a conglomeration of various previous groupings, was by 2001 present

¹⁵ The significance of this latter point must not be underestimated. Here it is sufficient to note the exclusivity al Jazeera enjoys with regard to footage and recordings of bin Laden as well as the gulf between how Western networks and the new Arab networks covered the fall of the Baghdad regime and its aftermath. One group focused on the toppling of Hussein’s statues and the rejoicing of average Iraqis, whilst the other preferred to emphasise the looting and ensuing chaos that liberation brought, playing into the hands of anti-American, anti-Western propaganda.

in no less than 40 other nations or regions spread judiciously over the whole globe, to include: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bahrain, Beirut, Bosnia, Chechnya, China, Dagestan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Indonesia, Jordan, Kashmir, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Morocco, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syria, Tanzania, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Uzbekistan.

This level of international diffusion, not only in the history of the organisation's creation, but also in the dispersion of its operatives, is paradoxically not reflected in the "so-called" global response to this new type of terror organisation. As witnessed by the fracas within NATO over the invasion of Iraq, there is a clear lack of convergence within established security architectures with regards to current threat perceptions. Washington is convinced of the veracity of assessments based upon concepts of hyper-terrorism: political violence with a global reach that aspires to WMD capability. Its formerly most reliable allies, with the exception of the UK and Australia, tend to disagree in this threat assessment, or at least in the tools to be employed against it, especially with regard to any unilateral use of force outside established international frameworks such as the United Nations and justified solely by the logic of "pre-emptive defence", the removal of a given danger prior to its becoming a fully developed threat.

This division may in fact be exactly what al Qaeda wished to achieve with the string of attacks that culminated with 9/11. By focusing almost exclusively on the US in its high exposure attacks, it was inevitable that there would eventually be a divergence in threat perceptions, in feelings of vulnerability amongst the allies within NATO, and that, given its superpower status, Washington would unilaterally react with force despite this difference of opinion. In doing so the US is acted altogether understandably but in ways that not only weaken its international relations to otherwise friendly nations, but in ways which reinforce existing claims that the conflicts of the post Cold War era will be more inter-cultural, or inter-civilisational than ones based on ideology or differences between nations states.

While this author does not agree with the scenario of “civilisational clash” as made famous by Harvard’s Samuel Huntington, (most especially given the fact that in a globalised world most Arab and Muslim nations must maintain healthy relations with the US and the West, or otherwise commit economic and trade suicide), it is likely that through giving the appearance of being on a crusade in which the Stars and Stripes is one of the most often used tools, the US contributes to pushing the otherwise undecided more closely into bin Laden’s camp, at least as passive supporters or just as sympathisers.

Whilst in truth it would be an exaggeration to accuse the US of being an out-and-out empire, since in the vast majority of countries where it is militarily active the US is there at the behest of the given government and always downsizes its engagement as soon as internal stability is arrived at¹⁶, these nuances are often lost on publics which have limited access to international information, or only to distorted versions of history and current affairs. Nevertheless, the question persists that although the elites of most Arab or Muslim countries are fully cognoscente of the need to maintain good relations with the rich nations of the West and North, the Arab and Muslim world still has a perturbed relationship to the question of modernity. The modern secular nation-state as a model of how to function is to many, especially religious leaders, a model in contravention of fundamentalist interpretations of the Koran. Whilst Osama bin Laden only represents a minority of such peoples given the heinous methods he employs, the fact remains that there are few statesmen in the Middle East or in other Muslim regions prepared to follow the example of politicians such as Turkey’s Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and radically redefine their nation’s attitude to modernity¹⁷.

¹⁶ Compare the numbers: Countries Where US troops were invited, or are there with the consent of the host government: Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia, Canada, Colombia, Cuba’s Guantanamo Bay, Denmark, Diego Garcia, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Greece, Greenland, Hong Kong, Iceland, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Saint Helena, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Tajikistan, Turkey, the UK, Uzbekistan (36) Versus Countries where they are they arrived without consent: Afghanistan, Germany, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kosovo (6).

¹⁷ It is interesting to note that despite the beacon-like example that modern Turkey represents, here too there have been significant developments recently toward a revitalisation of a national identity that relies far more on religion than would otherwise

If we posit that globalised terrorism that possesses means for mass destruction represents the greatest threat to national security, the natural question then should be: is the West able to deal with the new threat? Here we immediately run into problems.

The apparatus for dealing with threats to national security evolved gradually over time after the Westphalian model of state architecture began to develop from the 17th century onwards. The Cold War simply codified and embedded these structures which were defined around clear categories derived from the nature of various sub-threats (military, civilian, external or internal). This resulted in the clear division of labour that exists to this day between police authorities, intelligence services (both civilian and military) and the armed forces. Such an historic division was necessary and logical given the fact that the enemy of first order was always a nation-state or group of nation states. As a result, the most important tools of national security were designed and moulded with exactly this in mind, that a nation-state was the enemy.

Unfortunately none of these tools has fundamentally changed since the Cold War was won by the West. We have more than enough tanks and nuclear weapons, more than enough intelligence operatives specialised in Russian and able to make “net assessments” of a nation’s lethal capacity. We are rather worse off when it comes to people able to penetrate fundamentalist religious organisations, able to make net assessments of the scale and capacities of globally dispersed networks with no fixed boundaries and capitals, or even GDPs. On September 11th itself there were only two CIA employees, for example, who spoke Pashto¹⁸ out of the 30,000+ who work for that agency. It does not matter how many spy satellites one has to intercept telephonic transmissions in Central Asia. If the majority of the linguists in a given

even have been imaginable during recent decades. This resurgence can in part ironically be explained by the negative way in which the European Union has delayed talk of Turkish EU membership.

¹⁸ Author’s discussion with Marine colonel who had served in Afghanistan as a covert paramilitary operator with the CIA, Summer 2004.

security architecture speak Russian, then the agency concerned will not be able to make operational intelligence from the reams of data technical intelligence provides. Likewise, if the security services have no human intelligence sources functioning actually inside al Qaeda's headquarters, for example, it will remain nigh impossible to intercept and apprehend its leader.

In fact this non-applicable national security inheritance seems to be being reinforced instead of radically redrawn. The creation in America of the new Department for Homeland Security, with its 170,000 employees and near 40 billion dollar budget is a behemoth that obviously reflects Cold War thought reflexes. Unfortunately the enemy in this case – unlike the USSR and Warsaw Pact – is not a behemoth, but instead is hyper-mobile, horizontally dispersed across a myriad of nations (often allies) and seemingly can operate in a fashion whereby initiative is delegated to a low level thus obviating the need for tight and frequent communications between its cells and the centre. Hardly the Cold War way of doing business.

The Sum of all Fears: global terror and WMD

Given the proto-trend described above which sees an increase in lethality of terror attacks over time, it is reasonable to posit that since al Qaeda ripped through the envelope of terrorist lethality with its 9/11 attacks, that it will wish to obtain tools which ensure for even greater devastation. As a result we arrive at the question of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

In order to manage the new threat of terrorism that wishes to inflict mass casualty, we must become better acquainted with the ancient category of transcendently motivated violence. This work will attempt to do so by first returning to the most famous examples of such groups, what they did, why they did it and what became of them, before looking in detail at these characteristics as they pertain to al Qaeda itself, based on the pronouncements of its highest leaders and other evidence.

Globalisation as a process is not new. Many an ancient empire can be seen as a form of (limited) globalisation. Even so, the fact that globalisation is now occurring in an environment of interconnected market economies and the spread of one specific model of nation-state structuring, namely market democracy, means that an actor wishing to exploit the inherent weaknesses of the democratic model, such as a religious terrorist, has a broader environment in which to operate. Additionally the attitude of many people nominally belonging to the faith community of Muslim fundamentalism may be swayed by interpretations of the current trends to globalisation that exacerbate the centuries old question of Islam's relations to modernity and the West. Lastly, the fact that the pre-eminent exponent of globalised terrorism at this time has chosen to restrict his actions very much to attacks aimed against just a handful of Western nations (UK, US, Spain) results in the fact that existing alliance frameworks may be severely weakened by differing assessments as to whom has most to fear from "Transcendental Terror". Within the previously united western world there is now no agreement on whether or not this is a significant new threat that applies to all of us. In part, the problem is that man has a propensity to judge others based upon himself. As a result it is very difficult to believe in, let alone comprehend, an adversary who thinks in a fashion so contrary to our own. We tend to posit our rationality, even our morality, onto the other. Additionally, many of America's European allies are more inclined to resolve dispute and potential conflict through diplomatic and political means, rather than through the use of force¹⁹. And lastly, the fact that the invasion of Iraq was in part justified on the grounds that Saddam Hussein's regime was linked or could facilitate hyper-terrorism through the provision of weapons of mass destruction to terrorist groups has done much damage to intra-Alliance relations. The lack of concrete evidence linking Saddam Hussein, weapons of mass destruction, and terrorist groups, has weakened the potential for a consensus with regard to the threat of hyper-terrorism. This is despite the fact that we now know, based upon documents recovered in Kabul after the invasion of Afghanistan, that Al Qaeda was intensely

¹⁹ According to the fashionable conservative analyst Robert Kagan, this is because Europe has no other choice, given the severe limits on its military capability and lack of agreement on core foreign policy issues.

interested in unconventional weapons, to include even experimenting with primitive chemical agents²⁰.

Even those who appreciate Al Qaeda and hyper-terrorism as being on a par with, for example, the threat formerly posed by the Soviet Union, are for very human reasons unprepared or unwilling to recognize that all the tools of national security that we have at our disposal were made to face threats of a wholly different nature: i.e. threats in the form of other nation states and primarily of a conventional military nature. As a result, there is an inertia with regards to making security structures more appropriate to a threat that is not a nation state, that has no borders, no capital, no recognized government, no recognizable army, and no obvious point of strategic gravity. We have to understand that Al Qaeda is wholly unlike the terrorism we are used to fighting, that we must, in order to understand it, return to those groups of centuries past that justified terrorist-like actions on religious or apocalyptic grounds, and that we need to make our defence against this radically new threat resemble the enemy itself. Without a wanton use of force, and without sacrificing the liberties we have worked so many centuries to achieve, without sacrificing the values of the system we live in, we need to create operational capabilities which are just as flexible, interdisciplinary, hyper-mobile, and non-hierarchical, as the terrorist organizations we are facing.

But if we submit that hyper-terrorism may broaden its range and decide to take on other western nations we will all come to find that the existing tools of national security – whilst adequate to the nation state era of threat – will drastically fall short of finding great utility in the face of an enemy that has neither a nation nor a state against which we can act. In the meantime there is an important potential consequence of an increasingly unilateral US employing military tools in nations that do not share its culture, and that is a global increase in potential recruits for extremists such as al Qaeda²¹.

²⁰ CNN even showed footage of al Qaeda experimentation that involved the gassing of dogs.

²¹ In the famous internal Pentagon memo that was leaked to the Press, former US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld asked the key question: Are we capturing, killing or deterring

The question now is does the West have the new tools at its disposal to effect an eradication of the renewed threat of transcendently motivated terror? At the moment our national structures seem too locked in a past age and reliant on outmoded means to be of much relevance. Changing this state of affairs is not impossible. Let us recall that at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution the US had a minuscule army, no international intelligence to speak of and knew very, very little about Russia, yet nevertheless it still managed to win a Cold War against the USSR sixty plus years later. The final part of this dissertation will make concrete recommendations as to how the West can reorient its national security structures to deal with the new enemy it currently faces. Hopefully this conflict will not last for as long as the last one.

and dissuading more terrorists every day than the madrassas and the radical clerics are recruiting, training and deploying against us? See Appendix II for the full text of this brief but significant document which included another 13 questions aimed at the core of the Global War on Terrorism.

THE EVOLUTION OF NATIONAL SECURITY

The basic needs of a human being are quite easy to identify: shelter, sustenance and community. The importance of the first two is also simple to explain. As a biological entity, without protection from the elements and food and water, we will not function and quickly die. The relevance of the third requirement is superficially obvious, but on closer examination more complex. There are, of course, the economies of scale that come from living in a cooperative group. As our ancestors who did not have the use of firearms well knew, it is quite difficult to hunt and kill a large animal by oneself. Likewise to fish the seas in an efficient fashion or even to build a sizeable home is a faster and easier a task when done in the company of others. But there are also the psychological and societal benefits of not living the life of a hermit or recluse. Man craves friendship and companionship and finds fulfilment in living within community. If this were not the case, given all the benefits of technology, we could in fact choose to live in total isolation from one another today, but we do not. Then there is the more practical profit that accrues with regard to safety in numbers.

It has been said more than enough times that the history of Mankind is the history of conflict. Respect for one's territory, one's chattels and even one's right to life was never a given. There have always been, and will always be, those that threaten our very existence or livelihood. As a result, the need to be able to defend oneself and one's family has always been apparent. Such defence is easier when done in numbers than individually or just by family unit. In modern terms, this is the function of providing security.

Security must have an object. At the most obvious level there is the security of the individual, the level of micro-security. This is very closely linked to the security of the family and its home. These are eternal needs, whether the home in question was the tent in which the nomadic peoples of pre-history would overnight for a short period, or the apartment of the modern city dweller. The evolution in provision of

security over time has come at the macro level, however. Over the centuries and millennia, we have witnessed a change in the higher focus of security, the level beyond the family, which too must be protected if the life of the individual and his loved ones is to be secure.

It is not the purpose of this dissertation to provide a lengthy discussion of this evolution, to enumerate the dates when one macro level gave way to another. In gross terms we can speak, however, of a chain of security being tied first to the tribe or clan, then to a village and, or, religious community, and further to the local landowner unit, followed by a kingdom or empire, or a city-state until we arrive at the modern object of macro-security, the nation-state.



Diagram One: Chain of Security Evolution

There are those that have attempted to display the evolution as eminently describable, scientifically discrete, or in lay terms, neater. Perhaps one of the most significant recent works written on this question is Philip Bobbitt's "*The Shield of Achilles – war, peace, and the course of history*"²². An historian and scholar of matters legal and strategic, former counsel to the White House, Bobbitt, presents a theory whereby the modern form of organisational unit was determined by what he refers to as 'epochal wars', conflicts that had a distinct effect on constitutional realities. In this he identifies the structural foci of modern macro security, in order as: princely states, kingly states, territorial states, state-nations and finally nation-states²³.

Bobbitt's sees this evolution in terms of "the relationship between strategy and the legal order as this relationship has shaped and transformed the modern state..." For him the latest iteration is the '*market-state*' which is defined by the logic of maximising opportunity for its members since nation-states are rapidly losing sovereignty and legitimacy (the first through globalisation and the rise of the transnational actor and the latter, according to Bobbitt, by way of such scandals as lack of nation-state intervention in the Balkans.)

²² Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2002.

²³ The *princely state* is described as the realm of Machiavelli and typified by Habsburg Spain, Valois France and Tudor England. The *kingly states* were, according to Bobbitt, ushered in by the epochal Thirty Years War. Here the logic was that the religious conflicts of the previous period could only be avoided by having a single sovereign who embodied the ultimate authority of the state. *Territorial states* came with the defeat of the greatest of *kingly states*, Louis XIV's France. The arrangement underpinning the new unit of macro-security was a covenant between sovereign and the governed, from whence the sovereign's legislative monopoly was derived. The *state-nations* came by way of the Napoleonic Wars that were settled by the Congress of Vienna. The understanding here was that the national assembly was not a gathering of representatives of specific sub-territories, but rather a unified body with one set of interests: that of the whole nation.

Unlike perhaps the vast majority of scholars and commentators, Bobbitt therefore sees the modern *nation-state* as coming to us only in the 20th century. This unit of macro-security was forged in what Bobbitt refers to as the *Long War* of the last century which revolved around competing views of the 'moral and political orientation' of that constitutional form. As such he sees the conflict as between the interpretations of the nation-state as given by key actors such as Lenin, Hitler and Roosevelt. For more details on Bobbitt's delineation of this evolution and the periods of epochal war see Appendix III.

There is much to commend the work, but it does have distinct flaws, flaws that it shares with the majority of recent treatises that have proclaimed the death of the nation-state, somewhat prematurely²⁴. Nevertheless, the fact that such a book has been written, became popular despite its “academic” quality, and was then endorsed by such luminaries as the British historian Michael Howard, seems to indicate that at least some reappraisal of the nation-state is timely. It is the hypothesis of this work that the core problem is not so much to be found with the construct itself or how its citizens relate to the framework they find themselves living in, but has to do with the disjunction between the nation-state’s tools for self-preservation and security and the threats that it now faces, in an age where traditional state-to-state warfare seems increasingly less and less likely²⁵.

²⁴ For an at times swinging, yet most learned critique of the hefty tome, one could do much worse than read Paul W. Schroeder’s lengthy review, entitled: “*Paper-Mache Fortress*” in *The National Interest*, of Winter, 2002.

With regard to prophecies of an end to the nation-state, one can go as far back to such classics as Hannah Arendt’s: “*The Origins of Totalitarianism*”, Meridian, Cleveland, Ohio, 1951, especially chapter nine: ‘The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man’.

²⁵ If one wishes to delve even deeper into the question of the nation, then one is not locked into the post-Westphalian arguments alone. The Hungarian author, Jenő Szűcs, explores concepts of identity and nationhood in several of his works, for example “*A Magyar nemzeti tudat kialakulása*”, Osiris, Budapest, 1997 and especially “*Nemzet és történelem*”, Gondolat, Budapest, 1974. The latter is interesting in that, although it is flavoured by the context of academic discourse within the Communist state, the discussion – which in large part is a response to a 1963 article by Erik Molnár – takes the issues of national identity back further to the Middle Ages and feudal connotations.

THE WESTPHALIAN INHERITANCE

It is often far too easy to take for granted the system of governance and administration in which we today live. If one does not professionally study modern history or the evolution of international law, one could be forgiven for thinking that the current system of independent nation-states has existed for much longer than it has in fact existed. The truth is that as a concept we can describe its evolution as being quite recent in historic terms. The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 is taken by most commentators as introducing the foundations for the creation in the West of a system in which the objects were states, bodies that were independent of each others – although which could ally with one another – and into whose internal affairs it was not allowed to become involved, a system in which sovereignty would eventually become paramount²⁶. Later, as this concept evolved and as the individual allegiances of the people would shift from local landowner or royal house, to a professional political elite defined around a national identity, the state would evolve further into the nation-state, with its fundamental aspects of citizenship and nationality.

For our purposes, the most important side-effect of the founding and development of the nation state as a way to run and define a country, are the ramifications of this new locus of sovereignty on the practice of providing for the security of the new construct. Whilst man has been waging war for as long as territory and other forms of expropriable wealth have existed, the modern method of securing the nation state resulted in a new and fascinatingly almost universal division of labour being established in practically every nation of the world²⁷. The national security systems thus created were quite simply formed around a categorisation of threats as being either external, internal, civilian, or military in nature. Since the threats were all relatively discrete in scientific terms, i.e. easily definable and differentiated, it was

²⁶ In fact it was the sacrosanct nature of sovereignty that would later lie behind the creation of the ‘balance-of-power’ system that would be so important to Europe in following centuries.

²⁷ There are of course rare exceptions to the rule, such as countries such as Andorra or Costa Rica, but these all have in common either the fact that they are too small to have their own armies or security services, or that they rely upon external and comprehensive guarantees of safety, as in the case of the latter and its relationship with the USA.

logical to make the nation state’s institutional responses reflect the given challenges. If the enemy state wishes to obtain sensitive information of a military nature, then the nation state must have a capability to protect such information and to capture enemy agents wishing to obtain such information. Likewise if the enemy state intends an act of military aggression then we must maintain a permanent capability to deter such attack or to meet it head on with force should deterrence fail, and so on. Of course, there developed particular variants, nations that combined civilian and military counter-intelligence into one body, for example, but on the whole the majority of modern nations-states established a division of labour as described in *Table One*.

Type of Threat	Nation State Institutional Response
External Military (Invasion)	Standing Professional Army
Internal Constitutional, Legal Disorder	Police Force
Theft of Military Secrets	Military Counter-Intelligence
Theft of Political, Economic Secrets	Civilian Counter-Intelligence
Enemy Military Intention/Capability	Military Intelligence
Enemy Intention by External Political Elite	Civilian Intelligence (Espionage)

Table One: The Inherited Architecture of Westphalian National Security

It should be remembered, that whilst we take for granted today the existence for example, of police forces and professional armies, these are all recent inventions in historical terms, with village militias and temporarily hired mercenaries having been the rule for centuries before the permanent elements of the Westphalian national security structure were fully established.

In each case, as the nation state evolved and solidified its structures, the internal architecture of national security was reinforced by the laws and constitutional measures which defined the responsibilities and specific missions of the given organs. As a means to preserve efficiency and to ensure against abuses of power and information, practically every state of the developed West would severely demarcate the spheres of authority of each body. Matters of military intelligence, for example, were to be the sole purview of the body (-ies) expressly mandated to respond to this threat, and so on. In fact any intentional or even inadvertent flouting of this strict division of labour could, if found out, generally cause scandal and/or investigation²⁸. The strict interpretation of missions and the resultant mirror-image response whereby the threat would be matched by a domestic body focused on that threat, would simply be further reinforced by the cut and dry, unequivocal threat environment presented by the Cold War, within which the threat was posed by a group of nation-states. *Table Two* describes the similar systems of some important nation-states of the period. (Note that with the exception of the STASI and KGB, in all the other countries listed each threat is dealt with by a separate body, as per the Westphalian functional division of labour).

²⁸ For example when the CIA was accused during the Vietnam War of collecting information on Americans nationals in the USA, an activity which was outside of its mandate.

Nation-State:

<u>Threat:</u>	DDR ¹	FRG ²	France	UK	USA	USSR
Internal Order	VoPo ³ , MfS / STASI ⁴	Polizei (Federal and State)	Police, Gendarmerie National	Regional Police Forces	State and Local Police	Militia, KGB
Foreign Espionage	STASI	BfV ⁵	DGST ⁶	M-15	FBI	KGB
Enemy Intent	STASI, HVA ⁷	BND ⁸	SDECE ⁹ , then DGSE ¹⁰	M-16, GCHQ ¹¹	CIA, DIA ¹² , NSA ¹³	KGB, GRU ¹⁴
Invasion	NVA ¹⁵	Bundeswehr	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces

*Table Two: Nation States and their Cold War National Security Divisions of Labour**

Notes:

- 1 Deutsches Demokratisches Republik (East Germany)
- 2 Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany)
- 3 Volkspolizei (People's Police)
- 4 Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (Ministry for State Security)
- 5 Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution)
- 6 Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire (Directorate for Domestic Surveillance)
- 7 Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung (Main Administration for Foreign Intelligence)
- 8 Bundesnachrichtendienst (Federal Intelligence Service)
- 9 Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage (Service for External Documentation and Counter-Espionage) until 1982
- 10 Direction générale de la sécurité extérieure (General Directorate for Foreign Security)
- 11 Government Communications Headquarters
- 12 Defense Intelligence Agency
- 13 National Security Agency
- 14 Glavnoye Razvedyvatelnoye Upravlenie (Military Intelligence)
- 15 Nationale Volksarmee (Peoples Army)

* Note that as with most fields of policy and government affairs the description of competencies and mandates is not totally discrete in the scientific sense and there are of course overlaps and ambiguities. Nevertheless, despite the existence of organs such as the KGB which covered both internal and external threats, the fact remains that the security architecture of all nation-states demonstrated (sub-) structures that reflected a division of threats into various categories, to include external, internal, civilian and military (in the case of the KGB, for example, in the division of these areas into various *Directorates*.)

FROM A PREDICTABLE THREAT ENVIRONMENT TO A CORNUCOPIA
OF THREATS AND THE CHALLENGE TO PRIORITISATION

Perhaps only after the fact did it become fully apparent to the national security sector within the Western community of “market democracies” just how much the Cold War had been an eminently workable international system. Whilst the overarching threat of WWII, or Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), was ultimate in scale, potentially ensuring for the annihilation of both East and West should the blocs go to war with each other, the fact was that the bloc-to-bloc arms race produced near parity of nuclear forces by the 1970s and the later system of arms negotiations and arms control regimes together resulted in a system that was for the most part well-balanced and predictable²⁹. For those with responsibilities within the national security architectures of the western nations, the enemy and the related responsibilities were quite clear: the USSR, its allies and the prevention of WWII, or, should that not be possible, preparation to win the ‘hot war’. The enemy (and its allies) was a static nation-state, with easily identified points of gravity such as its capital, its government, its industrial base and its organs of security and defence. How to ‘take the Cold War’ to these targets was relatively obvious, if not easy.

Beyond this overarching challenge, there was, of course, another national security-related task-set: terrorism. From the 1960s onwards countries such as the UK, Spain, Germany and Italy, as well as several nations in Latin America, had to fight the scourge of political violence. However, here it is important to note that in comparison to the primary threat posed by the Soviet bloc, this enemy was in a fundamentally different class. Whichever group one cares to choose, be it Baader-Meinhof, ETA, or the Provisional IRA, whilst deadly, none had the capacity to strike

²⁹ Perhaps the three most obvious points at which the Cold War could have metastasized into a hot war, were the Berlin Blockade in 1948, the Korean War of 1950 and the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. This represents three events in a span of forty-five years, a ratio that underlines the fundamental stability of Cold War bipolarity.

a fatal blow against the government they were fighting, and thus they did not vitally endanger the given nation’s existence as did the Soviet Union, or the primary focus of national security³⁰.

With the collapse of the Iron Curtain, the realm of national security faced a new challenge. Whilst the Soviet Union dissolved into successor nations, and the biggest, the Russian Federation established normalised relations with the Western Alliance (NATO) and would even become nominally an ally in later years³¹, other new or newly revitalised threats emerged to challenge Western governments and concurrent calls domestically for a post-Cold War peace-dividend. These ranged from the familiar, such as failed states, to the new and outré, such as information warfare and critical infrastructure defence. See below.

<i>Era</i>	<i>THREATS</i>
Cold War	USSR-Warsaw Pact / WWII Terrorism
1990s	Terrorism Ethnic Conflict Mass Migration Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and related know-how Organised Crime Resource Conflict Rogue States Failed States (peace support, nation-building) China Information Warfare, Critical Infrastructure defence

Table Three: Cold War versus 1990s Western Perceived Threat Environments

³⁰ In the early 1980s PIRA succeeded in placing a huge bomb in the hotel where the Conservative Party was holding its annual conference and in killing one member of the cabinet, injuring several and almost killing PM Thatcher. Even if they had eliminated the whole cabinet, the UK would still have functioned and a new cabinet been appointed. Thus PIRA, for example, one of the deadliest Cold War terrorist groups, at its worst is not comparable to the threat of thermonuclear exchange.

³¹ This is especially true on paper, in formal terms with the creation of the Permanent NATO-Russia Joint Council (PJC) in the latter half of the 1990s and especially after President Putin’s adroit manipulation of the post-9/11 situation in the White House.

As the number and nature of the new panoply of threats and challenges grew in the 1990s and became more complicated, two obvious questions arose. The first was: given the limits to defence expenditure that exist in most democracies, how should governments now prioritise their national security investments and activities? Which of the enumerated threats should receive greater attention, where should limited public resources be invested so as to best protect the population and the national interests? For many nations the answer was not clear. It was noted by the more observant, however, that despite the vast array of threats and their variety, there was a common thread to the majority of them: they do not directly concern an enemy that is a nation state. A second issue had to do with capabilities.

In the European half of the Atlantic Alliance defence and security capabilities were shaped, understandably, very much with the scenario of WWII in mind. The national war planners and the multinational staffs at SHAPE NATO Headquarters in Belgium worked on the assumption that should conflict erupt, the USSR and its satrapies would execute a massive land attack against the West through the Sibbesse or Fulda Gap into West Germany and beyond, most likely using chemical weapons and resorting to nuclear weapons if necessary. Thus it was NATO's *raison d'être* to ensure that the United States would respond to the overwhelming conventional advantage posed by the 2nd Red Army over European forces by bringing an intercontinental and immediate nuclear response to such a land attack. Subsequently, the majority of forces in the European half of NATO were designed to fulfil a largely static territorial defence function, to act as a delaying force inhibiting the rapid invasion by Soviet forces until the transatlantic nuclear response was made and US troops could come to the aid of the European allies. In layman's terms this meant that the armies of most western nations were replete with heavy, slow armour and anti-armour assets³².

³² The exceptions to this rule, those nations with more flexible armed forces which could be deployed well beyond the nation's own borders, were of course those countries that had had strong imperial histories and which still retained quasi-colonial interests. Such countries include the UK, France and Belgium.

It soon became apparent after the fall of Communism that the appropriateness of such European capabilities was limited in a new threat environment which may dictate the requirement that a nation be able to project its forces far further afield than its own national territory. As a result, very soon talk of a growing gap between US and European defence capabilities increased, given that the US, thanks to its geography and the way in which it defined its global interests, had at its disposal a far more flexible and projectable force than any of her allies.

The interesting fact here is that whilst the primary national security task was lost after the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 and the legacy forces that remained meant that the US and Europe had very different assets to face the 1990s, terrorism was a threat to national security during the Cold War and after the bipolar world order had collapsed. It did not disappear with the end of bipolarity. Yet, given the significant difference between the two geostrategic environments, and the earth-shattering events that would occur a decade later in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania, it is reasonable to ask whether post-1991 terrorism is the same as the terrorism we have faced in the past. In order to answer this question, we must first establish what in fact terrorism is. This is harder a task than it may at first appear.

TERRORISM: THE FUNDAMENTALS

A systematic analysis of terrorism is not, in fact, easy. This is for several reasons. The first has to do with the word itself, the second with the short time that has been generally devoted to its proper study. The third concerns the changing nature of terrorism itself.

As a word describing a phenomenon, terrorism is wholly inadequate from a scientific point of view. It is an emotive, value-laden phrase which is also strongly pejorative. It is no accident that of all of history's non-state actor terrorist groups, almost none has chosen to label itself as terrorist³³, instead choosing nouns such as 'faction', 'brigade', 'group' or 'army'. It is in fact a useful facet of the word that when used by the representative of a given government it immediately conveys moral probity upon the user and the opposite upon those thus labelled. This fact goes part way to explain why there are scores of official definitions for terrorism today but no one universal definition³⁴. The explanation also has to do with the various political issues connected to self-determination and anti-colonialism. It was just such concerns that have prevented the United Nations (UN) from arriving at a common,

³³ A qualification here must be made with regard to non-state actors, since during the French Revolution, the new 'government' avowedly endorsed the use of terror. It is in fact from this age and the French word "La Terreur" that the Anglo-Saxon world obtained the word terrorism. Later the Russian revolutionaries and Trotsky in particular, would also speak of the utility of state-executed terror. See Leon Trotsky: "*The Defence of Terrorism*" (also published as "*Terrorism and Communism: a reply to Karl Kautsky*" and as "*Dictatorship vs. Democracy*"), The Labour Publishing Company and George Allen and Unwin, London, 1921.

The only real non-state actor exceptions to self-labelling a terrorist are those of the Russian Anarchists - who actually called themselves terrorists in an attempt to promote the appearance of a lineage back to the French Revolution itself -, and the Israeli Lehi Group. See David C. Rapoport: "*The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism*", in "Attacking Terrorism – elements of a grand strategy", Eds. Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes, Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2004.

³⁴ This is despite years of attempts by the United Nations, for example, to come to a recognised definition for the word. The latest attempt by a special UN committee to arrive at a conclusion failed once again in October of 2004 to come to an international consensus. See Appendix IV for a selection of international and US definitions of terrorism.

UN approved, definition of terrorism. In a very functionalist and practical response, given these problems, the UN has approached the problem in a piecemeal fashion by avoiding a universal definition and instead bringing conventions to outlaw specific types of methods used by terrorists. As a result today there are 12 such resolutions in place to cover acts such as bombing, hijacking and attack on diplomats.

To avoid therefore the problem of value-laden content inherent to the word terrorism, the trend in recent years within the study of terrorism, is to refer to such acts as “political violence”³⁵. I shall use both phrases interchangeably, given the prevalence of the former³⁶.

The second academic difficulty is a product of how very new a field of study terrorism, or political violence is. Ironically, given the fact that such acts have occurred for thousands of years, with the most famous examples being some of the oldest (viz. the Zealots and the Thuggees, see below), the systematic study of political violence has only been with us since the late 1960s and in earnest from the early 1970s. Here too there was much confusion in the early years. Originally terrorism was treated as an aspect of the study of revolution and totalitarian systems. Then, as already mentioned, as the nascent field began to be shaped, it was ploughed variously by historians, criminologists, sociologists, psychologists, amongst others, until finally it fell under the purview of the political scientist³⁷. Even then, as the

³⁵ In my own effort to use more accurate terminology, I am struck, however, by how out-of-date already, such a phrase as political violence is, since it seems useless when trying to address the terrorist that has truly religious goals in mind, where the political is limited. For the time being, given the resurgence of the religiously motivated actor, we may have to make do with using the word terrorism once more – until a better term is coined.

³⁶ Besides terrorists never willing calling themselves by such a name, there is a related phenomenon concerning those that write about political violence, or who study it. Very rarely, if at all - perhaps with the exception of Robespierre or Trotsky – have the authors of treatises on terrorism also been practitioners of it. This can be seen as somewhat limiting the legitimacy of much literature on the subject, since it is written by the outsider who ab ovo morally rejects such actions. For a lengthier discussion see Schmid, op. cit., who likens such lack of first-hand experience and negative writer attitude as akin to having only pacifists write books on war.

³⁷ For a fascinating account of the early years of the field of terrorism studies, see Stephen Sloan: “*Almost Present at the Creation – a personal perspective of a continuing journey*”

field began to develop and mature, it continued to suffer from somewhat of an orphaned status amongst its older cousins. To quote Martha Crenshaw, for decades one of the leading academic experts of the field:

*“Furthermore, the security studies and international relations fields were not especially hospitable to scholars interested in terrorism precisely because it was not considered an important problem for the discipline or for the development of grand strategy. As an intellectual approach, it did not lend itself to abstract theory or modelling. The study of terrorism was too policy oriented to be of serious academic significance.”*³⁸

Journal of the Centre for Conflict Studies, Summer 2004, Vol. XXIV, No.1. On how new this ‘science’ really is see Chapter Four “The Literature of Terrorism” of Alex Schmid’s seminal work *“Political Terrorism: a new guide to actors, authors, concepts, data bases (sic.), theories and literature”*, with Albert J. Jongman et al., Transaction Books, New Brunswick, 1988 (revised edition). Although published before 9/11, it is interesting to note the data provided by the author, specifically that on all the books written on terrorism by 1988 (over 6,000 titles), 85% had been written after 1968. The work includes a damning quote from one of the leading students of terrorism, Ariel Merari, on how unscientific an endeavour it is. Merari states: “Terrorism is a study area which is very easy to approach but very difficult to cope with in a scientific sense. Easy to approach – because it has so many angles, touching upon all aspects of human behaviour. Difficult to cope with – because it is so diverse. As terrorism is not a discipline, there can hardly be a general theory of terrorism... There are few social scientists who specialize in this study area. Most contributions in this field are ephemeral. Precise and extensive factual knowledge is still grossly lacking. Much effort must still be invested in the very first stage of scientific inquiry with regard to terrorism – the collection of data.”

If the message was unclear, Schmid follows this with: “There are probably few areas in the social science literature in which so much is written on the basis of so little research.” Although I am unsure about Merari’s claim against the possibility of a general theory (see below), I tend to agree with Schmid and Merari regarding professional indigence of the field and paucity of real research. This dissertation’s focus on the primary source material provided by the statements of Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda is one attempt to redress this imbalance, at least with regard to the terrorist group de jour.

³⁸ *“Terrorism, Strategies, and Grand Strategies”* in “Attacking Terrorism – elements of a grand strategy”, op. cit..

Even today, after 9/11, the field remains incredibly small³⁹ and the possibilities to study it at undergraduate and graduate level remain very limited. With the odd exception, today there are still very few centres of excellence for research into terrorism⁴⁰. It is rather telling that of all the billions that have been spent on investment by the US government in recent years to counter terrorism, the vast majority has gone into technology and equipment in general, with very little, by comparison, being spent on the academic side of support to policy. Hopefully this will change.

As to a definition, it has become clichéd to state that it is impossible to define terrorism⁴¹. If this were in fact the case, there would be no hope for counter- or anti-

³⁹ The academic ‘great’ names in political violence remain the same as they were pre 9/11: Sloan, Crenshaw, Rapoport, Jenkins, Laqueur, Wilkinson and Schmid. To quote an anonymous contributor to Schmid’s *Political Terrorism*: “there is a tremendous amount of nonsense written in this field.”... there are “about 5 [authors who] really know what they are talking about – [the] rest are integrators of literature...” Schmid himself goes on to note that “many authors have never written more than one article about terrorism; few have dedicated most of their research time to this field of study. Real specialists in academia are still few.” Schmid’s study includes a table of the leading authors based on frequency of citation, see Chapter Four of *Political Terrorism* op. cit..

⁴⁰ The few exceptions being the Program for Terrorism and Security Studies, at the George C. Marshall Center, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence and Terrorism (CSTPV) at St. Andrews University and the International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT) in Herzlia, Israel.

⁴¹ See Schmid, *ibid*. After polling 58 leading academics specialising in terrorism, Schmid elucidated over 100 definitions of the phenomenon and twenty-two definitional elements. See Appendix V for the spread of these elements and also Appendix VI for another more recent version of such a definitional poll, this time taken by this author amongst counterterrorism practitioners.

As the result of his poll and an overview of the literature to date, Schmid and his colleagues proposed the following definition: “Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-)clandestine individual, group, or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal, or political reasons, whereby – in contrast to assassination – the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat- and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperilled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought.”

terrorism policy, nor would a successful case ever be brought against a terrorist in a court of law. To quote Alex Schmid, the academic who has probably done the most to help us arrive at an international understanding of a potential definition of terrorism:

“The search for an adequate definition of terrorism is still on. There continues to exist considerable uncertainty about what the right way to think about the problem is. At the same time, many authors seem fatigued about the need to still consider basic conceptual questions. This is a dangerous attitude as it plays into the hands of those experts from the operational antiterrorist camp who have a “we-know-it-when-we-see-it” attitude that easily leads to double standards which produce bad science and also, arguably, bad policies.”⁴²

A third very serious factor acting as an obstacle to arriving at a universal definition of political violence, or terrorism, is the very changing nature of the phenomenon itself. If we are to have a working definition, it must be good enough to encompass actors as diverse as the religiously motivated Zealots of ancient Palestine as well as the political motivated actors of recent years, such as the Baader Meinhof Gang, for example. And not only have the motivations of perpetrators of political violence been immensely varied over the ages, so have their methods. For example, the rules of engagement (ROEs), the prescriptions as to who could be targeted have varied greatly. In some cases, such as the Russia anarchists, the terrorists were clear that only officials of the government or members of the ruling elite could be killed. In the case of the IRA, or ETA, civilians completely devoid of any connection to the

Although, perhaps a definition to end all definitions, this product is far too cumbersome and of limited utility in a policy sense, not to mention that in using words such as “idiosyncratic” it opens the definition up to subjective definitional factors we would otherwise wish to exclude. That is why this author has striven for brevity in his definition. (In fact, some years after Schmid’s work was published, in a lecture to the Program on Terrorism and Security Studies entitled: “*The Problem of Defining Terrorism*”, February 5th 2005, George C. Marshall Center in Germany, Schmid provided, a pithy and distinctly shorter definition of terrorism, calling it “violent propaganda”. This echoes an older description of political violence as “propaganda of the deed” made famous by the anarchist Prince Peter Alexeevich Kropotkin. (Please note we will be returning below to the interesting concept of main targets versus victims and message generation (see *Diagram Two*).

⁴² “*Political Terrorism*” *ibid.*

government were deemed just targets. Therefore any universal definition cannot rely solely on a description of motivation or on targeting methods, since that will lead to confusion.

Thus fundamental issue in definition should be recognised not as coming from the subjective nature of the word terrorism, but from the broad scope of acts and actors that it encompasses. To be able to attempt a definition, a few observations must first be made.

To begin with it must be recognised that terrorism is a method of conflict⁴³. It is a mode of fighting⁴⁴. To quote Schmid once more, “Terrorism is primarily an extremism of means, not one of ends.”⁴⁵

Secondly, an act of terrorism must have a particular, predefined purpose. A psychotic killer may kill innocents, but that does not make him, or her, a terrorist⁴⁶, despite the fact that fear is engendered just as with acts of terrorism. For a violent act to be deemed a terrorist act it must have a purpose beyond just the immediate death of innocents and a purpose which is not, for example, concerned purely with financial profit, for this we call crime, or to satisfy some personal perverse

⁴³ Many authors have called terrorism a ‘mode of warfare’. This is very misleading and I use the word ‘conflict’ purposefully, since warfare infers legitimacy, application of the laws of war, and negates the fact that the victims of terrorism are most often unarmed civilians, which is not the case when we talk of warfare. For war to obtain, both sides must abide by the laws of war, such as the Geneva and Hague conventions. This is clearly not the case when terrorism is involved.

⁴⁴ This is why it is inappropriate in a legal sense to “declare war on terrorism.” Legally one can declare war on a nation, but not a method of conflict. As Schmid quotes Fritz Allemann in the work cited above, terrorism “amounts to the negation of any notion of “warfare” at all.”

⁴⁵ “*Political Terrorism*” *ibid.*

⁴⁶ As Schmid points out “While violence is the key element of murder, it is the combination of the use of violence and the threat of more to come which initiates a terror process.” Brain Jenkins helps us further by stating that: “Fear is the intended effect, not the byproduct (sic), of terrorism. That, at least, distinguishes terrorist tactics from mugging and other forms of violent crime that may terrify but are not terrorism.” B. Jenkins: “*International Terrorism: a new mode of conflict*”, Research Paper 48, California Seminar on Arms Control and Foreign Policy, Crescent Publications, Los Angeles, 1975.

requirement, such as in the case of the lone serial killer. It must have a purpose in terms of changing history. Subsequently, a terrorist act must have a political or religious element to its justification, an element concerned with strategic end states⁴⁷. Violence for the sake of violence is not terrorism. The group involved in political violence must wish to achieve a goal that is politically or religiously informed and that goes beyond their own group's future. It is here very important to state that the goals must be at odds with the desires of the majority of the given population and/or, its legitimately elected representatives. It is through the use of this latter caveat, or definitional requirement, that we avoid falling into that despicable trap represented by the saying that "one man's terrorist is another's freedom fighter". This is a fallacious and morally untenable cliché.

Having established core definitional elements and avoiding semantic traps, we arrive at a workable definition, such that:

TERRORISM *is the use of violence (or threat thereof) to inculcate fear so as to pressure the broader population - or its legitimate representatives - into a political or religious end-state that is not of their choosing.*

This is a reasonable starting-point for discussion and analysis. At the same time, there are additional attributes of acts of political violence that can supplement the definition and help in the identification of terrorism when it occurs. These include the wilful targeting of civilians, contravention of the Hague and Geneva Conventions of War⁴⁸ and the fact that terrorism is the choice of the weaker side in

⁴⁷ Although practically all workable definitions of terrorism include a reference to a wish to make a political change, or to realise a political end-state, no one has addressed the obvious problem this creates.

⁴⁸ The suggestion has been made that terrorism can be understood as those acts occurring during peacetime that would be classified as war crimes in a time of war. It is interesting to note how many of the "laws of war" peacetime terrorists do in fact transgress. Unlike the category of 'lawful combatants' which the conventions of Geneva and Hague established, terrorists do not wear uniforms, do not carry weapons openly, are not part of a recognised

any given conflict⁴⁹. Regarding the last point, the Provisional IRA, or ETA, for example, would never use conventional forms of warfare, conflict on the open battlefield since they know that they would not stand a chance under such conditions. This is where the moniker of ‘asymmetric warfare’ comes in⁵⁰.

Before we move one, there are, of course, many other additional ways to approach the question of a workable definition of terrorism. One more avenue that takes us out of the abstraction of mere words is a pictographic representation of the mechanics of terrorism. By resorting to a Venn diagram-like approach, it may be easier to understand the dynamics at work between the various subjects and objects of political violence.

governmental chain-of-command and today most often purposefully target civilians instead of military units or establishments.

⁴⁹ Paul Wilkinson, the doyen of British terrorism research and currently chairman of the advisory board of St. Andrews Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence and Terrorism (CSTPV), clarifies this multifaceted aspect of terrorism, by including three elements into his definition, viz.: “Terrorism is a special mode or process of violence which has at least three basic elements: the terroristic aims of its perpetrators, their modus operandi in deploying particular forms of violence upon the victims and the target audience.” For more details see Appendix IV.

⁵⁰ Asymmetric warfare is quite simply conflict in which the one side is demonstrably weaker than the other and exploits unconventional means so as to redress the strategic balance. The clearest example would be the ‘hit and run’ tactics of the insurgent guerrilla force. Unfortunately, as a phrase, asymmetric warfare has been ridiculously overused in recent years, especially after 9/11. This is especially true if one looks to the fact that very few conflicts – if any – can be called truly symmetrical. There are hardly any battles or wars in the whole of written history in which the two sides were exactly matched. In fact tale of the Trojan Horse is a good example of very early asymmetric warfare, as is the tale of David and Goliath.

