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AIR & SPACE POWER JOURNAL

# Editorial

# Articles

# Counterinsurgency Is Dead: What Else?*

*Here, on 26 July 1972 the Royal Thai Army burned all its American textbooks. From this dates our victory over the communists.*

—Inscription over the incinerator
Royal Thai Army Headquarters

Combat is winding down in Afghanistan, and—as in Iraq—serious questions have arisen about the value and intent of counterinsurgency (COIN). We remember the motto No More COINs in the 1970s after Vietnam. Today, lessons learned should tell us again that we should avoid such wars, but it is doubtful that we can do so in the future any more than we have in the past. Thus, perhaps we should now think seriously about the fundamental cause of the most prevalent form of conflict—insurgency.

Given the impressive number of books on COIN, the abundance of new research on former guerrillas, military doctrine, lessons learned, and the experience of those who have led insurgencies (very few) and COINs (too many), do we better understand asymmetric warfare?[1] The interest in this phenomenon boils down to two questions: (1) What is an insurgency? and (2) Can a professional army overcome an insurgency by relying on the people of the country *where the insurgency takes place*?

Disagreement abounds on virtually every aspect of insurgency warfare, including its definition. Obviously, the terms *small war*, *long war*, *irregular warfare*, *asymmetric warfare*, *terrorism*, and so forth, do not delineate the problem. Insurgency encompasses all of the above and more. It acts along several broad lines of operation, shifts its emphasis, changes strategy, or appears to become a different kind of conflict. Insurgent warfare adapts, depending upon the location of popular support.

First of all, however, an insurgency has to do with people sharing the same grievances. A subjective formula based on the belief that an equal number of people

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support and oppose the insurgency but that most of the populace remains neutral, ready for the picking, still permeates COIN theories and doctrines. Such a formula was the product of an academic, bureaucratic approach and an oversimplification by some military practitioners, based on little realistic experience and formed in an environment unlike an insurgency. It had enormous implications that affected COINs waged by Western powers. A formulation of this type is highly arbitrary, if not dubious, for the following reasons:

1. Segmenting people into categories is virtually impossible because of the secrecy that an insurgency imposes upon itself and the people. To acquire the data that permit such segmentation requires a COIN intelligence beyond the ability of intelligence operations in an insurgency environment.

2. Mobilization of the people depends entirely upon the needs of the insurgency at a specific time and place and upon its long- and short-range objectives.

3. Deception is the forte of insurgents. Consequently, they could structure the population to play the role of neutrals or collaborators trusted by the enemy but in actuality lend support to the insurgency logistic. Insurgents may even encourage some of them to take up arms against the insurgency, all the while using them as a source of intelligence, ammunitions, and resting places.

4. One may safely start with the assumption that, with few exceptions, an insurgency has the support of all the people who share the same grievances.

The fundamental cause of an insurgency is a common, deeply rooted set of grievances among citizens that become pretexts for conflict. The insurgency takes shape and grows if its leadership establishes a link between the struggle and the demands of the population. Therefore, conflicts that develop within the civilian population are underwritten by such key ideas as justice and freedom. Insurgents conduct activities in an explicitly revolutionary context that seeks to effect radical change in the present situation by means of subversion and armed struggle.

An insurgency draws its strength from the absence of a "center of gravity," a concept taught in Western military schools. Carl von Clausewitz's notion of a war's center has moved toward a revolutionary trilogy: (1) the will of the people as the strategic center of gravity, (2) the will of the insurgent to continue to fight as the operational center of gravity, and (3) the multitude of basic cells of a clandestine organization as the many tactical centers of gravity. These centers tend to be nested but autonomous and secretive; hence, elimination of any center of gravity at any level cannot contribute to the downfall of the others, thus ensuring

the survival of the insurgency, regardless of the number of battles or fighters lost. Clearly, a desire to win the "hearts and minds" of the population in an insurgency becomes a dangerous illusion, an acculturation, and a naïve, strategic myopia.

The goal of a professional army is to win wars; insurgency seems to have spoiled that mission. Western armed forces engaged in COIN have either suffered defeat or "exited strategically." Heralded by many experts as the only military victory over an insurgency, Malaya actually represents a hyped-up case, according to Dr. Andrew Mumford: "A counterinsurgency campaign taking 12 years to eradicate an isolated insurgent group is not a glowing achievement and is hardly deserving of the academic salutations it has garnered."[2] Max Boot sums up COIN by observing that "the long history of low-intensity conflict reveals not only how ubiquitous guerrilla warfare has been but also how often its importance has been ignored, thus setting the stage for future humiliations at the hands of determined irregulars."[3]

So, what else? If we persist in considering an insurgency a military matter, we should fight it with special military means that are free of wishy-washy doctrine; bloated, bureaucratic commands; and self-proclaimed experts—that is, with all of our military might, including the right equipment and manpower such as intelligence, special forces, and airpower. We might do better than we have done so far.

"Preventive insurgency" might represent an even better option. If nonrepresentative governments create grievances, then we should "aggressively" encourage our autocratic allies and friends to change their systems. And if that fails (e.g., Egypt in the case of Hosni Mubarak), we should limit bloodshed and prevent the extremist segment of the population from taking over the country by openly supporting the insurgents. Finally, we should help build modern nation-states that are responsive to their people.

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**Notes**

1. Rémy Madoui [aka Mauduit], *J'ai été fellagha, officier français et déserteur: Du FLN à l'OAS* [I was an insurgent, a French officer and a deserter: From the FLN to the OAS] (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 4 April 2004).

2. Andrew Mumford, *Puncturing the Counterinsurgency Myth: Britain and Irregular Warfare in the Past, Present, and Future*, Advancing Strategic Thought Series (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, September 2011), 15, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/download.cfm?q=1086.