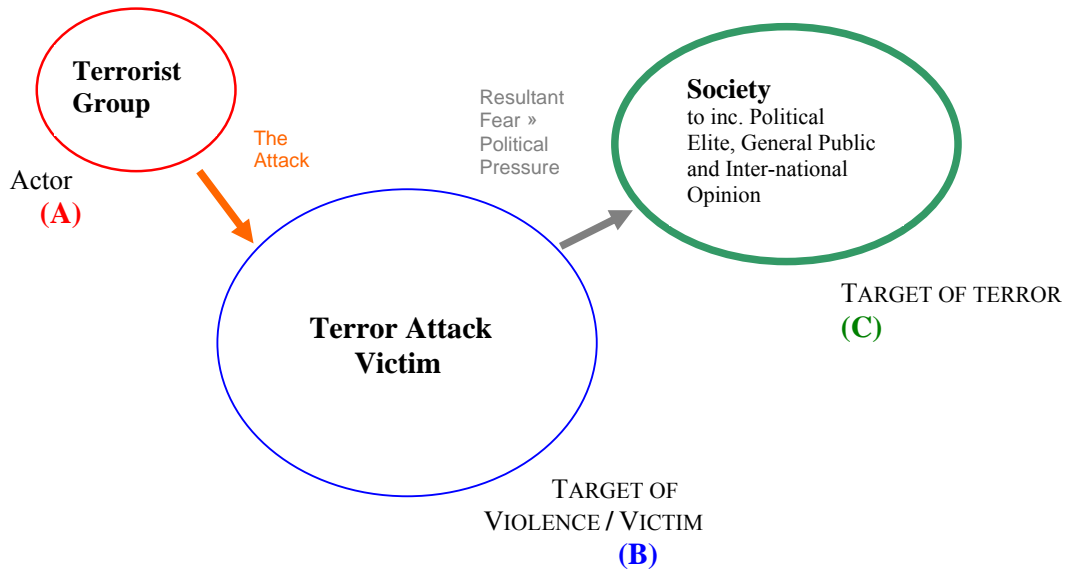


Diagram Two: The Mechanics of Terrorism

Here the mechanics of terror are more transparent. Terrorist group **A** wishes to induce an effect upon a target audience, **C**, primarily the political elite of the nation which is not acting in accordance with its own desires. To coerce change, fear is employed either directly onto members of this elite (this would be assassination) or pressure is exerted upon this groups through the induction of fear in the general public of the nation concerned, or through the reaction of international opinion. This fear is induced through the act of attacking a given target, **B**, thus channelling the message to the indirect, yet ultimate target, **C**. The intermediate target of violence can be a member or members of the public, or the government, or its authorities. As Schmid puts it in a far more graphic fashion: “The particular effect of the terrorist message results from the fact that it is written, as it were, with the blood of people who matter to the addressee, but not to the sender.”⁵¹ R. D. Crelinsten likewise talks of the “double victimisation method”, wherein there are targets of violence and targets of demands, through which the allegiances of the targets of terror and targets

⁵¹ A. Schmid: “*Political Terrorism*” *ibid.*

of attention and the targets of attention and the terrorists themselves⁵². Or there is Jenkins who sees Terrorism as “violence aimed at the people watching”, i.e., not the people directly under attack⁵³.

An additional point needs to be made at this point regarding who can use terrorism. As we have noted there are at present two major schools of thought within political science on this issue. The first states that political violence, or terrorism, is truly the preserve of weak non-state actors who have decided to forgo a political resolution to their problem. The second has it that in addition to non-state actors, such as the Provisional IRA, or the Baader-Meinhof Gang, nation states can also be judged as terrorist in their behaviour⁵⁴. Obvious candidates would be those countries that systematically employ violence against their own people in peacetime, such as Pol Pott’s Cambodia, Stalin’s USSR, Milosevics’ Yugoslavia or Hussein’s Iraq. Some go further to state that acts such as the fire-bombing of Dresden in WWII are acts of terrorism executed by democratic nation states at war. For this author, these cases do not wash.

With regard to the Stalins and Pol Potts of this world, these are clearly dictatorships and as such I am unconvinced that by additionally adding the adjective ‘terrorist’ to ‘dictator’ we necessarily understand or explain these actors or their horrific acts any better⁵⁵. As for the latter example of Dresden and similar atrocities, here too one can discuss such cases more easily, I believe, by resorting to existing descriptors and categories, such as war crimes, since these are very well defined in international law and should not be confused with events when the opponent is not a nation state or there is no state of war in effect. For the purposes of own examination, we will be limited to non-state actors engaged in terrorism.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ B. Jenkins: “*International Terrorism*”, *ibid.*

⁵⁴ For a famous examination of terror as used by the state, see Arendt, (*ibid.*) chapter thirteen: “*Ideology and Terror: a novel form of government*”.

⁵⁵ Perhaps here it is useful to separate the word ‘terrorism’ as a tool used by the non-state actor from ‘terror’, as a tool of dictatorships. In any case, the debate is of limited relevance here, as we are not here concerned primarily with dictatorships, but with the modern non-state actor’s use of political violence.

Now that a definition has been established, we can move to the less dry question of how has this mode of conflict has changed over time and how this evolution can inform our fight against today's terrorists⁵⁶.

⁵⁶ In addition to the fundamental issue of definition, there is the question of the root causes of terrorism. Although less academic work has been dedicated to this question than to others in the field, the works of Crenshaw and Sageman (op. cit.) are a good starting point. A summary of the various theories are beyond the brief of this dissertation and in fact of little relevance to the question of how to deal with an actor prepared to use WMD and who cannot be reasoned with. In fact, despite the existence of a "true" grievance often being accepted as a given in the case of the evolution of terrorist groups, the literature to date does not provide one over-arching demonstrable theory (such a deprivation, or poverty), since there are often many factors in play when the choice to use violence against the unarmed is made. For the best discussion recently of the many factors involved, see Sageman's work especially.

RELIGIOUSLY MOTIVATED TERRORISM OF THE PAST

“Until the nineteenth century, religion was usually the only acceptable justification of terror.”

James Q. Wilson
“What Makes a Terrorist?”⁵⁷

The art of crafting good counter- and antiterrorism⁵⁸ policy in the current environment is clouded by the anomalous period of evolution in political violence that was the Cold War. As Wilson rightly points out in the essay quoted above, religiously motivated terrorism has been rather the norm than the exception prior to our modern age which saw violence fuelled by ideas of self-determinist anti-colonialism, or the ideologies of Marxism and Fascism.

The fact that Western national security structures have, when it comes to counterterrorism, been built to deal with adversaries who were predominantly politically motivated explains much of the difficulty organisations such as the CIA and FBI, or even Nemzet Biztonsági Hivatal have in countering groups which are

⁵⁷ City Journal, Winter 2004, accessible at:

http://www.city-journal.org/html/14_1_what_makes_a_terrorist.html.

⁵⁸ There is no hard and fast rule for distinguishing counterterrorism from anti-terrorism. There exists the broadly recognised separation that sees the latter as referring to measures taken to inhibit terrorism prior to a potential attack and the former as those steps taken by a government once an offence has occurred. One can differentiate between the two, also in terms of defensive versus offensive and this is the official definitional distinction provided by the US Department of Defense. According to the mammoth *Joint Doctrine Encyclopaedia*, (July 16th 1997) Antiterrorism is to be defined as: “Defensive measures taken to reduce vulnerability to terrorist attacks”, whilst Counterterrorism is understood as “Offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism.” There is, of course a problem with such a brace of definitions. As Stephen Sloan controversially pointed out in a study prepared for the United States Air Force University: how can one engage in the contradictory position of taking the offensive only after the terrorist attack has occurred? See Stephen Sloan, “*Almost Present at the Creation*” op cit. For the purposes of this study the method of distinguishing definitions of anti- and counter-terrorism is not relevant.

operating with significantly different types of end-states in mind, ones which are not open to political resolution. As a result it is necessary to indulge in a brief overview of the previously far more common form of terrorism: religiously motivated terrorism.

Any analysis of terrorism that is even just partially informed by religious or apocalyptic ideas must mention at least three famous groups: the Zealots, or Sicarii (Dagger Wielders), the Assassins, or Hashshishin (hashish eaters) and the Thuggees. What follows is a brief description of each and their respective fate.

THE ZEALOTS

A group that perfectly exemplifies how religious goals can meld with the political, the Zealots were a 1st century AD⁵⁹ off-shoot of the Pharisees active in Judea and modelled on the revolutionary group created by Judas Maccabaeus whose call to arms was “No god but God, no tax but the Temple!”⁶⁰ They were led by Menachem, the grandson of Judah of Galilee, who had led an unsuccessful uprising against the Roman authorities in AD 6⁶¹.

⁵⁹ As chronicled by the historian Josephus (Flavius), the group was active between 45 A.D. and the eventual destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in 70 AD

⁶⁰ Andrew Sinclair: “*An Anatomy of Terror – a history of terrorism*”, Pan Macmillan, 2003.

⁶¹ See Daniel C. Peterson and William J. Hamblin: “*Who were the Sicarii?*” At <http://www.meridianmagazine.com/ideas/040607Sicarii.html>.

The aim of the Zealots⁶² was two-fold: to purge the Jewish faith of Hellenistic influence and to pressure the Roman forces of occupation into mass warfare with the Jews such that the Messiah would be forthcoming. The tactic for achieving the latter lay mainly in assassinations of Roman officials or soldiers and Jewish collaborators or priests, often involving stabbing in broad daylight⁶³. Hence the group's secondary name of Sicarii – *Dagger Wielders* in Latin⁶⁴. The group, led by key revolutionary leaders such as Menahem ben Jair and Eleazar ben Jair, would eventually take the lead role in the Jewish Revolt that began in AD 66. In fact, holy Jewish texts tell the story that it was the Zealots that accelerated the starvation of the besieged city dwellers such as to provoke as widest spread an uprising as possible. (Having successfully retaken the Temple of Jerusalem, it stayed under Jewish control until AD 70).

The historian Josephus paints a very negative picture of the sect and its campaign of violence in the build-up to the destruction of the Temple by Roman forces. Although devoting some time to describing the group and its history, the less than objective writer does little to help us answer the question of whether there was only one such

⁶² Of course, the modern English words zealot and zealotry, comes from this historic group, the latter denoting instances where activist ambition in relation to an ideology becomes excessive to the point of being harmful to others. The original Hebrew word *kanai* actually meant one who is jealous on behalf of God. For a very brief overview of the term see the relevant entries at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>. There are those that posit that Judas Iscariot the disciple of Jesus that would eventually betray him, was a zealot given the similarity of his name to the Latin singular term for dagger-wielder: *sicarius*. There is, however, no conclusive proof of this in fact being the case. The Gospel of Luke describes another apostle, Simon the Canaanite, as Simon the Zealot, but this may simply be the closest Greek translation for the original Aramaic word to describe Simon's wholehearted commitment to Jesus.

⁶³ S. Anderson and S. Sloan: "*Historical Dictionary of Terrorism*" 2nd edition, Scarecrow, Lanham, 2002.

⁶⁴ Ibid, Anderson and Sloan. The Zealots did, however, evolve into using guerrilla tactics and hostage taking for ransom, as well as the first recorded use of mass-scale passive resistance. There are some scholars, such as Daniel C. Peterson and William J. Hamblin, who assert that the Zealots and Sicarii were not one and the same, that the former were more political and less violent and that the latter was a splinter group. It is safe to say that this fact is still contested given the confused and subjective nature of sources available on the events of the first century Palestine.

group or several such sects, under the control of different leaders with different goals (for example Judas of Gamala, John of Gsichala and Zadok the Pharisee)⁶⁵.

THE ASSASSINS

The second most cited group that employed religiously motivated terror are the members of the Assassin cult, the 12th and 13th century followers of Hassan Ibn al-Sabbah, or the *Old Man of the Mountain*.

Al-Sabah was an Shi'ite Ismaili⁶⁶ heretic born into the minority population of oppressed Yemenis who would gather followers referred to as the fedayeen, the Persian word meaning 'he who offers (self-sacrifice)' He and his cult are still somewhat clouded in mystery, subject to questionable accounts, to include Marco Polo's account of his travels through the mountainous Alamut (eagle's nest) region of today's Iran⁶⁷. The legends have it that the cult members were trained, read brainwashed, through a very hierarchical Shi'ite system of gradual enlightenment⁶⁸

⁶⁵ See the various works of Josephus, including: "*The Jewish War*", translated by G.A. Williamson, Penguin, Baltimore, 1959. The Talmud also deals with the sect and labels them *baryonim* meaning uncouth or wild and they are condemned for their aggressive behaviour, and refusal to compromise to save those inside Jerusalem besieged by the Romans. The holy text blames the Zealots for having contributed to the demise of Jerusalem and the second Jewish Temple and of provoking Rome's acts of revenge on Judea.

⁶⁶ The Ismaili (or Isma'ili) sect sprang from the main body of Shia thought in the second half of the 8th century. This group traced its imamate through one of the sons of Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq, Isma'il. The Ismaili followed closely the tradition of secret teaching, or *batini*, holding that religious truth was only understood by a chosen, dynastic few. Under a cloak of representing themselves as members of other groups and other denominations, they would travel far and wide sowing discontent and unrest. (Patrick Sookhdeo: "*Understanding Islamic Terrorism*", Isaac Publishing, Pewsey, 2004).

⁶⁷ See "*The Travels of Marco Polo*" Volume 1 by Marco Polo dictated to Rustichello of Pisa. E-book transcript available at <http://library.beau.org/gutenberg/1/0/6/3/10636/10636-8.txt>. Note that this work is based on a visit to the Assassin stronghold of Alamut that took place a full 17 years after the cult had been destroyed.

⁶⁸ The seven grades of Nizari Ismaili enlightenment, from *fidai*, or devoted one, to Grand Master. (Unless footnoted otherwise, the historic details concerning the Assassins and Thuggees are taken from Paul Elliott: "*Warrior Cults*", Blandford, London, 1995.)

in a beautiful secluded paradise, or walled garden that represented the paradise of the hereafter. Then they were deployed as killers targeted against the Sunni rulers of the region⁶⁹.

There is no reliable evidence for the claim, but Sunni leaders victimised by the fedayeen, alleged that the killers were only able to accomplish their bold attacks after having partaken copiously of the drug hashish. This led to their being later called the Hashshishin, or hashish-eaters, from whence we derive the modern English word ‘assassin’⁷⁰. For our purposes, beyond the continued use of this phrase and also the use by Palestinian fighters and the Iraqi resistance of the word fedayeen to denote suicide squad members, it is also important to note the role of guarantees of entry into paradise as a theme that would recur in later, religiously motivated, terrorism, to include the suicide attackers of September 11th 2001.

Beyond the now legendary story of brain-washed or fanatical killers, it is all too often forgotten that the cult was first a proselytising one and that it wished to undermine the political realities it perceived around it at that time. From the mountain fortress, the Old Man would send individual missionaries into the Persian countryside to preach the Ismaili doctrines and engender political resistance to the Sunni, and specifically Seljuk Turkish, elites in the region. As a result, fuelled by political revolution, the Ismaili heresy spread through Persia and frequently resorted to tactics that later would be labelled guerrilla warfare⁷¹. It was only after a very spectacular routing of the Seljuk Vizier Nizam al-Mulk’s forces in 1092, that The Old Man, al-Sabbah, decided on new tactics, the tactics that would make the cult so famous, but would at the same time cement its doom.

⁶⁹ Ibid. Anderson and Sloan, and Sinclair.

⁷⁰ The seminal English-language work on this cult is Bernard Lewis’ “*The Assassins*”, first published in 1967 but reissued in 2003 by Weidenfeld. It should be noted that the word assassin is more accurately used to refer to the later Syrian off-shoot of the cult, than to the original group based in Alamut, especially if one agrees with the assessment that the original cult was an ascetic one.

⁷¹ Guerrilla warfare must be distinguished from terrorist action. Although also an asymmetric weapon of choice for the weaker side in a conflict, the guerrilla is more military in nature and holds territory.

THE THUGGEE CULT

Despite the paucity of written evidence of this cult's early period, it is reasonable to conclude that the most successful, long-lived and bloody terror group is in fact the Thuggee. Depending on which historian one reads, this group existed for between 500 and 1,000 years and killed between 600,000 and 1.2 million people on the Indian sub-continent through ritual strangulation, until it was wiped out ostensibly by the mammoth efforts of one Capt. Sleeman of the East Indian Company⁷².

As to origins, there is no incontrovertible account of from whence the group came, or how it was established. One interesting hypothesis, given the Muslim identity of this heretical group which mixed elements of Islam with Hindu mythology, is that it was made up originally of immigrant Ismaili immigrants to India that were escaping the collapse of the Hashshishin strongholds in Persia and Syria⁷³. Is this is true then the Thuggee is even older than most often thought and can be treated as a mutation of the cult of the Assassins.

The Thuggee stand apart from both the Nizari Ismaili cult and the Jewish Sicarii, because, whilst the latter two mingled the transcendental and the political, the mass violence of the Thuggee appears to have had no other purpose than to satisfy their idol, Kali Ma, the Hindi Goddess of war and destruction⁷⁴. This lack of a political dimension to Thuggee violence is all but confirmed by the fact that it killed in

⁷² The earliest written mention of the Thuggee comes in the history of Firz Shah by Zia-ud-Barni, which mentions the mass capture of Thuggee cult members in 1290. By 1853 the remnants of the cult had been all but destroyed by Capt. James Sleeman, the nephew of William Sleeman's who started the original imperial campaign against the Thuggee. This places the most conservative estimate of the duration of the cult at just under six centuries.

⁷³ Ibid., Elliott.

⁷⁴ At least in the area of terrorism studies, it may be wise to reconsider our fundamental definitions of the adjectives religious and political. Given the mixture of political and religious themes behind the motivations of groups such as the Zealots and even al Qaeda, perhaps the usage of a broader definition of political to include the religious, may be apposite.

silence and anonymity. The bodies of sacrificed innocents were buried and no open demands of any kind were made by the cult, nor did it proselytise, its members keeping their Thuggee affiliation a secret throughout their lifetime.

The violence of the Thuggee⁷⁵ was most ceremonial, very defined by ritual. The targets were the travellers that moved across India's vast distances, mostly in the pilgrimage seasons. Members of the cult would live ordinary lives for most of the year. Then, when the season for pilgrimage began, they would come together in groups of 50-100 cultists, in which each person had a specific role to play. There would be those that would disguise themselves as innocent travellers, entertainers or pilgrims. These would be the decoys and scouts that would attach themselves to an unwitting group of pilgrims. Then there would be those that would lay the ambush once the travellers were at ease and relaxed, then ritualistically strangling the victims with a white or yellow rumal or knotted scarf. Still others that would bring the ritual hatchet for the communion ceremony and then there were those that would bury the dismembered victims⁷⁶.

After the killing, a ceremonial feast would be held over the murder site to disguise the events that had taken place and to offer the lives and wealth garnered to Kali as the sweet goor, or ceremonial drink, was drunk by the cult members. Once the season for pilgrimage was over, the Thuggee would return to their normal existence until called once more to kill for Kali.

The killing was not maniacal, or random. There were those that could not be killed, either out of deference to Kali, because they would bring bad luck, or because their disappearance would bring unwanted attention and risk to the group. Examples include, women, artisans, the infirm or foreigners and especially whites, who would be missed more readily. Children were not spared, however. It would in fact be the

⁷⁵ Of course, today's English word 'thug' derives from the violent cult of the Thuggee.

⁷⁶ Strangulation was not chosen for tactical reasons, but as a direct result of the mythology of the Thuggee. In the great battle between Kali and the demon-king Raktavija, every drop of blood split by Kali in wounding her enemy turned into a giant that would fight her. As a result Thuggee-induced death had to come without loss of blood to the victim. Only once dead could the victims be dismembered for burial.

breaking of these strict rules by later apostates as well as the rash behaviour of those whose greed outweighed their sense, that contributed to the final downfall of all Thuggee in the 1820-30s.

THE DEATH OF EARLY TERRORISM

The Zealots

The politically and religiously motivated group proved most resilient, but after Nero's son, Titus Flavius was tasked after his father the emperor's death to retake control of Palestine, he used all-out military force in the form of numerous assaults and a siege of Jerusalem to destroy the group's places of worship, including the Temple of Jerusalem, and massacre its members⁷⁷. The final stand between Roman and Zealot forces was at the famed mountain retreat and Roman fortress of Masada, which ended in AD 73 in a mass suicide of the extremists after a siege of over two year's duration.

The Hashshishin

In its original form as an Ismaili cult, the group was successful in becoming a state-within-a-state for thirty years, with strongholds in not only Alamut, but Samiran, Lamassar, Maymun Diaz, Shah Diz, Damghan, Turshiz and Girdkuk. Then as a result of internal strife at its highest level, followed by the advent of a series of heretical Grand Masters (the most outrageous being Hasan III who after coming to power in 1210 converted the Shi'ite cult to being a Sunni cult!) the group gradually lost power and became isolated.

Finally, the original terrorist-cult was exterminated by the invading Mongol hordes of Hulagu, brother of the Great Mongol Khan, after a series of sieges in 1256. The

⁷⁷ Ibid., Sinclair.

cruder Syrian version of the cult, which eventually, by the end was, to all intents and purposes, a group of killers for hire positioned between the Arab elite and the Christian crusaders, was violently swept aside in 1273 as the new Islamic empire of Sultan Baibars the Mameluke was established⁷⁸. Once again, brute force and overwhelming numbers would bring the end of a religiously and politically motivated terrorist group.

The Thuggee

Surprisingly, given the lack of a political element and the highly clandestine way in which this last group functioned, the fall of the Thuggee came not with the use of overwhelming force, but through dedicated detective work and judicial action.

William Henry Sleeman, a magistrate in Jubbulpore, would, as the result of a chance arrest in the early 1820s, become the East Indian Company's most dedicated Thuggee hunter and eventually be named General-Superintendent for Suppression of Thuggee. Thanks primarily to his dogged determination, the use of cultists he had turned (so-called *approvers*) and his finally convincing the authorities that the scale of the threat was large enough to endanger British interests, Sleeman, systematically mapped the Thuggee network over a series of years and proceeded to arrest hundreds and hundreds of the cultists, many of whom would end up swinging on the gallows⁷⁹.

Ironically the death of the world's most successful and deadliest cultic terror group would lead to the beginning of a new age in which the religious would loose ground

⁷⁸ Note that in addition to the enduring legend of the cult of the Assassins, to this very day the modern Ismaili leader, the Aga Khan, claims to be a direct descendant of the last Grand Master of Alamut. (Sookhdeo, *ibid.*)

⁷⁹ Of the almost 4,000 Thuggee arrested, not all would end up in jail, or be executed. By the end, when the aim was to cut of the supply of potential new recruits to the cult, re-education became almost as important as interdiction and execution. As a result many Thuggee, or sons of Thuggee, were helped to learn a trade and thus integrated safely into society. In fact, the Thuggee carpetmakers would gain a name in their own right.

practically completely to the political and then the ideological. With this shift we will arrive to the era of modern terrorism.

MODERN TERROR: A TEMPORARY SECULARISATION OF MOTIVATION

“One of the original justifications for terror was that man would be totally reconstructed; one didn’t have to worry about the kinds of means one was using because reconstruction itself would be total and there would be no lingering after-effects (Modern) terrorism was initiated by people who had millennial expectations, who expected the world to be utterly transformed. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, terror has been used for very limited political purposes like the separation of a piece of territory from another piece of territory.... Something changed in the nature of terror as people began to see that it can...be turned on and off at will.”

David Rapoport
“Political Terrorism”⁸⁰

“Both analytically and operationally one can contend that if there is “a fog of war,” there most certainly is “a smog of terrorism,” which makes it particularly difficult to look through a very opaque analytical crystal ball.”

Stephen Sloan
The Changing Nature of Terrorism⁸¹

As writers such as Francis Fukuyama and others have duly noted, the 20th century was a century of ideologies. Although one does not have to agree with Fukuyama when he states that the conflict of ideologies ended with the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the later implosion of the Soviet Union, the truth is that at the very least the period from 1933 to 1989 is impossible to explain fully without recourse to a discussion of the competing forces of Nazism, Fascism, Communism and liberal democracy⁸². One can take this back even further to 1917-1918 if one is prepared to see the breaking up of empires such as the Ottoman and Russian Tsarist Empire as ideological aims also.

It is no exaggeration to say that in the latter half of the last century, from the viewpoint of the major protagonists, there was no decision of import taken regarding

⁸⁰ A. Schmid, op. cit.

⁸¹ From “The Terrorism Threat and U.S. Government Response: operational and organizational factors”, Eds. J.M. Smith and W.C. Thomas, INSS Book Series, US Air Force Academy, Colorado, 2001.

⁸² It may be more precise to add free market economics to liberal democracy here, or to use the contraction “market democracy”.

national security and defence policy that was not informed by ideological factors. It should therefore come as no surprise that the nature of terrorism would change to match this circumstance and to reflect the heightened relevance of the political over the religious and that the idea of doctrinal thinking, or strategy, would finally become a part of such violence.

Despite the ‘science’ of terrorism studies being eminently young and underdeveloped, there are key theories and tools which have been fashioned in recent decades so as to help us better understand modern political violence.

ANALYSING THE MODERN TERROR GROUP

According to the doyen of the study of political violence, Martha Crenshaw⁸³, there are two basic explanations for how the conspiratorial organisations that practice terrorism behave: the instrumental approach and organisational process theory. The logical premises and the policy implications of each are separate from one another, however both views may have to be applied together to understand terrorism and its consequences in a strategic fashion.

The Instrumental Approach

The instrumental approach, according to Crenshaw, is based on the assumption that the act of terrorism is a deliberate choice by a political (non-state) actor and is a response to external stimuli, particularly government actions. Terrorism is thus seen as a means to a political end and the attendant violence is seen as intentional. Terrorism is thus meant to produce a change in the government’s political position,

⁸³ See Crenshaw’s study: “Theories of Terrorism: Instrumental and Organizational Approaches” in *“Inside Terrorist Organizations”* Ed. David C. Rapoport, Frank CASS, London, 2001.

not to destroy military potential. Surprise attack is a favoured tactic. The actions of the attacker are determined by perceptions of incentive and opportunity. Terrorism is referred to as “a new mode of warfare”⁸⁴ beginning its modern era around 1968⁸⁵. The possibility of surprise is critical to its success. An organisation’s success or failure is measured in terms of its ability to attain its stated political ends. Few organisations actually attain their long term ideological objectives, therefore terrorism can be considered objectively as a failure⁸⁶. The targets of terrorism are symbolically related to the organisation’s ideological beliefs, dependent upon the existence of a link between victim and purpose. According to this view, terrorism will end through consistent failure, when costs are high and opportunities for violence are closed.

Governments have two basic alternatives to meet the threat: defence and deterrence. Defence means forcefully preventing an enemy from attaining his physical objectives. Pre-emption and prevention are both forms of defence that require exceptional intelligence. Effective deterrence must influence the adversary’s perceptions of opportunity and incentives for attack. According to Crenshaw there are two forms of deterrence open to the defender: denial and retaliation. Denial is

⁸⁴ The use of the word warfare in this case is problematic since it implies legitimacy to the protagonist and that he or she will observe the laws of war, which is rarely the case, if at all, when terrorism is concerned. See Footnote 43 and 44 above

⁸⁵ In addition to David Rapoport’s identification of waves of terrorism discussed below, Stephen Sloan also describes phases in the evolution of political violence and associates the one which began in the 1960s with technological advances in communications and travel, most importantly television and the jet-airline. Together these facilitated what Brian Jenkins termed “terrorism-as-theatre” and what Sloan termed “non-territorial terrorism”. See Rapoport: “*The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism*”, Sloan: “*Almost Present at the Creation*” and Schmid: “*Political Terrorism*”, all three op. cit..

⁸⁶ Whilst the author has yet to see a definitive table describe the numerous terrorist actors of the modern age and whether or not they have achieved their goals (this would be an interesting project in itself), it may be unwise to agree immediately with Crenshaw’s conclusion regarding terrorist movements and success. If we look to how groups such as the Stern Gang, Irgun and Haganah, were, by way of the political violence they employed, instrumental to the creation of Israel, or if we look to how after thirty years of a renewed campaign of violence the Provisional IRA seems to have secured greater autonomy for the six northern provinces of Northern Ireland, it would seem unwise to state flatly that terrorism always fails.

conventionally considered to be the weakest form of deterrence. The purpose here is to raise the immediate cost of contemplated actions. Retaliation involves the threat of the use of military force in response to an attack after it has been committed. Deterrence is never simple and it has proven to be ineffective against adversaries with superior motivation.

Organisational Process Theory

This approach focuses on internal organisational processes within the group that uses terrorism. It assumes that the fundamental purpose of any political organisation is to maintain itself. Terrorism is thus explained as the result of an organisation's struggle for survival, usually in a competitive environment. Leaders ensure organisational maintenance by offering varied incentives to followers, not all of which involve the pursuit of the group's stated political purposes. Leaders seek to prevent both defection and dissent by developing intense loyalties among group members. The organisation responds to pressure from outside by changing the incentives offered to members or through innovation. Incentives for joining the organisation include a variety of individual needs, such as camaraderie - particularly since most members of this type of group are adolescent, or at least younger than is otherwise the case.

The issues or causes which the group supports may shift with the organisation's need to offer new incentives to its members. There are different categories of political purpose, according to analyst James Wilson. The first purposive incentive offers the pursuit of a single specified objective and is narrowly focused and issue oriented. Ideological incentives are based on rejection of the present political world with the promise of a future replacement. The third type of incentive is redemptive, the appeal of organisations whose efforts concentrate primarily on changing the lives of their members.

According to Crenshaw, organisational analysis shows that the objective conditions likely to inspire grievances and hence incite violence are permanent, whereas

violence is not continuous or universal. Thus, often terrorist groups can be identified with for-profit enterprises, in that the immediate objective is to continue operations. The dissatisfied member has two options: exit or ‘voice.’ Exit can be performed by joining another rival organisation or splintering off and creating a new group (a good example here would be the Provisional IRA and the splinter Real IRA). One method the leadership may use is ‘severe initiation costs,’ whereby members invest much in joining an organisation at the beginning and therefore will be reluctant to leave. The dangerous side to this tactic is that if discontent does foment, it can easily become explosive. It also suggests that in competitive conditions where exit is possible, there may be less internal dissent. In sum, the organisational process assumes a complexity of motivation that goes beyond simply communicating a political message. Leaders of the organisation struggle to maintain the viability of the group by offering incentives and subtly altering organisational goals.

Government response also varies with the situation. For non-purposive incentives, governments can offer substitutes, such as financial rewards. Where incentives are purposive (ideological or redemptive), the situation of the government is more difficult. Nevertheless, according to Crenshaw, there do exist counter-intelligence opportunities for creating dissatisfaction and dissent within terrorist organisations.

Crenshaw’s instrumental theory is simpler, more comprehensible and more intellectually satisfying. The main difference is that instrumental theory suggests that terrorism fails when the political objectives are not met and organisational theories infer that terrorism fails when the organisation disintegrates; achieving long-term goals may be undesirable⁸⁷. Analysts of terrorism rarely use organisational theory explicitly. Many policy makers seem to believe that hard line policies will prevent terrorism because terrorists wish to avoid high costs.

⁸⁷ Indeed, the behaviour displayed by some terrorist groups (even the IRA) as they approach the potential realisation of their political goals has led to the identification of a “*moving goal-post syndrome*”. As the prospects of an end in hostilities become more realistic, terrorist demands may be changed so as to make resolution impossible and thus protect the way of life the terrorist has become accustomed to.

Another, more common approach to analysing political violence is to attempt to identify a progression in its development, an evolution of terrorism or the types of terrorist actor.

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL PHASES OF MODERN TERRORISM

It is remarkable that a truly academic and comprehensive account of the history of modern terrorism has yet to be written⁸⁸. Even the scholar who has published the most on the historical aspects of political violence, David C. Rapoport, has yet to produce a magnum opus of such a kind. Nevertheless, Rapoport's contribution is significant since in his numerous articles he has at least attempted to describe the evolution of the terrorism of the last century.

The conventional wisdom is that terrorist groups first developed an international dimension in the 1960s, a characteristic resulting from the cumulative impacts of specific developments in modern technology. However, there have been international aspects to terrorist activities since well before the 1960s. The political variables within this dimension have been identified by David Rapoport as follows⁸⁹:

- The terrorist commitment to an international revolution
- The willingness of foreign states to support terrorist groups

⁸⁸ There are, of course, works such as Andrew Sinclair's "*An Anatomy of Terror - a history of terrorism*", Pan Macmillan, London, 2003, but given that these are not written by specialists in the field and that they eschew requirements of a truly academic standard, being more novelistic in character, such works do not fill the obvious scholarly void.

⁸⁹ See "The International World as Terrorists have seen it: a look at a century of memoirs" from "*Inside Terrorist Organizations*" *ibid.*

- The degree to which the population terrorists claim to represent is found in areas beyond the primary territory being contested (i.e. diaspora)
- Changes which have occurred in the international state system.

It is safe to assert, as does Rapoport, that modern terrorism was born in Tsarist Russia just over a generation before the Bolshevik Revolution would arrive to St. Petersburg⁹⁰. These terrorists, most famously, Narodnaya Volya (The People's Will), operated largely within the European states and engaged most often in assassination plots against major officials in the hope of reconstructing, or at least shaking, the social order.

Within just ten years of the anarchist movement resorting to violence in Russia, political violence of this sort and with such a message would be mimicked and spread to the Balkans and Western Europe, becoming the first international phenomenon of its type⁹¹. Its becoming internationalised so rapidly was thanks to the technological advancements of an age that facilitated the international carriage of news (the telegraph) and international travel (the expanding European railroad network).

The second phase in modern political violence began in Ireland after WWI and reached its peak in the two decades after WWII, engulfing the colonial territories of western nations, the mandate territory of Palestine (1943-48), Cyprus (1955-59), and Northern Ireland (1968-1974). The practitioners of political violence in all three areas spoke of common bonds with other revolutionaries elsewhere. The

⁹⁰ Of course, as has been noted already, the modern use of the word 'terrorism' stems from the terror used by the new regime brought in by the French Revolution. Nevertheless, this must be differentiated from the first true instance of sub-state terrorism, since the former use was by the state against its own citizens and as such does not fit into the category of true terrorism as we have come to use the term. See footnote 33 above.

⁹¹ Whilst the Assassins cult discussed above did act eventually internationally, it was not comparable in that its off-shoots were products of the original formation and not stand-alone fellow-travellers or ideological soul-mates.

international element in these cases derives from at least two principal political realities: they all involved problems which could be perceived as stemming from colonial histories and the involvement of a community some of whose members resided beyond the territory being contested (i.e. diasporas), thus drawing other states into conflict perhaps against their will.

The success of such terrorist groups depended (or depends), according to Rapoport, ultimately upon the international factor. In the Cyprus campaign, for example, unlike the earlier ones in Russia, the diplomatic activity of foreign states proved decisive. The UN was heavily involved and much depended upon the actions of Greece. In the case of Israel, the UN was a particularly crucial element since Palestine, existing as a League of Nations Mandated Territory, was ultimately under UN jurisdiction and the international Jewish elite was able to leverage very strong international sympathies as a result of the recent horror of the Jewish holocaust.

In the wake of the new political environment resulting from the Vietnam War, a third period was introduced in the 1960s. Rapoport labels this the 'Contemporary Wave' of modern terrorism, and in the US includes events occurring from 1969-71, in West Germany from 1971-77, and in Palestine, from 1957-78. Whilst the aims of the actors in this second wave were largely connected to national liberation, the majority of its later derivations were Marxists and/or Anarchist in ideology. Tactics changed to targeting softer and more defenceless targets, as opposed to military forces and other hard targets.

The two fundamental political factors behind the international terrorism of the third wave, which differentiated it, were that the ties between different national terrorist organisations and the involvement of foreign, third party, states was now greater. The German case was international in every way, with its intellectual roots lying outside of Germany. Actors such as Baader Meinhof viewed their actions as following the lead of Third World revolutionaries. The German and Palestinian groups cooperated closely. The international character of the PLO was its central feature, one thrust upon it by political necessity, not choice. According to Rapoport, the factors explaining this are:

- The change in the regional, or Arab international, system precipitated by the creation of Israel
- The recognition by the Arab states of the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinians (eventually being given observer status in the UN)
- The failure of previous campaigns demonstrating the fact that success is impossible without the direct involvement of Arab armies
- Competition between rival groups inside the PLO
- The Diaspora character of the Palestinian community
- PLO interests often conflicting with those of the Arab states⁹²

In other words, the terrorists of this era took to the international scene because they believed in the possibility of international revolution and/or because they existed foreign states with assets the terrorists could use in their domestic struggle. Two important contributory factors were the pre-eminence of the US as a symbol and leader of the West⁹³ and the creation of Israel.⁹⁴

⁹² Rapoport sees this as the most important reason of all.

⁹³ This is evinced by the fact that according to recognised databases, such as the RAND-St. Andrews database, attacks against international US targets during this period grew exponentially to make up in excess of 30% of all international attacks.

⁹⁴ The spread of liberal governments and the development of an international revolutionary tradition were also significant elements in shaping the political violence of this period. As to the second wave, the change obviously came with the fact that Western colonial territories were suddenly seen, by a wider and wider audience, as illegitimate and that, according to Rapoport, the governments concerned had “become ambivalent” about these territories, or simply lost the will to invest blood and gold in their continued governance.

A NEW PERIOD OF RELIGIOUSLY MOTIVATED TERROR

Rapoport’s contribution in mapping modern terrorism’s evolution is undoubtedly an important one and since the September 11th attacks he has returned to his theory of wave-based progression. Below you will see my attempt to put the most recent of his observations in the form of a table depicting the four periods or waves⁹⁵.

	Trigger(s)	Targets	Methods	End-State ⁹⁶
Anarchist 1880s-1890s (Russia, Balkans, Italy)	Unsatisfactory governmental reform efforts	The guilt-inducing, stultifying national order	Assassination, typically with a Bomb and ideally via martyrdom	Revolution
Anti-Colonial 1920s-1960s (Ireland, Israel, Cyprus, and Algeria)	World War I (reinforced by WWII)	Imperial Order	Bomb and Gun, but often also guerrilla-type ‘hit and run’ against police and armed forces. Diaspora and ideologically similar nation-states provided support, USSR included. Anti-colonial attitude of UN a factor	Self-Determination (secular state)
New Left 1960-1980s (Palestine, Northern Ireland, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Turkey and Japan)	The Vietnam War	The Undemocratic, Political and Economic Elite	“Theatrical” targets. Hijacking, hostage-taking, embassy attacks and assassinations. USSR, Cuba, and mutual assistance arrangements of logistical import. American interests become the preferred target	Self-Determination (secular state) or Radicalist, Marxist (or both)

⁹⁵ D. C. Rapoport, “*The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism*”, op. cit..

⁹⁶ Whilst on the surface one can identify different self-professed goals for the terrorists in each phase or wave, it is worthy noting something Rapoport himself states before he discusses each period individually: ““Revolution” is the overriding aim in every wave, but revolution is understood in different ways.” See “*The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism*”, ibid.

<p>The Religious Wave 1979- 2025(?) (Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, Algeria India, Philippines, Indonesia and Japan)</p>	<p>Start of new Islamic century⁹⁷ Iranian Revolution Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan</p>	<p>The Secular National Political Elites and The USA</p>	<p>Suicide-bombing</p>	<p>Creation of a Theocratic State, or proto-Caliphate</p>
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Table Four: The Waves of Modern Terrorism according to Rapoport, (Author's own tabular representation)

It is Rapoport's contention that given what we have seen with previous waves of 20th century terrorism, the last and fourth wave may also be of a fixed duration, probably no longer than the second anti-colonial phase. Thus he predicts that renewed forms of religious violence, such as evinced by al Qaeda, will run out of steam sometime around 2025. It is I believe, however, misleading to see all current day extremist Muslim actors as falling neatly into this fourth phase or wave. There are facets of al Qaeda and its related network that I believe make it sui generis, or at least worthy of being dealt with as a sub-set of the fourth group. These differences are clearest when we look at the triggers and the methods, but also at structure⁹⁸.

To begin with it must be recognised that al Qaeda was not triggered, was not created as a result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Yes, many of its later members would be drawn from the ranks of the 'Arab Mujahedeen', but al Qaeda did not exist as a terrorist organisation until well after the USSR had withdrawn from Afghanistan. In fact it was exactly this successful routing of a superpower that would give impetus to its creation. At the same time there are multiple catalysts one can identify which together would turn the Arab Services Bureau (MAK), a recruiting structure for freedom fighters, into a radical terrorist organisation. They

⁹⁷ 1979 was the year the Muslim calendar moved into 1400 Hijra.

⁹⁸ A lengthy discussion of the structural differences as well as al Qaeda's desired end-state can be found below.

include: the slaughter of Muslims in Chechnya, Bosnia and Kosovo, the creation of Muslim successor states in Central Asia with the dissolution of the USSR and the refusal of the Saudi government to accept bin Laden's offer of defending the Saudi kingdom with his mujahed fighters after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. We will look at these factors in greater detail when discussing the evolution of al Qaeda.

Secondly, and here we return to the spectre of "hyper-terrorism", al Qaeda, along with Aum Shinrykio, must be taken to be in a category of their own, since for both groups it seems obvious that it is not the mass-audience aspect of terror but 'mass-casualty' that is important. Whilst Aum was unable to kill thousands, as al Qaeda did on September 11th, the fact that it developed and attempted to deploy both chemical and biological weapons makes it a mass-casualty seeking terror group. As a result it would be wrong to have either group be co-categorised as other actors in the Fourth Wave who have not resorted to means of mass casualty and cannot be demonstrated to have had any interest in such methods. I believe, that subsequently, we can thus add a Fifth Wave, or category⁹⁹ to Rapoport's previous four:

⁹⁹ I am still not fully convinced by the addenda that come with Rapoport's usage of the word 'wave.' Whilst it is clear that with it he wishes to impart the sense that each period acted in a way that the ripple-like consequences of the phase's originator spread globally, the additional facet, Rapoport's conclusion that the waves have to eventually die or run out of energy – just as with ripples on a pond's surface – is not substantiated in any scientific way, nor is the inference that Wave Four needs to end approximately twenty years from now. There is nothing to say that Salafi-inspired terrorism such as that of al Qaeda need last only 20 or 30 years before it fizzles out, just because Anarchist Terror or Anti-Colonial Terror petered out after a few decades.

	Triggers	Targets	Method	End-State
Transcendental – Apocalyptic Terror 1995- (USA, Japan East Africa, Thailand, UK)	Mujahed Victory over the Superpower USSR			
	End of the Cold War		Mass Casualty Means, Synchronised (Suicide) Bombers (al Q)	Global Caliphate / Theocracy (al Q)
	The Gulf War (and bin Laden’s rejection by the Saudi government)	Apostate Arab / Muslim Leaders		
	Creation of Muslim successor states to the USSR in Central Asia	The USA		
	Plight of Muslims in Bosnia, Chechnya and Kosovo	‘The West’	BioChem Weapons (Aum)	Global Cult Empire (Aum)

Table Five: A Fifth Phase in Modern Terrorism: The Transcendental

If the above description is correct, if al Qaeda (and Aum Shinrykio) can be considered to be significantly different from the terrorist groups that preceded them, as I believe this to be the case, then, one can reasonably conclude that the utility of the methods used to combat the previous four types of terrorist groups is not assured and as such we must reassess tools and policies. This will indeed be the goal of the final chapter of this dissertation. Before we discuss how to counter the terrorism of the Transcendental Terrorist, and how my hypotheses apply to the new threat, we must, however, first, know more about the enemy, its history, structure, methods and ideology. What follows is a discussion of these attributes with regard to al Qaeda¹⁰⁰.

¹⁰⁰ I leave Aum Shinrykio out of the discussion that follows purposefully. Whilst it does seem reasonable to place both Aum and al Qaeda into the same category of Transcendental Terrorism - since both are religiously informed, have global aims and are interested in mass-casualty terrorism - Aum does not at this moment pose a global threat, its leader having been arrested and tried for the crimes related to the Sarin gas attack of the Tokyo

WHAT WAS AL QAEDA?

“Once the legitimate use of violence to produce change had been established within the Islamic tradition, certain consequences followed. Violence was not just the prerogative of the Islamic state, but could also be claimed as valid by any Islamic rebel movement which might spring up. Many of these movements held that violence could be directed against civilians as well as against the state’s armed forces despite the fact mainstream teaching tended to forbid attacks on non-combatants.”