3. Max Boot, "The Evolution of Irregular War: Insurgents and Guerrillas from Akkadia to Afghanistan," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2013, http://www.cfr.org/afghanistan/evolution-irregular-war/p30087.

# Public Health Considerations of Launching Nuclear Waste to the Sun

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This article addresses the public health aspects of disposing of radioactive nuclear waste by launching it to the sun. The environmental and ecological problems that have occurred since British Petroleum's oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico on 20 April 2010 have prompted discussions about finding alternative energy sources. On 11 May 2010, Senator John Kerry (D-Massachusetts) and Senator Joseph Lieberman (I-Connecticut) introduced legislation (the American Power Act) "to secure the energy future of the United States, to provide incentives for the domestic production of clean energy technology, [and] to achieve meaningful pollution reductions."[1] Nuclear power, one of the many forms of alternative energy, has attracted renewed and increased interest. However, damage to the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant from the 9.0 earthquake and subsequent tsunami in Japan on 15 March 2011 as well as reported problems at several nuclear power plants along the East Coast of the United States during Hurricane Irene have heightened concerns about safety and health regarding the use of nuclear power. Furthermore, when power outages plagued the East Coast after "Superstorm Sandy" struck on 29 October

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2012, the press ran articles about the issue of nuclear power plants endangering the public.

Nuclear waste material, which emits "ionizing radiation," poses a threat to public health, based upon the duration of exposure, distance to the source of radiation, type of radiation (e.g., alpha, beta, gamma, etc.), and the presence and type of any shielding.[2] Sources of radioactive nuclear waste materials include nuclear weapons, nuclear power sources, medical radionuclides used for diagnosis or treatment, radiation-producing machines, radioactive metals, and radioactive isotopes of all elements (usually found in "background radiation" exposures).[3]

The threat of exposure arises primarily from an accident or incident that results in a "spill" of radioactive nuclear material (i.e., a "nuclear spill") normally not encountered by the general (unprotected) population. Collection and containment of radioactive nuclear materials in secure sites—the current method of disposal—require safe transport and placement in specialized, secure installations. These repositories must be located away from populated areas; on installations whose physical security can be assured and where access by intruders—whether deliberate or inadvertent—is extremely unlikely and easy to detect (e.g., the Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository, which was defunded in 2010); and in places not likely to suffer from geological instabilities such as earthquakes, volcanoes, and so forth.

Another option is the collection and burial of radioactive nuclear waste material in the ocean, particularly in the deep crevices of midoceanic mountain ranges or extremely deep geologic formations such as the Marianas Trench. Clearly, any consideration of deep-sea burial would demand that the area be far removed from the oceanic tectonic plates—locations more subject to volcanoes, earthquakes, or other seismic geological activities. According to Charles Hollister and Steven Nadis, marine scientists feel that such places have not experienced geological activity for more than 50 million years and, therefore, will not likely become active in the future.[4]

Previous proposals for disposing of radioactive nuclear waste by launching it to the sun remove the threats of exposure from leakage of a storage facility or from the diversion of such materials by nuclear terrorists.[5] The underlying principle here is that all matter caught in the sun's gravity will lose its structural integrity due to the stress of gravitational forces and "break up" before reaching the sun. Moreover, high temperatures will incinerate and

completely consume all matter prior to its reaching the sun's corona.[6] Specifically, as matter heats up, it expands beyond its structural integrity, and the heat energy encountered causes molecular bonds to break. Even the atomic integrity of elements of atomic number above two (i.e., Helium) does not exist within the sun.[7] Essentially, the intense heat renders such elements into their composite subatomic particles (e.g., electrons, protons, neutrons, etc.).[8] Thus, the radioactive nuclear waste never impacts the sun, having no effect upon its "ecosystem," and therefore cannot "damage" the sun.

## Magnitude of the Problem

In terms of the risk to public health, however, one must consider the possibility of a launch accident such as the destruction of a launch vehicle prior to leaving the earth's gravitation or its breakup shortly after launch, scattering radioactive debris. An examination of the US unmanned space program should reveal the likelihood of such an accident. Atlas, Centaur, Delta, Delta II, and Saturn V missions numbered over 1,000. Debris from accidents varied in size from centimeters to several meters in length and width, but none of it was radioactive. During the entire unmanned space program, the probability of an accident involving a space launch vehicle amounted to less than 3 percent.[9] Granted, the probability of such an occurrence is low, but it does exist.

We have long recognized the health risks presented by ionizing radiation. Witness the well-documented short- and long-term health issues associated with the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the atmospheric tests of atomic and hydrogen bombs conducted by the United States and Soviet Union from 1946 through 1964, and the incidents involving nuclear power reactors at Three-Mile Island in 1979 and Chernobyl in 1983. Risks associated with a launch vehicle carrying a payload of radioactive waste are analogous to those associated with nuclear fallout patterns observed during the atmospheric nuclear bomb tests until the advent of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

## Key Determinants

As mentioned above, the causes of potential public health problems are well known. Specifically, these include the biological effects of a radioactive

nuclear waste environment on living organisms. Ionizing radiation can damage the biochemical, molecular, and cellular structures underpinning all life. Human behavior has no direct bearing upon this problem but can have an indirect effect in terms of safety and/or security concerns about the handling or containment of radioactive nuclear waste in the current international geopolitical milieu. That is, we must consider the possibility that such material might fall into the hands of terrorist groups which may use it to build and deploy low-yield "dirty" nuclear weapons (i.e., nuclear terrorism).

## Making Policy and Setting Priorities

Again, one may dispose of radioactive nuclear waste material either by (1) sending it into space or by (2) collecting, isolating, and storing it on/under the land or deep within the oceans. Sending waste into space, especially launching it to the sun where it will burn up before reaching the corona, removes this hazard forever. As noted earlier, though, this option incurs the cost of launch vehicle operations and carries with it the risk of a launch accident that could spread radioactive debris unpredictably over a large geographic area. Collecting, isolating, and storing radioactive nuclear waste in or on the earth's land mass would be easy and inexpensive in terms of initial operations and logistics. Doing so, however, requires ongoing monitoring and security measures because terrorist groups could steal this material and put it to nefarious uses. Moreover, containment of the radioactive waste could become compromised by natural causes (e.g., earthquake, volcanoes, etc.), leaking into the water table and contaminating land and/or water resources. Finally, disposal of this material deep in the oceans may prove just as costly as launching it into space. A maritime accident could subject the oceans near populated areas, fishing areas, and so forth, to radioactive contamination. Further, although a deep oceanic site is much more difficult to reach than a land-based containment facility, terrorists could still compromise its security and divert the radioactive material. Again, such a facility would require ongoing monitoring and security.

Regardless, we have the technical and scientific capacity to implement any disposal strategy, including launching payloads into space toward any target.[10] Political and social-behavioral obstacles to implementation arise from the public's perception of the risks associated with the production, use, and by-products of nuclear energy; in actuality, they are not as great as most

of the public believes.[11] No published studies demonstrate that the health of workers in the nuclear industry is any worse than that of the general public, assuming observance of the appropriate safeguards. However, a failure to follow safe practices or the occurrence of an accident or incident involving nuclear materials can detrimentally affect the public health, especially in terms of producing cancers.

Regarding economic considerations, launching a payload into space costs about $10,000 per pound.[12] Thus, sending 100 metric tons of radioactive nuclear waste into space would cost $2.2 billion whereas storing it in the Yucca Mountain facility would have cost approximately $200 million per year.[13] Thus in 11 years we could fully amortize the cost of a space launch that carries much more waste than we could store at a single site on the earth's surface.

Space disposal of radioactive nuclear waste benefits individuals, communities, and society in general at the global level since this option removes the possibility of accidents/incidents during storage on the earth or the appropriation of material by terrorists. The attendant risks of space launch, noted earlier, involve incidents that could occur at or shortly after launch— or later but prior to leaving the atmosphere. Clearly, an accident at or shortly after launch would affect neighboring communities downwind of the site (e.g., Melbourne, Florida, near Cape Canaveral and Patrick Air Force Base) where radioactive debris would quickly accumulate and compromise the public's health. According to a press release from Johns Hopkins University,

> Nuclear fallout arising from accident or terrorism contains radioactive iodine that can cause thyroid cancer, especially in babies and children up to 18. Potassium iodine tablets prevent the thyroid from absorbing radioactive iodine, protecting the gland.

> "Thyroid cancer historically has been a major public health problem resulting from nuclear incidents including the bombing of Nagasaki, Japan, and the nuclear accident in Chernobyl, Ukraine," says Paul W. Ladeson, M.D., director of endocrinology and metabolism at Johns Hopkins.[14]

Plans call for the distribution of potassium iodine tablets to people living within 20 miles of a nuclear incident.

If an accident occurred in the upper atmosphere, the winds aloft and prevailing jet streams would spread radioactive debris and affect populated areas, the number and location of which depend upon whether the incident took place in the northern or southern hemisphere. Moreover, the debris would disturb maritime life and commerce. Realistically, the impact of such an unlikely accident will be no worse than the results of any atmospheric

nuclear bomb test, mentioned earlier, which entailed the detonation of multimegaton nuclear weapons that produced large amounts of radioactive debris in the form of fallout. The amount of nuclear waste material under scrutiny here does not fall into the "megaton" category.

## Assessment of Related Risks

Several risk assessments (also known as environmental assessments) have a direct bearing on the collection and transport of nuclear materials, including issues of safety and analyses of the threat posed by potential accidents/incidents and their public health considerations. The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) of the US Department of Energy has performed numerous such assessments. In January 2004, it concluded one that addressed the risks of latent cancer fatalities in the population resulting from the collection and transport of fissionable nuclear material—specifically, the movement by air of highly enriched uranium from Russia to a secure site near Knoxville, Tennessee. The NNSA performed assessments for cases of "no accident/incident," for breakup or destruction of the aircraft in flight, for destruction on the ground (i.e., a "crash landing"), for destruction of ground vehicles transporting the materials (e.g., truck accidents), and for "no action." In all cases and scenarios, the NNSA identified the worst one as a person "maximally exposed" to radioactive material at the site of a traffic accident on the ground, assessing the chance of a latent cancer fatality at "$1.4 \times 10^{-10}$, or less than one chance in a billion." For personnel handling the transfer of packages of highly enriched uranium from the aircraft to trucks, the chance was "less than 1 in 140,000."[15] Consequently, the NNSA issued a finding of "no significant impact." Similar risk assessments resulting in the same finding included those of the Chariton Valley Biomass Project, the decontamination and decommissioning of the nuclear reactor facility at the Argonne National Laboratory near Chicago, and the building of a nuclear-reactor fuels-materials facility near Aiken, South Carolina.[16]