Patrick Sookhdeo

“Understanding Islamic Terrorism”¹⁰¹

“The new Bogeyman”; *“an existential threat to Western civilisation”*; *“the blow-back of the CIA’s biggest ever covert action”*; *“the front for a Zionist-Capitalist conspiracy”*; *“a deception of the neoconservatives”*; Al Qaeda has been called many, many things. Some have used it to describe the new geostrategic state of the World; others have seen it as the natural consequence of arrogant and hypocritical American foreign policy. Still some have sought to portray the organisation as a mirage, as a useful tool of modern political control¹⁰². Subsequently it seems that the

metro in 1995 and the remnants of the cult being in a far weaker position than the post-Afghan invasion generations of al Qaeda as evidenced by the Madrid and London attacks of 2004 and 2005 (see the discussion of al Qaeda’s generations below). For those that are interested, nevertheless, in more information on the cult, see Kaplan and Marshal: *“The Cult at the End of the World”* and Falkenrath et al: *“America’s Achilles’ Heel”*, both op. cit.

¹⁰¹ Isaac Publishing, Pewsey, 2004. Sookhdeo is, unfortunately, only one of a very small group of specialists writing on Islam for a Western audience, an author with true insight.

¹⁰² One of the most dangerous and intellectually bankrupt, yet popular such depictions of late was the three part documentary (or rather ‘docudrama’) produced by Adam Curtis for the BBC entitled: *“The Power of Nightmares”*. The mini-series, very much in the Michael Moore vein, is dangerous because it has been used to underpin many of the more aggressive and destructive conspiracy theories relating to the US administration and the current situation in the Middle East. The series is intellectually and journalistically bankrupt because it makes a subtle yet unfounded leap of logic in its main argumentation. From stating, quite reasonably, that politicians and bureaucrats in the White House, Pentagon and UK administrations have embellished and exaggerated some of the facts concerning al Qaeda, the producer then goes on to make the statement that therefore the threat is all fanciful and invented, without proving this to be the case. (He goes on much later to reveal his true agenda and political identity, when he attempts to imply that even the USSR was

era of conspiracy theory is still very much with us¹⁰³. Nevertheless, no matter how titillating, or even convincing conspiracy theories and other simple holistic explanations of the current world state-of-affairs may be, without solid proof, argumentation and supporting facts, such dubious versions of reality remain all but useless to those attempting to secure their nations from potential further attack. What then can be said about al Qaeda that is incontrovertible? The following examination is aimed at demonstrating a few simple, yet important, facts that are essential to our examination of the transcendently-informed perpetrator of terrorism:

- Al Qaeda is a real organisation.
- It was created out of the remnants of the Arab Mujahedeen that had been in part recruited and trained by Osama bin Laden.
- Bin Laden is a very charismatic leader who is not afraid to telegraph to the wider world the aims behind his political/religious violence.
- Since its radicalisation in 1990/1 into a terrorist organisation – as opposed to a group of freedom fighters resisting the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan - al Qaeda has gone through at least 3 evolutionary iterations, or generations.

not a threat to the Western world, but used by the then political elites of the West to maintain power). This reprehensible journalist sleight of hand did not fail to make Curtis' series most popular in and outside of the UK. For the producer's argumentational sleight of hand see the programmes transcripts available at <http://silt3.com/index.php?id=572>, (especially the jump in logic betrayed between paragraph one and paragraph two of the introductory voiceover). For examples of the discussion spurred by it and related conspiracy theories see, for example, Robert Scheer: "*Is Al Qaeda Just a Bush Bogeyman?*", January 11th, 2005, The Los Angeles Times, or the numerous blogs, such as: "*I Believe 'Al Qaeda' was/is a 'Phony' (sic)???*" on The Rumour Mill News at www.rumourmillnews.com/cgi-bin/forum.cgi?noframes;read=62841 or any one of the many outlandish theories provided by the pariah of conspiracy mongering, Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr. of Executive Intelligence Review fame. For example: "*Zbigniew Brzezinski and September 11th*" at http://www.larouchepub.com/lar/2002/2901zbig_sept11.html which depicts the horrible events of 2001 as a Brzezinski and Huntington-inspired fascist coup against the White House.(!)

¹⁰³ One could dedicate several PhD dissertations to the topic of 9/11 and alleged conspiracies. A shorter yet sober overview of 9/11 and 'conspiracism' can be found at *PublicEye.org* (www.publiceye.org/conspire/conspiracism-911.html).

- Generation One of al Qaeda strongly wished/wishes to acquire Weapons of Mass Destruction. As a result it should not be classed and dealt with as if it were a rational, pragmatic actor akin to the IRA or ETA.
- Today al Qaeda poses a greater threat in the long term as an ideology than as a global, unitary network, as an ideology founded on transcendental motivations unlike those of the Cold War terrorist.

In order to understand the new nature of the threat, let us begin with the pre-history of al Qaeda.

THE HISTORY OF A TRANSCENDENTALLY INFORMED TERRORIST: BIN LADEN

Osama bin Laden was one of the many children¹⁰⁴ born to Muhammad bin Laden an indigent Yemeni labourer who went to Saudi Arabia to make his fortune. Through hard work and good fortune Muhammad would become Saudi Arabia's foremost construction magnate, lead contractor to the royal family. Osama would grow up in Medina under the influence of his Syrian mother. Their family would eventually be greatly respected by the Saudi royals and commoners alike¹⁰⁵.

Osama attended King Abdulaziz University where he studied economics and management, intending to join his family's business. Half-way through university he began to be drawn more towards government and international relations and eventually dropped out as a third-year student. His father died in a helicopter crash in 1968, having declined various political appointments offered by the king. After his death, Osama was the only child who took an interest in politics. He particularly supported the Saudi-based Islamists of south Yemen who were fighting to oust the local Communists. During his subsequent travels he came to Peshawar, where he fell under the influence of the Jordanian-Palestinian professor, Dr. Abdullah Azzam. Azzam was a stalwart of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood who played a key role in formulating and articulating the jihad doctrine that mobilised the Afghan mujahedeen and Arab volunteers to fight the Soviet forces of Afghan occupation.

In 1984, Azzam and Osama set up the *Afghan Service Bureau*, or MAK. This organisation was used as an umbrella to recruit and train tens of thousands of Arabs to join the mujahedeen in Afghanistan, and also acted as a clearing house for the funding of the resistance to the Soviets, disbursing over \$200 million dollars in

¹⁰⁴ Figures vary, but bin Laden had at least 50 siblings and was born 16th or 17th among them.

¹⁰⁵ Unless otherwise footnoted, the following biographical and historical information on bin Laden and his organisation is sourced from the first book to treat the subjects comprehensively: Rohan Gunaratna's *Inside Al Qaeda: global network of terror*, Hurst, London, 2002.

Middle Eastern and Western aid to the fight against the invaders. It must be noted that this occurred in conjunction with, and was facilitated by, the about-turn of US foreign policy under the Reagan administration, which formally declared “roll-back” as the replacement for “containment policy” and vouchsafed support for all those prepared to take the fight to the Soviets.

From the Truman Declaration of 1948 until President Reagan’s declaration of his administration’s support for the Mujahedeen, US foreign and defence policy had been defined around the need to stop the spread of Communism, to contain the ideology. With the move to true ‘roll-back’ the mission changed from stopping the spread, to pushing the Soviets and their ideological creed out of a given area. As a consequence of this seminal change in US Cold War foreign policy (which actually had its roots in recommendations made at the end of the Carter administration by then national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski), the CIA would eventually undertake the largest and most successful covert operation in its whole history. Under it, US and Saudi funds would be brought to buy weapons from China and the Arab “Muj” would be trained in covert bases supplied by the Pakistani intelligence service, or ISI¹⁰⁶.

Osama bin Laden himself donated much of his own wealth¹⁰⁷ to the cause and even participated in at least one minor battle inside Afghanistan which left him wounded.

¹⁰⁶ For information on this huge effort that would eventually bring defeat to the Soviets, the author recommends two distinctly different works. For a very professional and detailed account, there is none better at the moment than “*Ghost Wars*”, Penguin, New York, 2004, by Stephen Coll, formerly of the Washington Post, which was written with a very high level of access to key players and documents. For a totally different angle focusing on the more outlandish and James Bond-ish elements of the story, there is George Crile’s “*Charlie Wilson’s War*”, Grove, New York, 2003 (allegedly soon to be a Hollywood film), which tells the story of the Texan Congressman behind much of the CIA’s Afghan operation.

¹⁰⁷ Much rubbish floats on the internet regarding bin Laden and al Qaeda. One of these morsels is that bin Laden was immensely wealthy, a dollar billionaire able to buy his own army of mujahedeen. This is not true. Given the number of his siblings and the fact that after his radicalisation in the early 1990s he was expelled from Saudi Arabia and the bin Laden family openly disavowed Osama, there were/are distinct limits to his wealth. He is, or at least was, a dollar millionaire, but not much more can be stated with certainty except

While Osama spent most of his time at the training camps, his leader, Azzam was popularising his version of jihad on the Pakistan-Afghanistan borders. The broad outlines of what would become the later al Qaeda were formulated by Azzam in 1987 and 1988, during which time he completed its founding charter.

By 1989, with at least 15,000 soldiers killed, but likely many more, the Soviets decided to withdrawal their forces from Afghanistan. The Mujahedeen had won. The question now was: what next? Azzam envisaged his organisation, the MAK/al Qaeda, as being a tool to help oppressed Muslims globally, exploiting the wide-ranging network of charities and recruiting facilities the MAK now had at its disposal. But Osama felt that it should maintain the militant identity of a structure through which to deploy fighting forces into zones of conflict where Muslims were suffering. The disagreement between Azzam and bin Laden would become an insuperable loggerhead. After the Soviets had left Afghanistan, there was no apparent possibility for a compromise over the future of the MAK, or nascent al Qaeda¹⁰⁸. Azzam was assassinated 1989, allegedly by Egyptian assassins in the pay on bin Laden. Now the organisation was his and his alone.

After Azzam's death, Osama never publicly criticised his former mentor, instead choosing to praise him. He appointed his own loyalists to key positions in the organisation, including the "Blind Sheikh," Umar Abd al-Rahman, with whom Osama had become close during his first visit to Pakistan and in return al-Rahman acknowledged Osama as the undisputed leader of international jihadists after Azzam's death.

Replacing Azzam to a certain extent the role of ideological eminence gris, would be the work of Ayman al-Zawahiri. Al-Zawahiri came from an influential family in

that al Qaeda was not short of income in its early years, in addition to the funds that bin Laden may have invested himself into the organisation.

¹⁰⁸ Al Qaeda means "*the base*" and can have several connotations in Arabic, from the physical to the spiritual or ideological. No one has successfully identified at what point the organisation was rechristened al Qaeda from the MAK. For an usually good discussion of the word and its various meanings see chapter one of Jason Burke's "*Al- Qaeda – the true story of radical Islam*", Penguin, London, 2003.

Egypt and has been credited by some as being responsible for transforming bin Laden from a guerrilla to a terrorist. He had been central to the building of Egyptian Islamic Jihad and had become Osama's physician first before becoming his close advisor and mentor. He also came from a privileged background, like Osama, clearly demonstrating that extremist Muslim ideologies can appeal equally to all classes and strata of society. They were also united by both being Salafi¹⁰⁹ Muslims.

¹⁰⁹ Salaf literally means ancestor in Arabic and Salafiyyah is the practice whereby it is believed that the correct form of life is to follow that lived by the first communities that followed the Prophet Mohammed, the first three generations of Muslims: the Companions (Sahabah) of the Prophet, their immediate followers (Tabiun), and the followers of the Tabi'in.

THE TURN: RADICALISATION FROM FREEDOM FIGHTER TO TERRORIST

When the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in February 1989, Osama returned to Saudi Arabia, where he was treated with respect and diffidence, even being asked to assist the Saudi intelligence service. Whilst some analysts place the responsibility for bin Laden's radicalisation on the door-step of al-Zawahiri, it seems clear to this writer that external events and the behaviour of the Saudi regime are just as much a factor as the influence of bin Laden's new mentor.

With the invasion of Kuwait on August 2nd 1990 and the imminent threat posed to Saudi Arabia by the comparatively vast military might of the Iraqi army¹¹⁰, bin Laden decided to offer the services of his Arab mujahedeen brigades in the defence of his country. The Saudi royals rejected the offer. Not only was it rejected, but the security of the desert kingdom was to be provided for not by Arab or Muslim soldiers, but by the white infidels of the US armed forces and their allies. It was this rejection by the elite of his home country coupled with the stationing of infidel foreign forces on the land of Mecca and Medina that would spark bin Laden's transformation, a transformation that would be rapid and radical and after which he proceeded to openly criticise the Saudi regime so forcefully that within months he would be stripped of his citizenship and expelled from Saudi Arabia. He was not without friends, however, and was soon invited by the Sudanese to re-establish his operations in Sudan.

Two factors prompted Osama to relocate al Qaeda's infrastructure to Sudan. Firstly, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan enjoyed close relations and Osama realised the danger of returning to Peshawar at that time. Secondly, many of his group's members were becoming restless and wanted to "go back to work again" after the hiatus caused by the Soviet withdrawal. Once in the Sudan, Osama established substantial business

¹¹⁰ At the time of the invasion of Kuwait, the Iraqi Army stood at just under 1 million men in uniform at 955,000 troops (almost half being made up of reserves) compared to the grand total of 67,500 for all armed services in Saudi Arabia. "*The Military Balance 1990-1991*", Brassey's - IISS, London, 1990.

interests and ties with Sudan's political leadership, the intelligence community and the military. As a sizeable investor and businessman, he and his organisation were treated with respect. With Sudan as a new base of operations, al Qaeda continued to spread its network world-wide. Osama concealed his role in most al Qaeda operations and therefore the multinational nature of his organisation largely escaped the attention of the CIA¹¹¹. Whilst in Sudan, Osama became more and more interested in the use of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons, Weapons of Mass Destruction. This interest would culminate in the compilation of the so-called "*SuperBomb Manual*" and other materials that would be uncovered in Afghanistan after the US invasion of that country in October of 2001¹¹².

Eventually, however, the Sudanese would bow to American pressure and bin Laden was made to leave this country also. This decision, amongst all others, could be argued as being the biggest tactical mistake made by the US Intelligence Community (IC) and the White House. With bin Laden and al Qaeda's subsequent relocation to Afghanistan, a country in the midst of a civil war, whose Taliban government would not enjoy international recognition for some time, the capacity of the US IC to

¹¹¹ For copious details on what the US intelligence community missed see the final version of the official congressional 9/11 Commission Report, which runs to more than 600 pages.

The report is not your usual collection of diplomatic verbosity, but a very serious document. The author especially recommends the penultimate and final chapters, twelve and thirteen, which deal with concrete recommendations for a global strategy to fight al Qaeda and its kin and how the US government should be reorganised.

Note that there was more than one version of the report thanks to political agreements against full disclosure until after the last US presidential campaign was over. As a result, see the final version which can be downloaded in its entirety from the US Government Printing Office at www.gpoaccess.gov/911/. For a shorter, somewhat less objective yet most readable treatment dealing with what the political elites did wrong, one can read Richard Clarke's "*Against all Enemies – inside America's war on terror*", Free Press, New York 2004. Clarke served several US presidents, eventually becoming the Counter-Terrorism tsar for Bill Clinton, only to resign under the first term of President George W. Bush. His is a story of a blinded political elite looking for evidence to support preconceived notions to do with Iraq and Saddam Hussein.

¹¹² The discovery of these most important materials can be thanked to CNN and its al Qaeda team, led by the indomitable investigative reporter Mike Boettcher, who has over the years brought much to light in the world of international terrorism, and al Qaeda in particular, often before or against the tide of government efforts.

monitor the organisation was lost. Al Qaeda's infrastructure in Afghanistan was increased by the Taliban, who would seize control of much of the country with the help of al Qaeda fighters. Bin Laden was quick to consolidate his links with the Taliban leadership (to include familial intermarriage), and by financing and materially assisting the regime he soon had widespread influence over it. Al Qaeda soldiers were used for the purpose of fighting the Northern Alliance and in exchange al Qaeda benefited by being able to use Afghanistan as a staging ground, training area and headquarters. The Taleban's goal was to create the perfect theocratic Islamic state, which fit well with Osama's strategic goals and was fully compatible with al Qaeda's vision.

With the move to Afghanistan, Osama took the opportunity to manipulate his perceived persona, exploiting meetings with journalists to project the image of a pious man who had abandoned the riches of Saudi Arabia to live in Afghanistan. Even his dress was made to fit the new ideal of a clerically legitimate fighter for Islam. He would be seen in traditional dress plus combat jacket and the silver ring with black stone that he now wore was meant to represent the leader's goal to free Mecca and the Arabian Peninsula from both foreign unbelievers and the apostate house of Al-Saud. In February of 1997 he would declare a fatwa stating the three reasons why the United States should be targeted within this fight. They are as follows:

- For seven years, the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, meaning the Arabian Peninsula
- Americans are once again trying to inflict horrific massacres upon the Iraqi people
- The aim of the Americans' is to serve the Jewish state and divert attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and murder of Muslims there (evidenced by their desire to destroy Iraq.)

Then on February 23rd 1998, Osama announced the formation of a new alliance: *The World Islamic Front for the Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders*. Stating that the Americans had declared war on Allah, the Prophet and Muslims, bin Laden

announced that it was the duty of all Muslims to comply with God's order by killing Americans and their allies, both civilian and military, irrespective of location. Whilst he claimed no role in the huge East African bombings of August 7th that same year, that killed 224 people and injured more than 5,400 in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, he did praise the attack¹¹³. In retaliation, the CIA would try to assassinate bin Laden but failed. This attempt propelled him to pre-eminence as the leading extremist among the many Asian and Middle Eastern Islamist organisations. Now let us proceed to a discussion of how this new terror group functions and how it has changed over time.

¹¹³ This set an interesting pattern with regard to terrorist attacks and the acceptance of responsibility by bin Laden. Repeatedly bin Laden would refuse to immediately identify himself or his group with a given atrocity that was clearly of his making. This is even true for the 9/11 attacks. Instead, most often when making post-attack statements, bin Laden first simply comments on the attack then later praises the executors, and only much later will he accept direct responsibility or involvement. Compare this, for instance to the speed with which Cold War terrorist groups, such as the Provisional IRA and ETA, would openly declare their responsibility for an atrocity. This methodological difference, again underlines the way in which the politically motivated actor of the past differs from the religiously motivated terrorist of the present.

THE ORGANISATION AND TACTICS OF THE ORIGINAL AL QAEDA

Until the post 9/11 invasion of Afghanistan, the strategic and tactical direction of the al Qaeda network was provided by the Shura-level (council) leadership¹¹⁴ of al Qaeda, to include bin Laden and his deputy, al-Zawahiri. Until that point in time most al Qaeda attacks involved three distinct phases.

1. Intelligence teams mount surveillance and the attack team rehearses its operation in an al Qaeda camp
2. Al Qaeda sends a support team which arrives in the target area, and organises safe houses and vehicles, as well as explosives
3. Lastly, the Al Qaeda strike team arrives and withdraws after completing the mission, unless it is a suicide attack.

Suicide attack is likely to remain the preferred tactic for the foreseeable future, as well as synchronised attacks, as typified by 9/11, the East African embassy bombings, the planned attack against the Jordanian government and US embassy in Amman, and the Madrid and London attacks¹¹⁵. Al Qaeda tradecraft emphasises the need to maintain internal security and divides its operatives into overt and covert members under a single leader, with specific *modus operandi* for each. Both have the aim of concealing their identity, though covert members have to take a step further and completely avoid attracting unnecessary attention, whilst overt members can function nominally as ‘normal’ members of the given target society. It is clear from the numerous training manuals and other materials recovered in recent years that al Qaeda takes operational security most seriously.

¹¹⁴ For a diagrammatic of the then structure see *Appendix VIII: The Structure of Al Qaeda (Generation I)*.

¹¹⁵ The potentially horrific al Qaeda Amman attack, which was to involve synchronised chemically-enhanced explosions against three targets in the Jordanian capital, was interdicted at the last moment by the Jordanian counter terrorist forces. See Sebestyén Gorka and Richard Sullivan: “*Jordanian Counterterrorist Unit Thwarts Chemical Bomb Attack*”, JANES Intelligence Review, October, 2004.

Al Qaeda has developed intelligence wings comparable with government intelligence agencies. They strictly adhere to the cellular, or cluster model, composed of many cells whose members do not know one another. Most communication is carried out through human courier, with the higher echelons often avoiding the use of anything electronically detectable. Dormant cells do exist and are only called upon for a specific mission.

According to Rohan Gunaratna, as of mid-2001, al Qaeda had a permanent or semi-permanent presence in 76 countries. The basic building blocks of support and operational cells are the safe houses, secure communication channels and transportation systems. People entering and leaving safe-houses are obliged to have a non-Muslim appearance. Perfect cover must be maintained by all members, requiring the obtaining of all documents necessary for a false identity. Communication should be quick, explicit, and pertinent and should be carried out from public places, such as via public pay phones on busy streets, or on mobile phones using disposal SIM cards. There are different procedures when meeting one another depending on whether or not the members know each other or not. If not, there is a three-stage set of guidelines to establish identity. When letters are used to communicate, they must be only a few pages in length and be sent far from the sender's home address. Three types of secret communication are used: Common, Stand-by and Alarm. Common is one on one and covert. Standby is used when operators are unsure of how secure the meeting place is, and alarm communication is in response to security force penetration.

Al Qaeda's training programme is designed to create self-contained cells that operate independently of a central command¹¹⁶. Each man is taught to be self-sufficient, but in the event, for example, that an attack necessitates a bomb which cannot be easily home-made, a four stage security plan must be used. This breaks down into: pre-purchasing, purchasing, transportation and storage. Training also covers how to build and manage camps, where once again, 'need to know' principles are followed.

¹¹⁶ See again *Appendix VIII*.

When it comes to the make-up of the cells and sundry units it is important to note an observation made by analyst Rapoport:

“Every previous terrorist organisation, including Islamic groups, drew its recruits from a single national base. The contrast between PLO and al-Qaeda training facilities reflects this fact; the former trained units from other organizations and the latter received individuals only.”¹¹⁷

It is this international recruiting success and the fact that bin Laden was able in the past to attract both Shia and Sunni Muslims into al Qaeda, that makes the organisation unique. But it is unique not only in its heterogeneity, but also in its internal architecture.

Flexibility versus Hierarchy

In the literature of modern, fashionable business and management studies, there has over the last decade or so been a most prevalent mantra: in a world of globalised interdependency and “just on time” supply, in order for a transnational company (TNC) to be effective and remain flexible enough to meet the fluid demands of the marketplace, classic pyramidal hierarchy must give way to flat structures which are hyper-mobile, not bogged down by bureaucracy and red-tape. Perhaps, given his initial studies in the area of management and the later business experience he acquired in the Sudan and elsewhere, it should come as little surprise therefore that bin Laden transplanted this still fashionable concept to the world of political violence. By doing so, he has not only revolutionised the practice of terrorism, but in the same stroke, effectively made useless most of the tools the West has used to provide for national security in the last half a century¹¹⁸.

¹¹⁷ *“The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism”*, in *“Attacking Terrorism – elements of a grand strategy”*, Eds. Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes, Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2004.

¹¹⁸ Compare the organisational shape of the IRA to al Qaeda, *Appendix VII and VIII*.

As a history of al Qaeda demonstrates, the start of the organisation was a privileged one, since it inherited a fully-fledged training and operational infrastructure that had been funded and facilitated by some of the wealthiest and most capable governments of the Cold War period. As a result, from almost its very inception al Qaeda was able to wield direct and indirect control over a potent, far-flung force of trained operatives. The constituent groups operated as a loose coalition, each with its own command, control and communication structures. When necessary, however, these groups could interact or merge, cooperating ideologically, financially and technically.

As the group evolved, in 1998, al Qaeda was reorganised into four distinct but interlinked entities¹¹⁹. The first was a command structure to facilitate strategic and tactical decisionmaking; the second was the globally dispersed set of cells of individuals who had been trained in one or other of the terror camps; the third was a base force for guerrilla warfare inside Afghanistan¹²⁰; and the fourth was a loose coalition of transnational terrorist and guerrilla groups. After the invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001, the latter would increase in significance as command and control and safe-haven were denied the al Qaeda leadership, or were seriously degraded. Prior to that date the military committee or shura would appoint agent-handlers to manage an extensive network of cells and agents outside Afghanistan. During the latter half of the 1990s activities became increasingly clandestine, with al Qaeda choosing to operate more and more through front-, cover- and sympathetic organisations (the exception being its activities in Afghanistan).

¹¹⁹ Gunaratna, *ibid.*

¹²⁰ This group is the so-called ‘055 Brigade’, al Qaeda’s guerrilla arm. It used to be part of their strategic reserve, and until 2001 consisted of approximately 2,000 fighters. New members to 0555 would receive or chose a new alias, and members would not know anyone’s real details, much as in the French Foreign Legion.

The force was made up of two overlapping generations of Afghan veterans: the first, which had driven out the Russians, and the second, generally better educated, who had fought elsewhere (such as in Kashmir), but had been trained in Afghanistan. Equipment was most often made up of weapons left behind by the Soviets.

Interestingly, according to Gunaratna and the primary source material he cites in “*Inside Al Qaeda*”, it is common for brigade members to make the move to becoming suicide-bombers once they have decided upon martyring themselves.

Therefore it is not just in cultural and historical context that al Qaeda differs from the terrorist groups of the earlier phases on terrorism's evolution. There are significant structural differences also. For a comparison of how al Qaeda differs organisationally from other Cold War-era terrorist groups, see the diagrams under Appendix VII and VIII. There it will be seen that the Cold War era rational/pragmatic terrorist group is far more hierarchical than al Qaeda's flat architecture.

THE NEW AL QAEDA¹²¹

“[W]hat I am doing is part of the ongoing war between Islaam (sic) and disbelief ... the message of Islaam is the truth, this is why we are ready to die defending the true Islaam rather than to just sit back and allow the American government to dictate to us what we should believe and how we should behave, it is clear that this is a war between truth and falsehood ... this is a war between Islaam and democracy ... I ask HIM that HE guide me to the truth and cause you to understand why I’ve done what I’ve done.

**Richard Reid
Abdul Raheem ,
aka the Shoe-Bomber¹²²**

“A new al Qaeda has emerged and is growing stronger, in part because of our own actions and inactions. It is in many ways a tougher opponent than the original threat we faced before September 11 and we are not doing what is necessary to make America safer from that threat.”

Richard A. Clarke
“Against all Enemies”¹²³

As the violent attacks in Iraq have multiplied, it is becoming evident that the moniker "al-Qaeda" is being unwisely overused, adding to the potentially dangerous misrepresentation that the US and its allies are still facing a monolithic and unitary foe responsible for all Islamist violence on the globe. In fact, responsibility for more recent attacks across the world points toward a completely different analysis. Based upon information from a variety of European sources, including the German foreign

¹²¹ The analysis that follows is expanded upon in an article by the author entitled: “*Al Qaeda’s Next Generation*”, published by the Jamestown Foundation of Washington in their Terrorism Monitor series, 29th July 2004 – Vol. II, Issue 15. The article can be read in the compilation “*Unmasking Terror*”, Jamestown Foundation, Washington 2004.

¹²² From the text of an email written by Reid to his mother on the eve of his planned attack against flight 63, Paris to Miami, *Government’s Sentencing Memorandum*, Michael J. Sullivan, United States Attorney, Criminal File No. 02-10013-WGY, United States District Court, District of Massachusetts, January 17th 2003, in the possession of the author.

¹²³ Op. cit.

intelligence agency, the Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND)¹²⁴, it seems clear that al Qaeda has been evolving continually ever since bin Laden took over the original MAK network in 1990/1991. This evolution has significant consequences for our understanding of the terrorist threat and how to deal with it.

GENERATION ONE: THE ORIGINAL AL QAEDA

The majority of agencies and open-source analysts agree that the original organization that was al-Qaeda has been severely degraded as a result of the military operations in Afghanistan that began soon after the 9/11 attacks, at the end of 2001 and that disposed the Taliban regime¹²⁵. From the very first point at which bin Laden became involved in recruiting and training fighters to resist the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan to his usurpation of the MAK and its transformation into al Qaeda, bin Laden has required a safe-haven in which to operate his headquarters. He needed a home for the many training bases that his guerrillas (and then later, terrorists) would pass through. His migration from Pakistan to Sudan and then to Afghanistan after 1989 testifies not only to his operational flexibility, but also to his need at every point to have a physical centre for his organization.

While much has been made of the institutional and human weaknesses that led to the American security and intelligence failures prior to the 9/11 attack, it seems clear that the post-9/11 response has been effective with regard to the first and original coterie of al Qaeda. Although bin Laden is still at large, six of the twenty-nine recognized top leaders of the original al Qaeda structure are now dead and seven are in custody. The sheer fact that six years since the heinous hijackings, despite all its

¹²⁴ The observations on al Qaeda's evolution and generations are based in part on two meetings the author had with the BND's lead al Qaeda analyst in the Summer of 2004 and Winter of 2004/5.

¹²⁵ As David Rapoport has cogently observed with regard to the original al Qaeda based in Afghanistan: the group "violated a cardinal rule for terrorist organizations, which is to stay underground always. Al Qaeda remained visible to operate its extensive training operations, and as the Israelis demonstrated in ousting the PLO from Lebanon, visible groups are vulnerable." D. C. Rapoport, "*The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism*", op. cit..

bluster and bin Laden's various pronouncements, the organization has been unable to execute an attack of similarly catastrophic proportions, speaks to the operational weakness of the network. However, investigations of the still significant but somewhat smaller-scale bombings in Bali, Madrid and London indicate that the tactical initiative has moved to new, younger groups of fundamentalist terrorists that are less strictly linked to the original cadre of mujahedeen fighters.

GENERATIONS TWO AND THREE: AN EVEN HARDER-CORE ADVERSARY?

Demographically and socially, the core membership of the original al Qaeda network is made up of individuals in their 40s or 50s, people tied to one another by the common experience of having fought the Soviets together in Afghanistan in the 1980s. In fact, their link to this war imbues (or at least imbued) them with a distinct status amongst Muslim fundamentalists. This al Qaeda was a monolithic and unitary structure which functioned very much on the basis of personal acquaintance, but which, over time, has become a catalyst for newer and currently less globally-capable regional groups.

The second generation of al Qaeda which was to spring from under the patronage of the original Arab mujahedeen fighters, the Afghan Arabs of the MAK, was associated not with combat in Afghanistan but with the fighting in Bosnia. Numerical estimates by the BND put the original group at approximately 30,000 operatives, with the second generation numbering slightly less at 20,000. Here it should be noted that the majority of terrorist arrests made on the territory of the European Union since 9/11 have involved individuals in their twenties, many of the suspects having combat experience from the Balkans, and Bosnia in particular.

Since then even newer sub-sets of terrorists which could be identified with al-Qaeda, or which identify themselves with the broader aims of the original group, have emerged. The first are in one way or another tied to the fighting in the breakaway former Soviet republic of Chechnya, or to the former Soviet Republic of Georgia.

Following them come the members of the al Qaeda generation that is the youngest, young men usually in their twenties. Not linked by any particular campaign or by having trained together in one of the original al-Qaeda camps, rather, these extremists have shared experience at certain universities dotted across the Arab and Muslim world, universities that are home to the more virulent strains of the fundamentalist interpretations of Islam. Most often, these are establishments located in Pakistan or Egypt.

Very interestingly, in the case of some of the individuals that have been successfully identified or apprehended, these terrorists and potential terrorists are in fact the sons or sons-in-law of first generation members of the original al-Qaeda network. This is first and foremost an intellectual network, less reliant on the person-to-person contact so common to the original group. As a result, these cells have been found to be even more autonomous than was previously posited. They represent a broad outer circle, far more diverse than the original al-Qaeda network which grew from out of the MAK.

Perhaps the newest generation of al Qaeda is the most difficult one to pin down. In this case, typified at the moment best by those responsible for the attacks in Bali and London, the common thread is neither shared combat experience, nor educational background. Instead we see local actors, disaffected with their lot, who turn to political violence, and in doing so, self-identify with al Qaeda, without being formally, or organically members of the previous levels or iterations of the organisation. The emergence of such self-appointed al Qaeda leads one to the reasonable conclusion that that which was an organisation is becoming an ideology, or even a label.

ASPECTS OF THE NEW AL QAEDA

The newest generations of fundamentalist terrorists clearly do not share the same group history as the ones the US and its allies have been fighting most frequently since 9/11¹²⁶. The non-aligned nature of many of the new cells established in Europe and Austral-Asia, for example, have a more international identity, greater independence and looser structures. Almost all the 9/11 hijackers were of one nationality, Saudi Arabian. Today, however, law enforcement agencies are, more often than not, apprehending or learning of cells with an extremely heterogeneous make-up. Good examples of this are the group that attempted a gas attack on the Paris metro in 2003 and those responsible for the simultaneous bombings in March 2004 of the Madrid railway.

In fact, we now know that, contrary to the government line, the Hamburg cell which had provided logistical support to the 9/11 leader Mohamed Atta was not effectively dismantled after the attacks. Instead, it reconstituted itself in the months following in order to play a crucial role in the Madrid bombings more than two years later. Likewise, more and more cells have been unearthed, the members of which are from North Africa and Asia. This led one senior European intelligence specialist to state that: "It is not al-Qaeda that is the problem anymore. The next generation sees the original one as gone soft, or too vulnerable."

Furthermore, a pattern seems to be emerging in regards to how these new iterations have managed to sustain themselves. Training facilities have moved from Central Asia to Asia: particularly Indonesia (the Sulawesi region especially), the Philippines, Bangladesh and Nepal. And more often, it appears that operational

¹²⁶ David Rapoport likewise sees a marked change in al Qaeda following the post-9/11 military operations led by the United States: "The disruption of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan has altered the organisation's previous routine. Typically, al Qaeda sleeper cells remained inactive until the moment to strike materialized, often designated by the organisation's senior leadership. It was an unusual pattern in terrorist history." *The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism*", op. cit..

planners have begun isolating specific Islamic centres, mosques or madrassas for operational targeting and recruiting¹²⁷. They take control of an existing facility, typically with the assistance of a radical Imam with a suitably fundamentalist or Salafi message then turn this facility into a recruiting centre for those that will be later sent to one of the new training camps. The creeping takeover of these centres reflects, in a methodological sense, the way in which the original Arab Service Bureau (MAK) subsumed previously innocuous charities and organizations all over the globe before al Qaeda was actually created.

Subsequently, whilst the wider world is still busily dissecting the findings of the 9/11 Commission, it seems that many of the recommendations touted as new and innovative responses to al Qaeda may in fact already be out-of-date. Policymakers and practitioners need to invent new tools to address the new reality that the target has moved. We have effectively disabled the original organization, at least for the time being. However, the truth may be that, we are on the verge of witnessing the eruption of many more diverse groups on the world stage, groups which are less restricted by geographical and national ties than were their patrons.

As a result we must begin by better understanding not what happened on 9/11 or 3/11(Madrid) or 7/7(London), but what the ideology behind all these deadly acts truly was and is.

¹²⁷ *Terrorism*”, op. cit..

¹²⁷ A perfect example of this is the Richard Reid, Shoe-bomber case, in which it was proven that Reid, after having converted to Islam, was identified and nurtured by talent-spotters at the more extreme mosques in the UK.

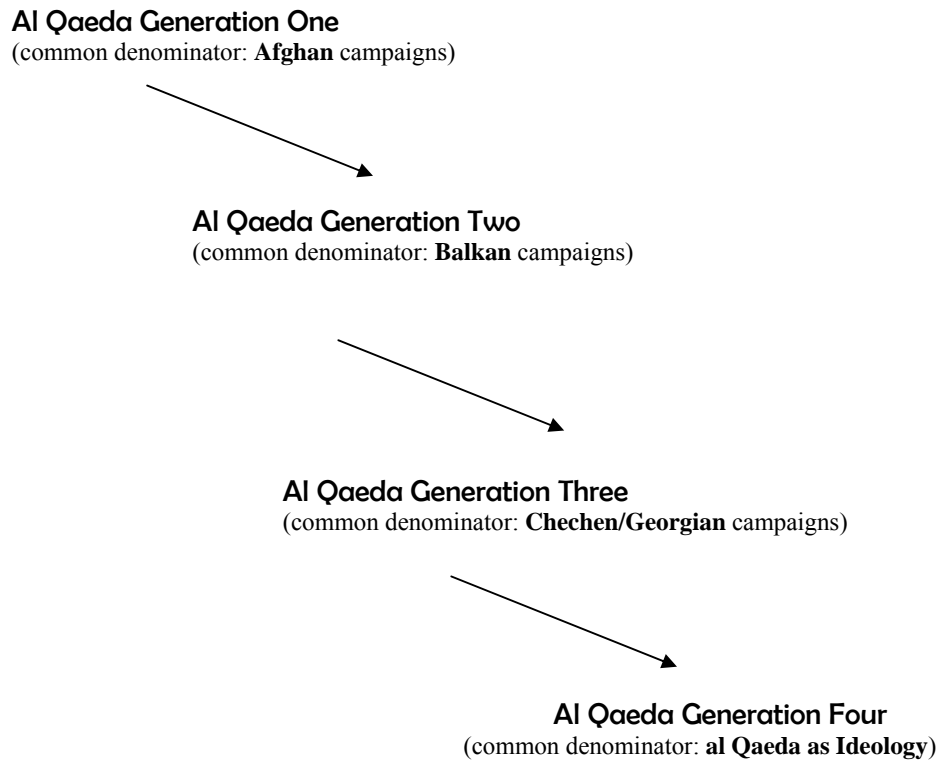


Diagram Three: Al Qaeda's Iterations

AL QAEDA AS THE RESULT OF THE EVOLUTION OF 20TH CENTURY CONFLICT¹²⁸

As with the famous phrase concerning death and taxes, there is another element of human existence that we can count upon to always be with us: armed conflict. However much we may have faith in multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations Organization, or in the spread of fundamental human rights across the globe, the fact remains that the history of mankind is far more a telling of one war story after another than a recounting of centuries of peace followed by more centuries of peace. This is true even today and even in the so-called civilized, or developed world. The 20th century saw two global conflicts, each one emanating from Europe and each one meant to be the last such conflagration. Yet even after the menace of the Third Reich was vanquished and Western Europe began to build what Robert Kagan has famously called a “Kantian world of perpetual peace”, the fact remained that for the next four decades the threat of thermonuclear war between East and West loomed large. Once that apocalyptic threat eventually dissipated, on the very doorstep of Europe, people began killing each other in vast numbers simply because the ‘enemy’ spoke the wrong language or belonged to another religious community. It took this so-called civilized and developed West four years to put a stop to the mass-killings in former Yugoslavia. By that time at least 400,000 people had died. This was in the heart of Europe and only 13 years ago.

Whilst man’s proclivity to kill his fellow man – or woman, or child – seems not to have abated, as Algeria, Somalia, Rwanda and Darfur have of late clearly demonstrated, the 1990s, as we have noted, did at least seem to present a respite for the West from previous bloody centuries, at least in terms of scenarios for conventional war. Whilst the less developed parts of the world were still held

¹²⁸ I am indebted to George Friedman, the founder and chairman of STRATFOR, and especially to chapter one of his book “*America’s Secret War*”, Doubleday, New York 2004, for inspiring and informing this rendition of the evolution of conflict in the 20th century. This representation uses elements of his prose commentary regarding the origins of what he calls “The Fourth Global War”.

hostage to atavistic tribal violence employing the most ancient and crudest of methods, with the demise of the Soviet Union and after the first Gulf War, strategic thinkers within the First World were planning for a new reality. With the threat of Mutually Assured Destruction alleviated, it was argued that we were now in a post-modern threat environment.

During the previous forty years, from the Berlin Blockade onwards, there was a “glue”, as Phillip Gordon has put it, that kept the West in agreement and which meant that Portugal, for instance had the same threat perception as the US, France the same as the UK. It was this overarching agreement as to universality of the challenge posed by the USSR and its colonized satellites that would allow one telegram, written by a Moscow-based US diplomat to eventually shape the foreign and security policies of all the future NATO nations. George Kennan’s classified cable, later parsed into the anonymous Foreign Affairs article, *The Sources of Soviet Conduct*, would be translated by the “wise men” of the post-war US Administration into a very simply doctrine. That doctrine, named after President Truman, was containment of the Communist threat and the prevention of a domino-like collapse of other nations into the grasp of the USSR. The simplicity was the doctrine’s strength. Every soldier, every intelligence operative, even the average citizens of the free world could understand this grand-strategy. It was not some complicated, secret arrangement resulting from a machtpolitik negotiation concerning balance-of-power. The enemy was known, his intentions were clear and in their absolutist global nature they posed a threat to all the free peoples of the world. The task for all could be simplified even further: the West must prevent WWIII, or if that is not possible, we must win WWII.

But then, four decades later, without one shot being fired across the Iron Curtain, on December the 25th 1991 the Evil Empire ceased to exist. Instead it was divided up into 14 newly independent states, some of which had existed before, and the new, much smaller, Russia Federation. Although the new Federation was not in a position to turn itself from a dictatorship into a functioning liberal democracy overnight, under the leadership of its new president, Boris Yeltsin, the Kremlin formally stated that it no longer consider the USA or its NATO allies to be its enemies.

Subsequently the question was: to what end do we maintain our advanced defence assets? Who or what is the enemy in the post Cold War world?

On the eve of the First Gulf War, at a point when it was clear from not only the events occurring in Moscow, but from the series of regime-changes and velvet revolutions in Central Europe that European Communism had already taken its last breath, George Bush senior was already preparing to address a joint session of Congress with a speech entitled “Toward a New World Order.” Despite the phrase having been previously associated with the likes of President Woodrow Wilson and even the former Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachov (who had used the same phrase when addressing the United Nations General Assembly just two years previously in December of 1988) the idea would become irrevocably associated with the elder Bush.

At the time the concept was criticized from both left and right, with the President and his Secretary of State, James Baker, being accused of policy vagueness. There was a little meat to the idea, however, as the speech did detail the seminal role of the US as a leader of the international community; the potential for a partnership between Washington and Moscow aimed at energizing the UN and securing democracy globally and the rise of economic sources for conflict as opposed to ideological ones. Nevertheless, as unveiled by the then President Bush, this was definitely not a doctrine that could even come close to the simplicity and neatness of containment policy. In fact, it could not rightly be called a doctrine¹²⁹.

As a result, the fundamental question of national interest and national security would have to be approached in a different way by the nations of the West. Many threats emerged in the following decade, but they proved too diverse and

129 According to the Wikipedia definition, “in matters of foreign policy, a doctrine, also known as dogma, is a body of axioms fundamental to the exercise of a nation's foreign policy. Hence, doctrine, in this sense, has come to suggest a broad consistency that holds true across a spectrum of acts and actions.”

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctrine#Military_usage).

It is clear that the pronouncements by Bush Snr. regarding the so-called New World Order, do not satisfy the requirement.

unpredictable for any one thinker, for a new George Kennan, to create a singular new post-Cold War doctrine that was as useful and as beautifully simple as containment had been.

Then came September 11th 2001. On that Tuesday morning the US suffered the greatest terrorist attack ever recorded. In the space of less than two hours the bin Laden's al Qaeda operatives managed to murder more people than the IRA or the Baader Menhof gang had managed to kill in the space of thirty years, and at the same brought the world's financial hub to a standstill. Whilst Khrushchev may have once promised to "bury" the US, he never did make good on the threat. Osama bin Laden had managed something that the mighty USSR or even the Third Reich never achieved: the mass murder of Americans on American soil. In the days and weeks that followed it became more and more clear that for many the strategic confusion of the 1990s had vanished along with the twin towers of the World Trade Center. In place of the previous panoply of competing low-level threats and challenges, there was a new stand-alone menace equal to replacing the Red Bear. The global threat of Communism and the Soviet Union had been replaced by what some neoconservative writers would christen Islamic Fascism, or the neologism: Islamofascism.

A New Enemy

The challenge terrorism experts face today, is the question of how different exactly is the new enemy? Whilst the politicians on both sides of the Atlantic may still be differ on the issue of how one defines terrorism and argue over what the best tools to use against political violence may be; how the balance is met between the use of force, law enforcement tools and diplomacy, there remains the burning question: how different is Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda network from the dozens of terrorist organizations we have fought in the past and can we use the same counter-terrorism tools and strategies that previously proved successful? For although the Cold War may have been defined around the East-West nuclear standoff and the political division of the world into Communism versus Democracy, we were also

threatened by numerous non-state actors that saw the killing of civilians or unarmed officials, as a viable political tool.

Although there were a small number of exceptions, by far the vast majority of the terrorist groups which shaped modern Western counter-terrorism policies can be described as political or pragmatic actors. The end-states that these organizations wished to achieve were linked by their political and territorial nature. For every Baader-Meinhof gang with vague, universal anti-Western goals, there were a dozen or more other terrorist groups which had a very clear end-state in mind, one that was linked to a specific territory and to the realization of self-determination or greater autonomy. Even the most famous Arab terror group of the late twentieth century, the PLO, was defined originally not around any religious world view, but instead the desire for Palestinian self-determination – as well as the destruction of Israel.