Of special significance is the decision to fly the Cassini mission to Saturn in 1997, which has much relevance to the proposed idea. First, the mission involved the launching of a payload destined for other-than-earth orbit. Second, the spacecraft (i.e., the Cassini orbiter) is nuclear powered. Third, its payload, the Huygen probe, contains nuclear components. Risk assessments performed by the Interagency Nuclear Safety Review Panel for

the National Aeronautics and Space Administration examined scenarios for launch accidents, accidental reentry into the earth's atmosphere with the breakup and destruction of the space launch vehicle and payload, and accidental reentry due to the earth's gravity during a "swing by" maneuver designed to increase the inertial velocity of the space vehicle during the interplanetary voyage phase. The Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Cassini Mission Report placed the median cancer fatality rate at "$1.4 \times 10^{-6}$."[17] This varies from "1 in 13 billion" to "1 in 280 billion."[18] These accident/incident scenarios are notable because of their similarity to those that could occur with the proposed idea of launching nuclear waste to the sun.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

This article has found that the risks to public health from disposing of radioactive nuclear waste by launching it to the sun are extremely small. Specifically, the median cancer fatality rate of one in 3.8 billion reported by the Cassini panel (based on scenarios comparable to those that might occur during the proposed launch)—and only in the event of an accident involving the space launch vehicle—is significantly less than the cancer fatality rate in the general population (one in 5,000). In light of the extremely minimal risks to public health, as well as the defunding of the previously proposed Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository, this article recommends that the United States reconsider the economically viable alternative of launching nuclear waste to the sun.

**Notes**

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# Defense Diplomacy and the Arab Spring

## New Ventures and the French Presence in the Persian Gulf

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*The present situation forces us to consider a new "arabo-muslim" era, and a structural crisis that will be long and unpredictable.*

—Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2011

The year 2011 was marked by a wave of Arab Springs that collapsed several regimes. Western countries did not anticipate this "black swan" and now have to revise their thinking about the Middle East.[1] These forces, encouraged by different sources of popular support, have transformed a society once considered fossilized. Because of these uprisings, which are shaking Arab governments, the French presence in this region undoubtedly takes on a new dimension. Particularly well established in the Arab world, France must now reposition its external policy. In this respect, the defensive diplomacy that it has used in the Persian Gulf deserves reexamination. France can pride itself on having solid, strategic alliances in the Persian Gulf due to its active traditional diplomacy in the Arab world. This dynamism is evident in such diverse sectors as higher education and culture; hence, implementation of l'Université Paris–Sorbonne in Abu Dhabi and, in the near future, that city's own Louvre, will aid in the diffusion of French "soft power" in the region.[2] The defense and security domains also constitute a combined effort having strong potential.

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## The Persian Gulf: A Strategic Space in the Arab World

The Persian Gulf is a strategic location in many ways. In terms of energy procurement, it boasts more than 65 percent of the world's oil reserve and 40 percent of its gas (including Iran and Iraq). Beyond these resources, the countries of the Persian Gulf exhibit considerable economic wealth because of their banking system, which functions under "sharia compatible" precepts, which, in turn, shelter it from the failures of a casino economy. The gross domestic product of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (CCASG) should, therefore, reach $2 trillion in 2020, making it one of the region's most prosperous institutions.[3]

However, this strategic space remains plagued by instability, crises, and a degrading security policy. The threat of Iranian nuclear programs, the crisis in Yemen, persistent insecurity in Iraq, tension with Pakistan, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continue to complicate the situation. Several risk factors jeopardize the stability of the region. Paradoxically, they also present opportunities for the Gulf states to equip themselves effectively with ambitious military tools in this uncertain time. Moreover, the difficulty they face in overcoming internal rivalries in order to develop a security structure forces them to depend upon the guaranteed security offered by the superpowers. This situation explains the ferocious competition between the United States and Europe—even between certain European countries—for the lion's share of the market. For France the stakes are even higher because since 1980 the Persian Gulf represents the recipients of more than half of its arms exports.

The French presence in the Gulf is actually recent, coinciding with the withdrawal of British forces from the region in 1971. France has one of the first, though discreet, European partnerships with the CCASG in terms of defense. (That is not to discredit the American and British forces, who remain resolute partners.) Until the first Gulf War, France had a presence in Iraq, developing important armament cooperation that supported Iraq during its war with Iran from 1980 to 1988.

A defense agreement signed by several monarchies in the Gulf in the 1990s marked the turnaround of French diplomacy in the region.[4] Little by little, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) eclipsed Iraq by developing close ties with France. The new defense diplomacy is now more regional and marked by a strong political willingness to assume an active role in the Gulf states' individual security issues. The challenge remains sizeable in a space

largely dominated by Anglo-Saxon and American influence. But France has important assets that it intends to put to use, including a traditional diplomacy renowned for its profound understanding of the Arab world and its more measured position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as the crises in the Middle East. France has some facility in reviving the dialogue with the Persian Gulf's monarchies and presents itself as a credible actor regarding security in the region.[5] Under former president Nicolas Sarkozy, French diplomacy clearly worked in favor of a cooperative defense in the Gulf region. The *French White Paper on Defence and National Security* (2008) confirms this interest by creating a zone essential to a French strategy in the region.[6]

Defense diplomacy aims to consolidate regional security by fighting against any and all forms of destabilization, such as proliferation, that could harm French interests. Specifically, France wishes to protect energy procurement as well as profit from a market of considerable possibilities. In theory this takes the form of not only exporting and transferring state-of-the-art industrial technology but also contributing to the formation of locale elites.

## Defense Diplomacies Implemented in the Persian Gulf

The study of defense agreements with various Gulf partners shows not one particular diplomacy but several. Indeed, defense cooperation between France and the CCASG states is not homogeneous but varies in accordance with political, economic, and commercial relations. One can also notice two types of partners: "privileged," with whom France makes defense agreements and/or important arms contracts (UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait), and "peripheral," historically marked by the trusteeship of Britain (Bahrain and Oman).