Yet al Qaeda is therefore, as we have described, clearly a terrorist group, but not a classically pragmatic, or political one. Professor Stephen Sloan, observing well before 9/11 the quiet and unannounced rebirth of religiously motivated terrorism coined the term “non-territorial terrorism.” With this he wished to illuminate the growth in numbers of groups that were not defined by an issue which was geographically delimited (such as independence or autonomy for a specific region). Al Qaeda is such a group

So what does, or did, al Qaeda wish to achieve through its string of murderous attacks against civilians, from the first World Trade Centre attack in 1993, through to the East African embassy bombings, then 9/11 and the subsequent atrocities? Is this group defined more by religion than politics? It is geographically defined? The label Islamofascism seems to imply a welding of both as well as a global perspective, but is this accurate?

Here the researcher is well served by bin Laden’s own ego. Unlike the relatively scarce and vague ramblings of terrorists such as the Ulrike Meinhof, bin Laden’s statements are many and detailed. One does not even have to be an Arabist, or linguist the get to know the terror leader’s inner thoughts. Thanks to a surviving

remnant of the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) of the US government, anyone (with official business to do so) can read in English the vast number of bin Laden statements made since al Qaeda became an international player. And this self-appointed leader, is not a shy man. The first decade of material (1994-2004) compiled by FBIS runs to almost 300 pages in translation. After reading the ninety-plus statements and interview transcripts one can piece together a picture of what end-state al Qaeda wishes to achieve.

The only problem is the picture is a mosaic. Yes, it is religiously-informed throughout, but at the same time it is flavoured with the clearly politically, or pragmatic. The best example of this admixture of the two worldviews is the prerecorded video statement that bin Laden gave to the al Jazeera TV station that was to be broadcast only once large-scale military operations were launched against Afghanistan (October 7th 2001). For the majority of the statement, bin Laden talks of religious motivation and the global and absolutist aim of recreating a fundamentalist Caliphate, a vast theocracy that will bring the Arab and Muslim world back to the true path described by the lives of the early Salafi, generations of the Mohammedan faith. A world in which the West is no longer the dominant culture, in which politics, the law and faith are not separated but one again, a world in which the religious leader is the political leader.

It is exactly these types of pronouncements that have led many to place bin Laden and his followers in a category separate from the classic terrorism of the second half of the 20th century. Although the IRA may have said it represented the Catholics of Northern Ireland, the annexation of the northern provisions by EIRE was a purely political end-state. As such it was, importantly, an end-state open to negotiations between the IRA (Sinn Féin) and the British government. That is exactly where we are today with devolution to Stormont no longer out of the question. It is nigh impossible to envisage any political negotiations between al Qaeda and its enemy, the West, on its desired end-state. The destruction of our civilization in favour of the creation of a fundamentalist Muslim empire that includes territory that now belongs to the West (such as Andalusia) is obviously not a subject for the G-8 or NATO to

discuss behind closed doors at a table with Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri. It is clearly a ‘Them and Us’ situation, as was the Cold War.

Yet it is this author’s conviction that Transcendentally Informed (Irrational) Terrorism is not a phenomenon that appeared out of thin air once the Cold War ended. The creation of al Qaeda is rooted in processes whose origins stretch back, in at least political terms, to well before the Cold War began, back to the end of WWI, and the ideology of al Qaeda’s founder and highest officers is understandable only in terms of historical events and ideas that are far older still.

The Westphalian system created nation-states. This system saw sovereignty as absolute and eventually would eventually develop its own mechanism, balance-of-power, to protect against hegemonic behaviour which would undermine the principle of sovereignty. Even so, the Westphalian system and its principles were very selectively applied, referring as they did to only the European members of international society. Subsequently, we see that the principles of sovereignty would not apply to those empires that were on the losing side of the first global war of the 20th century. As the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires were dismantled, it was not the sovereignty of the vanquished which would determine the new map of Central Europe, the Balkans and the Middle East. Instead new entities would be created, new borders drawn. Ostensibly this was done to punish the losers and encourage self-determination of the peoples within the former empires. In reality, the drafters of the Versailles peace treaties were more interested in putting place structures and divisions which would maximise the realisation of their own interests in the regions concerned¹³⁰. This is clear enough if one remembers the simple fact that self-determination was applied to nationalities within the losing empires, but were not extended to ethnic or national groups within the colonial or imperial control of the victors. This latter exemption would only change after the next global conflict weakened empires such as the British so much that they could no longer maintain control over previous acquisitions such as India, for example.

¹³⁰ Many examples could be cited here, yet the one that most comes to mind given its topicality, is Iraq, a nation artificially created without any historic identity to speak of.

This redrawing of the map would have greatest consequences in the Middle East, since it would spell the subordination for decades of Arab interest to that of the White Man, and with the creation of Israel in 1948, to that of the new state of Israel. At the same the ultimate aim of war would shift for the first time since historic began. With the advent of universalist dogma such as that of Communism and Nazism, conflict was no longer simply a question of using force to accrue ever more territory or wealth, but would be fought over ideological visions. The Nazi-Fascist threat was dealt with in rather a quick fashion, by historic standards, emerging in the early 1930s and being eradicated by 1945. But then Communism would emerge as a far sturdier foe, one that again posed a global threat to the ideology of liberal democracy and market economy.

One of facets of the bipolar conflict that would evolve which can be said to feed directly into the creation of that ideology which would eventually drive bin Laden and his ilk, was the West's preparedness to support, nurture and arm regimes which although not democratic, were deemed as allies against the threat of the Soviet Union and its satellites. It is thus that both the undemocratic and the fundamentalist would flourish under Western protection and encouragement. Most important, from the vantage of hindsight, would be the patronage of the Iran of the Shah, followed by Saddam Hussein's Iraq and the religiously motivated mujahedeen. It must be noted that it was not contradictory for the West¹³¹ to have supported the secular and the fundamentalist, since each case was weighed on its individual merits. The question always to be asked was not whether the given government or group was pro-democracy or market-economy, but whether it was anti-Communist, or whether it could act as a balance to a perceived regional threat, such as a clerically-led anti-American Iran.

¹³¹ One must not single out the USA as the only state which supported such regimes. Saddam Hussein's Iraq was feted by many states in the Western Alliance, which profited handsomely from the arming of a secular regime fighting the fundamentalist Iran, Germany and France profiting the most.

The period from 1914 to today may have been one of great flux and seen huge conflagrations one after another, and competing ideologies, but from one vantage point it meant only one thing; viewed from the Middle East and North Africa, it was a period in which Arab and Muslim interests went unrealised. Whether it was the arrival of the transistor and then microchip age, or the repeated defeat of Arab armies by comparatively much smaller Israeli forces, the fact is that the Arab and Muslim world was condemned at best to a halfway house position, behind the First and Second Worlds and just before the Third World.

Two events did provide exceptions, however. One was obvious, the other less so. With the ousting of the Shah in 1979 and his replacement by a regime that preached Sharia and theocracy, the tables were momentarily turned. For at least a decade, as the USSR fell ever more into an economically and politically untenable state, Iran would successfully compete for the attention of the “good” Superpower, representing as it did a threat to US interests in the Gulf region. Its ability to nominally become a lead player in a world geopolitics otherwise monopolised by the white cultures of America, its Western allies and Eastern Europe, would have a seminal effect in proving to large parts of the Muslim and Arab world that the post-Ottoman reality was not irreversible.

The second event was even more significant in undermining the fatalistic worldview of the Arab and Muslim world, but unfortunately was not at all understood as such by the West which was so involved in its being brought about. Although it was in large part Western money and organisation and Chinese weapons that help facilitate the final withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the victory was understood by those doing the fighting as a war won by believers against a pagan enemy, and an enemy that was a Superpower. This version of the Mujahedeen war must be placed in context of all that preceded it from the fall of the Ottomans’ onward. From the end of 1918, for seven decades, the Arabs and Muslim world was seen by many of its members as being a secondary part of the world. One in which the people and their political elites could not determine their own fate, subordinated as they were to the larger theatre of East versus West. The Iranian events of 1979 shook that reality, but it was the events of 10 years later that would undermine that reality completely.

The Superpower which had threatened the richest and strongest part of the world for decades had been forced to capitulate to a handle full of irregular warriors with handheld weapons after just a few years. The fate of the believing Muslim was again to be made by his own hands.

What was to follow? In the years since the fall of the second Superpower, conflict as we have seen, has not been a processes occurring between nations. Conflict has occurred most often between ethnicities or faith communities, as in the former Yugoslavia. The nation-state as enemy has been replaced by a far more amorphous entity that it defined less by geography than by belief system. The belief system of the most dangerous foe, is one that is entwined with the events of the whole century, not just the post-Cold War reality. Bin Laden and his followers see the first two-thirds of the last century as a castration of their great community. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 is the beginning of a reversal. One Superpower was defeated, now it is the turn of the remaining Superpower, which although not secular, as was the USSR, is anathema to their fundamentalist interpretation of the Muslim faith. As a result it is possible to describe a continuity of evolution in conflict over the last 100 years.

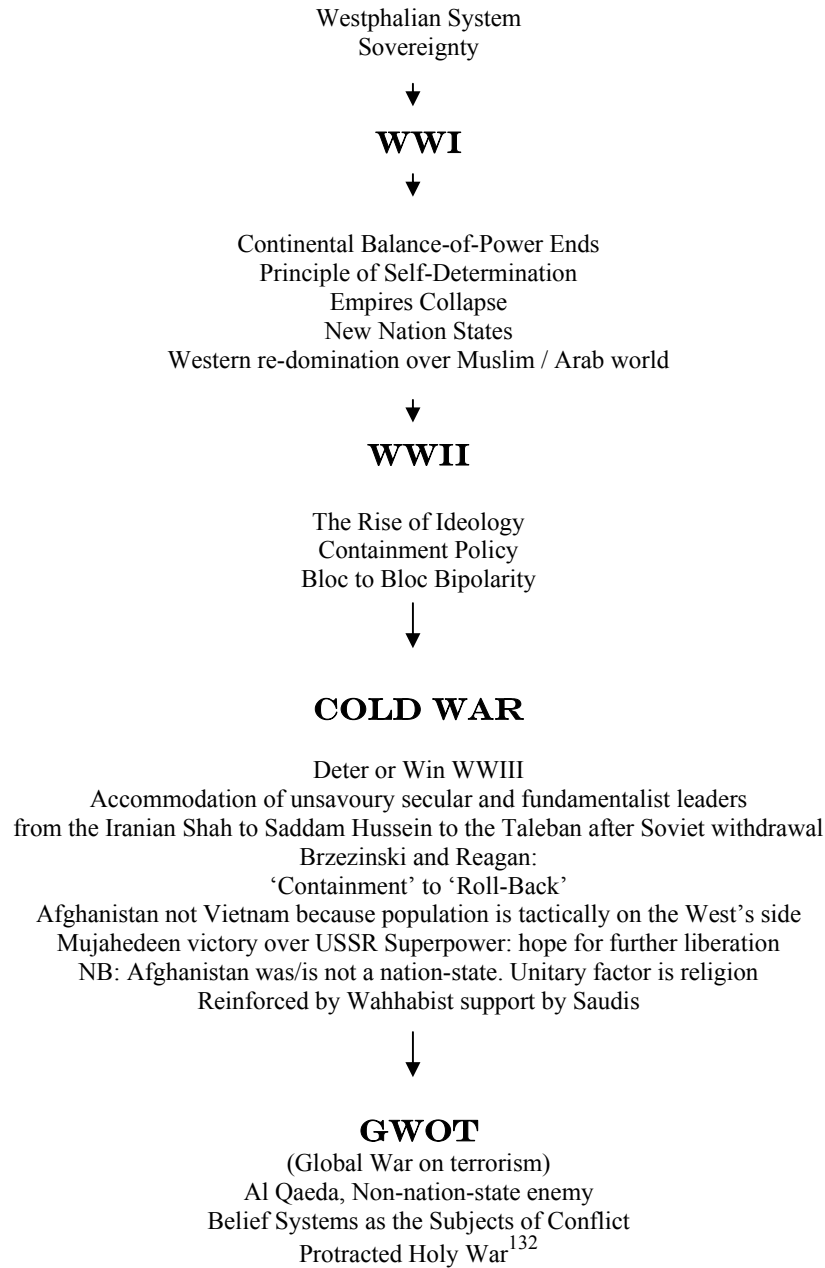


Diagram Four: The 20th Century Anatomy of Conflict

¹³² This term came to me from Prof Stephen Sloan, to whom I am indebted for coining it.

HOW TO SECURE AGAINST THE NEW ENEMY

*“We are great at dealing with the symptoms. We are great at dealing with the tactical problems—the killing and the breaking. We are lousy at solving the strategic problems; having a strategic plan, understanding about regional and global security and what it takes to meld that and to shape it and to move it forward. Where are the Marshalls today? Where are the Eisenhowers and the Trumans, that saw the vision and saw the world in a different way; and that understood what had to be done and what America's role is?”*¹³³

General Anthony Zinni

"How Do We Overhaul the Nation's Defense to Win the NextWar?"

“Strategic thinking in the post-cold war world must account for the unconventional power of non-state actors: risk-takers who are willing to violate norms and who may be immune to military threats.”

Martha Crenshaw¹³⁴

“Terrorism, Strategies, and Grand Strategies”

“Will we be constantly caught in a reactive cycle of incident and response instead of catching up and moving beyond the rapidly changing learning curve of cotemporary and future terrorists?”

Stephen Sloan

“The Changing Nature of Terrorism”¹³⁵

The above words should not be taken lightly. The first come from a man who was at the violent end of several recent and important conflicts and bore great responsibility for how such actions were executed. The second quote is from an academic professional who has led the way in trying to understand the whys and wherefores behind the phenomenon of terrorism in the last three decades. The third comes from one of the very few individuals who has managed to bridge the gap between these two worlds that are far too isolated from one another, the academic and the operational¹³⁶. The thought that binds all three statements is that we are ill-prepared

¹³³ Address to Forum 2003, Marine Corps Association and the U.S. Naval Institute. <http://www.mca-usniforum.org/forum03zinni.htm>.

¹³⁴ Op. cit.

¹³⁵ Op. cit.

¹³⁶ Although a distinguished professor with scores of articles and books to his name, Stephen Sloan also pioneered the use of role playing simulations for the training of law enforcement and counter-terrorism units and has advised them directly over the years.

to meet the challenge terrorism now poses. That the enemy we now face is different from the previous foes we have had to prepare for. That the established cycle of reacting to a danger once it has already effected damage upon us will not suffice. That we are without a grand strategy. In fact the strategy of today is very much not of today.

THE UNKNOWN CHINAMAN AND THE BY-GONE GENERAL

It is indeed remarkable that the way in which governments strategically use force to protect themselves today is fundamentally informed by only two sources. The first influence is an ancient one, the writings of a Chinese strategist named Sun Tzu, who lived thousands of centuries ago and of whom we know very little¹³⁷ and the second influence are the posthumously published works of the Prussian soldier-scholar Carl von Clausewitz¹³⁸.

Sun Tzu left us a brief collection of concise and mostly very clear pieces of advice, concerning many aspects of war entitled: “*The Art of War*” (ping-fa). I do not wish to summarise them here, suffice it to say that they focused on knowledge of the enemy and on philosophically intriguing concepts – often influenced by Confucian modes of thought – such that the ultimate victory is to be had by influencing the will of our foe without ever having to resort to force. By contrast, Clausewitz’s ideas are far more difficult to comprehend clearly and in many cases remain, for several reasons, open to interpretation even today. The first of these reasons is that his most influential work was published only after his death, and as such was never fully

¹³⁷ We are not even sure when Sun Tzu lived. Various dates have been given ranging from the 7th to the 4th century BC. Some, including Lionel Giles the translator of the 1910 English-language edition of “*The Art of War*”, posited that Sun Tzu never in fact existed but that the work was written by an unknown author or authors. See the introduction to Sun Tzu’s: “*The Art of War*”, available as a Project Gutenberg e-text at www.gutenberg.org/files/132/132.txt.

¹³⁸ There are others, of course, such as Jomini and Machiavelli, but it is safe to say that the works of Clausewitz and Sun Tzu are the undoubted sine qua non in military academies from West Point to Beijing.

completed by him, and secondly, that the language used was complex and most often inadequately translated into other languages¹³⁹.

Although it has been said frequently that one cannot summarise Clausewitz at all and that the whole point of his work is to be found in the special didactic style of his writing, we may note, just as with Sun Tzu, the most influential of his contributions. If forced to choose just three, then they would be firstly that conflict is made up of a trinity of factors: primordial violence and hatred, the play of chance and probability and finally war's element of subordination to rational policy¹⁴⁰; secondly that there is a friction in war that works against our intentions and makes a clear cause and effect in application of effort impossible¹⁴¹, and lastly, perhaps his best known observation, that war is the continuation of policy by other means.

Given their contributions to strategic thought it is wholly uncontroversial to state that Sun Tzu and Clausewitz have fundamentally shaped how decisionmakers and military leaders have understood war in the last century. For example, since 1832, the year after Clausewitz's death and when "*Vom Kriege*" was finally published, no work has seen the light of day that could challenge either authors' standings, or which significantly added to their combined works in a way that was as timeless as

¹³⁹ A great service was done to the English-speaking world with the publication in 1976 of the Michael Howard and Peter Paret edited version of Clausewitz's seminal "*On War*" (Princeton University Press, New Jersey), given the accuracy of the translation and valuable editorial essays included in the volume.

¹⁴⁰ This trinity has often been misrepresented as consisting of the three main actors involved or effected by conflict: the military, the government and the people. The reasons for this confusion are various and discussed at length by Edward J. Villacres and Christopher Bassford in "*Reclaiming the Clausewitzian Trinity*", *Parameters*, Autumn 1995.

¹⁴¹ Although the term "fog of war" is far better known, this fame is unwarranted. Clausewitz never actually uses this phrase in "*On War*". For an enlightening discussion on how this phrase has been so tirelessly yet incorrectly associated with the Prussian general see Eugenia C. Kiesling's "*On War without the Fog*", *Military Review*, Sep./Oct. 2001 viewable at <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/milreview/kiesling.pdf>. Kiesling clearly states that: "Like most useful military concepts, 'fog of war' normally is attributed to Clausewitz, who receives the credit for the alliterative 'fog and friction'— friction referring to a physical impediment to military action, fog to the commander's lack of clear information. The only problem with this neat formula is that he neither uses fog of war nor gives fog significant weight in his argument."

the original works. Given the hundreds of regional wars and the two global conflicts of the last century, it is remarkable that we have seen no one able to take the mantle of the Prussian General. There was no Clausewitz for the 20th, nor has one appeared as we step into the 21st¹⁴².

As discussed in Chapter One, the way in which national security is provided for today is, to all intents and purposes, structurally the same it is was in 1906, or even 1806. We maintain legacy architectures and legacy forces that were designed to protect our nation-states from other nation-states in conflict involving recognised weapons systems handled by identifiable enemy forces. The tactics and strategies used to fight foes two hundred years ago, differ little for those used twenty years ago.

¹⁴² There are a handful of authors who have very insightful observations to make and have contributed to strategic thought in the modern age since Clausewitz. Names one would have to include would be T.E. Lawrence, Colin Gray, Edward Luttwak and Ralph Peters. Yet none have come close to provided us with a truly new system for understanding war as comprehensive as either “The Art of War”, or “On War”. For an enjoyable discussion of this vacuum in strategic thought one should read Chapter Four, “The Poverty of Modern Strategic Thought” in Colin Gray’s own work “*Modern Strategy*”, 1999, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

TERRORISM AS A CONTINUATION OF POLICY?

Much has been made of the American government's choice of wording when planning a response to the attacks of September 11th 2001. The word 'war' was chosen early¹⁴³ and then used consistently and frequently thereafter¹⁴⁴, leading eventually to the phrase: "*The Global War on Terror*".¹⁴⁵ There are of course problems with such usage, as have all ready been touched upon above. To begin with, from the point of view of international law and the customs related to armed conflict, war is understood classically to occur when two or more states are involved in hostiles with one other. The use of force by one nation against another entity that is not a state, is rarely called a war¹⁴⁶. Countries in a state of war must employ force in the form of units that are uniformed and distinguishable from one another¹⁴⁷ and the members of these forces must abide by the laws of war as laid down in Hague

¹⁴³ On the very next morning after the attacks President Bush called them "acts of war". *Remarks by the President in Photo Opportunity with National Security Team*, www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/print/20010912-4.html. Just over a week later in an address to a Joint Session of Congress, Bush called America's response a war to disrupt and defeat global terror. This would later turn into America's "Global War on Terror", or GWOT. See Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People, www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/print20010920-8.html.

¹⁴⁴ A search on the public White House web-site for the words 'war' 'on' 'terror' in the Summer of 2005 brought 21008 hits, whilst a search for the specific phrase "war on terror" resulted in 1,789.

¹⁴⁵ Recent reports of in the Summer of 2005, especially of speeches by US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, had it that the labelling of US strategies was to change and that the enemy was no longer terror, or terrorism, but radical extremism. These press reports were countered within days by the President himself, who reiterated that the US is still involved in a war against terror.

¹⁴⁶ There is of, course the whole sub-set of civil war, conflict within a state which does involve not state actors, but this is not relevant here as the post-9/11 response was not labelled as such, but as a war proper. For a clear discussion of the legal distinction see Mackubin Owens: "*Detainees or Prisoners of War?*", Ashbrook Center for Public Affairs, Ashland University, <http://www.ashbrook.org/publicat/oped/owens/02/pow.html>.

¹⁴⁷ The requirement for forces to wear uniforms is not negotiable. For example, if a soldier is found to be partaking in military action in wartime disguised as a civilian or members of the other side's military forces, he may be summarily executed on capture. There are numerous examples of this occurring during WWII.

and Geneva conventions¹⁴⁸. It is the fact that he can be identified as legitimate combatant that provides the soldier with certain rights and obligations even in war. In the case of September 11th the enemy is not a nation, but a terrorist organisation. It did at the time maintain a base of operations in a given country (Afghanistan), but it was a grouping that was not recognised internationally and was most definitely not an armed force distinguishable as such by uniform or markings. On the day of the attack, its members were dressed as civilians and used force against unarmed civilians living and working in a country not legally at war with any state, let alone Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, it was not the requirements of international law that drove decisionmakers in the US to choose such phraseology. The response to the attacks was to lead military action against Afghanistan and Iraq and to the greatest reorganisation of the American national security administration since the National Security Act of 1947 as the Department of Homeland Security was created. As a result, and clearly motivated by the political requirement to rally a nation behind the response and convince both sides of the aisle in Congress to back and fund the military response, the word “war” was and is used.

It is also necessary to understand that the other side of the current conflict does see it in terms of a war. The premeditated nature of 9/11 and the statements concerning civilisational clash make this more than apparent.

Returning to the ideas traced by Phillip Bobbitt in his work on the evolution of the nation-state, international law and strategic culture, whilst it may indeed be too early to report the death of the nation-state, there are new, or rather, revitalised processes that challenge the previous system of loyalties individuals felt toward the nation-

¹⁴⁸ Whilst to the layman, a concept such as rules for how to kill another person may seem somewhat absurd, this is in fact the case. Simple examples include the regulations pertaining to prisoners of war, the fact that a surrendering, unarmed soldier must be unharmed and provided for, or that one cannot fire upon paratroopers whilst they are in the air and incapable of defending themselves.

state. Stephen Sloan succinctly describes these shifts, facilitated in part by the loss of bipolarity:

The State centric model is now under assault as the superficial loyalty to idealized nation-states, particularly in the Third World, has been replaced either by transnational movements or subnational movements that are rejecting the legitimacy of the arbitrary constructs of states that were largely the result of the imposition of legalistic or physical boundaries of nation-states that ignored the more profound psycho-social boundaries that can bring people together or apart. With this breakdown of community, legitimacy, and order, we are now confronted with the reality that large areas of the world are for all intents and purposes ungovernable and are in effect part of “.... the world’s ‘gray area’ where control has shifted from legitimate governments to new half-political, half criminal powers.” The mythic body politic that defined and institutionalized terms of the relations among nations and the politics within states is now being transformed as new players now seek to alter the course of international politics.”¹⁴⁹

The exploitation of ‘grey area’ is something that al Qaeda and kindred spirits have clearly utilised, be the area the border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan, Afghanistan itself, the Sudan, the tri-border area of South America or more recently the Sulawesi region of the Philippines.

Sloan goes on, building on J.K. Zawodny’s discussion of “centrifugal infrastructure” of terrorist groups, asks: can one use counterterrorism models built on classical hierarchical models to defeat a centrifugal entity. Or can a government successfully build centrifugal structures while maintaining command and accountability over such organizations.

The answer is that the attempt must be made to create such structure and in ways that do not undermine accountability and legality.

Whether or not one agrees with the still influential theses cited above of ‘clash of civilisations’ or ‘the end of history’, it seems clear that there has been at least one

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

incontrovertible change in the geostrategic environment in which the developed countries of the West now find themselves: the Westphalian system's core presumptions no longer hold.

Firstly, it may have become trite to say so, but that does not lessen the veracity of the statement that democracies do not wage war on one another. In fact this tenet has in recent years been raised to the level of being a basic element of US foreign policy¹⁵⁰. Translated into more practical terms, it means that the countries of the Western community of nations do not pose a threat to one another. This seems an uncontroversial statement since it is hard to envisage a classic nation-on-nation conflict involving the recognised tools of war erupting between Germany and the United States, or the UK and France. This fact is underpinned by the nature of new threats that have been identified in recent years, as enumerated in table one.

Whilst this statement may seem obvious, its ramifications in practical terms are highly significant. As we have seen, the national security architecture universally established under the Westphalian system and reinforced by the Cold War was not a multifarious tool. It was originally designed exclusively to deal with external threats that were in the form of (enemy) nation-states. The ultimate purpose was to prevent or win an armed conflict against another country or group of countries, usually in relatively close physical proximity to one's own nation. Today, the transatlantic area is constituted by nations that do not hold grudges against one another which could reasonably lead to an armed conflict for territory or wealth. In fact continental Europe is now for the major part represented by an institutional form of integration that since May 2004 is made up of 25 countries representing the largest voluntary unitary market and trading bloc the world has ever seen¹⁵¹. Thus both the NATO and

¹⁵⁰ It has been widely reported that one of the books most effecting President George W. Bush and his foreign policy agenda is "*The Case For Democracy: the power of freedom to overcome Tyranny and Terror*", written by Natan Sharansky, Ron Dermer and Anatoly Sharansky.

¹⁵¹ For a discussion of the nature of the European Union and how its identity has fundamentally changed with the last round of enlargement this year, see the author's paper entitled *European Union Enlargement: - common challenge or internal divide?* as

EU community consist of nations whose national defence and security structures are wholly out of step with the danger they actually face; dangers that are without borders, capitals, or nation-state derived governments.

At this point it is important to remember the lessons of history. There were in fact periods in the not-so distant past, when the forces of the Western world were involved in a deadly fight with forces that exploited asymmetry, that were unconventional and that were not limited by nation state strictures. These were the eras of counter-insurgency and classic counter-terrorism

presented to the German-American Fulbright Commission's *Berlin Seminar: Where Continents Meet*, March 20th 2004, accessible at www.itdis.org.

20TH CENTURY LESSONS LEARNT

There are many case studies in combating terrorism that could be mentioned at this point. One could begin with perhaps the most interesting case of the Red Army Faction, or the Baader Meinhof Gang. Most interesting for us, since this is one of the few groups of the classic era of modern terrorism that was not driven by post-colonial self-determination or nationalism, but by a utopian ideology: Marxism.

The Rote Armee Fraktion, (RAF) became one of the most notorious and feared groups in German in the 1970's. The beginnings of this group lie in the student movements and protests in the 1960's. With large anti-war and anti-German government demonstrations at many large universities, radical leftists began to execute minor and often prank-like attacks against German government institutions, especially in West Berlin.¹⁵² At this time, a young criminal named Andreas Baader, a convicted car thief decided that the time was ripe for a much more violent attack. His bombing of the Kaufhof department store in Frankfurt and subsequent arrest and trial was the catalyst for other, more Marxist thinkers to debate starting a new, more organized and militant terrorist group. One of these intellectuals was a left-wing news paper editor named Ulrike Meinhof. Her involvement in radical politics stretched back to the 1950s when as spokesperson for the SDS (Socialist German Student Union) she advocated splitting away from the Social Democratic Party and to pursue more orthodox Marxist policies.¹⁵³ While Baader stayed in prison, Meinhof and other plotted his escape, which was spectacularly achieved in 1970. The group, known at the time as the Baader-Meinhof gang went on to perpetrate numerous bank robberies and car thefts to gain needed capital. Some members were smuggled to East Germany and then to Palestine to receive weapons training. Soon, armed attacks, assassinations and bombings occurred against targets across the country.

¹⁵² Hufmann, <http://www.baader-meinhof.com>, 1969 Chronology.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

The initial RAF organization seemed to consist of Meinhof as ideological leader with Baader and others planning the logistical aspects of attacks. The group's membership never exceeded 20 or 25 people making decisionmaking easy.¹⁵⁴ The apparent execution of a group member wishing to leave in 1973 also showed the strict order imposed on the group members by themselves.¹⁵⁵ A network of several hundred sympathizers also existed, yet this did not seem to indicate widespread support for the group¹⁵⁶. With the arrest of both Baader and Meinhof in 1974, the group became officially known as the Red Army Faction and sought in addition to its previous goals, to free their imprisoned members. Tough government action prevented many attacks and weathered two hijackings that ended with minimal civilian life lost. With the failure of these attempts, both Baader and Meinhof along with most of the other imprisoned RAF members committed suicide in 1977. The RAF continued to survive, adopting what became known as second and later third generation leadership. Although responsible for several later attacks, the group's impetus had died with the founding members and as communism crumbled in the east, the group's ideological foundation also was weakened. Finally in 1998, the group issued a communiqué to Reuters announcing their disbandment.

The RAF's Declared Policies and Demands

The RAF's approach to ideology fell somewhere between revolutionary Marxism and anti-establishment anarchism. Analysis of the document "Concept of the Urban Guerilla" (*Konzept des Stadtguerillas*)¹⁵⁷ shows both these competing views. This document, which was received by the German Press Agency in 1971 outlined the grievances of the RAF and their ideological reasons for attacks against German

¹⁵⁴ Patterns of Global Terrorism, (ibid) RAF.

¹⁵⁵ Hufmann, <http://www.baader-meinhof.com>, 1973 Chronology

¹⁵⁶ See *Inside Terrorist Organizations*, Edited by D. C. Rapaport, Frank Cass, London, 2001, especially Bonnie Cordes' chapter: "When Terrorists Do the Talking: Reflections on Terrorist Literature".

¹⁵⁷ Reproduced in full in Walter Laqueur's *Voices of Terror: Manifestos, Writings and Manuals of al Qaeda, Hamas, and other Terrorists from around the World and throughout the Ages*, Reed Press, NY, 2004.

targets. Although never officially authored, most sources attribute this work to Ulrike Meinhof.¹⁵⁸ Although other documents were received by the German Press Agency and other international news sources, this document is seen as the defining work and guiding ideological paper upon which the RAF justified its actions. Divided into sections, each part begins with a quote from Chairman Mao on principles of revolutionary Marxism¹⁵⁹. The author then tries to tie the quote into past RAF actions and justify the continued work of RAF terrorists. The first section primarily discusses actions of the German government and the German media as directed by fascist Sympathizers. Although some key government officials had been members of the SS and other Nazi organizations, most German people and the German press found this claim to be exaggerated.¹⁶⁰ The author then states that ‘armed struggle’ (a popular sound bite of both the RAF and the media when discussing the RAF) was necessary because neo-fascist elements were corrupting the psychology of the masses.¹⁶¹ According to the document, the only method of preventing a fascist takeover would be for individuals to arm themselves and attack elements of what the author refers to as the ‘imperialist’ elements in society.¹⁶² Although the armed struggle against capitalism has clear socialist elements, the document also rejects political means as a method of solving this situation. It accuses the German parties, including the Social Democrats of ‘extra-parliamentary activity’ (*ausserparlamentarische bewegung*) to maintain political influence.¹⁶³ By rejecting political means, the RAF seems to commit itself to a more anarchist type of motivation. A final feature of this document is the lack of a clear end-state goal other than the destruction of capitalist and military institutions, primarily those of the US Military in Germany (referred to here as ‘occupiers’), NATO, institutions of the German Federal Republic, and prominent figures in German capitalism. Without a rational goal in mind and without a political apparatus, the RAF rested on the continued ideological attraction of dissatisfied West Germans.

¹⁵⁸ Hufmann, <http://www.baader-meinhof.com>.

¹⁵⁹ See *Voices of Terror*, Op. Cit.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ “Konzept des Stadtguerrillas, Section IV”

¹⁶² Ibid. Section I

¹⁶³ Ibid., Section II.

The final RAF communiqué, which announces the disbandment of the group also provides insight into the strange nature of RAF ideology. Within the document, the group stands behind its actions and defends what it had done as both necessary and historically important. In addition to a rehashing of the Maoist rhetoric, this document also speaks of an anarchist utopia or “a life without lies” (*leben ohne lug*) as opposed to a life where “profit is the subject and Man the object” (*der profit das subjekt, der mensch das objekt ist*).¹⁶⁴ This rhetoric, arising from a group composed of few if any of the original members shows the excessive ideological basis for a collapsing anarchist group.

A Summary of RAF’s key acts prior to this communiqué would include:

- 1968: Firebombing of a Kaufhof Department Store in Frankfurt (Main).
- 1970: Meinhof and proto-RAF break Baader out of Berlin jail
- 1972. May 11: Bombing of US Army Corp. in Frankfurt (Main),
American Lt. Colonel killed
- 1972, May 24: Bombing of US Military Barracks, Heidelberg
- 1974: Assassination of German Supreme Court President von Drenkmann
- 1975: April 24: Hostage taking, execution of military attaché and bombing of
German Embassy in Stockholm. All other hostages survive bombing.
- 1976: Hijacking of an Air France Flight to Entebbe, Uganda. All seven
hijackers killed, passengers only have slight injuries.
- 1977, 13 October: Hijacking of a Lufthansa jet to Mogadishu, pilot killed as
well as all other hijackers.
- 1977, 17 October: Kidnapping and eventual murder of Hanns-Martin
Schleyer, the Employer’s Federation President
- 1991: Assassination of Detlev Rohwedder, a businessman helping to
privatize East German Assets.

Categorising RAF

Although most likely fitting the category of ‘irrational’ terrorist group, the RAF’s aim of attacking institutions and targets of the US military, persons and institutions of the German Federal Government, and symbols/persons associated with excessive

¹⁶⁴ Author Unknown “Final Communiqué from the RAF”.

capitalism do fit their behaviour. The RAF's behaviour significantly changes once Baader and Meinhof had been brought into custody. Instead of merely attacking the aforementioned institutions, the RAF tried to free its imprisoned members also suggesting a less irrational behaviour, less commitment to the original ideology and possibly even more criminal gang-like behaviour.¹⁶⁵ In addition, the tactic of kidnapping and hijacking without a clear political goal appears strange and appears nowhere in the much more violent tone with which the ideological documents were written.

Another interesting aspect of the RAF's behaviour is their ambivalence towards generating a larger public following. While several hundred Germans must have provided the RAF with shelter, weapons and logistic support, the RAF never seemed to act directly to try to win more public support over to their side. A poll conducted in 1971 regarding public feeling towards the RAF stated that one in five Germans felt sympathy for the RAF and one in ten would be willing to help them.¹⁶⁶ This, coupled with the large student protest movement in the 1960's should have provided the RAF with many new members and a much larger public feeling. Yet unlike the IRA or ETA, the RAF never seemed to act out of vengeance or protection, ways in which the IRA and ETA maintained popular support. The RAF did attempt hunger strikes to influence public opinion, yet with only one death and multiple incidents of 'cheating' by key members including Baader, these had little public support. The assassination of Detlev Rohwedder shows an attempt for the RAF to remain relevant, and seems to have some basis in social justice. Yet the RAF once again misjudged public opinion and the incident remained very minor.

The RAF appears largely to have very irrational tendencies. The ideology appears muddled and obscure, which attracts students and academics yet remains far from the average person.¹⁶⁷ This ideology mixes Maoism with popular anti-establishment 1960's leftism, resulting in a quasi-anarchistic almost gang-like criminal structure.

¹⁶⁵ See *Inside Terrorist Organizations* Ed. David C. Rapoport, op. cit. and Hufmann, <http://www.baader-meinhof.com>.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 1971 Chronology.

¹⁶⁷ *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, (ibid) the RAF.

The defining lack of rationality is the lack of a clear political purpose. Interestingly, the group in their final communiqué cites the lack of such a political organization as a “strategic failure” (strategische fehler). This led to seemingly irrational action such as attempts at negotiations during hostage taking which, without a clear purpose or some ‘rational’ goal to bring to the negotiating table, proved completely ineffective. The ambivalent relationship with German society in general undermined popular support for the group early on and diminished their effectiveness.

The complex and debated issue of international support for the RAF also shows their inability to attract support for their goals from outside the German Federal Republic. Although formerly secret GDR documents show that the RAF received financial and military aid from the GDR, it was not of sufficient quantity to make much of a difference.¹⁶⁸ Their inability to find a rational (state) actor to sponsor their actions or to serve as a political entity also shows their irrationality. The RAF’s major international terrorist supporters were similar left-wing anarchists whose existence was epiphenomenal at most. Even the Palestinian groups, with whom early RAF members trained grew quickly tired of their German counterparts and expelled the RAF members within months of their arrival¹⁶⁹. Inability to secure international recognition, even from among other terrorist groups should have been an indication of to the RAF of their efforts as most likely futile. Their persistence for many years in actions despite such a lack of support shows their irrationality. Here are key aspects of rationality one could reasonably summarise:

I. *Primary Cause of Grievance*: In the RAF’s case this would probably be the dissatisfaction of students and intellectuals with the German Federal Republic’s capitalist system. Although popular in the 1960s, this movement soon lost momentum within the high level of affluence in the FRG in the 1970s. By making capitalism and the German government the enemy within an affluent society, the RAF condemned its opportunities for long term support. Overall, the RAF’s primary motivation for action became trapped within the dated and unpopular ideology it exposed and never could appeal to a wide base of support thus making it very irrational.

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Hufmann, <http://www.baader-meinhof.com>.

II. *Tactics*: While bombings, and shootings against persons and institutions the RAF disliked seemed to follow their ideological principles, the use of hijackings and kidnappings as bases for negotiations could not work without a clear political purpose beyond that of freeing incarcerated members. Botched hunger strikes and other actions never fully captured needed public support, showing the irrationality of the group in using these tactics.

III. *Political Organization*: The lack of this feature fundamentally makes the RAF appear to be more of a criminal organization than a terrorist group. Without principles to negotiate anyway, any political organization probably would have had little relevance.

IV. *Funding*: Bank robberies constituted the primary source of RAF funds, which seems a rational source of funding as it weakened the capitalist institutions the RAF stood against.

Government Response to the RAF

The German Government's response to these terrorist actions, due to lack of negotiating ability was to simply treat them as if they were a common criminal organization. The lack of a large support base allowed German authorities to capture the founders Baader and Meinhof early on in the group's existence.¹⁷⁰ Because the government could count on both popular and media support during the worst period of RAF violence, the Schmidt government decided not to directly negotiate with the RAF nor concede to any of their demands.¹⁷¹ The government's handling of both the hijacking situations showed not only extreme effectiveness but also that a hard line towards such a group can net results. This government also saw the passage of an act that limited lawyer access to a client if both were suspected in conspiring to commit a crime. Although this came under fire from activist groups, the suicide of Baader and others with weapons smuggled by lawyers into the prison diminished criticism¹⁷². Ultimately, the German government's treatment of the RAF as a criminal organization worked to undermine and eventually destroy the RAF threat.

¹⁷⁰ Hufmann, <http://www.baader-meinhof.com>, Chronolgy 1972.

¹⁷¹ Blasis, Rainer, page 1.

¹⁷² Hufmann, <http://www.baader-meinhof.com>, Chronolgy 1975, Chronology 1977

SCALE OF RESPONSE: THE POLICE MODEL VERSUS THE TOTAL WAR MODEL

The nature of the RAF blending extremist political ideology with aspects more common to a classic criminal organisation may make it somewhat unique. Nevertheless, the case-study has distinct value in that it clearly demonstrates that even a sui generis terror group can be successfully beaten by government authorities. The question that remains is what exactly is the extent of the policy response palate available to governments? Whilst perhaps not exhaustive, the renowned military strategist Martin van Creveld, has in a recent study illuminated two distinct models that can be taken to represent the two ends of a sizeable scale of counter-terrorism responses.

In his book chapter entitled “*On Counterinsurgency*”¹⁷³ van Creveld first gives a brief overview of counterinsurgency operations since 1941. Why this year is chosen is not exactly clear, nor is the exclusion of many cases outside of Europe and the Middle East, nevertheless, the core of the piece rather concerns two specific cases, the first being Syrian President Assad’s brutal suppression of an uprising in Hama in 1983 and the second being the manner in which the British have deployed forces in Northern Ireland following the resurgence of violence in the late 1960s.

With regard to the former case study, van Crefeld states that ethnic and religious groups in Syria looked down on Assad’s presidency for many reasons, not the least being his coming from the lowly Alawite community of Muslims. As tensions increased in the early years of his presidency, Hama became the physical centre of resistance, until in late 1982 and early 1983 an uprising took place in the city aimed against government personnel and property. Assad’s response was swift and deadly. In a counter-attack executed by his own brother, government forces laid siege to the city and shelled it mercilessly with artillery for weeks until an estimated 20-30,000 men, women and children had been killed. This level of response has been called the

¹⁷³ From “Countering Modern Terrorism”, Ed. K. von Knop, H. Neiser, M. van Creveld, WBV, Bielefeld, 2005.

‘Hama Rules’ form of counter-terrorist engagement. This method is juxtaposed by the author with the far less brutal action taken by UK forces in Northern Ireland, a policy which instead of overwhelming force, places the soldiers in the position of quasi police officer, a buffer between the respective terror groups, Unionist and Loyalist.

Van Crefeld’s analysis may at times be somewhat oversimplified and confuse starting points. Can we really compare the IRA to a groundswell revolt against an undemocratic regime? Nevertheless the overall point is clear: the scope of options when dealing with a politically motivated foe is wide. Even so, counterinsurgency may not be the only parallel that should be brought to bear. Although, on the surface the difference may seem great, there is value to comparing the current so-called “Global War on Terrorism” with the previous conflict, the Cold War.

GWOT versus Cold War

Far more than just a battle of competing economic systems or even of competing political systems, the Cold War was primarily a conflict that could be expressed in moral terms. It was a conflict in which the West stood for the rights of the individual, the freedom of the individual to choose his own course. The Soviets, on the other hand, subjugated the individual to the state. The Soviet leadership operated under the belief that it had the authority to choose for the individual. One should not be so quick to forget the war against communism, because it can teach us not only about the scope and seriousness of the current conflict, but also about the choices available in fighting the new enemy.

Consider the following assessment:

“We have here a political force committed fanatically to the belief that with us there can be no permanent modus vivendi, that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken.”

Remarkably, this is not a description of al Qaeda made by the likes of Donald Rumsfeld or Richard Perle, although it easily could have been. Rather, it describes the Soviet Union as George Kennan saw it 59 years ago in his famous “*Long Telegram*.” Kennan’s assessment of the Soviet Union went against the prevalent thinking at the time. Importantly, he saw that with the Soviet Union it would be a zero-sum competition.

The communists did not wish merely to gain dominion over a limited territory, they wished to conquer all. In Khrushchev’s words, they wanted to “bury us.” Kennan knew it was a battle between the ‘West’s’ vision, a vision of life and liberty, versus a vision of tyranny, death and destruction. When bin Laden states that “*the ruling to kill the Americans and their allies— civilians and military— is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it....*” the similarity is striking.

The Cold War began in the heart of Europe, with its division into East and West, and then spread as communism expanded into Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Similarly, from its very beginnings, al Qaeda has been a global network with tendrils stretching to the cells in Germany that planned the 9/11 attacks to its headquarters in Afghanistan, to its newer training facilities in the Philippines, and its recruiting areas as diverse as north Yorkshire, Fallujah, Madrid, and Africa.

Just as the communists before them, the terrorists exploit those parts of the world that have the highest concentration of disaffected and disenfranchised populations. In the case of communism this included the populations of Europe on the brink of starvation after six years of World War, the uneducated peasants of Asia, and the impoverished of Africa and Latin America.

In addition to its sophisticated leaders, al Qaeda now exploits the disenfranchised and undereducated of the Middle East, Central Asia and

Africa. Amazingly, extreme Wahhabi, or Salafist fundamentalism has even found adherents within the educated populations of Europe and America, from the Talib fighter John Walker Lindh to the Belgian suicide bomber Muriel Degauque, who recently blew herself up in Iraq.