### *Privileged Partners*

France has long-held ties with Kuwait; the agreement concluded in 1994 addresses military technical aid. Today, Qatar and the UAE form the pillars of French defense cooperation in the region. The French-Emirates defense relationship thus rests on operational arms and intelligence cooperation as well as on structural security and defense cooperation—one of the most developed in the Gulf. The UAE, therefore, has bought more than half of its military equipment from France whereas Qatar is equipped with nearly

80 percent French materials. Cooperation between France and the UAE is framed in bilateral, binding agreements that represent a strong political engagement. The two countries signed the first agreement in 1977, followed in 1991 by a military and arms cooperation pact. Another agreement, dated 18 January 1995, defined the modalities of France's participation in the UAE's defense and the terms of bilateral military cooperation. This document provides for joint exercises involving the air force, army, and navy. On 15 January 2008, France and the UAE signed an intergovernmental agreement calling for creation of a permanent French military establishment in UAE territory. The strategic scope of this implementation is undeniable, significantly reinforcing French presence in an area previously under Anglo-American domination. Finally, a new cooperative defense agreement concluded on 26 May 2009 between the governments of the French Republic and the UAE updated the obsolete agreement of 1995.[7] French diplomats described it as "the strictest defense agreement and the most binding one ever signed by France."[8] A security clause provides a gradual response to all threats up to and including the engagement of French forces if the vital interests of the UAE are threatened.[9] This engagement reveals France's strong political desire to become a leading actor in the security of the UAE. The document also seeks to formalize cooperation in training and joint exercises as well as consolidate the outlets for each defense industry. Thanks to diverse contracts, French savoir faire radiates through Mirage 2000-9 fighters, MICA missiles, LeClerc tanks, and stealth frigates. Given its ability to defend the airspace and to attack outside the country's borders, the UAE air force remains at the forefront of the national defense. That service can also pride itself on being one of the most modern and well-equipped forces in the Middle East.

As for Saudi Arabia, defense cooperation essentially includes an operational dimension and support for arms exportation.[10] Thus, that country is France's third client in terms of arms equipment. It seems that the presidency of François Hollande intends to put Riyadh back at the center of the region.[11]

Even though France has become one of the leading partners in the CCASG states, it has not succeeded by imposing an exclusive relationship on its contracting partners. The diplomacy of the Gulf states is characterized by diversification that seems to reflect a type of mistrust.[12] These countries do not wish to lock themselves into a partnership that creates a marked

dependence on another state; rather, they prefer to make stability in the region a common good by multiplying their contributors. Rather than establish an exclusive partnership, they decided to entrust several countries with their security, therefore creating competition.[13] This logic of diversification sometimes duplicates certain areas of cooperation.

### *Peripheral Partners*

Peripheral partners occupy a lower level because they are countered by entangled cooperation with the United States and Great Britain. The British maintain a marked presence in Oman—a situation that explains the modest cooperation with France. An intergovernmental cooperation agreement between France and Oman, signed 2 June 1989, exists with regard to defense equipment, but it was never implemented. Cooperation takes the form of some navy calls, arms contracts, and exercises. Each year, the North American, British, and French navies participate in the Khanjar Hadd exercise, and some exchanges take place in the formation of elite organizations (e.g., a war college and the Institut des Hautes Études de Defense Nationale). Oman's sultan did have some interest in the strategic plan because his country represents a maritime focal point in the Arabian peninsula. Located at the crossroad of the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean, Oman commands the Strait of Hormuz and maintains good relationships with Iran. But for now, France does not seem to want to extend its regional approach of military cooperation to the sultanate.

Regarding the Kingdom of Bahrain, the defense agreement concluded in 2009 was based on the monarchy's desire to create a quick-reaction force within the Royal Guard. For France, it had to do with investing in a cooperation area where the British had lost ground. Even if they unevenly involve France, these diverse agreements contribute to consolidating its presence in the Persian Gulf region. However, one can ask if the Arab revolutions did not add a new dimension to this defense diplomacy.

## The Arab Spring: What Consequences for Defense Diplomacy in the Persian Gulf?

Its diverse cooperation gives France a presence in the Persian Gulf and consolidates its influence in the Arab world. Today, however, one

must understand this presence in terms of the new cartography drawn by the Arab Spring.[14] Because the profound mutations set off by this rising force are still at work, coming to a conclusion regarding the success or failure of these uprisings would be premature. Facing the reconfiguration of the Arab world and its uncertainty, France should play a role in line with its position on the United Nations Security Council and with its global power ambitions. This implies perpetuating clear autonomy in the region in order to have sound comprehension and appreciation of that area. France should reinforce its influence here by maintaining an awareness of the Gulf's geopolitics and the leverage that the CCASG states can exert on events playing out in the rest of the Arab world.

## The Arab Spring: A Strategic Upset

One must take a second look at defense agreements in light of events that overturned the Arab world and gave rise to a new balance of power. Indeed, 16 of the 22 member states of the Arab League faced political instability in 2011. This phenomenon displays a type of spontaneity that makes it difficult to predict. If we could not foresee this occurrence, then we know even less about the result, which depends largely upon presenting durable economic solutions to frustrated youth. Certainly, though, the changes brought about by these revolts are without precedent and mark the beginning of a new era in what we hastily call the Arab world.

Among these transformations, the emergence of a political Islam can very well characterize the majority of these regimes born of revolution. It remains to be seen what form this type of Islam will take. Surely, some of the nations have democratic aspirations, but it is too early to determine if such yearnings will materialize when these countries face a hard Islamist movement such as the Salafism financed by the Gulf states. More than ever, the Middle East—an already fragile region—confronts destabilization, and the crisis in Syria feeds this regional instability. Amplified by the Arab revolutions, the rift between Sunnis and Shiites has become more structured in interstate relations and constitutes the same major strategic risk. One element of uncertainty involves the succession of King Abdullah in Saudi Arabia, the world's leading oil reserve; another is that the region appears headed to an arms race, all the while seeking a deterrent in case Iran proceeds with its nuclear plan. Some new actors have become part of the inter-

national scene and intend to play a crucial role. Qatar, for instance, claims to be Egypt's successor as the grand mediator of the Arab world. This small emirate has distinguished itself with hyperactive diplomacy as well as involvement in the Arab revolutions—notably with its television station Al-Jazeera.[15] The year 2011 marked a turning point in Qatar's international politics, which took advantage of several factors: the absence of leadership in the Arab world; the victory of the Islamic party Ennahda in Tunisia, with which Qatar has excellent relations; and the diplomatic and military actions taken in Libya.[16] Moreover, this military contribution marks an evolution in Qatar's external politics. The emirate has decided to adopt its own tools of military intervention to support its foreign policy, by force if necessary. Ready for diplomatic activism, the country now indicates more clearly its desire to return to a hard-power strategy—yet another element to consider when reexamining this ever-changing Arab world.

In light of these upheavals, "these Arab Springs constitute one of the principal strategic ruptures France has confronted since 2008."[17] Furthermore, the notion of an *arc of crisis*, a term coined in 2008 to mark this new evolution of international politics, is unsatisfactory because of its excessively reductionist nature. We have a tendency to forget that the white paper, mentioned above, is also "an exercise in public diplomacy" and that certain Gulf partners do not appreciate their place on said arc of crisis.[18] Joseph Maïla, director of foresight for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, therefore suggests that we speak of "an era of major strategic investments."[19] Undoubtedly, the wave of Arab Springs has the virtue of shedding light on the plurality of this Arab world; regrouping different cultural areas under the term *arc of crisis* does not do justice to this diversity. One cannot compare Afghanistan to Qatar. Given these changes, French diplomacy in the region must update its plan of action.[20] Defense diplomacy should also allow for this new data.

## What Kind of Defense Diplomacy after the Arab Spring?

The Arab revolutions have profoundly modified the strategic landscape, but they have also validated the political choices that one must pursue. More than ever, defense diplomacy in the Persian Gulf needs development and focus, taking into account the primary objectives of defense cooperation. Interoperability becomes a more pressing issue than before because we no

longer have simple exercise partners in the Persian Gulf but operational partners, called upon to intervene with us in new coalitions. France should also reinforce its influence in this strategically decisive zone—more so to solidify its interests than to assume a position of global power.

### Developing Interoperability

Libya has proved that this new genre of coalitions could work, even with new partners. Participation of these countries in coalition operations brings a new Arab reassurance that is indispensable because of the impossibility of viewing these operations as Western interventions. The UAE is the second Arab country, after Qatar, to take part in military operations to uphold Resolution 1973 of the UN's Security Council in Libya. Defense diplomacy in the Persian Gulf, therefore, should work by developing enhanced interoperability between France and its partners—witness the joint military exercises Gulf Shield, which married elements of Qatar's army with those of the UAE; Green Shield, with Saudi Arabia; and, most recently, Gulf 2012—jointly organized by the UAE and France. Further, the Abu Dhabi military base prefers joint military training with French forces.

Such exercises not only demonstrate the quality of French equipment (with an eye toward exportation) but also assure true interoperability among forces. According to Gen Jean-Paul Paloméros, former chief of staff of the Armée de l'Air (French air force), "If our Air Force acquires an international dimension, to the point that it receives real recognition by foreign countries; only at that point we can talk about a real 'air diplomacy': this is particularly evident in the United Arab Emirates, [and] Qatar who participated in operations in Libya."[21] The technologically advanced equipment of these partners, as well as the armored community, reinforces the importance of operational cooperation.

As these states further a more refined interoperability, developing a dynamic of multilateral cooperation for the future would also prove beneficial. At present, the Gulf states—inclined to cooperate in a more bilateral fashion—do not prefer this orientation. For the time being, they refrain from creating a trusting environment that would lead to collective action. For example, the Sultanate of Oman is very hostile to participation in coalition or multinational actions, including those at the heart of the CCASG, that would

combat piracy. Thus, one must strive to transmit to these countries a multi-lateral culture—an essential requisite for coalition interoperability.

### Reinforcing France's Influence in the Arab World

Through various defense agreements in the Persian Gulf, France intends to occupy a position of global power in a key region of the world. This ambition rests on its influence there and, beyond that, in the Arab world. Toward that end, the base at Abu Dhabi can exert substantial leverage. Established on 16 May 2009, it houses forces that can operate in the air, on land, and at sea. For 50 years, France had not opened a new foreign military base, a fact that made this one "a small geopolitical revolution," according to Adm Edouard Guillaud, chief of the French Defense Staff.[22] First and foremost, this defense base is the expression of an unambiguous engagement with our emirate partners to guarantee their security by means of the presence and visibility of French forces as well as the pre-positioning of permanent armed forces, which would help keep enemies at bay. It also represents a strong indicator of the determination and the capacity of France not only to react in order to protect the UAE, in accordance with the defense agreement, but also to protect French interests in the region by preserving the energy supply lines. This military stronghold offers new projection capabilities for troops in the region and secures two major naval routes between the Red Sea, protected by the French base of Djibouti (3,000 troops) and the Arabian–Persian Gulf outlet. France finds itself at the entrance points of a strategic location in the Persian Gulf—namely, the Strait of Hormuz. In case of an Arab conflict (whether involving the Americans or Israelis and Iran), the base, situated 200 kilometers from the Iranian coast, will put France at the fore-front of any regional battle. The hardening of political positions in the area should not lead us to underestimate the occurrence of such a scenario. The rivalry between US-supported oil monarchies and Iran, which wants to emerge as a regional power, and the latter's threat to block the strait pending an attack by Israel, put France at the heart of this sensitive territory. More than ever, nuclearization of the region becomes a possibility since Iran seemingly does not want to give up on nuclear weapons despite threats from Israel. Moreover, a long-standing dispute exists between Iran and the UAE about the three islands situated in the middle of the Strait of Hormuz.[23] Under these conditions, we can also judge how the security clause—foreseen

in the agreement between France and the UAE—could become engaging. In this tinderbox, the Abu Dhabi base keeps tensions at arm's length by discouraging all aggression that could force the region into a crisis whose consequences would become direr as they spread to surrounding countries.