Communism, with its false promise of a classless world of equality and redistributed wealth grabbed and held onto the imagination of many in the U.S. and the West, intellectuals who were ceaseless in their criticism of those who saw communism for the vital existential threat that it was. In addition to the wilfully malevolent fifth-column that would betray our security, from the Cambridge Five to Alger Hiss and the Rosenbergs, it was these “useful idiots,” to quote Joseph Stalin, who effectively prolonged the struggle.

Now, the stateless enemy does not even have to penetrate our national security structures nor manage to convince the intellectuals of the universal validity of their theocratic ideology. Instead, the media, academia and a vast portion of the policy community are more than prepared to openly undermine our side in this fight that only began four years ago.

In the early days of the fight against communism, only a handful of individuals fully understood the significance of the enemy and the magnitude of the coming conflict. It was the hard-bitten persistence of these few that put into motion a chain of events that ultimately would save our way of life. Without individuals such as diplomat George Kennan, economist Warren Nutter, historian Robert Conquest, writer Arthur Koestler, and leaders such as Winston Churchill, Konrad Adenauer, Harry Truman and above all Ronald Reagan, the annis mirabilis of 1989 may have more closely resembled Orwells' *1984*: a “boot stamping on a human face forever.” Thus we must not minimize the role of the few and how much our future once depended on a handful of individuals who understood the enormity of the threat.

If the 20th century taught us anything, it should have taught us that our way of life will again be threatened, that our freedom is precious and can never be

taken for granted. There will always be those like Hitler, Stalin, Hussein, and bin Laden, whose sole purpose is to rob others of their liberty and impose their will upon them. Simply because the West won the last conflict, the long protracted war against communism, one should not downplay just how close that conflict was, and exactly how much was at stake. Everything was at stake.

Just as many once minimized the danger of communism, so now many minimize the threat of the transcendently informed terrorists. But they are no less deadly and no less committed to our destruction: not only is al Qaeda the most lethal terror organization in the modern age, it accomplished what the Soviet Union never managed: the mass murder of US citizens on American soil. Moreover, bin Laden has said repeatedly that it is the duty of all “good” Muslims to kill Christians and Jews; and beyond that, it is a holy duty to obtain weapons of mass destruction and so effect the global and final victory over the West.

Only in hindsight does the fight against Communism seem to have been simple—a bipolar standoff in which we merely had to deter the enemy from making a first strike. But we forget the variety of policy dilemmas with which communism confronted Western leaders: the agonizing complexity of the responses required by such events as the Hungarian revolution of 1956, the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, the spread of Communism into Southeast Asia, the Prague Spring of 1968, the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the imposition of martial law in Poland in 1981, and throughout, the constant and enormous Soviet military build-up.

In the fight against communism, no one was ever sure what tools would ultimately bring victory. The important point is, they fought. Enough of them understood that coexistence was not a long-term option, and indeed, even if the West could have survived it, was immoral, given the fundamentally oppressive nature of the regimes in question. But for decades, the majority did not see it this way. Just as then, far too many today choose the suicidal self-delusion that if the West and allied moderate Arab states choose not to fight, the other side will give up the fight as well. Secondly, they see it as more ethical to remove themselves from the conflict than to

resist an enemy who is quite prepared to kill innocent civilians purely on the basis of their skin colour, religion or country of origin. They think it is less objectionable to tolerate beheadings, bombings and torture than to take up arms. But our “side” has to recognize that the nature of the enemy makes coexistence not only morally untenable but physically impossible. Bin Laden has made it a case of “them or us.”

There is of course one significant difference between the foe of yesteryear and the foe of today. It is hard to imagine the USSR motivating its people highly enough so that they would consider suicide attacks against the enemy. This is not the case with Salafi terrorism such as al Qaeda’s. As a result we must discuss specifically the motivation that separates the transcendental actor from the political.

THE MOTIVATION BEHIND IRRATIONAL TERROR

One of the most difficult aspects of studying terrorism is the inaccessibility of the primary sources. Whilst Terrorists like Osama bin Laden and others provide much material in terms of communiqués and various other statements, terrorists are not generally open to be interviewed at length by members of the political science community, to answering questions in lengthy surveys. There have, of course, been written several studies based upon interviews with imprisoned terrorists typically of the pragmatic era of the 70s and 80s, foremostly Germans. But truly original analysis of the motivation behind transcendental terrorism is very thin on the ground.

One individual who has attempted to address this dearth is a forensic psychiatrist named Marc Sageman. In a previous life, as an employee of the Central Intelligence Agency, Sageman worked in Afghanistan in the 1980s assisting the Mujahedeen in their fight against the Soviet occupiers.

Having personally met Dr. Sageman on numerous occasions, I am convinced that his recent and most valuable work in the field of studying transcendental terror was at least motivated in part by the many fallacious statements Sageman heard regarding al Qaeda after 9/11. The author set himself a simple yet challenging goal: to take what could be known about the core membership of al Qaeda and map the relationships between its members, with the intention of explaining why they chose the path of transcendental terror. Given the conventional wisdoms surrounding the issue, and conceptions related to al Qaeda that saw its members as undereducated, poor, religious extremists, his findings are most surprising.

JOINING THE SALAFISTS¹⁷⁴

To begin with, Sageman notes that the usual biographical descriptions we use of people: age, sex, national origin, education, and so forth are of very little use in identifying true terrorists. If we are to map relationships and understand the characters that become transcendently informed terrorists, then we need to start elsewhere. Sageman's choice was the common link of all his subjects being Jihadists. How did these individuals, become members of a fundamentalist global Jihad? For this question his test cases were the individuals involved in two groups of attacks, those of 9/11 that were members of the Hamburg cell, and those involved in an attempted plot in 2000 to bomb Los Angeles airport. We shall consider the former.

When Sageman looked into the lives of those plotters based in Germany who contributed to the events of 9/11, he found that as a group they emerged from a convergence of nine individuals of upper middle-class expatriate origins within the local student community. The key character was a middle-aged called Indonesia Mohammad Belfas who had organised a religious study group within the now infamous al Quds Mosque of Hamburg sometime in the mid 1990s. Several technical students of Middle Eastern origin, including the now infamous 9/11 hijacker Mohamed Atta became members of this religious study group¹⁷⁵. Very often they would congregate also in the kitchen of one of the student apartments where they would prepare and share a common meal¹⁷⁶.

¹⁷⁴ The following description is drawn from discussions with Marc Sageman that occurred at the Marshall Center during several iterations of the Program for Terrorism and Security Studies and from Sageman's text: "*Understanding Terror Networks*", University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2004, specifically Chapter Four.

¹⁷⁵ Sageman goes into some detail, discussing exactly which individual joined when and what they were doing in Hamburg, who they lived with, and so forth. The details are not relevant to the discussion here, but if the reader so wishes, can be had through reference to Sageman's text.

¹⁷⁶ Only half jokingly, Sageman refers to the 'kosher factor' in terrorist development. In other words, he notes that one of the reasons, for example, that the world Jewish community has managed to survive despite centuries of persecution and life in diaspora, is thanks to the

Over time the circle grew and its members developed a very close lifestyle relationship with other members, sharing apartments, cars and even bank accounts. By last 1998, despite the fact that many of the group's members had not come from devout or even practicing Muslim families, the members of the group had taken on the lifestyle of the strong believer. They prayed five times a day, maintained the strict diet required by Islam and even began to universally wear the long beard of the fundamentalist. By October of the following year, having heard at first hand accounts of fighting in Afghanistan and Bosnia from visitors to the group such as Mohamed Zammar, the group was communally ready to make their own link to the cause and to join the Jihad.

The original plan was to join the pro-independence forces in Chechnya and to fight the Russians. This plan was dropped on the advice of one Mohamadou Slahi, the brother-in-law of one of bin Laden's close associates who was then living in Germany. Slahi advised the group to first go to Taliban-controlled Afghanistan for training¹⁷⁷. The group duly did so, divided into two separate groups, or waves of trainees. It was a fateful decision since they were the perfect candidates to fill key positions in the 9/11 plot which had been hatched several years earlier by Khalid Sheikh Mohammed: they were familiar with the requirements of living in the West

very specific dietary requirements incumbent upon the devout Jew. As members of a 'food community' Jews come together to share their special meals and to divide the burden that preparing kosher food represents. Once together members of an ethno-religious community will naturally discuss issues of common concern to the whole community and as a result the shared meal strengthens shared identity. Sageman says that this is also in part what happened amongst expatriate Arabs and Muslims who later became part of the Salafi jihad. (Discussions with Dr. Sageman, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, 2005). In fact, there do exist reports that in the al Qaeda camps of Afghanistan trainees would congregate and mix in groups even more specific than just the requirements of halal cuisine, in groups defined by their specific national staples. For example the couscous eaters of North Africa would be one distinct unit, whilst the rice-eaters of the Middle East would be another.

¹⁷⁷ It should be noted that Atta had already probably been to Afghanistan for training, since he had previously disappeared for several months without warning and then returned to Germany. Note, that many of the group's members were under surveillance by the German authorities, but the surveillance was sporadic and frequently dropped all together for want of concrete evidence of criminal intent.

and they all spoke English. As a result in Afghanistan they were recruited for the al Qaeda operation that would lead to 9/11. Once back in Germany they began to apply for American visas to go to flight school in the US.

“Friendship, kinship, discipleship”

Having examined the key events in the formation of the group, Sageman then turns his scientific eye to mapping the social affiliations between its members. The first conventional wisdom that Sageman wishes to utterly dismiss is the understanding of al Qaeda that sees it building an organisation based on aggressive top-down recruitment and fundamentalist brainwashing. Pre-existing relationships amongst friends are far more important than religious background, for example. Sageman stresses that the transcendental terrorists of al Qaeda which he examined existed first as a group of friends and only later became involved with terrorism. 68% of those examined had ties of friendship to one another before ever being connected to any violent group. One theme that was important, however, was that despite their not being brought together originally as members of a terrorist organisation, these friends did together, before joining al Qaeda, voice radical views about two issues, the influence globally of the Jewish community and the hegemonic power of the United States.

Strikingly, in another example Sageman examines elsewhere there is the pattern of a group reaching out to al Qaeda, or the Salafi Jihad. Not vice versa. The established group of radical friends looks for the opportunity to join the cause. The established terror group does not ‘recruit’ the group as we would expect. This fact alone would seem to be of great significance for any counter-terrorism plan that wishes to address the question of how the transcendental terrorist group acquires new blood.

Joining the Salafi Jihad is the result of a group dynamic. Rarely, if ever according to Sageman, does the individual join the transcendental terrorist group¹⁷⁸. If we remind

¹⁷⁸ From a purely operational, terrorist point of view, Sageman also makes the interesting point that joining al Qaeda as a group is also beneficial from al Qaeda’s point of view. If

ourselves of the history of how al Qaeda was created, as described above, then we see that there also the group dynamic was important, for although back in the 80s it may have been more the individual who approached the MAK with the desire to become an Arab Mujahed, the core of individuals that would later become al Qaeda were forged as a unit precisely by their experience as a group in the fighting in Afghanistan against the Soviets.

But the author did not limit his exploration of group dynamics to just the social. Sageman also looked to the fascinating factor of kinship. In fourteen percent of all the subjects he examined, he found that family ties played a significant role in one's belong to the Salafi terror movement. In fact Sageman has identified a whole category of extended family which he terms 'Jihad families'. He lists several sets of brothers, but the ties can be far more distant, with in-law relationship also being observed¹⁷⁹.

The last factor Sageman discuss as a means of affiliation with transcendental terrorism is that of discipleship. Here the links refer mostly to transcendental terrorists associated with al Qaeda affiliates in Southeast Asia. In several cases a relationship was founded on the connection between teacher and student at certain Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia and Malaysia, schools associated with the terror groups Jemaah Islamiyah. Such relationships appear to be built upon the regional tradition for great loyalty between the pupil and master.

you run a clandestine terror organisation very leery of potential security breaches, it is very difficult to measure the potential loyalty of a solo individual who announces as intention to join. As a group, loyalty is somewhat easier to test for and have vouched safe.

¹⁷⁹ It should be noted that we now know that bin Laden himself employed tactics of kinship bonding when al Qaeda returned to Afghanistan, as members of his family inter-married with leading members of the Taliban regime that was controlling the country.

Breaking the Conventional Wisdoms

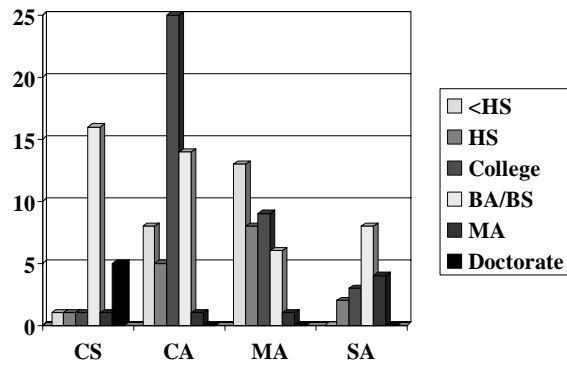
Although Sageman's study was limited to a pool of 150 terrorists, his findings are very important for those that see al Qaeda as typical of the terrorist groups that are driven by transcendental aims. Sageman demonstrates that recruitment to the Salafist Jihadi groups is not the result of brainwashing in madrasses. It is not even the result of having grown up in a deeply religious home, or having a childhood shaped by poverty in a Palestinian refugee camp. In the specific case of al Qaeda the dynamic is a group dynamic. One will be friends with people first and then as a group these people will take the initiative to 'recruit themselves' into the terror organisation. It is more friendship, kinship and discipleship, than aggressive recruitment or individual action that brings new recruits into the fold.

To summarise as briefly as possible some of Marc Sageman's other findings of relevance to mapping transcendental terrorism, I include the following graphs which describe data of a socio-economic nature on the 150 terrorists examined¹⁸⁰. As with the other points raised above, these data undermine many conventional wisdoms relating to who becomes a transcendentially-informed terrorist.

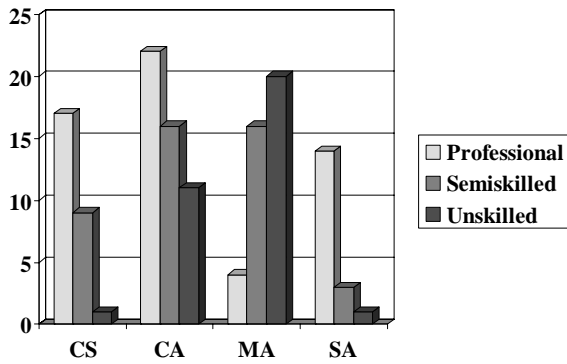
¹⁸⁰ Source: lectures to the Program for Terrorism and Security Studies, George C. Marshall Center, Feb. and Oct 2005.

Findings of Dr. Marc Sageman Regarding Socio-Economic Background of 150 al Qaeda connected Transcendental Terrorists:

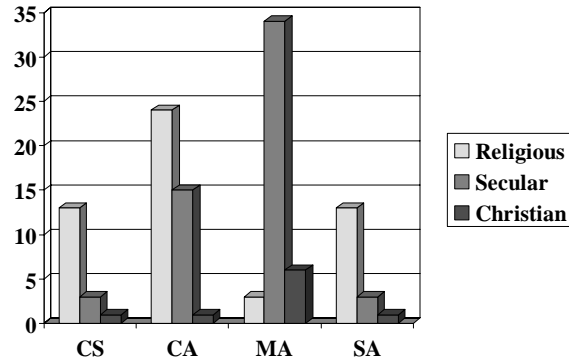
Levels of Education



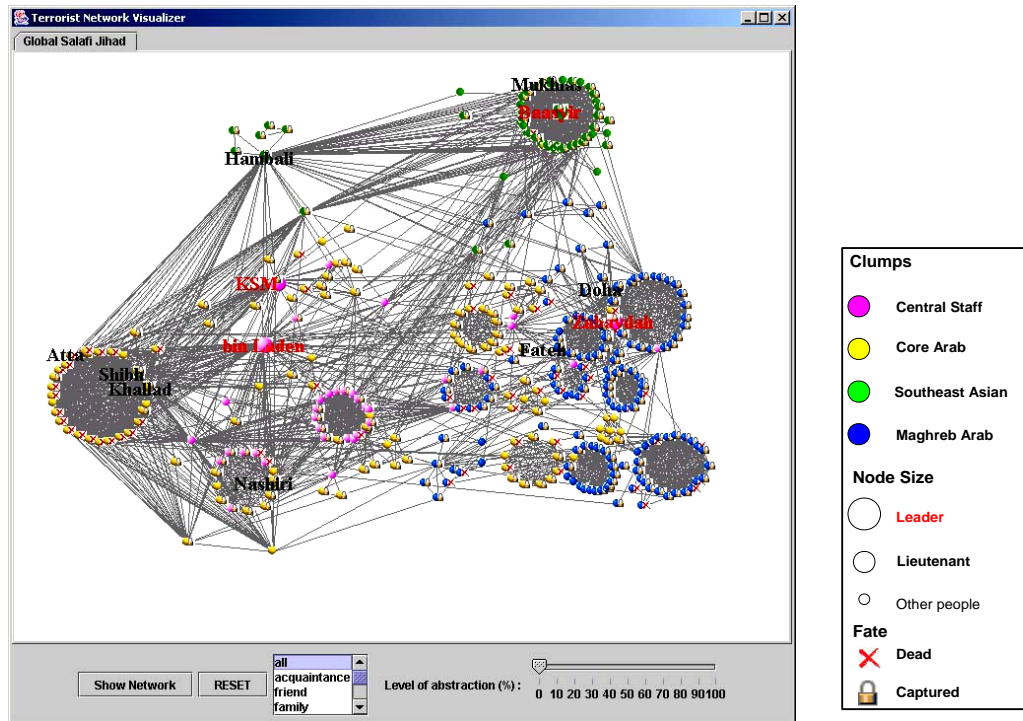
Occupation



Devotion as Youth



And lastly a frighteningly complex representation of the overall bonds of ‘friendship, kinship and discipleship’:



As noted above, the only thematic link between the potential terrorists before they became fully fledged members of al Qaeda, was their shared opinion on certain world issues. Given this core commonality, the next question that naturally arises, is how can ‘we’ address such views and defuse their potential to act as recruiting themes within the process of the evolution of transcendental terrorists. This question is of course linked to the fundament of current US foreign policy and the slogan of democracy for all.

COMPETING REALITIES

As we have noted above, the *Global War on Terror* is in part predicated on the relatively recent theory of ‘democratic peace’ which states that democracies are far less likely – if at all – to go to war with each other. Subsequently it is the opinion of the decisionmakers in the American administration, that it is in the interests of the United States to promote democracy globally, since the greater the number of democracies, the argument has it, the less the chance of international conflict. Whilst this theory is still a young one and disputed, the fact is that the attacks of September the 11th have raised the already prominent position of this tenet within the government elite, so high in fact, that it has been used – in part – to justify actions taken in Afghanistan and Iraq. For not only is it argued that the greater the expanse of democracy in the world, the less war there will be, but also that it is most often the undemocratic or ungoverned territories of the world that act as homes and bases to international terrorist organisations¹⁸¹.

¹⁸¹ This second element of the so-called “Bush Doctrine” is even more problematic than the first tenet, since it is obvious to anyone with even a scant knowledge of history that terrorism has flourished most often in Western-style democracies, viz. the Provisional IRA, the Baader-Meinhof Group, ETA, and so forth. If one wanted to connect the location of terrorist groups to non-democratic countries or ungovernable regions, one would do far better to limit such as statement, of course, not to terrorism in general, but to the particular kind of Salafi fundamentalist Islamist terrorism of al Qaeda and its affiliates, which have indeed flourished operationally in countries that were less than democratic (Afghanistan, Sudan and Pakistan).

As a result we have seen the forceful export of democracy to new regions and countries become a pillar of American foreign policy and to a lesser extent an element of the policies of its allies since 9/11. In fact when Libya unilaterally renounced development of Weapons of Mass Destruction and then when in 2005 there were large-scale demonstrations in Lebanon against Syria's undemocratic involvement in that country's affairs, it seemed as is this new push for democracy in the Middle East would indeed have very positive side-effects in countries that were not invaded by the US or its 'Coalition of the Willing'.

But despite these positive developments which can be seen as early vindication of the democratic peace theory, and the subsequent high turn out at both the Afghan and Iraqi post-invasion elections, the rising death toll in Iraq especially, in recent months should lead one to a reassessment of this theory.

Perhaps the most fundamental question that should be asked, is when we speak of a democratic peace, and democracy's existence making the operation of Salafi-type terrorist organisations difficult, if not impossible, is: what do we mean by 'democracy'? When the USA says that it wishes to promote democracy and even use force to do so, what kind of democracy are they trying to promote? It is far beyond the purview of this paper to discuss at length the very complex question of what democracy is or should be. Suffice it to say that there are local, national, regional and cultural understandings of the word that go far beyond basic concepts of multiparty political systems and regular national elections.

As was pointed out to me by leading Hungarian Arabist Miklós Maróth, of the Péter Pázmány Catholic University, Persian and Arab concepts of democracy, or political representation are very different from those we in the West identify with. For example in Iraq, despite decades of dictatorial control by Saddam Hussein, there existed and exists a tribunal or sheikhdom based system of representation. In most parts of the country (the Kurdish areas excepted), one will find one individual who as sheikh has the authority to represent a certain group of people within a geographically defined area, the size of which can vary greatly. This individual will regularly preside over meetings at which his 'constituents' can voice their opinions

on topical events and appeal to the sheikh on a given issue. At the end of such a lengthy group consultation, the sheikh is authorised to speak in the name of his geographical group, and thus be its representative¹⁸². This occurs without ballot boxes or even a show of hands. Nevertheless the lack of such trappings that we associate with our forms of democracy does not in anyway lessen the representative's legitimacy.

Therefore we are faced with the obvious questions: is it correct to impose or engender one culturally specific concept of democracy upon nations or peoples where there already exist (or existed) markedly different systems of democratic representation? And what can be said in greater depth about Muslim concepts of democracy? Unfortunately this is a very special topic within political science and one that is not well covered by the Anglo-Saxon world. In fact of the few Western scholars who have written on the subject it is the French speaking world that has most to offer with Louis Milliot's *Introduction a l'étude de Droit Musulman*¹⁸³ being a seminal work.

Milliot enlightens our understanding of the Muslim and Arab understanding of the concept of democracy by placing it in the overarching context of Muslim law and the different understandings of state that the Western and Arab worlds have. Milliot observes that the Western tradition has it that formally power is exercised by the people through their elected representatives and that one of the core facets of modern democracy is that its development came about once the prerequisite of separation of church and state was satisfied. This last fact represents the greatest disjuncture between Western and Middle Eastern, or Muslim understandings of democracy.

Without over-exaggeration it must here be noted that the two starting points are very different. For the Muslim understanding of law and political order the bedrock is faith and more specifically the will of Allah. Subsequently human action primarily depends upon God and only secondarily upon the human himself. As a faith-system Islam believes completely in the concept of predestination. All is determined by God

¹⁸² Details based on discussions with Professor Maróth in February of 2005.

¹⁸³ Recueil Sirey, Paris, 1953.

and as a result there is no room for free-will. As a result the status of unbelievers is very different from that say of the Christian faith. For the Muslim, the concept of converting the unbeliever has little importance since the separation of believers from non-believers has been determined already by the Creator¹⁸⁴.

Lest the Reader think at this point that we have inadvertently blundered onto a tangential avenue of research, let me stress that the issue of predestination and lack of free-will has enormous consequences for any policy we may wish to see encourage the growth of democracy in the hope that such growth will undermine the spread of transcendental terrorism. If our Western understanding is such that we see power residing in the people and represented and practiced on their behalf by their elected representatives, then our version of democracy cannot be sustained in a Muslim context, for if there is no free will, if the world and the future are predetermined, then the people's choice as prerequisite is irrelevant. For the Muslim worldview seats power in the hands of Allah and the chosen members of the *ullamah* who have the legitimacy to interpret his word via the prophet and left in the form of the Koran¹⁸⁵.

Perhaps it is best to use Milliot's own words (in translation) to illustrate the gulf between the two understandings of political reality:

*“One must respect at least for appearance's sake, the prohibitions of the Muslim faith. These can sever economic relations, put a stop to trading arrangements and even separate man and woman. The rigidity and monolithic nature of the faith now and probably even in the future stems from its traditions. For in Islam there never was a Cromwell, A Joan of Arc, a Voltaire, Goethe or Lincoln. There was no storming of the Bastille or Independence Day. The hero of the Islamic faith is the companion to the Prophet, and its only great text is the Koran.”*¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ Louis Milliot : Introduction a l'étude du Droit Musulman, Recueil Sirey, Paris, 1953.

¹⁸⁵ It is very interesting to note at this point that Milliot states that it is exactly thanks to the central role played by predestination that Arab and Muslim population can be encouraged (or manipulated?) into two complimentary choices: resignation to one's earthly fate and to fantasy. The relevance of the latter to discussions of martyrdom is, of course, obvious.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. With regard to the question of classic texts and literature, it is worth noting that in one calendar year far less foreign language books are translated into Arabic by all the Arab and Muslim states than are translated into Spanish.

The Koran's stature not only within the faith but within law and the world politic cannot be overstated. In fact, our dividing these three spheres into distinct areas illustrates precisely how different our understanding of the world around us is from that of the practicing Muslim living in a nation where the Koran informs both the imam, the judge and the Prime Minister. If the believer has a question about his faith, he or she can turn to the Koran. If he has a question about a current issue that we would deem to be political, he can likewise turn to the holy text. And of course the judge deliberating the finer points of a case and a sentence will refer to the same book. This is not what we do in the West. Most pointedly for the war on terror, we must note that we do not refer to the bible when promulgating the virtue of our form of democracy. We do not even refer to it when practising our own version of it at home.

Returning to Milliot, in his discussion of democracy and the Muslim world's understanding of it as a political concept, he points out that the connection of all worldly activity to the Koran as problematic due to the fact that the book can be divided into separate elements which can be and are interpreted in a number of ways. These sections roughly correspondent to the phases of Mohammed's life, with a section when he was being persecuted, when his new community was flourishing, and when he was protecting the new faith as a successful warrior-prophet. As a result attitudes to the use of force are several and varied within the scripture taken as a whole. What is clear is that the faith of the Muslim, as based on the Koran, only makes one distinction among individuals. Muslims are all equal ("like teeth of a comb"¹⁸⁷), the only difference between people can be religious; i.e. the line between believer and non-believer. As such the Koran also makes a clear legal distinction between the two, in that the law in its entirety can be practiced and apply only to the true Muslim, since a non-believer has no living connection to the Koran and the Koran is the source of law.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

Milliot takes this specific observation concerning Muslim law and the relationship of believer to unbeliever and extrapolates to the intercultural level. This is where his observations on the rigidity of the Islamic faith have the greatest consequences for the concept of democratic peace. In his own words:

“If we go beyond Islamic appreciation of the concept of democracy, we can observe that whilst the Islamic can influence other cultures, other cultures seem incapable of effecting a change in Islam. Looked at from another perspective, if another culture cannot influence Islam, even in a direction that were most positive in nature, would it not be necessary to class as sinner anyone who did not reject the other culture, since Islam is in one and the same instant the good and the true faith?”¹⁸⁸

From a Western understanding of democracy, it follows that one of the fundamental rights or freedoms, is freedom to choose religion, for example, and that would seem to clash irreconcilably with the non-negotiable fact that the Muslim sees the Koran as the source of political and legal wisdom and that knowledge must be acquired from a pure a source as possible¹⁸⁹.

According to Milliot, the obstacle to a common understanding of democracy comes with Islam’s different prioritisation of the individual and community. There is no question that in Islam, the community of believers, or umma, enjoys primacy over the individual. As a result there will needs be a built in tension between Islamic understandings of democracy and those (such as the Western European or American model) which emphasis individual human and civil rights. Milliot puts it more stridently: *“Whilst the West places tolerance at the forefront of its system and fights in its name, Islam sees it as a weakness.”*

Lastly, there is the question of building blocks, or starting points. In the West and especially through the lens of the media, the oversimplification it all too often made that religion is the essence of Islam. Hopefully the discussion above has illustrated

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

that whilst religion is important, it is not religion as we understand it. In the Muslim worldview religion cannot be separated from the political and the legal. What is more, religion is one of the core building blocks of the culture. Just as influential are the concepts of family and tribe as opposed to state. That is why we see the traditions of democracy in the Middle East as having so little to do with national identity, but far more with tribal or local representation. Therefore any notion that concepts of democracy are universal must be discarded and another approach taken. The role of the theory of democratic peace must be reassessed.

Tehran: the source of modern transcendental terror?

In a rare occasion for the study of political violence, a team of two Iranian sisters trained in the West, published a relevant study soon after the 9/11 attacks specifically concerning the relationship between terrorism, the Muslim faith and the concept of democracy. In their paper entitled: “*Terror, Islam and Democracy*”¹⁹⁰, Roya and Ladan Boroumand attempt to give a series of alternative answers to the then burning question of ‘why’ did the attacks take place. To identify the roots to the “murderous fanaticism” that can encourage a group of young men to use their own lives and the lives of thousands of others to send a vast message of hatred to the United States and the West.

From the very beginning of their discussion it is clear that the authors are themselves motivated by the gross confusion and disarray evinced by Western commentators attempting to grapple with the reality of Islamist¹⁹¹ terrorism post 9/11. Although

¹⁹⁰ Journal of Democracy, Vol. 13 No. 2, April 2002.

¹⁹¹ The authors duly note the difference between the phrases “Islamic terrorism” and “Islamist terrorism”, the former denoting the specific strains of fundamental interpretations of the Islamic faith such as the Salafi and Wahabi. The similarity of the two adjectives is very unfortunate and is often the cause of misunderstanding and unnecessary tensions. Such problems were frequently witnessed by the author when teaching on an international course on terrorism that included Muslim participants and which was taught via interpretation. The difference may only be a couple of letters, but when one word denotes a relationship to all of the Muslim world and the other to a fringe of radicals, sensitivities can easily be stimulated by mistake.

clearly not students of any particular school of strategic thinking, be it Sun Tzu or von Clausewitz, the authors caveat that the enemy should be understood as precisely as possible before counter-attack and counter-policies are shaped and initiated, is well taken. In their own words:

*“For terrorism is first and foremost an ideological and moral challenge to liberal democracy. The sooner the defenders of democracy realize this and grasp its implications, the sooner democracy can prepare itself to win the long-simmering war of ideas and values that exploded into full fury last September 11.”*¹⁹²

The authors see our – the West’s – problem as lying in a laziness of intellectual attitude, although this is my label. We have witnessed and fought our own terrors and terrorism ever since the French Revolution introduced the concept of systematic use of terror into our vocabulary back at the end of the 18th century. During the 20th, as terrorism evolved through its various stages of development, outlined above, we too easily maintained a ‘default’ appreciation that understood this form of violence as political or ideologically driven. It is no accident therefore that the academic label for terrorism became ‘political violence.’ But the authors, coming as they do from Persia see 9/11 as connected to the emergence and growth of the Islamist politico-theology which erupted in their own county of Iran with the religious revolution of 1979.

Yet the violence of the modern 20th century terrorist is not the same as that that would be inspired by the Khomeini and his ilk. The latter is not simply just another ideology like Marxism, Maoism or Fascism. Yet the similarity is evident in one respect. According to the authors, Islamist terrorism is totalitarian. And as such it represents a threat not only to the established community of democracies – Western and otherwise – but also to the traditional Islam, since the wanton destruction of thousands of people in the name of Allah is a modern phenomenon, not one connected to the essential historical tradition of the Muslim faith. If the Islamist

¹⁹² Ibid.

religio-ideology, and I can think of no better phrase to describe it at this point – is therefore not essential to the world faith of Islam, then what are its origins? Here the Boroumands give their own version of its ancestry.

The story is not a new one as told by the authors, describing as it does the crucial rise of a Pan-Arabic movement at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th that would evolve under the leadership of Hassan al-Banna into the very influential Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt. However, in an interesting tangent of history, they note the influence in the 1930s upon this movement of European ideas transferred from the German and Italian extreme right wing movements of Europe, concepts such as unswerving commitment to a leader and the idea of heroic death in the name of the cause. It was into this unusual cocktail of ideas that after Banna's death, individuals such as Sayyid Qutb would mix the revolutionary zeal of Communist and Marxist ideology. Ideas that would later become central to Islamist thinking would be the rejection of nationalism, promulgating instead the idea of an 'Islamic Sate' as opposed to nation-state, and the need for a revolutionary vanguard for the movement (bin Laden has frequently used this concept of vanguard or brave minority in his speeches and communiqués).

Once the Nasser's regime cracked down harshly on the Brotherhood, many of its leaders would escape to countries that today we recognise as being involved closely with transcendental terrorism, for example: Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Syria, Iraq. The link to Iran is drawn thanks to Khomeini, the future figurehead of the Tehran revolution, who was exiled to Iraq by the Shah's regime in the 1960s. Formerly a traditionalist and not a radical, in Iraq, Khomeini would convert to the ideas already established by Sayyid Qutb, such as a totalitarian vision of theocracy, under which all non-theocratic governments were to be dealt with as apostate.

At this point, given his core significance to the development of modern fundamentalist Islamist thought, it would be appropriate to discuss Qutb in some

detail¹⁹³. Born just after the turn of the century to a middle class Egyptian family, Qutb was a school teacher, poet, literary critic and later government official, who only converted to a fundamental version of the Muslim faith later in his life, after which he would become one of the leading figures and theologian-ideologues for the Muslim Brotherhood. The version of Islam Qutb propagated was founding on the non-negotiable platform that this faith was the only true faith and that as such the West was to be treated as the enemy with which Peace could never be established.

As an amateur, clerically unqualified writer of matters theologian and political he was most productive, writing more than 20 books, many of them whilst incarcerated by Nasser regime. The book most mentioned and discussed today is his “*Milestones*”¹⁹⁴. In his usually blunt style, Walter Laqueur, one of the fathers of terrorism research has said of Qutb’s *Milestones* that it “*amounted, no more and no less, to the ex-communication (taqfir) of all Muslims who did not agree with his brand of Islam.*”¹⁹⁵

For our purposes its most important tenets, tenets that still motivate today transcendental terrorism such as al Qaeda’s, are that the then existing Islamic states and their elites were apostates deserving of removal through a war to impose true (fundamentalist) Islam, a conflict that would purify and lift them from their state of *jahiliyya*, or pre-Islamic ignorance. After Nasser’s repeated failed attempts to win over and co-opt the Brotherhood, Qutb became one of the movement’s martyrs, being hanged in 1966.

¹⁹³ Biographical details on Qutb are based upon information found in Walter Laqueur’s “*No End to War*”, Continuum International, New York, 2003, unless otherwise noted.

¹⁹⁴ Sometimes translated as “*Milestones on the Road*” (orig.: *Ma’alim fi’l-Tariq*).

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

The Ideologue-Theologian's Legacy

In a fascinating parallel to numerous Salafi intellectuals, and even transcendently informed terrorists we now have biographical data on, Qutb was a product of the cross cultural experience, having enjoyed Islamic and Western style education and having travelled and worked in the United States. According to many commentators and biographers, it was Qutb's ill-fated journey in 1948 to visit the US for three years that most shaped his ideas about how to "deal with" the West. According to one writer, it was based upon the decadence he witnessed during his stay that on his return to Egypt he would leave his then job with the government and join the Muslim Brotherhood, saying: "I was born in 1951."¹⁹⁶

Milestones is definitely an usual work, a product of persecution and a product of more than one culture and ideology, melding as it does Marxism with fundamentalism, even with Christian concepts such as The Reformation. But all of these tools and ideas serve one purpose in Qutb's world: the re-assertion of God's authority over the world. In this he draws a clear parallel between the situation on the Arabian Peninsula when the Prophet was fighting the jahiliyya authorities of the time, to the situation around him in the 1950s, again surrounded by apostate or pagan authority:

"If we look at the sources and foundations of modern ways of living, it becomes clear that the whole world is steeped in 'jahiliyyah,' and all the marvellous material comforts and high-level inventions do not diminish this ignorance. This jahiliyyah is based on rebellion against God's sovereignty on earth. It transfers to man one of the greatest attributes of God, namely sovereignty, and make some men lords over others. It is now not in that simple and primitive form of the ancient jahiliyyah, but takes the form of claiming that the right to create values, to legislate rules of collective behavior, and to choose any way of life rests with men, without regard to what God has prescribed. The result of this rebellion against the authority of God is the oppression of His creatures."¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ Giles Kepel: "Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh", (trans. J. Rothschild), University of California Press, Berkeley, 1985.

¹⁹⁷ From the Introduction to "Milestones", <http://www.islamworld.net/qutb/mint.txt>.

As such, this identification of the establishment of the faith and the “milestones” it went through with what had to be done in the 20th by the true believers was how Qutb turned the Koran into a manual for revolution along Salafi lines¹⁹⁸. But it should be noted, especially with reference to the later transcendental terrorists, that the philosophy of Qutb was not just written for the Arabian Peninsula or the Middle East. His is a global vision, as is clear from this second quote from the introduction to *Milestones*:

“The leadership of mankind by Western man is now on the decline, not because Western culture has become poor materially or because its economic and military power has become weak. The period of the Western system has come to an end primarily because it is deprived of those life-giving values which enabled it to be the leader of mankind.

It is necessary for the new leadership to preserve and develop the material fruits of the creative genius of Europe, and also to provide mankind with such high ideals and values as have so far remained undiscovered by mankind, and which will also acquaint humanity with a way of life which is harmonious with human nature, which is positive and constructive, and which is practicable.”¹⁹⁹

But despite Qutb’s vision for change being clearly all-encompassing and universal the Boroumand authors squarely lay the responsibility for Islamist terror’s successful birth on the shoulders of Khomeini. Without explicitly saying so the inference is that until the banner was taken up by him, none of the previous ideologues have the religious credentials and thus the credibility to give the movement the breath of life it needed to become a global phenomenon. Not Qutb, not Banna, no one. For them, prior to the Iranian Revolution, Islamism was a “marginal heterodoxy.”²⁰⁰ As an established cleric, unlike his colleagues in Egypt or Iraq, and as the future leader of

¹⁹⁸ This very neat description of how Qutb employed the holy scripture to help effect political change in a modern society, comes from Trevor Stanley’s profile of Sayyid Qutb, Perspectives on World History and Current Events, www.pwhce.org/qutb.html.

¹⁹⁹ <http://www.islamworld.net/qutb/mint.txt>.

²⁰⁰ Boroumand and Boroumand, op. cit..

an uprising that would galvanise millions of youngsters, Khomeini brought respectability and authority to the modern invention.

The second half of their paper, takes a different issue as its starting point. The authors attempt to demonstrate how at odds with genuine Islamic teachings the proclamations of bin Laden and the like, truly are. That the Islamic is in fact in conflict with the Islamist. This assertion goes against some scholars' observations that the Muslim faith has at its core a certain militancy that facilitates its use and interpretation in ways that are violent. Many point to the fact that Mohammed was himself a skilled military leader as proof that the history of the faith's founder cannot but have influenced its nature and attitude to the use of force. Nevertheless, the Boroumands believe that the appeal by the transcendental terror group to religious justification for global jihad is less a product of theology itself, but rather the result of a distillation of key events in modern history and a belief in the efficacy of irregular warfare in the form of terrorism and related violence.

The fact that bin Laden, for example, speaks so favourable of the Iranian-sponsored attack against US forces in 1983 in Lebanon, that left hundreds dead and led to the withdrawal of the US, is just one example, an example to the Islamist of what can be achieved against a superpower with very little investment on behalf of the terror group. Then there is, of course the success of the Iranian Revolution, itself, in which a CIA-installed regime was deposed by a radical cleric and some students who were prepared to invade the US embassy and take its occupants hostage. Hardly a showdown one would expect America to lose. Then again, as we have noted already, just a decade later a handful of ill-equipped but similarly fundamentalist Muslims would bring humiliation and forced withdrawal to the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Again, a superpower defeated.

On final analysis the authors' argument can be summarised as the following: For various complex reasons the modern history of the Islamic world is one in which this culture shut itself down in terms of trying to understand other systems and regions. Whilst the West's understanding of the Arab and Muslim world may be largely imperfect and incomplete, it is far better than the Arab and Muslim world's

understanding of the West. Only this can explain for the way in which Western ideas such as Marxism, Leninism and Fascism could so easily be re-packaged in the form of a pan-Arab religious movement that could lead to the 1979 revolution in Iran and even the attacks of 9/11.

On the surface, I find this idea appealing, and have myself pointed out above the similarities between the Global War on Terror and its predecessor, the Cold War²⁰¹. However, I would see it as only partially correct a representation. Religion as a factor cannot be so easily explained away. Especially if we note the disturbing fact that very few communists or fascists were committed enough to take actions against their democratic foe in such a way that would unquestionably lead to their death. There were no Communist suicide bombers²⁰². Why therefore should the transcendently informed terrorist be so willing to kill through his own suicide, if his world is simply a political ideology wrapped up in new clothes? We will look at this question later on.

However, before we move on, I would like to close this discussion of the themes raised by the Boroumand pair with this, I believe significant, quote:

*“ In addition to all the questions raised about security measures, intelligence failures, accountability in foreign-policy decisionmaking, and the like, the atrocities of September 11 also forces citizens of democratic countries to ask themselves how strongly they are committed to democratic values. Their enemies may believe in a chimera, but it is one for which they have shown themselves all too ready to die.”*²⁰³

²⁰¹ One person who has looked at the similarities in some detail is Frederick Kagan of the American Enterprise Institute. See “*The New Bolsheviks: Understanding Al Qaeda*”, National Security Outlook, AEI, November 2005.

²⁰² It is interesting that of all the totalitarian enemies of democracy in the 20th century, only the Japanese had a version of the suicide bomber: the kamikaze. Here, of course the fact that the imperial regime was not secular is the clue to the unique similarity.

²⁰³ Ibid.

Image Management

Perhaps the question of American and allied Western security should be handled in a completely different way. Should the above discussion not be enough to convince the reader of why a policy of exporting democracy may be totally wrong-headed, then there is another, perhaps more scientific argument against making the democratic peace theory the centrepiece of a global policy of counter-terrorism.

For those political scientists who have devoted themselves to the study of democracy there is today a large group of case studies to choose from when examining transitions to democracy. In the current case in point we have the countries of Afghanistan and Iraq as test-beds of a new policy. In terms of classification prior to US intervention, one was a theocracy run by the despots of the Taliban, and the second a secular dictatorship modelled closely on the USSR of Joseph Stalin, but even deadlier. Then the contention of the US administration is that with the transition from invasion to post-invasion Coalition management and then transitional indigenous administration following initial elections in 2004/2005, the transition to democracy has begun.

From a pragmatic policy-oriented point of view, surely one of the first questions should be: what precedents exist for such a policy platform? What do we know about previous transitions to democracy from dictatorship, what is the success rate, and so on? Any reply should cover at least the issues of use of force, stability and duration.

Whilst it is true that we have many case studies in the last 50-60 years that provide us with adequate amounts of information, the picture is not uniform, nor is it simple. The fact is that transition to democracy is not a science by any means and the variety of transitional models is vast. We have on the one side examples where an alien culture (the USA) and political reality imposed its expectations upon a theocratic, non Anglo-Saxon autocracy (imperial Japan) and after an overwhelming show of force (Nagasaki and Hiroshima) shaped it into a non-European, sui generic

democracy. Then we have numerous models where the transition to democracy was predominantly an internal affair, influence by external factors. Hungary is a perfect example. The transition from Communist dictatorship to multiparty democracy was a negotiated one, negotiated between the regime and nascent opposition forces, yet external factors such as the influence of the American administration, the weakness of the Kremlin, all had their effect. Then there is Argentina, which also changed itself, but went through a transition catalysed in part by having lost a small war with the UK over the Falklands.

This last model raises the issue of violence. Transition to democracy can be bloodless, such as in Central Europe in 1989/90, but it can also be bloody as in the case of Romania, or the result of inter-state conflict, such as in the case of Hitler's Germany and its transition into the Federal Republic of (West) Germany. With all these variations, what then are the ramifications for anyone considering the democratic peace theory as the core of a counter-terrorism policy?

At the very least one needs to admit that the process is not scientifically predictable. Secondly, there is the fact that in the vast majority of cases transition to democracy is a lengthy process. Thirdly, this process often comes only with great internal and regional instability for the country concerned. Fourthly, the use of force and commitment by outside parties may have to be great and prolonged.

Together these considerations should lead one to at least question strongly the belief that promoting democracy will universally benefit all, especially those doing the promoting. Why? Well, because in committing one's nation to such a policy one would seem to be committing oneself to a policy that requires many years for it to work, a large-scale use of force and large-scale instability. It is perhaps this last point that is most important. Surely a counter-terrorism policy is primarily meant to provide safety to the country(-ies) concerned. Can we rationally state that a policy which in all likelihood will lead to extended periods of instability, will actually serve

the national interests of the state which promotes the policy²⁰⁴? What then is the alternative?

What we must not forget is that all of the activities related to national security that we have mentioned are significantly shaped and constrained by the historic forces at play around us in the last decade and a half. It would be foolish to suppose that having prepared from say 1948 until 1989 for a third world war, that the complete loss of this threat did not have a vast effect upon strategic reality on both sides of the erstwhile Iron Curtain. It is important to remember that with the disappearance of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact, it was in fact the Democrat administration of President Clinton that first announced that the spread of democracy globally was in the specific interest of the American nation and its allies despite the fact that there is much evidence beyond the core tenets of the Koran and the Muslim world that suggests that our culture has been consciously rejected by other parts of the globe.

Democracy and the Nation-State Model

According to the iconoclastic strategist Ralph Peters, these parts of the world have in recent history rejected our way of life no less than twice. The first phase of this rejection followed the settlement of World War One, as colonial areas fought off the domination of their former masters, yet to a greater or lesser extent maintained some elements of the system imposed upon them from the outside. This led eventually to the final collapse of empires that we saw following the next global conflict. This was accompanied by the violent nationalist campaigns that we noted above and that Rapoport labelled as one of the phases of modern terrorism. (It is important at this point to note that whilst these nascent countries fought to divest themselves of the

²⁰⁴ The author actually made this point to US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice during a video teleconference with staff and students of George C. Marshall Center. In response the Secretary Rice agreed with the observation that great instability may ensue in transitional periods. Nevertheless, she continued, morally one cannot maintain a stance that preserving dictatorship is preferable because of the instability that would result if we promoted democracy. Although I agree with this, I am not sure that such an interpretation of national interest based on morality alone is a realistic one.

political control of the outsider, that in most cases they did not alter the shape of the subsequent nation-state, or try to alter national borders, despite these demarcations also being the work of the outsider.)

According to Peters, who collected his thoughts in a series of briefings he presciently prepared for members of the Pentagon staff in the mid-1990s, the atavistic return to identities and motivations to violence based upon clan, tribe, religion or national ethnic group was simply the natural consequence of the externally imposed model failing to take root in the other culture. For this reader, the point Peters fails to stress adequately, is not the lack of applicability of the democratic model as a way to secure Western interests, but the all too often understated yet undeniable link between democracy and the nation-state model.

For Western communities to take this for granted is far too easy. As we discussed earlier on, concepts of national security are irrevocably linked to the establishment of the nation-state as the way to run a geographic area, the layman would simply call a country. We must not forget that as the Westphalian model developed it was accompanied by the settlement – over centuries - of numerous border disputes, to a point by the mid-20th century that bar a few exceptions, there really remained only a handful of unsettled territorial issues. (Yes we had had two world wars also, but one cannot reasonably assert that either the Austro-Hungarian Emperor or Adolf Hitler were motivated primarily by border revision issues.)

As a corollary, there is the post-1990 experience of Central and Eastern Europe. In the one area, around Hungary, where thanks to the edicts of the Trianon Peace Treaty of 1920 several million ethnic Hungarians ended up living outside the borders of Hungary, there was indeed tension between Budapest and those newly democratic states that were less than fully democratic, namely Illiescu's Romania and Meciar's Slovakia. For those nations, unsure of the robustness of their nation-state, the presence of sizeable ethnic minorities within their borders was seen as a threat. For other more democratic neighbours, such as Slovenia or Austria, nations secure in their statehood, this was no a problem. Again proof positive of the irreducible connection of nation-state to concerns of national security.

Returning to Peters, we can take this idea of the inseparability of nation-state and democratic functioning to strengthen his observations regarding what he calls the “non-competitive” nations that reject the West and its values²⁰⁵. Of course, all too often the areas that are home to such nations see a lack of confluence between nation-state boundaries and national communities, thanks to historic Western involvement. In his opinion, the fact that the West is so much so more powerful by all measurements of power, the rejection of our model by the uncompetitive of the world is not a strategic concern to us directly, but more to the populations that inhabit these nations. In classic blunt Peters style he states: “The challenge for the West is to salvage the essential, while avoiding commitments that lead to nothing but blood, expense and policy failure.”²⁰⁶ Although the book from which this quote is taken was published one year after the attacks of 9/11, this quote comes from the briefings made by Peters for the US Department of Defense in the 1990s. As a result they would seem eminently prescient, and all too apt a description perhaps of the quagmire American involvement in Iraq is rapidly becoming.

Whilst Peters may often have great insights upon strategic matters, too often they are deconstructive as opposed to constructive. With regards to these uncompetitive states that have seem to become such a part of current US and Western policy considerations, Peters expresses his opinion that the best they can hope for is that the West will not actively interfere with them. His advice is that they be left alone to synthesise a version of modern state management that is culturally relevant to the national community concerned. But will selective geographic abandonment really make a post 9/11 world safer from transcendental terrorism? At least the author is honest with regard to one specific region of non-competitiveness that is of great relevance to the spread of terrorism, and that is the Middle East. This area is so entangled at a historic and even current affairs level with the West, be it thanks to Western involvement in creation the state of Israel, or our dependence on Middle

²⁰⁵ Peters arguments can be read in reprints of his journal articles published as “*Beyond Terror*”, Stackpole, Mechanicsburg, 2002.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

Eastern oil, that we simply do not have the choice to ignore it or abandon it. But can we use democracy within this region to lessen the threat of transcendental terror?

Peters suggests that we attempt an intellectual exercise by which we remove ourselves as best we can from our cultural biases, our unthinking love of democracy and the values we hold to be universal. In this he sees a place for quasi scientific theories of collective action, since he is driven in part by a fascination over how to explain violence on a truly massive scale, such as the Yugoslav wars of independence or the genocide of Rwanda or the Third Reich. None of these can be understood – and by extension I would posit nor can the violence of the transcendently informed terrorist – via dry and rational explanations that begin and end with the motivation of the individual. According to Peters: “the mass senses and the mass acts. Sometimes it acts functionally and the result is “progress.” At other times, mass instincts are dysfunctional...”²⁰⁷

But are we prepared to settle for an analysis that says we cannot coherently explain violence of the kind that is common between those that involved themselves in genocide, or those that would execute a mass attack as horrific and 9/11? That they are all driven by some indescribable Jungian collective conscience? Surely, such an argument would play into the hands of those that would like to diminish the responsibility of such actors, to blame some amorphous ‘group will.’ A nation-state’s political elite does not have the luxury of relying upon such an explanation.

The question of why democracy should not be pursued as an export commodity with which to fight terrorism, or at least to limit its mobility is further addressed by Peters, and we should consider his argumentation on its merits. The first concrete reason the author provides regarding the inapplicability of this model to certain areas, is the concept that I would label as “democracy: the political luxury.” In other words, we cannot expect to foster Western style democracy in nations where the majority of the population is in a constant struggle to provide for itself the basic necessities of life (Peters refers to these as “survival resources.”) Again in his typical

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

style, the author sates unless the majority of the population is not fighting daily to stay alive, the electorate will not vote wisely but ‘hungrily’, and from a purely intuitive point of view, this would seem to be a reasonable assumption to make. If the nation’s economy is backward, if subsistence is the rule, then how much faith would any reasonable person have in visions based upon political affiliation, as opposed to the closer ties of clan, family, tribe or village? Should, as a result, one’s own non-party group win such an election, Peters observes that the next resulting event is that this ethnic or tribal bloc will use the shield of democratic election to protect its own parochial interests to the detriment of the other groups that lost. This definitely goes against the grain of what most people would understand as the Western model of democracy. Put in other terms, can we expect democracy to work in places where the most powerful motivations for survival act as factors influencing political decisions, or where the person doing the voting knows he will have enough food for dinner for himself and his family and can therefore take a political decision based upon considered thought and not his survival instinct?

Although to some diplomats and strategists such an assertion may be too politically incorrect, it would be hard to criticise Peters on this assertion. But where does this leave us? The outside observer may still have faith in the democratic model and even its utility as a tool to combat transcendental terrorism of the form demonstrated by al Qaeda. But if democracy is a political luxury for nations that are economically stable then logically, the conclusion is that before democracy we must have a thriving economy. Does this mean that before we ever decide to resort to promoting democracy, we should promote welfare? Such a deduction would seem to be just as problematic in my opinion.

Although it is true that the decision to disband the huge Iraqi Army after the US invasion was one of the greatest mistakes made by the US administration, since it put hundreds of thousands of people onto the streets without a job, people without livelihoods who really were not motivated to help make the transfer to democracy a success, the practical question remains: how do you promote the economy, not just in a militarily occupied country, but in nations that simply are underdeveloped and undemocratic?

This study is not the place to debate the whys and wherefores of economic development, a whole field of study unto itself, but it is reasonable, I believe, to assert that externally motivated economic growth is an oxymoron. To quote one infamous saying of economists who deal with the reality of economic development aid: “Foreign aid is the process by which money from rich people in rich countries is transferred to rich people in poor countries.” The huge sums of money pushed willy-nilly into the African continent over the last several decades, would seem to be proof enough that exogenous encouragement is pointless²⁰⁸. A nation will prosper economically if it wishes to sincerely do so, if its political elite takes the necessary domestic decisions to facilitate change, and perhaps most importantly, if the electorate keeps its leaders accountable. Does this mean we are back to square one? We should push democracy as the tool to prevent the growth of globally networked terrorism, yet since democracy is predicated on economic health and economic health cannot be turned on or off by external actors? Perhaps the answer is not so simple.

²⁰⁸ Although this is not a work concerned with the economics of development and foreign aid, should the reader be so inclined, I would suggest looking to the works of several experts in the field, to include, John Moore, Stephen Pejovich, Warren Nutter and the late Peter Bauer especially.

STRATEGIC LESSONS LEARNT: RETURNING TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF
COUNTERTERRORISM AS A FORM OF WARFARE

I believe it goes without saying that where democracy is incomplete, where it is obviously weak, it is morally right to assist the country concerned to perfect its version of pluralist representation, should such a request be made by the people and government of that country. As the same time it seems uncontroversial to state that assisting developing democracies to perfect as best they can their systems and so increase the number of mature democracies would be universally beneficial to all government. Nevertheless, following the discussion above, although it may seem morally appealing to violently dispose heinous dictators such a Saddam Hussein and the Taliban regime, it does not follow that by doing so we will necessarily be able to establish functioning democracies in former dictatorships. Nor do such actions necessarily impact negatively on transcendental terrorist organisations such as al Qaeda. For whilst in the case of Afghanistan, the disposal of the Taliban and invasion of the country did strike a hefty blow to al Qaeda, in that it lost its training camps and safe havens, the invasion of Iraq has not had an obviously detrimental effect on al Qaeda. Of course, scientifically measuring exactly how the invasion of Iraq has or has not benefited al Qaeda is not possible. Even so, the fact that the US is involved in an extended operation in the former geographical heart of the historic Caliphate and that it has been embroiled in scandals such as that of the Abu Gharib prison, means that the operation has provided grist to the mill of the propaganda machine of the Salafists.

As a result it would seem reasonable to conclude that promoting democracy as a part of a broader counterterrorism strategy should be limited to those instances where the fundamentals are entrenched and where the challenge is improvement and not creation where there is none. What then should fill the gap left by such a re-prioritisation? If the democratic peace theory driving the Global War on Terror is demoted to cases far less challenging and costly than Afghanistan or Iraq, how must we understand the post-Cold War strategic challenge of transcendental terrorism?

Although we have above disparaged the common held view that we are in an age typified by asymmetry in warfare, and noted that using the term war itself is not historical, nor legally correct, there does remain another analogy of warfare which will prove to be of use, and that is reference to counter-terrorism as irregular warfare.

The library of irregular warfare is, whilst though not huge, at least established, there having been numerous ‘small wars’ in the 20th century for British, French and American forces to test theories and write lessons learnt once those theories were proved inadequate, whether it was counter-insurgency on the Indian sub-continent, North Africa or Southeast Asia. According to perhaps one of the best strategic minds currently writing on these topics today, Colin Gray of Reading University, the term irregular warfare should be understood as a useful catch-all for a selection of activities that include: low-intensity conflict, unconventional warfare, revolutionary war, guerrilla war, terrorism, insurgency and civil war, but to name a few.²⁰⁹ These are all distinct concepts, if at times the difference between some of them may be less than huge, and subsequently it is useful to collect them under one descriptor. Gray notes that terrorism as a member of this group, has changed in recent years in that it now evinces a global domain, is religiously motivated and new in its technical capacity to cause harm. I would comment that it is not the technical capacity that has changed but the will to induce greater damage that separates the modern transcendental terrorist from the classic Cold War one. There was no special capability that made the 9/11 hijackers able to inflict the enormous damage they did. It was their willingness to use a jumbo jet as a weapon that was revolutionary.

Although I would take Gray to task for insisting that terrorism must be considered a form of war and its executors soldiers, when discussing terrorism in terms of the

²⁰⁹ See Colin Gray: “*Another Bloody Century*”, Orion Publishing Group, London, 2005. According to Gray, terrorism also represents a mode of irregular warfare and he sees terrorists as soldiers. This author has a great difficulty agreeing with this latter point, as highlighted above, especially on legal, as well as moral grounds, since such a statement would negate the requirements posited by important documents such as Geneva and Hague conventions. Nevertheless, his later observations are what matter here.

master of war Carl von Clausewitz, there is some merit to his argument. The point is that strategy as a component of war – and von Clausewitz is still the father of strategy – concerns a “purposeful matching of forceful means with political ends.”²¹⁰ And as the definition of terrorism I have used above refers to this form of violence as one in which there is a political aim, there the parallel is obvious. The problem only comes when we note that the war has in the past not solely been limited to the realisation of political goals and that war itself has not always been motivated by politics, for example in the case of the Crusades. But yet again Gray has a neat answer to this problem also since for him:

*“Even when warfare is waged for the glory of God, simply for the joy of slaughter, or for the sake of honour, such potent motivations drive a story with a political dimension.”*²¹¹

And on the surface one can probably agree with this. But can this not be said of so many other things; that they have a political dimension? Surely, when von Clausewitz immortally tied war and politics together with his famous dictum, it wasn’t so as to blithely observe that there is ‘something political’ in warfare, that the use of force is in some way associated with politics. The association has been understood for the centuries since it was made as vital, as essential. To say that it is a tangential, an apparent connection would surely undermine the entire point of von Clausewitz whole thesis.

Additionally, I think it reasonable to imagine instances of the application of force in the form of warfare where motivations were in fact almost purely spiritually or hatred driven, non-strategic in the original sense of the word strategy. Perhaps therefore the choice would be not between forcing terrorism – especially transcendental terrorism into the category of war – but to make a distinction between classic war and various forms of warfare or combat: the purely political versus the functional tool.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid.

Let us return to our categorisations then and choose to see terrorism not as war, but as a mode of combat, as a kind of warfare. As such countering it in the combative sense may be informed by the previous examples we have of successful irregular warfare. Amongst these examples the one that seems most obvious and that has indeed been used by some commentators of late, is the idea of al Qaeda as having grown into a form of global insurgency, a religious and ideological evolution from unitary body to violent world movement. If this is an even passing reflection of how the threat has developed since the al Qaeda lost its base of operations in Afghanistan, then it would seem clear that what is needed is a global campaign of counterinsurgency (COIN). As such it would be reasonable to suppose – as with COIN operations of the past – that the campaign is one of attrition. More eloquently Gray describes the challenge thusly:

“Since al Qaeda claims its legitimacy from Allah, via the Koran, and has no known political agenda that appears to be even remotely in the negotiable category, a political resolution to this variant of future irregular warfare will not be achieved dramatically by policy design. In order to make political progress towards achieving its grand purpose of restoring the Islamic caliphate, al Qaeda would have to adopt a moderate message calculated to gain widespread support. Only in that way might the organisation effect the transition to become a genuine mass insurgency capable of overthrowing regimes it regards as corrupt and apostate.”²¹²

Hopefully the leadership of al Qaeda does not read the works of Professor Gray, since the scenario posited in the second half of this quote does in fact seem more threatening than if al Qaeda remains an ultra-radical terror group that has sympathisers in many parts of the world but that does not represent a movement as such.

Beyond the sympathisers, in all fairness, and with a dose of realism injected, perhaps the best that can be done is to initiative a very long-term plan to win over the uncommitted to a life that stays within the culture of non-violent Islam since we are

²¹² Ibid.

unlikely to be able through dialogue alone convince the bin Laden's and the Zarqawis of the world that their transcendental reality is wrong and a perversion of the reasonable worldview that is mainstream Islam. This leaves wide open the question of what can be done to mitigate the threat of those irrational terrorists that we cannot push back into the mainstream. This is the subject of the last section of my paper, but before we turn to proposed solution, it is necessary to look more closely at the idea floated by Gray of terrorism's connection to the world of irregular warfare.

Terrorism: war or not war?

Given Mao's insistence that the guerrilla is like the fish which swims in the water of community, it would seem clear that irregular warfare of the kind we understand as insurgency has a strong social element in addition to the political. James Kiras, writing in a recently published handbook on the study of terrorism²¹³, asserts that the political is, nevertheless, always the dominant and defining aspect. For Kiras, the September 11th attacks were just as much politically driven as the slaughter of almost a million Hutu by the Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994. This argumentation, thought similar to Gray's is subtly different and a slippery and causal one in which the author observes that even if the violence is motivated by the desire to realise an end state that is a religious Caliphate, the usurpation of power and establishment of such a state is a political act and therefore the goal is political. I leave to the individual reader to decide how much the categorisation of a facilitating act can fully colour the nature of a categorically different end state. This writer is not convinced.

Kiras is just as adamant when it comes to the distinction between terrorism and irregular warfare. For him terrorism is about bringing attention to bear on a political grievance, rarely about effecting political change itself. Irregular warfare is rather the attempt to effect political change by "force of arms" The latter made be true, but the former would seem to be countered by examples such as the IRA and Irgun of

²¹³ James D. Kiras. *Terrorism and Irregular Warfare*, in Baylis, Wirtz, Cohen and Gray (Eds.): "Strategy in the Contemporary World", Oxford University Press, 2002

Israel. Also, would it be reasonable to state that the murder of 3,000 innocent office workers in New York and Washington was simply about al Qaeda wanting to draw attention to a grievance?

But it is the similarities that are more important than the differences and Kiras mentions several that should inform any campaign aimed at destroyed or limiting the efficacy of a terrorist group, be it pragmatic, or apocalyptic, like al Qaeda. Both activities must be underpinned but a goodly amount of enduring political will, since an asymmetric fight will only usually be won through attrition or the breaking of the will. Additionally those in positions of power able to take the relevant decisions, must be aware of the full panoply of tools available and decide from the beginning to use all tools maximally together, given the nature of the enemy. This is all the more true, if we posit an enemy that is political socially and religiously motivated.

Perhaps an easier way to resolve the question of whether or not a Clausewitzian approach to terrorism or irregular warfare is useful would be to approach the question of conflict in the fundamental terms that Sun Tzu has left us. According to Tzu, the ultimate form of victory, the most sought after result, is the imposition of our will on the enemy without having to fight him at all. This may be achieved by myriad ways, be it bluff, negotiation, or just patience. As a result we can also interpret 'hot' war in such a fashion as the use of force to impose ones will upon the other. If we are not concerned with the requirement that both sides consist of nations, then this may be a useful alternative in understanding core dynamics, although it does not address the questions that consequently result from the vantage point of international law. There is, however, one counterintuitive issue that remains unresolved, and this non-legal obstacle may in fact be the most significant argument for not lumping terrorism or related forms of irregular warfare into the class of 'war'. This obstacle is the association by expert and layman alike of regularity and war. War is understood, has been experienced throughout history, as a collection of separate yet linearly linked, mostly predictable and sequential events. To quote one military man:

“We consider a war as a series of discrete steps or actions, with each one of the series of actions growing naturally out of, and dependent on, the one that preceded it.... [I]f at any stage of the war one of these actions had happened differently, then the remainder of the sequence would have had a different pattern.”²¹⁴

This author would add, not just that the ‘remainder of the sequence would have had a different pattern’, but also that the new pattern would most likely have led to a different politico-military outcome. In other words, the single individual acts of war, from those as small as the sniper’s shot to those as large as the Normandy Invasion build upon one another as a string of cumulative events whose sequence is imperatively important. Without that solid line of prioritised connection it is not a war. Can we say the same of terrorism? Is there really a cumulative strategic link of a sequential nature between one IRA assassination of a policeman and then the bombing of a pub in on the mainland? Can we say that the Khobar Tower bombings executed by al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia were linked to the hijackings of 9/11 in the same way that the individual blitzkrieg manoeuvres of the Third Reich were, campaign elements that truly depended upon one another happening in the correct order? I would posit not, since the order of terrorist attacks is largely irrelevant and the causal chain is likewise not an obvious element of strategic victory.

The decision as to how to categorise terrorism, whether it is war or not (definitely not in legal terms), or whether it is a kind of warfare remains perhaps a question best answered subjectively. As such a question, one tool in arriving at a better understanding of the relationship of terrorism to other forms of violence may be to place political violence on a continuum, an axis, on which we can represent all the various forms of conflict, from peacekeeping to total nuclear war:

²¹⁴ Rear Admiral J.C. Wylie: *“Military Strategy: a general theory of power control”*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1967. For a discussion of this issue of definitions see Timothy D. Hoyt’s chapter *Military Force* in “Attacking Terrorism – elements of a grand strategy”, Eds. Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes, Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2004.

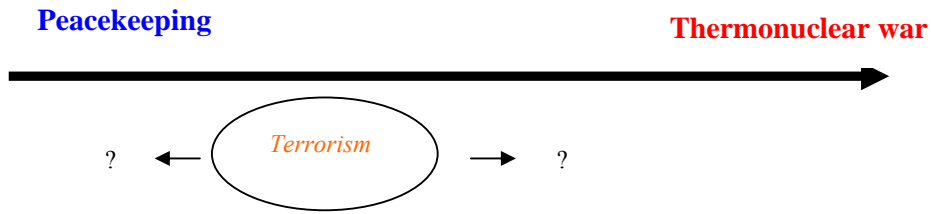


Diagram Nine: Terrorism and the Scale of Conflict

In the meantime there remains the issue of force. If we admit to ourselves that we cannot negotiate with the transcendental terrorist, that the only terms acceptable to an actor such as bin Laden would be either the destruction of the Western community of nations and the non-fundamentalist Islamic regimes, or their subjugation, then we cannot realistically hope for a perfect victory, in the sense of perfect that Sun Tzu left us. As a result we must consider how best to use force against a transcendently informed foe that is unlimited by the constraints the nation-state suffers from. Before we do so, there is there question of what within what doctrinal or strategic framework that force is to be used. This is the focus of our next section.

DOCTRINAL CONFUSION REPLACES THE DOCTRINAL VACUUM

As we noted already above, the end of the Cold War and the success of Western containment policy, was not replaced by a new over-arching Western doctrine. Whilst competing theories as to what the post-Cold War world meant strategically were born – and have been summarised above, none of them won general approval. Hence there was a doctrinal and strategic vacuum in the 1990s.

Surprisingly, the advent of the deadliest terrorist attack of the last 100 years, did not meet with a new understanding of the strategic environment. Or rather, the doctrinal response of the United States and its allies did not meet with general approval, even amongst the members of the North Atlantic Alliance. As a result, since that time, just as during the 1990s, a plethora of potential theories or doctrines have been penned in an attempt to make the current strategic environment more understandable. At this point, it is necessary to review the leading concepts, political and theoretical²¹⁵. Of course, it is necessary to start with the official US response.

Pre-eminence and Preemption:

Following the September 11th attacks, the National Security Strategy of 2002 outlined the Bush administration's policies of pre-eminence and preemption, stating that:

“while the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defense by acting preemptively against such

²¹⁵ At least one organisation has taken the time to compile a list of 21 potential doctrinal candidates for the post 9/11 world. The above summary relies in part upon a survey of government officials and policy experts conducted by the Washington-based *Council for Emerging National Security Affairs* (CENSA), under the leadership of US State Department official and failed-state expert Keith Mines. The full list of doctrines they enumerated can be found at Appendix X. As results of the survey are as yet unpublished, I am grateful to the project director Mr. Mines and to CENSA for involving me in the survey and making the original questionnaire with its summaries available to me.

terrorists, to prevent them from doing harm against our people and our country.”

The definition of preemption thus used is an expansive one, including as it does not just the ability to attack when there is an imminent threat, but also the ability to begin a preventive war to stop a future threat. Specifically: “*As a matter of common sense and self-defense, America will act against such emerging threats before they are fully formed.*” This strategy was revised over time and altered into the following doctrine

Global Freedom:

President Bush’s second inaugural address in January of 2005 outlined a doctrine in which creating peace and setting the conditions for security is part of the activity of spreading democracy globally. While “*whole regions of the world simmer in resentment and tyranny - prone to ideologies that feed hatred and excuse murder - violence will gather, and multiply in destructive power, and cross the most defended borders, and raise a mortal threat.*” The only force able to stop this threat, according to the administration, is the force of worldwide human freedom. In order to achieve this freedom, the policy of the United States must be “*to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture.*” The final result will be “*ending tyranny in our world.*”

Extending American Primacy:

As we move into the non-official sphere, the provocative author, and ex-military intelligence officer, Ralph Peters, develops a doctrine built on the premise that America “*is the greatest – and most virtuous – power in history.*”²¹⁶ Although, not a fully fledged doctrine or set of policies, Peters would use that virtue to expand raw U.S. power through a web of alliances reminiscent of the New Europe Strategy employed by the White House during the early days of the Iraq War, when America

²¹⁶ R. Peters: “*Expanding America’s Global Supremacy*”, Sentinel HC (Penguin), New York, 2005.

dismissed standing alliances in the interest of putting together a temporary coalition of like-minded countries. Peters would like to see this occur on a global scale, turning “*our attention from the lands of yesterday and extending a hand to the struggling lands of tomorrow.*” His proscription for the Middle East captures the tone of the strategy: “*engagement where there is hope; containment where there is no hope; preventive military action against terrorists. . .*” According to one US government official and writer, this approach would an attitude of “America first” to be “America only.”²¹⁷

Unity and Integration:

In 2005, Richard Haas, former director for US State Department Policy Planning and presently president of the Council on Foreign Relations, rejected earlier possibilities for a new US doctrine such as unilateralism and isolationism, narrowly focused counter-terrorism and even democracy promotion²¹⁸. He called instead for a doctrine that would focus on integration as the tool of stabilisation and realising national interests. Thus “*in efforts to tame the challenges inherent in globalization and the post Cold War World. . .The opportunity exists for our era to become one of genuine global integration. . .From terrorism, to WMD, to human crisis, to energy and global economy, the answer is more integration – commitment to a process, not a single policy.*”

The Core and the Gap:

A similar concept was developed by Phillip Barnett, an idea that apparently found many fans within the US Department of Defense. In *The Pentagon’s New Map, War and Peace in the Twenty First Century*²¹⁹ Barnett sees the strategic challenges of the world as foremostly resulting from the growing divide between the connected and

²¹⁷ Keith Mines, US State Department, director of the CENSA survey on post-9/11 doctrines. (See footnote 215)

²¹⁸ R. Haas: “The Opportunity – America’s Moment to Alter History’s Course”, Public Affairs, Jackson, 2005.

²¹⁹ G. P. Putnam’s Sons, New York, 2004.

functional “Core” and the disconnected and dysfunctional “Gap.” Barnett simple solution to shrink the Gap, bringing the disconnected parts of the world into the Core by heightening economic prosperity, information flow, and security alignments. He outlines a “global transaction strategy” that “*recognizes the primacy of the four global flows of people, energy, investments, and security.*” In response to the challenge of the Gap, US forces, according to Barnett, should be focused on two missions “system administration” for nation-building, and “Leviathan”, the classic military mission of destroying obvious enemy threats.

Forward Containment:

Walter Russell Meade, also of the Council on Foreign Relations and formerly of the World Policy institute, is so enamoured of the containment policy that wone the Cold War for the West, that he sees no reason not to adapt it to the current conditions and the new threats²²⁰. He proposes a version of the triple containment that defeated communism: contain Soviet military power, lock in friendly governments, and limit influence on civil society. The new strategy would contain terrorists by directly weakening their organizations, cutting their ties to supportive governments and blocking their access to WMD. It would also contain the expansion and consolidation of the state power of those nation that embrace the ideology of terror, leaving open forcible regime-change as an option. Lastly, such a policy would contain the influence of terrorist ideologies through generating a flow of new ideas and by fixing the Arab-Israeli conflict.

A Containment Strategy for the Age of Terror:

James Fallows of the *Atlantic Magazine* follows Meade’s approach by positing that our global situation is more similar than dissimilar to that of the immediate post-war period and argues for a strategy that would focus on three broad themes²²¹. These themes are described in terms of the type of leadership that would be required to

²²⁰ Walter R. Meade: “*Power, Terror, Peace, and War, America’s Grand Strategy in a World at Risk*”, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2004.

²²¹ James Fallows: Success Without Victory, *The Atlantic*, January/February issue, 2005.

realise them. *“A Truman would tell us that loose-nukes are the real emergency of this moment, and that instead of pussyfooting around we should control them right away. A Kennan would explain the sources of Muslim extremist behaviour and how our actions could encourage or retard it. A Marshall would point out how gravely we left ourselves exposed through our reliance on oil from the Persian Gulf.”* Thus Fallows concludes, our actions should take place against a backdrop of a *“courageous, confident, open society”* which is *“a goal in itself.”*

Containment Redux:

Ian Shapiro goes a step further than both Meade and Fallows. This Yale professor formulates an entire doctrine by directly adapting Kennan’s ideas to the current world²²². Shapiro finds the current threat more dangerous and complicated than the monolithic Soviet threat, yet in how Islamist terrorists have positioned themselves as being antithetical to our Western way of life, the threat has far more in common than the White House has realise to date. Despite this very forceful argument, Shapiro in fact calls for a very moderated role for the United States, as the world’s only superpower, one that would intervene only defensively to secure the nations survival as a democracy. Shapiro would have America *“guard against terrorism by containing enabling states, investing in human intelligence, and enhancing homeland security.”* Such a policy would *“gear military alliances and collective defense agreements first to America’s survival as a democracy and then to the defense of other democracies.”* Finally, it would *“support democratic oppositions against dictatorships around the world, and sow the seeds of an environment friendly to democracy by promoting economic development in poor countries.”*

The Anti-Doctrine, or ‘Just Do it Right’:

Clarke Murdoch of the Washington based Center for Strategic and International Studies takes a wholly different approach, in that the problem he sees is not “a lack of specific grand strategy to replace containment that is the problem, but the uneven effectiveness with which NSS [*National Security Strategy*] practitioners make and

²²² Ian Shapiro: *“Containment: Rebuilding a Strategy Against Global Terror”*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2007.

implement strategy.”²²³ He supports the old Army adage that a good plan poorly executed is worse than a mediocre plan well executed, arguing that “*the sustainability of U.S. national security strategy depends primarily on whether NSS practitioners get the strategy right.*” He has since followed this up with suggestions for going ‘Beyond Goldwater-Nichols’” in a paper that similarly lays out specific recommendation for further enhancing the inter-agency environment for results-focused policy execution.

America as World Leader:

Georgetown University Professor Robert J. Lieber also sees the U.S. as the indispensable player in international security in an age when the potential merger of militant Islamists with weapons of mass destruction could pose threats on a scale previously unimaginable. Lieber does not see the solution as lying with international organisations such as the UN, given that they are incapable of acting in a timely and effective fashion so as to neutralise current threats²²⁴. Lieber believes the absence of a true central authority in the international system de facto forces the U.S. to act as world leader. Thus: “*American intervention becomes a necessity, not something about which to be apologetic.*”

Post-Westphalianism:

The noted writer and academic, former Harvard Professor Michael Ignatieff who recently chose the route of practical politics, as a member of the Canadian parliament, gave a series of lectures in 2002 within the Gifford series. These lectures constitute the material for his book: “*The Lesser Evil: Political Ethics in an Age of Terror*”²²⁵. In this work he identifies al Qaeda as a unique kind of terrorism and a wholly new threat. According to Ignatieff, these “apocalyptic nihilists” who

²²³ C. Murdoch: “*Improving the Practice of National Security – A New Approach for the Post-Cold War World*”, CSIS, Washington, 2004.

²²⁴ R. J. Lieber: “*The American Era: Power and Strategy for the 21st Century*”, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2005.

²²⁵ Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2004.

attacked America on 9/11 defended their actions “*in the language of Islamic eschatology, not in the language of rights,*” with apocalyptic, not political intentions. “*Such an attack cannot be met by politics but only by war,*” according to the author. He places the current threat environment in historical perspective: “*A long historical parenthesis – the ascendancy of the modern state – might be closing. Since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 . . . international order has depended on state’s possessing a monopoly on the legitimate means of force.*” Ignatieff posits that this era may be coming to an end as powerful non-state actors emerge with the capability to destroy cities. The geographical boundary of the new threat is the band of failed and failing states running across Africa and on the periphery of the former Soviet Union. The answer Ignatieff gives us is to keep destructive power firmly in the state system where it can be deterred, by ensuring states have “*effective coercive control over their own territory.*” He lays out a strategy for non-proliferation and control of nuclear materials, state-building, enhanced multilateral and multinational cooperation, while holding out the use of preemptive force “*to prevent the sale or distribution of such weapons to non-state actors.*”

Ethical Realism:

John Hulsman, formerly of the Heritage Institute and Anatol Lieven, a senior researcher at the New America Foundation came together from opposite ends of the political spectrum to formulate a unique foreign policy called ‘ethical realism.’²²⁶ The policy is defined by five ‘core teachings’: prudence, humility, study, responsibility, and patriotism. Lieven and Hulsman propose spreading capitalism before spreading democracy, and ultimately strive for an international order which does not call for preventive war, citing containment of communism in the Soviet Union as a prime example to follow. This work was very much aimed as a response to the ‘idealism’ of the neoconservative administration’s ‘armed Wilsonianism.’

²²⁶ Hulsman and Lieven: “*Ethical Realism: A Vision for America’s Role in the World*”, Pantheon, New York, 2006.

Liberalization before Democratization:

Fareed Zakaria of Newsweek fame is motivated by what he sees as the fatally flawed doctrines which blindly promote democracy, a political system which according to Zakaria is neither an inherently good nor an inherently bad²²⁷. He is far more in favour of liberal values per se, whether or not they come attached to a democracy and contends that countries that first liberalised their economies and then democratised were better off in the long run than countries that first promoted democracy and afterward worked for liberal values. Zakaria discusses the ‘paradox’ of Iraq: “*to build democracy in Iraq, the United States must stay on, but to demonstrate that it is not a colonial power it must leave.*” Involving other countries in the process, he proposes, will solve this problem.

Counterinsurgency ‘Redux’:

Of the leading propositions for a doctrinal framework that have been penned after 9/11, the various works of Australian military officer and policy analyst David Kilcullen are most relevant to our study of the transcendently informed terrorist²²⁸. Kilcullen, who is currently serving in Iraq under Gen. David Petraeus, offers a unifying strategic conception for winning the War on Terrorism, which he narrowly describes as a “globalized Islamist insurgency.” Rather than a conventional terrorism campaign, the difference being largely in the level and modalities of global support networks, Kilcullen argues for a strategy of “disaggregation,” that “*seeks to dismantle, or break, the links in the Global jihad.*” He explains that “*like containment in the Cold War, a disaggregation strategy means different things in*

²²⁷ F. Zakaria: “*The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*”, W.W. Norton and Company, New York, 2003.

²²⁸ See the following by D. Kilcullen: “*Countering Global Insurgency*”, The Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol. 28 No. 4, August 2005; “*Three Pillars of Counterinsurgency*”, remarks delivered at the US Government COIN Conference, 28th September 2006, Washington: <http://www.usgcoin.org/docs/1/3PillarsOfCounterinsurgency.pdf>; “*New Paradigms for 21st Century Conflict*”, EJournal USA at: <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0507/ijpe/kilcullen.htm>; “*Subversion and Counter-Subversion in the campaign against terrorism in Europe*” (unpublished draft manuscript in author’s possession); and “*Counter-Insurgency Redux*”, Survival, vol. 48 no. 4, Winter 2006-7, pp. 111-130.

different theatres or at different times. Disaggregation focuses on interdicting links between theaters, denying the ability of regional and global actors to link and exploit local actors, disrupting flows between and within jihad theaters, denying sanctuary areas, isolating Islamists from local populations and disrupting inputs from the sources of Islamism in the great Middle East.” It works at the global, regional, and local levels – “seeking to interdict global links via a worldwide CORDS program, isolate regional players through a series of regional counterinsurgencies and strengthen local governance through a greatly enhanced security framework at the country level.”

Although none of the above doctrine has won whole-hearted approval across the strategic community of Western nations, with the recent publication of the Pentagon’s new field manual on counterinsurgency²²⁹, it seems clear that at least the United States has decided to follow the path indicated by Col. Kilcullen and is trying to revitalise an old doctrine in the face of this new threat. In the next part of this work, we will examine how relevant the model of counterinsurgency is to a conflict against a transcendently informed opponent.

²²⁹ *FM, 3-24 Counterinsurgency*, Department of Defense, 2006. FM 3-24 is available from the US Army Combined Arms Center: <http://usacac.army.mil/cac/repository/materials/coin-fm3-24.pdf>.

WILL OUR NEW COUNTERINSURGENCY
DOCTRINE DEFEAT AL QAEDA?

Just a few days before Christmas last year, on the day the Pentagon bid farewell to Donald Rumsfeld, the Department of Defense launched its new field manual on counterinsurgency. In the first month after its release, *FM 3-24: Counterinsurgency*, was downloaded more than 1.5 million times from Army and Marine Corps websites, reviewed on Salafi websites and later even found in Taleban camps in Pakistan²³⁰. This unclassified document has become one of the pillars of US policy in what was originally called the *Global War on Terrorism* (GWOT), but since the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, we now know as *The Long War*²³¹.

In the two years it took to write the manual and since its debut there has been an upsurge in specialist articles²³² by strategists and historians, as well as commentary on web-logs²³³ from those actually fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan all debating the

²³⁰ According to a posting on the *Small Wars Journal* website, May 8th 2007 by Col. John Nagl, contributing editor to FM 3-24. <http://www.smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2007/05/-fm-324-the-new/>.

²³¹ The QDR uses the new term liberally: “The Department of Defense conducted the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) in the fourth year of a *long war*, a war that is irregular in its nature.” (emphasis added). Indeed the first Chapter of the QDR is in fact entitled “*Fighting the Long War*.” See The Quadrennial Defense Review at <http://www.defenselink.mil/qdr/report/Report20060203.pdf>

²³² See the bibliography for a list of just some of articles penned in recent months, as well as other older classic texts. Last year, the US Army alone compiled a special 200 page reader just on counterinsurgency with 20 selected authors including Gen. David H. Petraeus, the current military commander in Iraq. See *Military Review*, Special Edition – Counterinsurgency Reader, Oct. 2006, Combined Arms Centre, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The RAND Corporation, which worked extensively on the issue of COIN theory during the Vietnam era, has also reissued its unclassified reports electronically and revisited the topic with new studies. See “*Counterinsurgency: A Symposium, April 16-20, 1962*”, Stephen T. Hosmer and Sibylle O. Crane (Eds.), RAND, Santa Monica, reissued 2006 and Austin Long: “*On “Other War”: Lessons from five decades of RAND Counterinsurgency Research*”, RAND, Santa Monica, 2006, both available at <http://www.rand.org>.

²³³ See for example the many entries at sites such as <http://www.smallwarsjournal.com>, <http://www.strategypage.com>, <http://counterterrorismblog.org>,

merits of the manual and the various extant counterinsurgency (COIN) theories and case studies. The US government even established a dedicated website just for documents and discussions of counterinsurgency²³⁴. Despite this healthy debate on how well the new doctrine will serve US national security interests in the post-9/11 strategic environment, certain fundamental questions remain, questions which go beyond the merits of any individual document or related collection of tactics. These questions are:

- How does insurgency and counterinsurgency relate to the higher strategic activity of waging war?
- Is the Long War truly just another iteration of counterinsurgency?
- Just how applicable is “classical” COIN theory to the struggle with globally dispersed terrorism that is religiously informed?

We will first deal with the connection between the practice of counterinsurgency and the broader world of politics and warfighting and apply certain of the eternal truths described by Carl von Clausewitz, to counterinsurgency. Then we will look at the existing canon of COIN theory and case studies and provide a new categorization of how counterinsurgencies vary and how different Iraq and Afghanistan are from the majority of prior campaigns that are usually studied. This conclusion will be based upon a drastic expansion of the case studies we can examine under the heading of irregular warfare or insurgency. Lastly we will close

<http://abumuqawama.blogspot.com/>, <http://www.blackfive.net>, <http://mountainrunner.us/> or <http://iraqwarnews.net>

²³⁴ <http://www.usgcoin.org/index.cfm>. Although the site carries a serious mission statement: “*The Interagency Counterinsurgency Initiative (ICI) seeks to inform and help shape relevant USG policy and programs by incorporating the theory and history of counters to organized movements that use subversion or violence rather than established political processes to undermine or overthrow governments, with the goal of focusing appropriate elements of diplomacy, defence, and development on the alleviation of such threats*”, the content is rather perfunctory and already out-of-date. Although it includes some seminal works by the likes of David Kilcullen and Eliot Cohen (first published elsewhere), the site seems to have run out of steam or been forgotten by its government masters.

with a discussion as to exactly how much the Long War is in fact understandable as a form of COIN and whether Al Qaeda is truly an insurgent organization.

COUNTERINSURGENCY RESURGENT

*“Making War upon insurgents is messy and slow,
like eating soup with a knife”*

T. E. Lawrence / Lawrence of Arabia

In the spring of 2006 over one hundred strategists and military officers, many who were already serving in Afghanistan and Iraq or who soon would be, met at a special operations base in Florida to discuss the war so far. The four day event saw a great variety of presentations ranging from the use of advanced mathematical modelling to map al Qaeda to the revitalization of Cold War tactics to face the new enemy, as well as much lively Q and A²³⁵. This author had the benefit of not having to speak until the last day of the symposium. Although this is always risky, given the potential for other participants to “steal one’s thunder”, it did give one the opportunity to observe and listen to the state-of-the art in GWOT thinking before making my own contribution. The overwhelming fact that struck me and which would become the central concern of what I had to say, was the realization that despite being at that point almost five years into a global conflict, those most involved in shaping the military thinking on how best to defeat al Qaeda were still debating the nature of the enemy.

As with many conferences and numerous more private, closed door events over the years since the September 11th attacks, the assembled devoted a great deal of time and effort to ascertaining who the enemy is: is al Qaeda an organization? Is it a network? What does that really mean? How much is it now an amorphous ideology as opposed to a physically locatable target? Does it have a centre of gravity? All these questions were being asked whilst we were working with full knowledge of the fact that *Global Insurgency*²³⁶ was our theme, that the brightest warrior-scholars

²³⁵ Joint Special Operations University, (JSOU), *First Annual Symposium: Countering Global Insurgency*, 2-5th May 2006, Hurlburt Field, Florida.

²³⁶ It is safe to say that the theme for this event and the inspiration behind much of the work that has been done in the US on counterinsurgency in the last few years is thanks in large measure to the efforts of the warrior-scholar David Kilcullen. Dr. Kilcullen was noticed by the Bush administration through his writings on the subject of insurgency theory and its

were busy relearning the lessons of 20th century counterinsurgency and as the Pentagon was preparing to unveil its new COIN super-manual. Whilst we were not clear on what we were fighting, we had decided – or it had been decided for us – that America is battling an insurgency and that COIN is to be our tool. Yet how had we gone from terrorism to insurgency and what had happened to the idea of the conflict being a global war? Each of these terms: war, insurgency and terrorism must describe discrete phenomena, yet we had not adequately explained what the difference between them is, or how al Qaeda has evolved between each manifestation into the next (if it had indeed done so).

Much has been made of President Bush's declaration of war against terror. As the cognoscenti persisted in telling us, war is a legal concept that holds for states of prolonged conflict between one or more countries. One cannot declare war against a non-state actor, let alone a tactic such as terrorism, they said. And quite right they were, at least from the legal point of view. Even so, America was at war as soon as it declared all those nations that knowingly harbour terrorists as culpable and especially so once it invaded Afghanistan in October 2001 and removed al Qaeda's Taleban-sanctioned bases. Yet beyond the legal questions and issues of political rhetoric, we must ask ourselves what kind of war the US is in fact fighting. Can special forces engagements in Tora Bora, law enforcement interdictions of terror suspects in Germany and the manning of anti-IED checkpoints in Fallujah all be understood as part of one global war? To answer these questions, we must return to Carl von Clausewitz, who as Colin Gray, one of the most remarkable masters of strategy alive today has observed "*provided brilliant answers to questions that few, if any, people, even ask.*"²³⁷

application post 9/11. This led to his job (on secondment) as chief strategist in the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the US Department of State. Now, as noted above, he is in Baghdad. The US military and its allies owe much to Col. Kilcullen's work which intellectually challenges existing practices and policies. This author would also like to express thanks to Col. Kilcullen for having taken time to explore certain issues of the post-9/11 environment in person. (See the articles cited above under footnote 228.)