In this sense, the French military believes in a strategy of strategic intimidation.[24] That is, it "rel[ies] on the threat of use or effective but limited use of capacities and conventional actions . . . to lead a potential or declared adversary to renounce the initiative, development or pursuit of an aggressive action, by influencing his decision with the fear of consequences to his organization."[25] This intimidation has no effect unless it is enforced by a strong political will backed by the means to deliver significant damage. Regular exercises that show efficient technique and operation will make the enemy aware of the effectiveness of such means, convincing him that the risk will far outweigh the benefits. The ability of the base at Abu Dhabi to strike quickly contributes to this strategic intimidation. Such a permanent display of our forces' operational character adds to France's external politics, particularly in the prevention of crises: "Our strategy of influence should rely on the existence of visible, quantifiable and recognized capacities, where engagement, potential or real, contributes to the politico-diplomatic maneuver at hand."[26]

France's role in the quality of global power in the region rests also on surveillance of the existing nuclear-proliferation network. Its presence in the UAE allows France to keep an eye on attempts at such proliferation. This capacity again reinforces its role and influence in the security of the Middle East.

## Conclusion

The Arab Spring validated the necessity of France's investing in the Persian Gulf region to confirm its influence and contribute to stabilizing a place where a number of security issues have crystallized. The choices of French foreign politics in this zone have in fact been validated, but this binds France even more to this strategic, precarious location that has emerged from ongoing Arab revolutions. The latter make it imperative that France take advantage of the aura and the respect it has acquired in this part of the world and have a say in the security and solidity of its partners in the Maghreb, Far East, and Middle East.

## Notes

1. According to the philosopher Nassim Nicholas Taleb, who developed the black swan theory, the realization of a certain number of unpredictable, highly improbable events would engender exceptional consequences. For example, one can consider the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 a black swan. See Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *Le Cygne noir: La puissance de l'imprévisible* [The black swan: The power of the unpredictable] (Paris: Belles Lettres, 2008).

2. Theorized by Prof. Joseph S. Nye Jr. in his work *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990), soft power plays on the capacity of a country to influence the behavior of another in order to lead it to adopt the same point of view by means of ideological and cultural seduction without the use of force (hard power). The rift between hard and soft power is therefore superseded, and it is considered advantageous to combine the two concepts harmoniously to lead to a strategy considered "smart power"—the official American doctrine concerning foreign policy since 2009.

3. Created on 25 May 1981, the CCASG united the countries of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE, Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar.

4. Kuwait signed in August 1992; Qatar, in August 1994; and the UAE, in January 1995.

5. The European Union, on the other hand, is not considered a viable partner to instill security in the Gulf states, mainly because it has credibility only in the political arena.

6. *The French White Paper on Defence and National Security* (New York: Odile Jacob Publishing, 2008), http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/france_english2008.pdf.

7. For parliamentary discussions related to this defense agreement, see report no. 3455 of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the National Assembly concerning law project no. 3193, which authorized an agreement between the French government and the government of the UAE in terms of a defense cooperative.

8. Nadim Hasbani, "France-Emirats: Des relations militaires stratégiques?" [France-Emirates: Military strategic relationship], *Revue Moyen-Orient*, no. 3 (December 2009–January 2010), http://www.moyenorient-presse.com/?p=31.

9. Cooperative Defense Agreement between France and the United Arab Emirates, 26 May 2009, art. 4.

10. The inflow of foreign exchange caused by the 1974 oil crisis and the need for Saudi Arabia to secure its sea lanes led the kingdom to diversify the modernization program of its armed forces. On 11 May 1980, Saudi Arabia and France concluded an agreement on naval cooperation whereby the French government would provide equipment to the Saudi navy. Similarly, on 9 October 1982 the two governments signed an agreement of cooperation and military assistance for the purpose of conducting joint exercises and training military personnel in Saudi Arabia.

11. Georges Malbrunot, "Pourquoi Hollande reliance le partenariat avec l'Arabie?" [Why does Hollande restart the partnership with Saudi Arabia?], 3 November 2012, http://blog.lefigaro.fr/malbrunot.

12. At the end of the 1990s, the UAE diversified its arms suppliers and bought 80 F-16s from the United States. Saudi Arabia did the same by purchasing 72 Eurofighter Typhoons from Great Britain, thinking that Moscow would consolidate its military arsenal with Iran.

13. Some European nations—Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Bulgaria—tried to take part in the "Persian Miracle." Their influence, however, was secondary to that of the United States, Great Britain, and France.

14. For more on the Arab Spring, consult Bernard Guetta, *L'an I des révolutions arabes* [Year one of Arab revolutions] (Paris: Berlin, 2012); and Mathieu Guidère, *Le choc des révolutions arabes, de l'Algérie au Yemen, 22 pays sous tension* [The impact of Arab revolutions, from Algeria to Yemen] (Paris: Autrement, 2012).