²³⁷ Colin S. Gray: *War, Peace and International Relations – an introduction to Strategic History*, Routledge, Oxon, 2007, chapter two: Clausewitz and the Theory of War.

The Inescapable Prussian

Akin to many classic authors that are oft-cited and more often misunderstood and little read, Clausewitz has been abused mercilessly. Nevertheless, he still stands alone as that thinker and writer who more than anyone else - especially anyone who came after him - has left us with less an eternal strategy for how to win all wars but far more a philosophy of war understood at its highest, meta-level. His is not a work on general rules one should observe but far more a series of observations concerning the environment in which a nation fights and how that environment will always be shaped by the same kinds of unpredictable factors²³⁸.

Some of his ideas that bear repeating today include the following. The first is the thought with which he opened his work "*On War*", and that is that "War is nothing but a duel on a larger scale", but a duel the purpose of which is not to necessarily kill or otherwise damage our adversary, but "to impose our will on the enemy"²³⁹. This idea is at least as important as the most-quoted Clausewitzian tenet of war being politics done by other means, for it illustrates how much of what the general had to say was in fact simple, yet hard to execute. For if the will is our target, he notes, we must remember that the strength of an adversary's will is far, far harder to gauge than his military strength²⁴⁰.

With regard to his immortal lines on war being politics' continuation, this concept, though seemingly simple, has not been understood in its entirety. There are other expressions of this connection between the two worlds that uncover the depth of Clausewitz's original idea. For example he clearly states that "the only source of war is politics" and "the political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it,

²³⁸ "Clausewitz aimed to educate the mind, not to advise directly for action.", Gray, *ibid*.

²³⁹ P. Paret: "*Clausewitz and the State*", Oxford University Press, New York, 1976.

²⁴⁰ Apply this observation, for a moment to the American war in Vietnam. It was easy for the Viet Cong to know the strength of the United States, one of only two superpowers, yet it would be the dwindling will to fight that was far more decisive than US might in the long run.

and means can never been considered in isolation from their purpose”²⁴¹. We will return to this observation and its relevance to the Long War later.

Counterinsurgency’s Many Faces

As COIN theory was rediscovered after the US invasion of Iraq, it was said that the simple truth is that we have many excellent case studies and existing doctrinal texts which can illuminate and guide our fight today, but that politics and fashion led us to overlook or forget these lessons. For example, speaking on the day of FM 3-24’s official release, one of its contributing editors, Col. John Nagl, made it clear that it was the negative political backlash to Vietnam that made the US armed forces willingly forget and distance themselves from all that it had learnt in Indo-China about unconventional warfare during the 1960s and 1970s²⁴². Thus we have seen the wholesale return of serving officers and strategists to the study of classic texts on previous insurgencies, foremostly Callwell on “small wars” and Frank E. Kitson on Northern Ireland, Roger Trinquier and David Galula on the French Experience, as well as Robert Taber’s original “*War of the Flea*” and of course T. E. Lawrence of Arabian fame²⁴³, in an effort to re-learn that which we once knew.

State-of-the-Art COIN

After reading the classic texts and today’s fresh interpretations, it is relatively easy to compile a set of COIN do’s and don’ts. A representative summary of the wisdom

²⁴¹ Paret, *ibid*.

²⁴² “*Army Unveils Counter-Insurgency Manual*” interview with Col. Nagl, National Public Radio, December 15th 2006. Audio file at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6630779>.

Many writers, especially those who served in Vietnam, have contended that the American military was just acquiring great skill in unconventional warfare and specialized COIN tools (such as the CORDS and Phoenix programs), when for political reasons the Washington leadership decided to pull out of Vietnam. (See several of the articles in the CAC Counterinsurgency Reader, *ibid*.)

²⁴³ See bibliography.

gleaned from T. E. Lawrence to Vietnam and beyond would look something like Table One.

<p style="text-align: center;">Table Six: <u>Classic Tenets of</u> <u>Counterinsurgency</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrated employment of political, military, economic, social and psychological countermeasures• Win the “hearts and minds” of the population• Deny insurgents sanctuary• Police Primacy• Focus on Intelligence• Selective and discriminate use of force• Avoid overreaction to insurgent violence• Separate insurgents from support base• Use <i>clear and hold</i>, “oil spot” tactics to gradually sanitize areas of insurgents <p style="text-align: right;">For details see the works of Lawrence, Kitson, etc. cited in the Bibliography</p>
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Despite our being able to collect and summarize the best COIN thinking of the twentieth century, two surprising facts remain:

- i.) For some opaque reason, the list of insurgencies the military/academic world examines is incredibly restrictive and ignores many cases of irregular warfare - without any justification - simply because been instead of being deemed “insurgencies” they have been labeled as civil wars or revolutions.
- ii.) Despite all the canonical texts and individual and comparative case studies, no one has attempted a categorization of previous COIN events that differentiate original conditions at the start of the conflict and the

given government's aims. Just comparing two instances: the UK's experience in Northern Ireland and the Vietnam experience clearly demonstrates the huge range of counterinsurgency cases and the need to clearly categorize based at least upon these two variables.

Together, these two factors: the restriction of COIN analysis to just a handful of famous 20th century cases, and the mistake of examining each without first separating cases based upon government aims and the political, economic military and point of departure, have greatly distorted what we have to learn from existing examples of irregular warfare and what in fact the lessons are for today.

Insurgency versus Civil War, versus Revolution

Without exaggeration, it can be stated that modern COIN theory is built upon just a handful of books written by practitioners that are based upon a handful of 20th century conflicts. The authors have been mentioned already: Lawrence, Callwell, Kitson, Trinquier, Galula and so forth. Similarly, country studies by the less famous²⁴⁴ are usually restricted in scope to a small number of countries or regions: Vietnam (including French Indochina), Algeria, Northern Ireland, Colombia, the Philippines and Malaya. A few of the more adventurous writers will go on to discuss Mozambique, Rhodesia, Angola, El Salvador, Aden, Oman or Afghanistan under the Soviets and only the most adventurous may brave travelling as far as Kashmir or Cyprus to look at what can be learnt there. But at that point it is as if the

²⁴⁴ There is a distinct disjunction observable between the classic books we study in modern COIN and the country cases we have. Although a given author may have focused his work on a specific conflict, many are far more familiar with the subsequent volume than with the actual country or conflict concerned. Such a rarefied understanding of COIN lessons learnt is best demonstrated by how T. E. Lawrence has been (mis-) used. Many and numerous are those that quote Lawrence of Arabia and the tenets of his "*Seven Pillars of Wisdom*" ad nauseam. Yet by far the vast majority who do so seem to have little or no comprehension of the events behind the author's distilled wisdom, of the details of the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Turks.

blinkers are pulled down. The study of COIN is exhausted by looking at 15 conflicts in a century that has witnessed dozens of wars and lesser conflicts, domestic and inter-state.²⁴⁵ Just as detrimental to the formation of a modern COIN doctrine, is the fact that almost all of the well known examples of counterinsurgency are limited to cases where a colonial or post-imperial government was fighting on the territory of its dependent colonies. How we can limit our understanding of insurgency to such historically particular cases seems very hard to justify in the post-colonial, post-Cold War era.

<u>Core, Most Common:</u>	<u>Additional, Less Studied Cases:</u>
Algeria	Rhodesia
Malaya	Cyprus
Northern Ireland	Mozambique
Vietnam	Aden
Colombia	Oman
The Philippines	Angola
	El Salvador
	Afghanistan (Soviet occupation)
	Kashmir
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>15 cases</u>

One author since 9/11 has attempted to broaden the scope of analysis and understanding. Dr. Kalev Sepp, a former special forces officer and faculty member at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey California wrote a short piece back in 2005 for the Military Review entitled “*Best Practices in Counterinsurgency*”²⁴⁶. Not a particularly groundbreaking piece, given that the work generally reiterates

²⁴⁵ Even when we add the seminal works written by the side of the insurgent, such as those by Guevara, Mao or Marighella, a study of these texts is rarely matched by a comparable understanding of the conflicts that spawned them. Despite the credence given the works of such “enemy” authors, amongst all the studies this author has seen published since 9/11, none have been written on the lessons of Cuba/Bolivia, China or Brazil.

²⁴⁶ Military Review, May-June 2005, pgs.8-12

some uncontroversial COIN advice learnt by others previously²⁴⁷, Sepp does, however, note that they are dozens of conflicts one could look at in order to learn more about how to defeat the insurgent. Unfortunately, beyond appending a long list of conflicts to the end of his article, the author does not take this point any further, nor does he seem to allow this unusually broad field of potential case studies to inform his conclusions or recommendations beyond what has already been said by others many times before²⁴⁸.

But what if we were to take this idea further, to truly broaden the scope of COIN analysis to include all examples of irregular warfare that occurred in the 20th century? Such a list, if it is to be intellectually rigorous, must include all instances - internal or international - where unconventional warfare was used by one or both sides, to include civil war and revolution. Such a list would include conflicts that the COIN strategists – both pre- and post 9/11 – have rarely if ever discussed, such as the Boer War, the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, partisan and resistance efforts in Europe during World War II, and even the Chechen-Russian conflict that simmers today. Such a list runs to almost 50 conflicts and enormously expands the field of data that can be examined by the counterinsurgency strategist and theoretician²⁴⁹. There is no good reason why the study of these other conflicts has been left to the military historian and been all but ignored by those wishing to defeat the latest irregular foe we are fighting. This is especially true, once we realize that by enlarging the set of conflicts we study, we include cases that are far closer to the current challenge we are facing. First we include more cases where the enemy was religiously as well as politically motivated, as is bin Laden and his Salafī allies. Secondly, we have examples similar to Iraq and Afghanistan, where the goal of the

²⁴⁷ Sepp repeats certain clichés. e.g. “Winning the hearts and minds must be the objective of the government’s efforts.” and includes a table of good COIN ideas versus bad ones, such as deny insurgents sanctuaries (good), focus your special forces on raiding (bad).

²⁴⁸ The list itself is not fully thought through, given that it includes a handful of civil wars from the last century (such as Greece) but leaves out all the others, and includes cases of terrorism, such as Baader-Meinhof and the Weather Underground, that very few scholars would consider relevant to counterinsurgency.

²⁴⁹ See Appendix XI for such a provisional list modified and expanded from that first published in Kalev Sepp’s “*Best Practices in Counterinsurgency*” *Military Review*, May-June 2005.

Counterinsurgent was not a return to the status quo ante, but a drastic alteration of the political reality, the forceful move from dictatorship to democracy²⁵⁰. Below is an initial categorization of COIN relevant conflicts that includes events that go beyond the usual 15 cases²⁵¹.

Table Eight: <u>New COIN-relevant Categories of Conflict</u>	
<u>Colonial Anti-Separatist</u>	<u>Domestic Regime Change / Revolution</u>
Algeria	Russian Revolution
Boer War	Cuba
	Hungarian Revolution
	Iranian Revolution*
<u>Anti-Separatist</u>	<u>International Regime Change</u>
Northern Ireland*	Afghanistan 1979*
Chechnya*	Afghanistan 2001*
<u>Domestic Resistance</u>	Iraq*
WWII - Yugoslav partisan	
- Finland	
- Norway	
<u>Internationally Assisted Resistance</u>	
WWII France etc. (SOE)	

N.B. Conflicts marked with an asterisk constitute an additional category or sub-set: COIN events substantially informed or influenced by religion, (as well as politics).

It is clear therefore that the model of counterinsurgency, as understood during the 20th century, was for various reasons limited in scope:

²⁵⁰ Indeed, there is no particular reason to limit our expanded data set of irregular warfare to just the 20th century (beyond a concern for cases wherein modern weapons and communications are relevant). As a result we can enlarge the analysis to include ancient examples of irregular warfare and insurgency, be it the Roman legions versus the Goths, British imperial forces versus the Thuggee on the Indian subcontinent, or even the American War of Independence, just to name a few potential earlier examples. This is, however, beyond the scope of this current paper.

²⁵¹ One can of course attempt to categorize all the events listed under Appendix XI in this way, however the point is the categories themselves and what they illuminate, as opposed to where each event can be placed.

- Too often it was limited by the post-colonial experience
- The case most often cited constitute a scientifically small number of potential cases given the history of the 20th century
- Without die cause, the case that have been examined exclude relevant instances of civil war and revolution

Subsequently we must ask how the conflict against the transcendently informed terrorist of today goes beyond the counterinsurgency campaign of the past.

To this end, this author was fortunate enough to gain a taste of how different and demanded the new threat environment truly is during a factfinding visit to Afghanistan in the Spring of 2007. Whilst their, in addition to talking to local officials attempting to stabilise the country, I was fortunate enough to spend time with Brig. General Buster Howes, Commander of NATO ISAF Operations in Afghanistan. The discussion illuminate some of the unique challenges we face today in finding doctrinal clarity and gaining the upper hand against the terrorist and insurgent.

General Howes' command and planning responsibilities cover a vast area of operations ranging from information warfare to planning the targeted killing of Taleban and al Qaeda leaders. According to the general: "Our approach necessarily covers the whole gamut of post-industrial modes of warfare because we are effects-based and have so many audiences and constituencies from the local Afghans to the political elites in our own capitals." Regarding the on-going debate as to exactly what the nature of the campaign in Afghanistan really is, Gen. Howes was very clear:

" Afghanistan is a counterinsurgency campaign. Every insurgency is of course sui generis, but this is still counterinsurgency. There are even many parallels with our experience in Northern Ireland, the mixture of the truly ideologically

motivated and the opportunist, as well as those foot-soldiers who are exploited because of their psychological weaknesses and social situation."²⁵²

One issue that has plagued the US administration, at least, in the years since September 11th 2001, is the classic Clausewitzian question of where the strategic centre of gravity with regard to the new enemy can be found. "In Afghanistan, the border region and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, the picture is very complicated. There are differences of opinion here within ISAF HQ as to the real focal point of attack. We need to avoid classic linear and binary approaches but eventually the commander will decide and some generalisations must be made. The end-state the Taleban wishes to achieve seems to be the creation of a new political structure, or the breaking off from Afghanistan-proper of a Pashtun belt and here the group we need to target is clear. This is what we refer to Tier One Taleban. As for Tier Two Taleban, this is a very different group. Here most of the fighters are very simply the poor or disaffected that have been convinced to live the life of the irregular fighter. We do not necessarily want to kill these people. Marching 1,000 NATO troops up into 1,000 Tier Two Taleban so as to engage and kill them is not necessarily productive at the strategic level."

There has been much made of the negative parallels with Vietnam and the model of winning "hearts and minds" in the post-invasion phase. According to Gen. Howes, NATO has a new and nuanced approach to information operations. "The real challenge with IO is being consistent with so many actors from so many nations. From the highest decisionmaking body in Brussels, the North Atlantic Council, we aim at maximum visibility, greater nimbleness and attempt to foresee, as much as is possible, the potential unintended consequences of given IO operations." The biggest challenge in Afghanistan in the IO campaign is the completely oral culture of communication. As a result ISAF is actively engaging the ulema. Latest statistics put one in eight young men in Afghanistan as being drug dependent. According to Howes "this is just as much a problem for us as it is for the religious and village leaders. And of course, Iran doesn't want this level of dependency to spread and

²⁵² S. L. v. Gorka: *Interview with Brig. General Buster Howes, Commander JCEB, ISAF, Afghanistan*, JANES Intelligence Review, May 4th 2007.

penetrate into Iran itself, so we can even find common ground with Afghanistan's neighbour on this issue. For example, in recent years Teheran has lost 600 border guards to the warlords and their drug runners."

With regards to the gloomy predictions of some armchair commentators and much of the mainstream media that the Spring will bring a renewed Taleban and a series of offensives against US and ISAF units, Howes - and his boss General Daniel McNeil, the Commander of all ISAF - has a very different message. According to Howes, the success of coalitions operations in Afghanistan will depend upon understanding the natural cycles and rhythms of life in the region. "Spring is always a time of greater activity. This is simply because Winter is too challenging a time to execute large-scale operations of any kind. We are not overly concerned, since we are also ready for Spring." Despite the proactive and positive note, Gen. Howes closed his meeting with the distinctly non-martial comment: "Success in this type of fight is not determined by how many things we can break or people we can kill. Success will come when we understand the fundamental forces that shape life in Afghanistan."

Now that we have adequately identified the nature of the new threats that face existing nation-state structures, the question remains: how best to we make legacy structures capable of addressing the current strategic environment?

MANAGING THE DISJUNCTION – ‘SUPERPURPLE’

The world of strategic thought is remarkably still in disarray. From the dissolution of the USSR fourteen years ago until September 10th 2001, no one could agree on how to describe the fundamentals of the post-Cold War world, what our new “system” was. Then came the deadliest terrorist attack of the modern age, which saw 3,000 innocent civilians killed in less than 120 minutes. A true mass destruction event, without the use of a weapon of mass destruction. After a fleeting unity in the face of such a truly mass-murder, the world soon became divided, but along new lines. Now instead of bringing clarity in threat perception, the Western alliance that won the last (cold) war lacks consensus on whether the Saudi business studies graduate turned international terrorist, Osama bin Laden, is truly the new replacement for the menace that was the Red Bear²⁵³.

There are, of course, many, many problems that plague the developed and developing world. A comprehensive list would include at least issues such as AIDS/HIV, natural resource depletion (oil and water), environmental damage / climate change, ethnic conflict, mass economic migration, and the like. Nevertheless, of these, very few fit comfortably into the classical category of national security concern²⁵⁴ and many are of greater relevance to poorer states than they are to the nations of the NATO alliance. Subsequently the question remains: Is, international

²⁵³ Some have described our current situation as defence professionals, as the search for the new Mr. X, in reference to George Kennan, the US strategist who through his 1947 anonymous article in *Foreign Affairs*, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” fathered containment policy. For a good discussion of our problem see the recent piece by Keith W. Mines somewhat misleadingly titled: “*Force Size for the Post-Westphalian World*”, *Orbis*, FPRI, Fall 2005.

For the original text of the classified cable of which Kennan’s article was but the summary, go to <http://www.historyguide.org/europe/kennan.html>.

²⁵⁴ Of course, that does not mean that a nation could not broaden the scope of its nation security policy to include such novel items as climate change and so on. However, this would be a radical reinterpretation of national security that is beyond the scope of this article and the argument it wishes to present.

mass-casualty terrorism of the type exercised by al Qaeda the most important threat to the world peace and security, or is it not? Surprisingly according to the much beleaguered United Nations the answer would seem to be a resounding yes.

RESOLUTION 1373 AND UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION

Terrorism has existed for as long as human societies have existed and history is littered with the grim stories of sub-state groups that have used violence in illegitimate ways to achieve political or religious ends. As detailed above, from the Zealots of ancient Palestine to the Thuggees of the Indian sub-continent, to the Hagganah which helped to create the modern state of Israel to Aum Shinrykio, the infamous cult that can claim to be the first terror group to have used chemical weapons against civilians, the list is long and very variegated. As a result of this variety, of the multiplicity of actors and motivations and the fact that, ironically, the science of terrorism studies is such a young one, there has been little international agreement concerning the nature and causes of this most human of phenomena. Whilst the rise of modern terrorism began only a generation after the creation of the United Nations – that body charged with the over-arching responsibility to provide global peace and security – the UN has failed repeatedly to arrive at a universal definition of terrorism which could be used to build international cooperation against the threat. Instead, realising that in the 1960s and 1970s the so-called Arab bloc would obstruct any measure that could potentially limit anti-colonial violence and attempts at self-determination, the UN addressed the problem through the piecemeal yet pragmatic method of bringing international conventions against specific terrorist act, for example, hijacking, bombing, or the targeting of diplomats²⁵⁵.

²⁵⁵ Thanks to this functionalist approach, more than a dozen UN conventions were successfully enacted, to include: *The Hague Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (1970)*, *the Montreal Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation (1971)*, *the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, Including Diplomatic Agents (1973)*, *the International Conventional Against the Taking of Hostages (1979)* and *the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (1998)*.

The UN did not give up however, and has dedicated the larger part of the last decade attempting to provide a definition of terrorism that could be accepted by the General Assembly. Unfortunately, as this is being written, it is being reported that this special committee has also failed and that there will be no universal UN definition. Despite this failure, earlier actions of the UN Security Council (UNSC) after the 9/11 attacks, along with existing principles of international law, may obviate the need for such a consensus definition.

Late on the night of September 28th 2001, less than three weeks after 9/11, in its 4,385th session, the United Nations Security Council brought a very brief and simple resolution²⁵⁶. For the purposes of this article the very first four clauses are the most important. They are:

“The Security Council,

Reaffirming its resolutions 1269 (1999) of 19 October 1999 and 1368 (2001) of 12 September 2001,

Reaffirming also its unequivocal condemnation of the terrorist attacks which took place in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania on 11 September 2001, and expressing its determination to prevent all such acts,

Reaffirming further that such acts, like any act of international terrorism, constitute a threat to international peace and security,

Reaffirming the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence as recognized by the Charter of the United Nations as reiterated in resolution 1368 (2001) ...”

The fact is that one of the greatest stumbling blocks to consensus building within the UN on the issue of the threat of terrorism was that the issue was most often hostage not just to the power-play of the geopolitical rivals within the Security Council, but more importantly, to the one nation - one vote weakness inherent to the General Assembly. Any resolution requiring unanimity with regard to the question of

²⁵⁶ For the full text see Press Release SC/7158:
www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/sc7158.doc.htm.

political violence was bound to fail given the hoary cliché that “One man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter.” But thanks to the universal condemnation of the 9/11 atrocities, the drafters of resolution 1373 were able to capitalize on world indignation and take one huge step, as well as take a second, almost as significant step forward in the world fight against terrorism. By stating unequivocally that the terrorist attacks against the United States “*constitute a threat to international peace and security*” the Security Council set the precedent that terrorism is not a threat just to particular nations and determined by local factors and geographically limited resolutions, but that terrorism is a global threat to the international order, the very state-of-affairs the UN was created to protect. Secondly, by invoking the “inherent right of individual or collective self-defence” in the context of the responses to terrorism that the resolution goes on to enumerate the UNSC has unquestionably tied the most important element of the original UN Charter - Article 51 and self-defence – to the threat of terrorism and our response to it. As a result, despite the fact that we are still without a definition of the terrorist threat that is universally agreed and useable in international law, terrorism itself has been raised to the highest level possible within the current international environment.

It is an often overlooked fact that there already exist two principles within international law that allow for a nation to take forceful action – even without UN sanction - in response to the kinds of attacks witnessed on September 11th. If a nation is threatened by a terrorist group – such as al Qaeda – which has taken refuge on the territory of another state, then the state that has been attacked, or which is threatened, can legally take action. It can demand of the third party government, either that it police its own territory and interdict the terrorists, or extradite them to a nation that is willing to prosecute them. If the country in question is unable to exercise full sovereignty over its territory, if it cannot deal with the threat by itself, then two scenarios are possible. The government in question may request the assistance of the aggrieved nation (and/or its allies) so as to be able to remove the threat, or in the worst case, the country that is in danger may in fact execute operations on the territory of the nation in which the terrorists are located without the express permission of that government. In other words, as the international lawyer Professor Mike Schmitt of the George C. Marshall Center points out,

sovereignty is not an absolute: i.e. the right to effective self defense cannot be countermanded with any sense of finality by reference to territorial integrity of a third party²⁵⁷. Of course, this does not amount to a justification for rampant disregard of sovereignty, since this principle of international law is quite clear in demanding that the intervention must be of as brief a duration as possible, only extended to the neutralization of the threat and the measures taken can only be directly related to the threat in question²⁵⁸.

The second concept is less fully formed in terms of application to political violence or terrorism, but is a concept widely supported with regard to genocide, for example. Here the logic is that national legal order is insufficient when addressing crimes that are of such a magnitude that they do harm to humankind en masse, in other words, crimes against humanity. The systematic targeting for extermination by a government of a particular group for reasons of political, ethnic or religious identity is the most obvious such crime against humanity. Such arguments lie in part behind legal actions brought in Nuremberg against the architects of Adolf Hitler's "Final Solution" and the Hague Tribunal that is currently prosecuting Slobodan Milosevic, amongst other, in connection with the ethnic cleansing of Bosnia Muslims and ethnic Albanian Kosovars. But more important than the resultant creation of temporary supranational courts to try such mass-murderers, is the implicit inference that response to such crimes is not simply the responsibility of the legal system of the country where the atrocities occurred, or the legal system of the nationals who committed them, but is the responsibility of all nations which have the capability and opportunity to take action. The inference being toward universal jurisdiction over the

²⁵⁷ "Counterterrorism and the Use of Force" lecture to the Program on Terrorism and Security Studies, George C. Marshall Center, October 7th 2005.

²⁵⁸ Here there arises the interesting question of Iraq. If one of the justifications of the invasion and overthrow of the Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein, was to remove a threat of terrorism to the US, then the US should leave as soon as the threat has gone. But does US inefficiency in stabilising the post-invasion regime, legally support an argument to stay there as long as possible? International law is less helpful in drawing distinctions based on fundamental principles, between duration of action that is focused and effective and actions that extend due to incompetence.

perpetrators of such crimes. With 9/11 one can make the case that terrorism has been elevated (or has sunken) to just such as level of crime.

With the first unsuccessful attack against the World Trade Center (WTC) in 1993²⁵⁹, Aum's Sarin gas attack of the Tokyo Metro in 1995, Timothy McVeigh massive truck bomb attack in Oklahoma City, the East Africa Embassy bombings of 1998, September 11th and the synchronized Madrid railways bombings, it is easy to demonstrate that we have moved from the age of mass-audience (Brian Jenkins) to the age of mass-casualty terrorism and the rise of the transcendently informed (irrational) terrorist. If then the aim of actors such as those responsible for the aforementioned attacks is to kill as many people as possible, carnage for the sake of carnage, then one can argue that the mass-casualty terrorism of groups such as al Qaeda is akin to a crime against all humanity that universal jurisdiction applies to such crimes and such actors.

With the bombing campaign against Serbia in 1999 and the more recent invasion of Iraq in 2003, some commentators have stated that the whole Westphalian system has suffered a death blow. The sacrosanct nature of a country's sovereignty – irrespective of domestic events – was held to be the core operating tenet of the system. The idea that internal behaviour deemed by one or more countries as going against the basic laws of human rights justifies military action is truly novel. However, it is important to note that this undermining of national sovereignty is very much limited to those states which can be classified as “failed” or “rogue” in nature. As a result we should not posit that the principle of unadulterated sovereignty has application in the community of developed market democracies.

Nevertheless there is when it comes to ensuring for the security of these nations a clear disjunction. For centuries the tools of national security matched the threat.

²⁵⁹ Unsuccessful because we now know that the intention of the attackers was to detonate their truck bomb next to a structural member within the WTC underground garage so that the building would collapse. Fortunately their bomb was of insufficient force to accomplish what would be accomplished through the use of the suicide jumbo-jet attack in 2001.

Today the threats operate in a milieu that is transnational and not limited by the shell of nation-state architecture. The foe moves in a world that is unrestricted by international convention, by physical borders, or the dictates of government. We must admit to ourselves the fact that our old division of labour is out-of-date and that we cannot justify the maintenance of hermetic seals between various agencies and forces. The successful members of the transatlantic community that won the Cold War inherited a tool box of means to provide for security that has not changed. Whilst the enemy has moved to a higher operational plain of operational existence we have not and will likely never do so, since world governance is not something that is welcomed either by the majority of citizens who find their identity in the national *métier*, nor by the entrenched stratum of politicians who would have everything to lose should their domestic authority be replaced by a higher transnational one. As a result we must look elsewhere for a solution.

If we recognize the fact that our internal national security and defense structures were inherited from another age and for another purpose, yet we are unable for various reasons (foremost political) to create supranational solutions, then the only viable option is to radically reform the instruments at the nation-state level so as to make them more applicable to the new tasks at hand, to more closely resemble the enemies of today and to heighten international cooperation in radical ways. If the internal barriers between the police force, the army and various intelligence services could be dismantled in a constitutionally guaranteed fashion, this would facilitate a *modus operandi* that is as flexible and as effective as that of our new enemies. There even exists a precedent for such a unified multi-agency approach²⁶⁰. Such a reform

²⁶⁰ In the bloodiest years of the PIRA's campaign against the UK government, the decision was taken to create a radically new unit that would take the fight to the most dangerous players. Various names were used, 14 Detachment, or Det., Dragon Company, or 14 Int. and Sy., this formation employed units made up of local police officers, members of the special forces (SAS / SBS) and the intelligence services. 14 Det. was very good at its job, overcoming the old divisions and obstacles to effective interagency cooperation. Whilst information on this part of the PIRA/UK struggle is limited, some works have in recent years shed light on 14 Det. See for example Martin Dillon: *The Dirty War: covert strategies and tactics used in political conflicts*, Routledge, New York, 1990 and James Rennie: "*The Operators – on the streets with 14 Company*", Century, London, 1996.

would result in “SuperPurple”²⁶¹ structures being created that would be as flexible and hyper-mobile as the enemies they need to neutralize. It would not even be too far-fetched to make the argument that in the case of many countries they would be best served in the current geostrategic environment by a unitary body which conglomerated all the skills of the various separate agencies and units into a new structure better suited to facing threats transcendental terrorist threat such as al Qaeda²⁶².

Even so, the reality is that such a broad sweeping reform and restructuring of the national security apparatus of the nations of the developed West will inevitably run into heavy resistance from all those who have an interest in maintaining existing structures and who do not see the necessity for change²⁶³. It is most likely the responsibility therefore of the non-governmental think-tank community to promote the initial discussion on how best to shape old capabilities to meet new threats and to

²⁶¹ Purple operations and structures are those that involve all the arms of military service, army, navy, air force and marines, or systems that require their members to be cross-trained and/or experienced in combined arms operations. The US Department of Defense has been emphasizing the “Purple Mode” for some years now, breaking down the technical as well as mental barriers to interoperability amongst the services, ever since the Goldwater Nichols Act mandated inter-service postings for senior officers. The name purple allegedly comes from the colour arrived at if the four service colours are mixed. My proposal would take this approach and apply it across the whole palate of national security tools, not just the armed forces. I am indebted to my good friend Keith Mines of the US State Department for christening my concept so aptly.

²⁶² Lest the Reader think we are making an argument here for states to follow the US model by creating their own Department of Homeland Security, I am not. The gargantuan DHS which brings together over 20 agencies and 170,000 federal employees under one letterhead is not a radical, new multidisciplinary approach, but represents just one more layer of bureaucracy that in its size and functioning reflects a distinctly Cold War approach as opposed to one that reflects the flexibility of say an al Qaeda.

²⁶³ Additionally there is any important caveat with regards to the adoption of the SuperPurple model, in that there are still several nations in the world that – in addition to having to deal with transnational threat – are facing traditional threats such as military action by an unfriendly neighbour. As a result such nations will have to maintain traditional “Westphalian” capabilities instead, or in addition to any of the capabilities as described under the SuperPurple moniker. SuperPurple should not therefore be understood as a ‘one size fits all’ solution.

convince as many members of the general public as possible that the topic should be placed on the political agenda of the various nations.

If we recognize the fact that extremist Muslim terrorism of the kind represented by Osama bin Laden, Shamil Basesev and Abu Musad al-Zarqawi operates with international structures that are flat, flexible and interdisciplinary, we need to do the same. We need to create international capabilities which can take on the most heinous of these individuals and do so with the legitimacy that an appeal to universal jurisdiction and UN Resolution 1373 brings to the issue of international counter-terrorism efforts. For if we do not begin to discuss and then eventually effect change, the West will continue to suffer in a deadly game of 'catch-up', as those unfettered by limits of the nation-state proceed to exact damage upon our countries and way of life in the name of their religious Worldview.

In the meantime, until individual nations are at a place in their political evolution where radical reform of national security structures and the dismantling of Westphalian divisions of labor can be sincerely contemplated, we must tackle the threat of hyper-terrorism with the military and legal tools we have available at the present whilst devising new strategies of communication to keep the uncommitted moderate Muslim from becoming a practitioner of transcendently-informed violence.²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴ Of course, in the long-term, the role of diplomatic, political and economic tools will have greater importance in removing or minimising the factors that play into the hands of religious extremists who turn to terrorism. The above suggestions are aimed squarely at maximising means to neutralise the existing organisations that are not open to negotiation or that we are not willing to negotiate with.

CONCLUSIONS: RATIONAL VERSUS IRRATIONAL POLITICAL VIOLENCE

With recent mid-term elections in the US decidedly going in favour of the Democratic Party, with US casualties in Iraq exceeding the number of those killed on September the 11th 2001 and the recent release of the Iraqi Study Group's report, there is a great expectation in Washington and among allied capitals that the last two years of the Bush presidency will see a significant change in how the Global War on Terror (GWOT) is waged.

Just 48 hours before his resignation after the mid-term elections, a memo from Donald Rumsfeld was leaked to the New York Times. As a historic classified document leaked at a very turbulent time in American politics, it is not a reassuring depiction of the maturity of strategic thinking amongst the highest level of decisionmakers in Washington. The brief document is little more than a shopping list of 21 various alternatives or options, some of which the author is strongly against, such as swelling troop numbers in Iraq, and others that seem driven by spite or that at least lack obvious benefits to the overall aims of previously declared US policy – such as removing US support and troops from the more “uncooperative” regions of Iraq. Unfortunately the document's weaknesses – which some commentators have adduced to its having been deliberately leaked by the Secretary of Defense as a last-minute face saving gesture, is not even partially compensated for by the recommendations of the bipartisan and much vaunted Iraqi Study Group (ISG). When recently unveiled the Baker-Hamilton report proposed ideas that have been around for so many months that they made little contribution to the debate on rethinking US counter-terrorism policy, or which likewise betray a scant disregard for the ‘grand strategy’ aspects of GWOT (for example the idea of opening negotiations with countries previously labelled as members of the Axis of Evil or otherwise as rogue states, such as Iran and Syria).

As a result one can justifiably ask whether the US strategy against terrorism? Or the more difficult question of whether in fact there is a doctrine driving GWOT. One of

the first problems in answering either question, comes in the form of terminology, or labelling. Although the Bush administration has taken pains to repeatedly assert the connection between Iraq and global terrorism and persists in stating that their policies are driven by the simple logic that it is better to fight the terrorists in the Middle East than on the territory of the Homeland, the fact is that one can and should separate Salafist Jihadism with global capability from the theatre of operations that is Iraq, if only for operational and strategic reasons. In the latter case we can reasonably talk of a religiously, politically and economically fuelled internal war for national dominance by distinct ethnic and religious groupings – at times supported by exogenous forces - whilst the other adversary– as typified by al Qaeda – represents an enemy that may at times be similar to those the US faces in Iraq (in terms of religious motifs or ideology) but which, by dint of its global aims and dispersed nature, poses and altogether different challenge, one that will not be met primarily by military force or even nation-building exercises and which targets other nations, not just US or Iraqi government forces, (viz. Madrid and London).

Despite the dismal strategic perspectives afforded therefore by the ISG and the leaked Rumsfeld memo on Iraq, with regard to the global threat of Salafi extremism, the picture is not so bleak. ‘Warrior scholars’ and the strategic minded diplomats beneath the cabinet and Assistant Secretary level have spent at least the last 18 months searching for a fitting doctrine or strategy befitting the new enemy. Events such as the first Strategic Symposium at the US War College last year and the unusual counter-terrorism programs launched by the George C. Marshall Center and then the Joint Special Operations University in Florida have proposed the revival of older strategies and doctrines which, if duly modified, will help minimize the risk to US and allied interests. Given the fact that the US has been free of mainland terrorist attack since 2001, there is hope that some of these are working.

The first realization is that previous models of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency bear a distinct similarity to the current situation, or at least can help point the way to avoiding the mistakes made by other nations in the past. Subsequently, whilst the Global War on Terrorism may have been internally rechristened last year by the military and the Department of State (DoS) as the “Long War”, as we have noted

above, the number of those who see the campaign as now being one of Global Counterinsurgency is growing. Secondly, given the historic role of Marxist and Communist concepts within the evolution of Salafi extremism (such as the role of the ‘vanguard’) and that this form of terrorism has its origins in the religious ideologies of writers such as Q’utb and those who combined Marxist ideas with post 1979 theocratic fundamentalism, there is a small group in Washington and elsewhere who are quietly arguing that the relevance of Cold War tools and concepts is greater than President Bush’s political detractors would have one believe. Following this realization, the groundbreaking academic work that one hopes will have its just influence on the policy process, individuals such as David Kilcullen, are finally revitalizing and modifying the tools of a previous era, especially those which we used to classify under the heading of political warfare.

At the beginning of this dissertation I posited a hypothesis founded on my professional experience that the categories used to class terrorist groups in recent years were inadequate when one wished to reflect the reality today of how political violence is used.

With regards to the evolution of the use of this tactic/strategy in modern times, above I discussed Rapoport’s four waves of 20th terrorism: the anarchist; the anti-colonial; the ideological; and the Arab/Muslim. In examining the last category I have I believe demonstrated that including the like of the Palestine Liberation Organisation in with a group like al Qaeda is unwise and taxonomically misleading. This led me to the conclusion that there are at least five phases of modern terrorism and that one must differentiate groups based upon the end-state they declare as realisable through violence. These two groups are:

The Rational, Pragmatic Terrorist:

The rational terrorist organisation has as its ultimate goal the realisation of a state of affairs that is fundamentally feasible and realistic (as viewed from the vantage point of an unbiased third party). As a result there is the possibility for a political or diplomatic solution to the root grievance. The opposing government can use a

myriad of tools to deal with this foe, to include Law Enforcement, military force, intelligence services and methods, but – should it so wish – it may resort also to negotiation. (examples include the IRA, ETA and the PLO).

Irrational, Transcendental Terrorist:

The irrational terrorist has as his end goal the realisation of a state of affairs that is not obviously feasible or realistic and which is completely antithetic to the opposing government, or in fact demands that the complete eradication of the existing order and/or civilisation. There is no possibility for a political resolution or even negotiations. In my dissertation I have demonstrated that the original central element of al Qaeda and all off-shoots that believe in the all-encompassing ‘New Caliphate’ ideology are prime examples of such a transcendently-informed user of political violence. Because the end-state they wish to achieve is defined in such a way as to deny the right of existence to the opposing regime or civilisation, governments which face such opponents are limited in the tools open to them. Since a political or diplomatic route is excluded, then the only choice is to use the classic tools of national security, such as Law Enforcement, military force, or the intelligence services.

Unfortunately, as described above, the classic tools we have for providing national security are however limited in their efficacy. In chapter two I have detailed how modern national security architectures evolved as part of the evolution of the Westphalian system of nation-states. In that context, the division of threats and tasks in discrete categories each to be dealt with by a stand-alone authority or agency was a logical and workable system which did in fact suffice very well for the period of classic inter-state and then inter-bloc conflict that we experiences until 1991 and the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

However, I have attempted to demonstrate above that today, for many countries, the classic tools are ill-suited to the challenge of defending against transcendently-informed users of political violence, such as al Qaeda, since al Qaeda and their related threats are not limited by the strictures of the Westphalian system, being globally dispersed, interdisciplinary and hyper-mobile. Subsequently, with an eye to

include conclusions of a practical nature this dissertation has detailed in its penultimate section a provisional solution to this problem in the form of international and inter-agency cooperation under the ‘SuperPurple’ model.

The urgency for new methodologies and frameworks in which to understand and deal with such threats is underlined by the fact that the transcendental actor – since he is not motivated by worldly, political goals and wishes to totally destroy his opponent – can justify within his own ‘logic’ the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). This is “hyper-terrorism”, the intersection of WMD means and the use of political violence.

Subsequently it is hoped that the policy elites will recognise the contribution political science categorizations and recommendations can have and will recognize that existing national security architectures must be refocused so as to be made able to function effectively across the international arena with the agencies of other countries. Only in this fashion will we be able to manage the transnational threat that is transcendentially-informed political violence.

* * *

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APPENDIX I: LETHALITY OF TERRORIST ATTACKS, 1993-2003

YEAR	<i>Number of attacks</i>	<i>Number of victims</i>	<i>Average</i>
1993	431	1510	3.5
1994	322	988	3
1995	440	6445	14.6
1996	296	3224	10.8
1997	304	915	3
1998	274	6694	25.5
1999	395	940	2.3
2000	426	1212	2.8
2001	355	5806	16.3
2002	205	3072	14.9
2003	208	4271	20.5

Sources: *Global Patterns of Terrorism*, United States Department of State
www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2003/33777.htm
www.state.gov/www/global/terrorism/annual_reports.html

APPENDIX II: THE LEAKED RUMSFELD MEMO

October 16, 2003

TO: Gen. Dick Myers*
Paul Wolfowitz†
Gen. Pete Pace‡
Doug Feith°

FROM: Donald Rumsfeld

SUBJECT: **Global War on Terrorism**

The questions I posed to combatant commanders this week were:

- Are we winning or losing the Global War on Terror?
- Is DoD changing fast enough to deal with the new 21st century security environment?
- Can a big institution change fast enough? Is the USG changing fast enough?

DoD has been organized, trained and equipped to fight big armies, navies and air forces. It is not possible to change DoD fast enough to successfully fight the global war on terror; an alternative might be to try to fashion a new institution, either within DoD or elsewhere – one that seamlessly focuses the capabilities of several departments and agencies on this key problem.

With respect to global terrorism, the record since September 11th seems to be:

* Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
† then Deputy Secretary of Defense and Secretary
‡ Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
° then Secretary of Defense for Policy

We are having mixed results with Al Qaida, although we have put considerable pressure on them – nonetheless, a great many remain at large.

USG has made reasonable progress in capturing or killing the top 55 Iraqis.

USG has made somewhat slower progress tracking down the Taliban – Omar, Hekmatyar, etc.

With respect to the Ansar Al-Islam, we are just getting started.

- Have we fashioned the right mix of rewards, amnesty, protection and confidence in the US?
- Does DoD need to think through new ways to organize, train, equip and focus to deal with the global war on terror?
- Are the changes we have and are making too modest and incremental?

My impression is that we have not yet made truly bold moves, although we have made many sensible, logical moves in the right direction, but are they enough?

Today, we lack metrics to know if we are winning or losing the global war on terror.

- Are we capturing, killing or deterring and dissuading more terrorists every day than the madrassas and the radical clerics are recruiting, training and deploying against us?
- Does the US need to fashion a broad, integrated plan to stop the next generation of terrorists?

The US is putting relatively little effort into a long-range plan, but we are putting a great deal of effort into trying to stop terrorists. The cost-benefit ratio is against us! Our cost is billions against the terrorists' costs of millions.

- Do we need a new organization?

- How do we stop those who are financing the radical madrassa schools?
- Is our current situation such that "the harder we work, the behinder we get"?

It is pretty clear that the coalition can win in Afghanistan and Iraq in one way or another, but it will be a long, hard slog.

- Does CIA need a new finding?
- Should we create a private foundation to entice radical madradssas to a more moderate course?
- What else should we be considering?

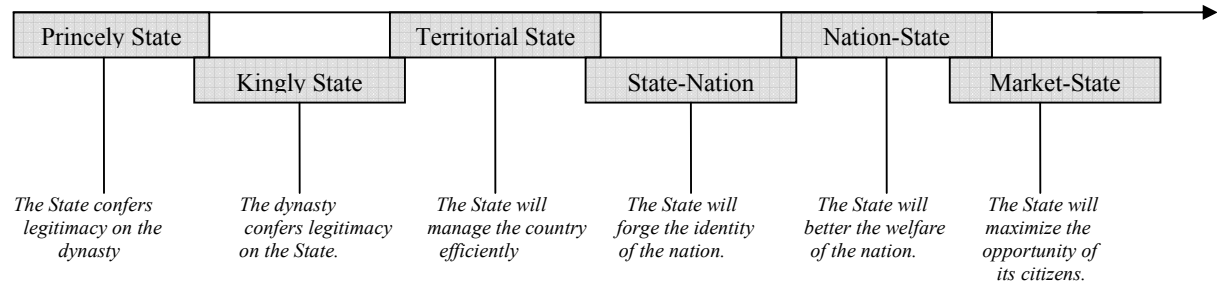
Please be prepared to discuss this at our meeting on Saturday or Monday.

Thanks.

Source: <http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/executive/rumsfeld-memo.htm#>

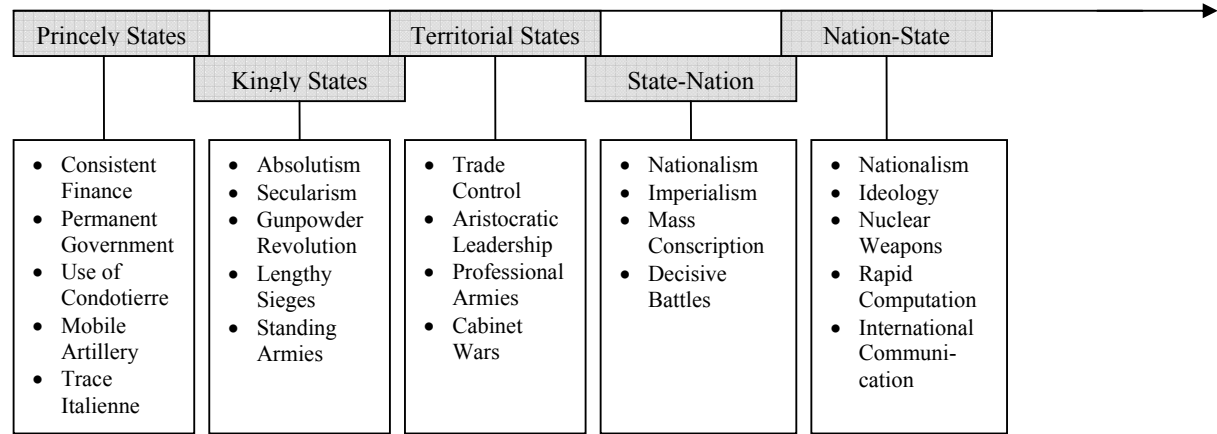
APPENDIX III: THE EVOLUTION OF THE NATION-STATE ACCORDING TO PHILLIP BOBBITT
(taken from Bobbitt's *The Shield of Achilles*. Diagrammatic Representation is the author's)

BASES FOR LEGITIMACY



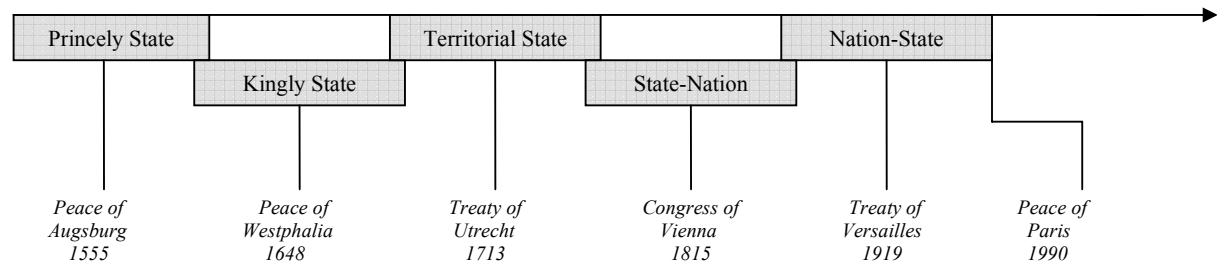
Each constitutional order asserts a unique basis for legitimacy.

HISTORIC, STRATEGIC, AND CONSTITUTIONAL INNOVATORS



A constitutional order achieves dominance by best exploiting the strategic and Constitutional innovations of its era.

THE INTERNATIONAL ORDERS



The peace treaties that end epochal wars ratify a particular constitutional order for society of states

APPENDIX IV: DEFINITIONS OF TERRORISM

GOVERNMENTAL:

Terrorism is the use of violence for political ends, and includes any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the public in fear.

Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act of 1974
United Kingdom

Terrorism is the enduringly conducted struggle for political goals, which are intended to be achieved by means of assaults on the life and property of other persons, especially by means of severe crimes as detailed in Article 129a, Section 1 of the penal Code (above all: murder, homicide, extortionist kidnapping, arson, explosives detonation) or by means of other acts of violence which serve as preparation of such criminal acts

Bundesamt für Vefassungsschutz,
(Office for the Protection of the Constitution)
Germany

Terrorism is the threat or use of violence for political purposes by individuals or groups, whether acting for, or in opposition to established governmental authority, when such actions are intended to shock or intimidate a large group wider than the immediate victims.”

Central Intelligence Agency
USA

The term Terrorism means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.....

Department of State
USA

Terrorism is = “the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological”.

Department of Defense
USA

Terrorism is defined as the unlawful, or threatened use of force or violence by a group or individual committed against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.

Federal Bureau of Investigations
USA

ACADEMIC:

A basic definition [of terrorism] would include the following attributes: the systematic use of unorthodox violence by small conspiratorial groups with the purpose of manipulating political attitudes rather than physically defeating an enemy. The intent of terrorist violence is psychological and symbolic, not material. Terrorism is premeditated and purposeful violence, employed in a struggle for political power.

Martha Crenshaw

The threat of violence, individual acts of violence, or a campaign of violence designed primarily to instil fear – to terrorize – may be called terrorism. Terrorism is violence for effect: not only, and sometimes not at all, for the effect on the actual victims of terrorists. In fact, the victim may be totally unrelated to the terrorist's cause. Terrorism is violence aimed at the people watching. Fear is the intended effect, not the byproduct (sic), of terrorism. That, at least, distinguishes terrorist tactics from mugging and other forms of violent crime that may terrify but are not terrorism.

Brian Jenkins

Terrorism is a special mode or process of violence which has at least three basic elements: the terroristic aims of its perpetrators, their modus operandi in deploying particular forms of violence upon the victims and the target audience.... I have defined political terrorism as the systematic use of murder and destruction, and the threat of murder and destruction, to terrorise individuals, groups, communities or governments into conceding to the terrorist' political aims.

Paul Wilkinson

A terrorist targets non-combatant civilians to achieve a political goal. Those who undertake political actions that target civilians are terrorists. A just cause does not ever justify the targeting of civilians.

Michael Ignatieff

Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-)clandestine individual, group, or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal, or political reasons, whereby – in contrast to assassination – the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat- and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperilled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought.

Alex P. Schmid et al.

Sources:

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M. Crenshaw: "The Causes of Terrorism", Comparative Politics No. 13, July 1981

B. Jenkins: "International Terrorism: a new mode of conflict", Research Paper 48, California Seminar on Arms Control and Foreign Policy, Crescent Publications, Los Angeles, 1975

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Transcript of remarks, Michael Ignatieff: "The Lesser Evil: hard choices in a war on Terror", Carnegie Council Books for Breakfast, 23rd January 2004.

APPENDIX V: FREQUENCIES OF DEFINITIONAL ELEMENTS IN 109 DEFINITIONS
OF TERRORISM

<u>Element</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
1. Violence, Force	83.5%
2. Political	65%
3. Fear, Terror	51%
4. Threat	47%
5. (Psychological) Effects, and (Anticipated) Reactions	41. %
6. Victim-Target Differentiation	37.5%
7. Purposive, Planned, Systematic, Organised Action	32%
8. Method of Combat, Strategy, Tactic	30.5%
9. Extra-normality, in breach of accepted rules, w/o humanitarian restraint	30%
10. Coercion, Extortion, Induction of Compliance	28%
11. Publicity Aspect	21.5%
12. Arbitrariness, Impersonal, Random Character, Indiscriminate	21%
13. Civilians, non-combatants, neutrals, outsiders as victims	17.5%
14. Intimidation	17%
15. Innocence of Victims	15.5%
16. Group, Movement, Organisation as Perpetrator	14%
17. Symbolic Aspect, Demonstration to Others	13.5%
18. Incalculability, Unpredictability, Unexpectedness of Violence	9%
19. Clandestine, Covert Nature	9%
20. Repetitiveness, Serial or Campaign Character of Violence	7%
21. Criminal	6%
22. Demands Made on Third Parties	4%

Source: Alex P. Schmid: "Political Terrorism: a research guide to concepts, theories, data bases and literature, with a bibliography by the author and a World directory of "terrorist" organizations by A. J. Jongman", North-Holland Publishing Company, Amsterdam, 1984. This table is the result of a survey by Schmid sent to 200 academics specialising in the study of terrorism. Of those approached, 25% replied to Schmid's lengthy questionnaire.

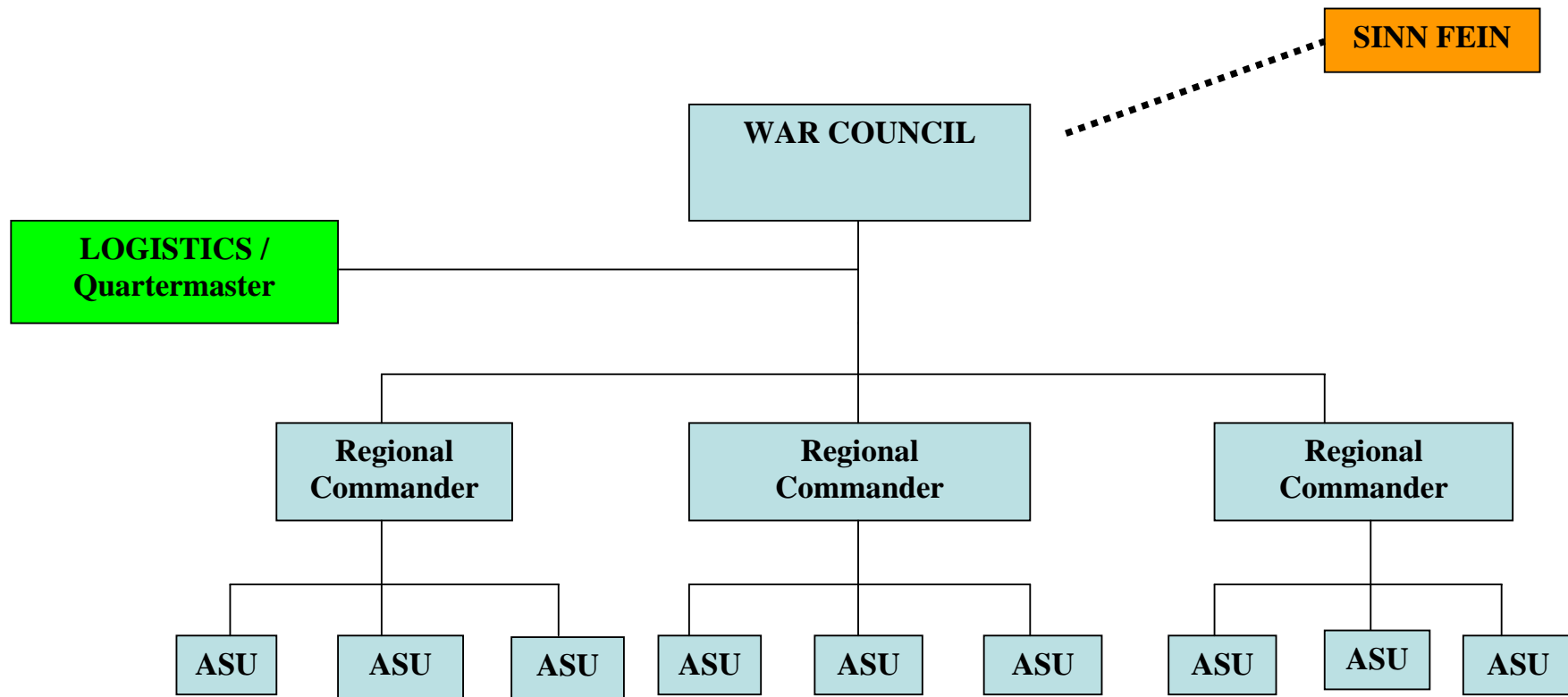
APPENDIX VI: ELEMENTS OF A DEFINITION OF TERRORISM AND THEIR
FREQUENCY AMONGST PRACTITIONERS

Political	12
Fear	10
Targeting Civilians / the Innocent	7
Executed by a Group	7
Illegal	4
Criminal Act	3
Versus the State	3
Ideology	3
Power	1
Violence	1
Threat	1
Coercion	1
Illegitimate	1
Combat	1
Social	1
Force	1
Public	1
Attention	1
Indirect	1
Various Target	1
Culture	1
Message	1
Reaction/Grievance	1
Strategy	1
Surprise	1
Anti-Constitutional	1
Radical	1
Anti-Democratic	1
Symbolic	1
Membership	1
Property	1

Source:

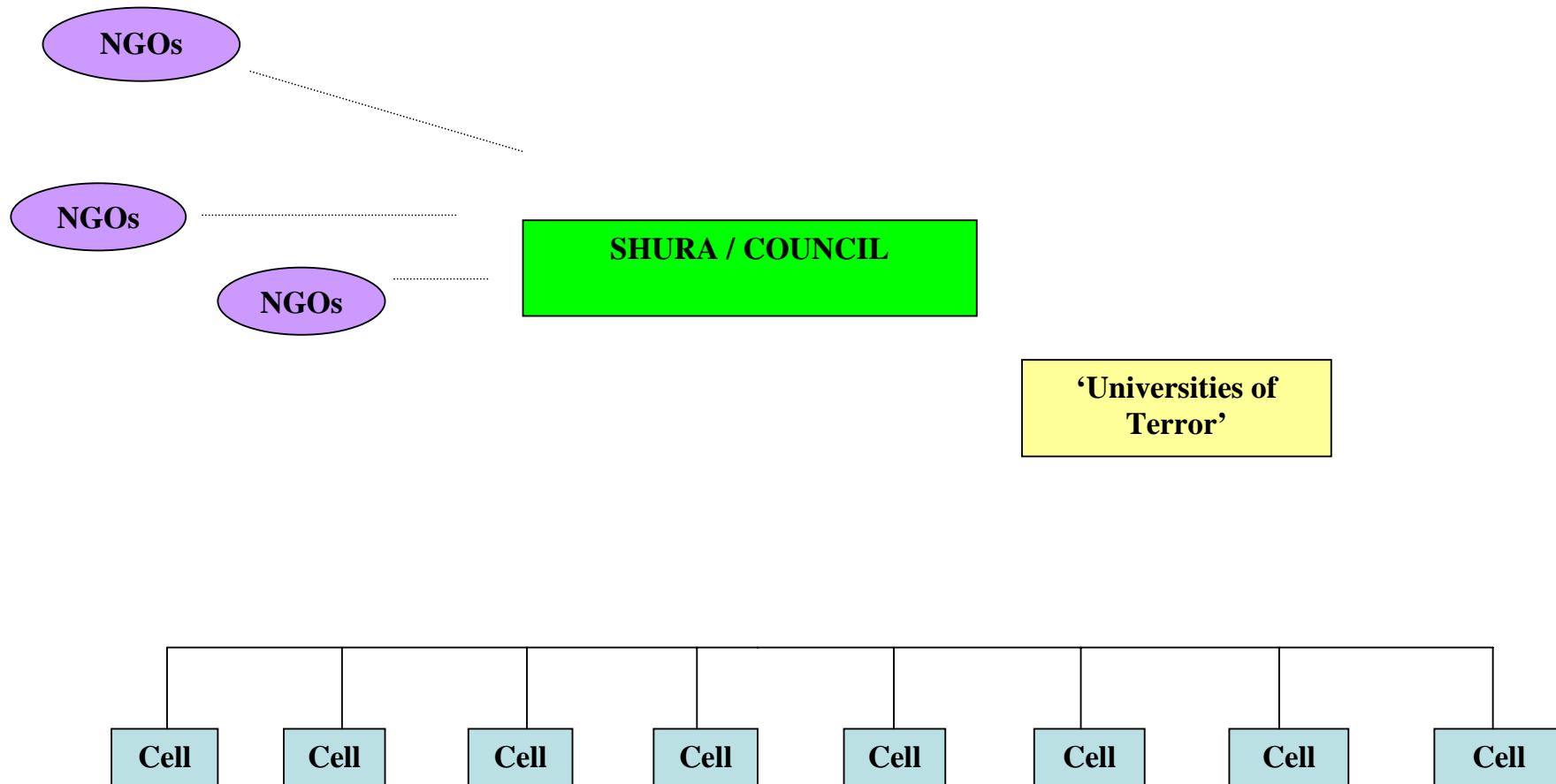
Poll taken by the author of an international group of counterterrorism specialists from the armed forces, intelligence community and police services during the *Program of Terrorism and Security Studies* at the George C. Marshall Center, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, February 2005.

APPENDIX VII: TYPICAL STRUCTURE OF A COLD WAR TERROR GROUP (IRA)



A hierarchy, that is top-down in initiation

APPENDIX VIII: THE STRUCTURE OF AL QAEDA (GENERATION I)



APPENDIX IX: TRANSCENDENTAL TERRORISM IN ACTION:

The Case Study of Richard Reid the “Shoe-Bomber”[†]

Background

The 7 July London bombings have focused attention on the involvement of radicalised UK Muslims in the global Salafi Jihad

Investigators may be assisted by developing a better understanding of the potential routes taken by a British Muslim to radicalisation and eventual engagement in terrorist activities

A paucity of information in open sources presently hampers any empirical research of this subject - in the meantime, case studies such as that of Richard Reid provide some initial clues as to which factors might be important in propelling a young British Muslim toward Islamist militancy.

Barely three months after the 11 September 2001 attacks in the US, a young British national boarded American Airlines flight 63 from Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris, bound for Miami. An Al-Qaeda operative, his mission was to detonate a concealed explosive device in one of his shoes, downing the aircraft and killing all on board, along with himself.

The plane had been airborne for around two-and-a-half hours when Richard Colvin Reid attempted to carry out his attack. Waiting until the passenger sitting next to him had left his seat for the bathroom, Reid tried repeatedly to ignite a fuse attached to the explosives carried in the heel and sole of one of his trainers. His failed attempts to ignite the fuse eventually caught the attention a crew member, Hermis Moutardier, who asked him to extinguish the match.

Reid initially complied with this request. However, once the cabin staff had passed by, he quickly tried again to light the fuse; Moutardier and colleague, realising Reid might be about to detonate a bomb, attempted to remove his trainer. Reid resisted but was eventually overpowered, restrained, and then sedated by the collective efforts of passengers and cabin crew until the plane could be diverted to Boston airport and Reid could be handed over to US Federal authorities. Almost immediately, Reid became known as Al-Qaeda's first 'shoe bomber'.

Reid's background

Richard Reid, aka Abdul Raheem, aka Abu Ibrahim, was from a broken home in southeast London, having been born to a Catholic English mother and a Jamaican Protestant father. As he grew up, Reid's father spent most of his time in prison, where

[†] This case study is based upon open-source media reports and US court documents provided to the author.

he converted to Islam. Petty crime became a defining characteristic of Richard's youth and he left school at 16. He would himself serve several sentences in youth institutions and prisons, including Feltham and Blundeston. Like his father, he too would convert to Islam. On being released from prison in late 1995, Richard Reid changed his name to Abdul Rahim and began to frequent the Brixton Mosque. Though a moderate institution, several notable radical Islamists are believed to have worshipped there at roughly the same time. Reid, who was described by mosque patrons as "an impressionable young man", was increasingly influenced by these elements. He began to drift away from mainstream activities at the mosque, and associated more frequently with these radical elements. His occasional return visits to Brixton Mosque, where he is believed to have attempted to communicate his increasingly hard-line views on jihad to mosque patrons, were given a cold reception.

Sometime between late 1995 and 1998, Reid came into contact with one or more individuals who made arrangements for his travel to Afghanistan, where he undertook extensive training at Al-Qaeda facilities.

The travel and training of a new Al-Qaeda operative

The image of Reid conveyed by the international press as one of being a bungling loner is incorrect. Like many suicide bombers, he benefited from training, support, and indoctrination by a well-organised network. Reid failed in his mission thanks to the keen observations of cabin crew, the help of passengers, and unforeseen technical difficulties with the concealed improvised explosive device (IED) he was carrying (see below).

The international investigation after the arrest reveals a well-organised series of reconnaissance and rehearsal operations, and a widespread network of facilitators and accomplices. After a two-year period of establishing Al-Qaeda credentials and then receiving training in more than one of the group's camps, Reid began a six-month tour of the Middle East and Europe during which potential targets and methods of attack were identified. Reid filed several reports to his Al-Qaeda handlers - reports later recovered from the hard-drive of a computer bought from a looter in Afghanistan by a journalist during Operation Enduring Freedom. The reports thought to have been authored by Reid were penned under the pseudonym of 'Abdul Ra'uff'.

Using these reports, US Federal prosecutors have been able to trace Reid's movements across the Middle East and Europe. In this six-month period, Reid first acquired a new duplicate UK passport from the consulate in Amsterdam. On 12 July 2001, he flew from there to Tel Aviv on an El Al flight. There he probably visited the Gaza Strip, travelling further on to Cairo by bus, where he would stay for a week. From Cairo he would fly to Istanbul, staying until 7 July, then flying on to Karachi, Pakistan. During this period Reid reconnoitred El Al facilities and flight security and sent his observations to Al-Qaeda contacts via email. It is clear that target selection was still open at this point, since he also scouted office complexes, malls and bus and rail terminals in Tel Aviv, as well as the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. In December 2001, Reid obtained yet another passport, this time from the consulate in Brussels. He then reserved his seat on the 21 December flight to Miami, paying USD1,800 in cash.

Al-Qaeda tradecraft

US investigators have uncovered not only much of the internet traffic initiated by Reid from various internet cafes, but also his old pre-pay mobile telephone cards. From this and other evidence, it is clear that he received much of the logistical support for his attack from Al-Qaeda cells and supporters not in Afghanistan, but in Europe, particularly Paris. Since Reid's conviction, French authorities have made numerous arrests of groups and individuals believed to have assisted him. The investigation also saw the arrest and conviction of a second 'shoe bomber', Saajid Badat, a British national of Pakistani descent. Badat had also acquired a duplicate passport through the Brussels consulate.

After Reid's target had been selected, the IED could be made. Reid told the court that he chose the shoe-bomb device after observing El-Al security procedures. Using the high-explosive PETN (production of which was taught at several Al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan), an improvised explosive device was hidden in the waffle structure of the sole and heel of both of Reid's high-top trainers. Kasey Warner, US Attorney, remarked during the case that the device was "ingenious, simple, hard to detect and deadly". In X-ray material of the original shoe seen by the author, there was literally nothing to see of the primary explosive and the homemade, paper-enclosed TATP (triacetone triperoxide) detonator and fuse.

On later examination of the device by forensics experts, a palm print and hair residue were found on the detonator which were not Reid's, indicating that the device had been built for him by an accomplice.

The attack fails

Press reports published in the immediate aftermath suggested that Reid was unable to detonate his IED because he was attempting to light a simple fuse, which would not have resulted in ignition of the explosive. This was not the case: in a sworn affidavit to the United States District Court, Special Agent Gregory Carl, a bomb technician, stated that had the fuse been successfully lit, it would have functioned as an IED with enough force to breach the outer skin of the aircraft.

Reid's reservation was made for 21 December 2001; however he did not fly until the next day, and this is probably the main reason why the attack failed. Carrying a new passport, with no luggage, having paid in cash and with an unkempt appearance, French authorities were suspicious of Reid and therefore did not allow him to board on that date. After further investigation, however, no clear evidence was available to further refuse passage, and so the next day Reid boarded the same flight. This meant that he had to wear the IED-laden shoe for an extra day over that intended. As a result, due to natural perspiration, the fuse became too damp to ignite properly once airborne.

Reid's motivation as a Transcendental Terrorist

Court documents from Reid's trial provide interesting detail on his stated logic used to justify the attempted bombing. On the afternoon of his arrest and the following day, in

interviews with FBI and Department of State officials, Reid claimed that democratic countries were ruled contrary to God's will, and that "America is the problem, without America there would be no Israel". When pressed as to why violence was necessary, Reid answered: "People tried peaceful methods for 70 years." He also stated that he was ready to be a martyr and that Allah would reward him in heaven.

But perhaps more interesting are the texts of the two letters and one "will" that Reid prepared via his email account the day before the attempted attack. In the first letter to his mother he writes:

"... what I am doing is part of the ongoing war between islaam (sic) and disbelief ... I didn't do this act out of ignorance nor did I do just [do it] because I want to die, but rather because i see it as a duty upon me to help remove the oppressive American forces from the Muslim lands and that this is the only way for us to do so as we do not have other means to fight them) ... the message of islaam is the truth, this is why we are ready to die defending the true islaam rather than to just sit back and allow the American government to dictate to us what we should believe and how we should behave, it is clear that this is a war between truth and falsehood ... this is a war between islaam and democracy ... I ask HIM that HE guide me to the truth and cause you to understand why I've done what I've done."

In the second letter Reid writes about a dream he had about a year earlier. In the dream, Reid was waiting for a ride, but when the ride (a pickup truck) came, it was full and Reid could not go. He was upset and had to go later in a smaller car. Reid explained the meaning of the dream as follows:

"I now believe that the pickup that came first was 9-11 as it's true that I was upset at not being sent."

Much later, in prison, in a letter sent to a journalist that was mistakenly allowed to be sent out of the MCI-Cedar Junction detention facility, Reid writes:

"Thus the reality is this America (sic) are oppressive, repressive tyrants while we the Muslims seek the justice of the laws of Allah who created the heavens and earth and it is this for which we fight, as for those who wish to condone our means of warfare, then we did not drop a nuclear bomb on Japan nor do we fund the torture of our opponents nor did we place sanctions on a people for the crimes of a tyrant whom we placed in power thus leading to the deaths of millions of children as America has done in Iraq.

"As such I make no apologies for my activities nor those of my associates and I state that if people want the attacks on the West to stop then they should start looking to their own selves because as far as we're concerned whoever supports the American government's activities in the Muslim world or helps them in that by any means is equally responsible for those acts and thus such people have no one but their own selves to blame for the attacks on American interests and such attacks will not stop unless the Americans stop their oppression of the Muslims."

Conclusions

Richard Reid's case should not be viewed in isolation; as the 7July attacks have most recently illustrated, there are other UK Muslims who identify sufficiently with the ideology of the global Salafi Jihad to follow on a path to radicalisation and eventual involvement in terrorism.

From the point of view of Al-Qaeda tradecraft and *modus operandi*, several aspects of Reid's case are noteworthy:

- Reid appeared well-financed; he was able to travel for an extended period, sustain himself and pay in cash where necessary. Unlike some operatives, who the Al-Qaeda command dictated must be self-financing, he did not appear to have difficulties accessing funds as he did not engage in criminal endeavours to support his travel
- The use of classic intelligence-gathering techniques for targeting purposes is a clear *modus operandi*, as is the use of modern means of communication such as email and pre-paid mobile phones.
- From a command-chain point of view, it appears that the individual operative has a large sphere of mobility. Reid is recorded as having stated that he decided against an Israeli target and chose instead an American one, once the US had started to bomb Afghanistan.

Two important wider issues are also apparent:

- Involvement in petty crime and the young offender prison system should be subject to further study - what role, if any, might it play in radicalisation and recruitment to the jihad?
- Reid was not a 'lone wolf operative'; between 1995 and 1998 he was slowly drawn into the activities of a radical Islamist clique in London quite distinct from the wider UK Muslim community. This group appears to have had a pivotal influence on Reid's ideological outlook, culminating in his travel to Afghanistan for terrorist training. Further research is required to characterise the nature of the radical Islamist social networks that help propel the individual from the position of sympathiser to someone seeking to join the Jihad.

APPENDIX X CONTENDERS FOR THE POST-9/11 NEW DOCTRINE

(Source: *The Search for Mr. X - A CENSA Member's Survey*, Keith Mines and Anne Smedinghoff, the Council for Emerging National Security Affairs, as yet unpublished)

1. **Bush Doctrine I – Pre-eminence and Preemption**: In the first national security plan following the September 11th attacks, the National Security Strategy of 2002 outlines the Bush administration's policies of pre-eminence and preemption, stating that "while the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defense by acting preemptively against such terrorists, to prevent them from doing harm against our people and our country." It expands the definition of preemption to encompass not just the ability to attack when there is an imminent threat, but also the ability to begin a preventive war to stop a future threat -- "As a matter of common sense and self-defense, America will act against such emerging threats before they are fully formed."
2. **Bush Doctrine II – Global Freedom**: Bush's second inaugural address (January 2005) outlines a doctrine in which creating peace and setting the conditions for security means spreading democracy. The problem is that while "whole regions of the world simmer in resentment and tyranny - prone to ideologies that feed hatred and excuse murder - violence will gather, and multiply in destructive power, and cross the most defended borders, and raise a mortal threat." The only force to stop this threat is the force of worldwide human freedom. In order to achieve this freedom, the policy of the United States must be "to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture." The final result will be "ending tyranny in our world."
3. **Haass – Unity and Integration**: In *The Opportunity – America's Moment to Alter History's Course* (Public Affairs, 2005) CFR President and former State Department Policy Planning Director Richard Haass rejects earlier suggestions for a Bush Doctrine – unilateralism or isolationism (unrealistic given the nature of the world), counter-terrorism (too narrow), promoting democracy (too impractical). He calls instead for a doctrine that would broadly integrate the nations of the world "in efforts to tame the challenges inherent in globalization and the post Cold War World. . . From terrorism, to WMD, to human crisis, to energy and global economy, the answer is more integration – commitment to a process, not a single policy."
4. **Barnett – The Core and the Gap**: Phillip Barnett, author of *The Pentagon's New Map, War and Peace in the Twenty First Century* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2004), believes that the world's unsettling security picture stems from a growing divide between the connected and functional "Core" and the disconnected and dysfunctional "Gap." Barnett's key prescription is simply to shrink the Gap, bringing the disconnected parts of the world into the Core in terms of economic prosperity, information flow, and security alignments. He outlines a "global transaction strategy" that "recognizes the primacy of the four global flows of people, energy, investments, and security." U.S. armed forces are organized on two tracks -- "system administrator" for nation-building, and Leviathan, to crush foes.
5. **Meade – Forward Containment**: CFR's Walter Russell Meade (*Power, Terror, Peace, and War, America's Grand Strategy in a World at Risk*; Alfred A. Knopf, 2004) takes the rationale that containment served us so well that our best approach now would be to adapt it to the new realities rather than start from scratch with a new doctrine. He proposes a version of the triple containment that defeated communism - - contain Soviet military power, box in friendly governments, and limit influence on civil society. The new strategy would: 1) Contain terrorists by directly weakening organizations, cutting ties to governments, and blocking access to WMD; 2) Contain expansion and consolidation of state power by those embracing the ideology of terror,

- leaving open regime change as an option; and 3) Contain influence of terrorist ideologies with a flow of new ideas and by fixing the Arab-Israeli conundrum.
6. **Hart – The Fourth Power, Principle-Based Leadership:** In The Fourth Power – A Grand Strategy for the United States in the Twenty-First Century (Oxford, 2004), former U.S. Senator Gary Hart expresses the belief that a return to principle-based leadership by the United States would be so compelling that it would itself provide us with security and go far in solving the problems we face. He eschews doctrine, but provides a framework for new policies, based on the mission statement: *“to transform our domestic economy from one of consumption to one of production and, through long-term investment, to recapitalize our education and technology base and achieve energy security; to use the forces of globalization and information to strengthen and expand existing democratic alliances and create new ones; to employ those alliances to destroy terrorist networks and establish new security structures; and guided by our historic principles, to lead international coalitions in spreading economic opportunity and liberal democracy and in nation-building, counter-proliferation, and environmental protection.”*
 7. **Fallows – A Containment Strategy for the Age of Terror:** Like Meade, the Atlantic’s James Fallows (“Success Without Victory,” The Atlantic, January/February 2005) believes that our age is more similar than dissimilar to that of the immediate post-war period and argues for a strategy that would focus on three broad themes, which he couches in terms of the leadership that would be required to deliver them. “A Truman would tell us that loose-nukes are the real emergency of this moment, and that instead of pussyfooting around we should control them right away. A Kennan would explain the sources of Muslim extremist behaviour and how our actions could encourage or retard it. A Marshall would point out how gravely we left ourselves exposed through our reliance on oil from the Persian Gulf.” Our actions should take place against a backdrop of a “courageous, confident, open society” which is “a goal in itself.”
 8. **Murdoch – Anti-Doctrine, or Just Do it Right:** In a unique approach that could be said to have support from the 9/11 Commission and undoubtedly some anti-doctrine policymakers, CSIS’s Clarke Murdoch (Improving the Practice of National Security – A New Approach for the Post-Cold War World; CSIS, 2004) believes that “it is not a lack of specific grand strategy to replace containment that is the problem, but the uneven effectiveness with which NSS practitioners make and implement strategy.” He supports the old Army adage that a good plan poorly executed is worse than a mediocre plan well executed, arguing that “the sustainability of U.S. national security strategy depends primarily on whether NSS practitioners get the strategy right.” He has since followed this up with suggestions for going “Beyond Goldwater-Nichols” in a paper that similarly lays out specific recommendation for further enhancing the inter-agency environment for results-focused policy execution. The 9/11 report similarly does not attempt to chart doctrine as much as a one-time strategy for attacking terrorists and their organizations, preventing the continued growth of Islamist terrorism, and protecting and preparing for terrorist attacks.
 9. **Peters – Extending American Primacy:** In his latest offering (New Glory – Expanding America’s Global Supremacy; Sentinel, 2005), the provocative Ralph Peters begins with the premise that America “is the greatest – and most virtuous – power in history.” Though difficult to pin down precisely, Peter’s would use that virtue to expand raw U.S. power (mostly military) in a web of alliances that reminds one of the New Europe Strategy of the early days of the Iraq War, when America dismissed standing alliances in the interest of putting together a posse of like-minded countries. Peters would do this on a global scale, turning “our attention from the lands of yesterday and extending a hand to the struggling lands of tomorrow.” His proscription for the Middle East captures the flavor of the strategy: “engagement where there is hope; containment where there is no hope; preventive military action against terrorists. . .” It goes beyond America first, it is America only.

10. **Mandelbaum – America as World Government:** Johns Hopkins Professor Michael Mandelbaum (The Case for Goliath, How America Acts as World Government in the 21st Century, Perseus, 2005), takes a more subtle approach to American primacy, arguing that “the world needs government and the United States is in a position to supply it.” The rise of American power during the long struggle against the Soviet Union, combined with the failure of Europe to recover its footing, the crash of the Russian empire, and the inability of international organizations to fully function, left the U.S. as the “best source of global governance because, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, there is no other.” Mandelbaum argues that absent this U.S. role the world would be a less secure, less prosperous, and less democratic place, and the U.S. (and the world) would do well to guard this role and help facilitate it, rather than grousing about it. Consider also Niall Ferguson’s *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire*.
11. **Lieber – America as World Leader:** Georgetown University Professor Robert J. Lieber (The American Era: Power and Strategy for the 21st Century, Cambridge, 2005) also sees the U.S. as the indispensable player in international security in an age when the potential merger of militant Islamists with weapons of mass destruction could pose threats on a scale previously unimaginable. He dismisses the U.N. and other international bodies as being incapable of acting in a timely and effective way to curb these threats, and believes the absence of a true central authority in the international system forces the U.S. to act as world leader. “American intervention becomes a necessity, not something about which to be apologetic.”
12. **Shapiro – Containment Redux:** While some have looked to George Kennan for inspiration, Yale Professor Ian Shapiro (Containment: Rebuilding a Strategy Against Global Terror, Princeton, 2007) formulates an entire doctrine by directly adapting Kennan’s ideas to the current world. Shapiro finds the current threat more dangerous and complicated than the monolithic Soviet threat, but in how Islamist terrorists have positioned themselves as being antithetical to our way of life, it has far more in common than the architects of the Bush Doctrine have, to date, accepted. As opposed to the push for, or acceptance of, American primacy in the world, an offensive strategy, Shapiro argues for a very moderated role that would intervene only defensively to secure America’s survival as a democracy. It would have America “guard against terrorism by containing enabling states, investing in human intelligence, and enhancing homeland security.” It would “gear military alliances and collective defense agreements first to America’s survival as a democracy and then to the defense of other democracies.” Finally, it would “support democratic oppositions against dictatorships around the world, and sow the seeds of an environment friendly to democracy by promoting economic development in poor countries.”
13. **David Kilcullen – Disaggregation:** Australian policy analyst David Kilcullen (Countering Global Insurgency, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, August 2005), offers a unifying strategic conception for winning the War on Terrorism, which he narrowly describes as a “globalized Islamist insurgency,” rather than a conventional terrorism campaign, the difference being largely in the level and modalities of global support networks. Kilcullen argues for a strategy of “disaggregation,” that “seeks to dismantle, or break, the links in the Global jihad.” He explains that “like containment in the Cold War, a disaggregation strategy means different things in different theatres or at different times. Disaggregation focuses on interdicting links between theaters, denying the ability of regional and global actors to link and exploit local actors, disrupting flows between and within jihad theatres, denying sanctuary areas, isolating Islamists from local populations and disrupting inputs from the sources of Islamism in the great Middle East.” It works at the global, regional, and local levels – “seeking to interdict global links via a worldwide CORDS program, isolate regional players through a series of regional counterinsurgencies and strengthen local governance through a greatly enhanced security framework at the country level.”
14. **Ignatieff – Post-Westphalianism:** Embedded in his award winning 2002 Gifford Lectures, former Harvard Professor and now Deputy Leader of Canada’s Liberal

Party Michael Ignatieff (*The Lesser Evil: Political Ethics in an Age of Terror*, Penguin, 2004), identified Al Qaeda as a distinctive kind of terrorism and a wholly new threat. The “apocalyptic nihilists” who attacked America on 9/11 defended their actions “in the language of Islamic eschatology, not in the language of rights,” with apocalyptic, not political intentions. “Such an attack cannot be met by politics but only by war,” he suggests. He places this in historical perspective: “A long historical parenthesis – the ascendancy of the modern state – might be closing. Since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 . . . international order has depended on state’s possessing a monopoly on the legitimate means of force.” This era, he suggests, may be ending with the rise in non-state actors with the power to destroy cities. The geography of the new threat is the band of failed and failing states running across Africa and on the periphery of the former Soviet Union. The answer is to keep destructive power firmly in the state system where it can be deterred, by ensuring states have “effective coercive control over their own territory.” He lays out a strategy for non-proliferation and control of nuclear materials, state-building, enhanced multilateral and multinational cooperation, while holding out the use of preemptive force “to prevent the sale or distribution of such weapons to non-state actors.” See also Phillip Bobbitt’s *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History*.

15. **Fukuyama I – State Building**: Francis Fukuyama believes that the greatest threat to international security comes from unstable states (*State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century*, Cornell University Press, 2004). The foreign policy of the United States, then, should be one which fosters development, better organization of private and public sectors, and lasting political and economic institutions in those regions which are most prone to instability and corruption by outside influence. The organization and infrastructure of the state must be able to survive after outside aid and intervention is withdrawn.
16. **Fukuyama II – Realistic Wilsonianism**: In a later critique of the neo-conservative movement which he once found himself a part of, Fukuyama posits in *America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy* (Yale University Press, 2005), that “the world is characterized by American hegemony and a global anti-American backlash, complete with inchoate forms of ‘soft’ balancing; a shift in the locus of action away from nation-states toward non-state actors and other transnational forces; an accompanying disintegration of sovereignty both as a normative principle and as an empirical reality; and the emergence of a band of weak and failed states that are the source of most global problems.” Realistic Wilsonianism, or what could be called “hard-headed Liberal Internationalism” would use American power to change what goes on inside states, albeit through a “dramatic demilitarization of American foreign policy and reemphasis on other types of policy instruments.” It would focus on “good governance, political accountability, democracy, and strong institutions,” through soft power: our ability to set an example, to train and educate, to support with advice and often with money.” And it would not be afraid of new institutions – “a large number of overlapping and sometimes competitive international institutions, what can be labeled ‘multi-multilateralism.’”
17. **Ethical Realism**: Anatol Lieven, a senior researcher at the New America Foundation, and John Hulsman, a member of Council on Foreign Relations and former senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation come together from opposite ends of the political spectrum to formulate a unique foreign policy they call ethical realism (*Ethical Realism: A Vision for America’s Role in the World*, Pantheon, 2006). The policy is defined by five “core teachings:” prudence, humility, study, responsibility, and patriotism. Lieven and Hulsman propose spreading capitalism before spreading democracy, and ultimately strive for an international order which does not call for preventive war, citing containment of communism in the Soviet Union as a prime example to follow.
18. **Princeton Project – A World of Liberty Under Law**: Reasoning that it would take a number of individuals to do “what no one person in our highly specialized and rapidly changing world could hope to do alone,” Woodrow Wilson School Dean Anne-Marie

Slaughter and Wilson School professor G. John Ikenberry, serving as co-chairs of the Princeton Project on National Security, engaged some 400 policymakers and academics with the aim to write a “collective X article.” The final report argues for “an American grand strategy of forging a world of liberty under law by supporting popular, accountable, and rights-regarding governments; building a liberal international order; and updating rules on the use of force.” The report has new ideas for nation-building (supporting Popular, Accountable, and Rights-regarding governments worldwide), rebuilding international institutions through a Concert of Democracies, and countering terrorism through a global counterinsurgency campaign. It similarly pulls in new ideas on nuclear proliferation, global pandemics, energy security, and building a protective infrastructure.

19. **Fareed Zakaria: Liberalization before Democratization:** Zakaria finds fault with doctrines that blindly promote democracy, something he believes is not an inherently good or bad as a political system (The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad. W.W. Norton and Company, 2004). He triumphs liberal values, whether or not they come attached to a democracy, and contends countries that first liberalized their economies were better off in the long run than countries that first promoted democracy and then worked for liberal values. Zakaria discusses the “paradox” of Iraq: “to build democracy in Iraq, the United States must stay on, but to demonstrate that it is not a colonial power it must leave.” Involving other countries in the process, he proposes, will solve this problem.
20. **Louise Richardson: Define and Contain:** Louise Richardson, Dean of the Radcliffe Institute, proposes that a war against the terrorist threat is futile because it is essentially a war against a tactic. (What Terrorists Want. Random House, 2006). “Terrorist” tactics were used by Americans against the British in the 1770’s, by the Israelis against the British, by the Algerians against the French. Progress is only possible if the problem is clearly defined “as global militant Islam.” Richardson proposes that the roots of terrorism are too varied to defeat, but that they can be contained by isolating terrorist groups from their communities through a “war of ideas.” Without a broad appeal in their communities, recruitment for terrorist groups will decline. The audiences for coercive and conciliatory policies must be kept separate, in that “Coercive policies should be restricted to the few actual perpetrators of the violence, while conciliatory policies ought to be focused on their potential recruits.”
21. **Parag Khanna, New Global Order:** In The Second World: Empires and Influence in the New Global Order (Random House, 2008) Khanna argues that America’s unipolar moment has been replaced by a tripolar world order in which the US, China, and the EU compete on increasingly equal footing. (Other great powers do not meet the criteria of a superpower nor does the concept of a global Islamist jihadism.) Military power alone is a false indicator of aggregate influence. Each superpower combines hard and soft power in unique ways to influence events in every corner of the globe, specifically in the most strategic “second world” regions of South America, the Middle East, the Black Sea region, Central Asia, and East Asia. America’s diplomatic style is “coalition,” the EU’s is “consensus,” and China’s is “consultative”. Success or failure to win the allegiance of second world state-regions will ultimately tip the global balance of power. The 21st century is the first in which truly global multi-polar competition has ever occurred, with not all superpowers being Western (e.g. China), and not all even being traditional nation-states (e.g. the EU). Maintaining stability thus requires not a tenuous “balance of power” or a culturally unachievable “concert,” but rather a system of “equilibrium” based on an active division of labor among the Big 3 to manage differences while reestablishing the foundation of shared norms which is rapidly eroding.

APPENDIX XI: LIST OF TWENTIETH CENTURY IRREGULAR CONFLICT
WITH RELEVANCE TO COIN

- Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902
- US Philippine nationalists 1899 1902
- Arab Revolt 1916-1918
- Russia Revolution 1917
- Ireland (IRA) 1920
- Northern Ireland (PIRA) 1968-
- WWII Resistance France and elsewhere (SOE) 1940-1945
- WWII Balkans (Tito's partisans) 1940-1945
- Norway v Germany WWII
- Finland v USSR WWII
- Greek Civil War 1944-1949
- French Indochina 1945-1954
- Palestine (British Mandate versus Jewish separatists) 1945-1948
- Malayan Emergency 1948-1960
- Kenyan Emergency 1952-1956
- Algeria (French versus FLN) 1954-1962
- Algeria (Algerian Government v FIS/GIA) 1992-
- Cyprus (EOKA) 1954-1959
- Aden (UK versus Yemeni insurgents) 1955-1967
- Cuban Revolution 1956-1959
- Hungarian Revolution 1956
- Vietnam 1958-1975
- Angola (MPLA) 1961-1974
- Mozambique (FRELIMO) 1964-1974
- Colombia (FARC, ELN) 1964-
- Oman (PFLOAG) 1969-1976
- Philippines (NPA, MNLF, MILF) 1970-
- Rhodesia 1974-1980
- Afghanistan (USSR versus Mujahedeen) 1979-1988
- Iranian Revolution 1979
- El Salvador 1979-1991
- Peru (Senedro Luminoso) 1980-1995 (MRTA) 1996-1997
- Nicaragua (Sandinista, Contras) 1980-1990
- Kashmir 1988-
- Chechnya 1994-
- Nepal 1996-
- Afghanistan (Taleban and AQ) 2001-
- Iraq 2003-

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