15. For more on Qatar's new diplomacy, see Jean-François Fiorina, "Géopolitique de Qatar: 'Diplomatie du tapis volant' ou réel appétit de puissance?" [Qatar's geopolitical "flying carpet diplomacy" or real hunger for power?], *CLES*, no. 60 (22 March 2012), http://notes-geopolitiques.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/CLES60.pdf; Pascal Boniface, "Le Qatar pratique une diplomatie pragmatique" [Qatar practices a pragmatic diplomacy], *Challenges*, 16 February 2012; and Fatiha Dazi-Héni, "Désir de puissance: Le Qatar a-t-il les moyens de ses ambitions diplomatiques dans le monde arabe?" [Does Qatar have the means to carry out its diplomatic ambitions in the Arab world?], *Actuelle de l'IFRI*, 21 July 2012.

16.  On this point, see Mourad Bsiri, "Investissements et diplomatie du Qatar au Maghreb" [Qatar's investment and diplomacy in North Africa], *Futuribles internationale*, 24 April 2012.

17.  Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Revision du livre blanc sur la défense et la sécurité nationale: Quelles évolutions du contexte stratégique depuis 2008?* [Revision of the white paper on defense and national security: What changes in the strategic environment since 2008?], information report no. 207, 16 December 2011, 37, http://www.senat.fr/rap/r11-207/r11-2071.pdf.

18.  Ibid., 42.

19.  Ibid., 91.

20.  Marc Vignaud, "Virage radical pour la diplomatie française face aux révoltes du monde arabe" [Radical shift in French diplomacy following revolts in the Arab world], LePoint.fr, 22 March 2011, http://www.lepoint.fr/politique/virage-radical-pour-la-diplomatie-francaise-face-aux-revoltes-du-monde-arabe-22-03-2011-1309906_20.php; and Alain Barluet, "Le printemps arabe réveille la diplomatie française" [The Arab Spring awakens French diplomacy], Le Figaro. fr, 11 October 2011, http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2011/10/11/01003-20111011ARTFIG00804-le-printemps-arabe-reveille-la-diplomatie-francaise.php.

21.  Committee on National Defense and Armed Foreces, report no. 5, extraordinary session, hearing of Gen Jean-Paul Paloméros, chief of staff, Armée de l'Air, 17 July 2012, 6.

22.  Philippe Leymarie, "La France, puissance du Golfe" [France, Gulf Power], *Le Monde diplomatique*, 17 January 2008.

23.  On 30 November 1971, Iran's Shah decided to invade three islands located in the Strait of Hormuz. Iran still occupies these islands, which are strategically located for economic reasons because of the development of hydrocarbons there.

24.  The Center for Interarmy Concepts proposed this concept in *Intimidation Strategy*, RDIA-006_IS (Paris: Center for Interarmy Concepts, 2012).

25.  Ibid., 9.

26.  Gen Jean-Paul Paloméros, chief of staff, Armée de l'Air, "Garantir à la France une puissance aérienne de permier rang" [To ensure a leading role for French airpower] (conference remarks, National Assembly, Paris, 30 March 2010).

# Poor Scapegoats

## Moving beyond Radical Islam, Modernization, and Authoritarian Rule as the Root Causes of Terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa

TIFFANY O. HOWARD, PHD*

The Middle East and the states that comprise the Maghreb have been plagued by enduring hostilities for the past 50 years. With the end of the Cold War, the region hosted some of the bloodiest and most protracted wars in the world—namely, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the two wars in Iraq (1991 and 2003), the civil war in Yemen (1994), the struggle in Lebanon (2007), and the war between Iraq and Iran (1980–88), one of the deadliest interstate actions on record. The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, a known conflict zone rife with internal and regional struggles, is also the site of some of the most lethal terror networks and attacks in the world. Thus, the prevalence of violence in the region has made the Middle East and the Maghreb the focal point for a great deal of research in political science.

For years, scholars have sought to understand why the MENA seemingly hosts an endless wave of violence. Several empirical studies have arrived at relevant theories that find the lack of democracy, barriers to modernization, and the presence of religious radicalism at the root of the conflicts.[1] Building upon this body of research, this article explores these arguments but from a different perspective. Instead of tackling democracy, modernization, and religious radicalism as discrete concepts, it examines the impact of these factors on the trend to political violence as components of state failure.

Next to sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, the MENA includes the highest percentage of weak and failed states in the world. Theories explored thus far as

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fundamental causes of the political violence in this area are simply symptoms of all weak states. Therefore, analyses of the causes of terrorism and political violence in the Middle East and the Maghreb should begin with an examination of the state dysfunction prevalent within the region.

Using data from the Arab Barometer Survey (2008), this article asserts that the conditions of state failure force individuals to resort to terrorism and political violence in the MENA as a means of obtaining tangible political, economic, and social goods and forcing strategic political concessions.[2] Therefore, promoting democracy, modernization, and religious freedom on an individual basis is a noble and useful pursuit, but addressing these factors in a broader context by cultivating state building in the region constitutes the first step towards dealing with the systematic violence.

## Argument

This study evaluates the relationship between state failure and the prevalence of terrorist and insurgent activity in the Middle East and the Maghreb in an effort to illustrate that the process of state failure—not the grievance-based issues of a lack of democracy and economic development, which then fuel religious radicalism—explains the region's political violence. Although it is tempting to deduce the simple explanation that weak and failed states would naturally be attractive to terrorist groups and insurgents, given the absence of a functioning security force, the article maintains that the relationship is more nuanced. Certainly the element of a pull factor exists, in that actors engaging in political violence can better carry out operations in failed states. Until now, most studies have focused solely on this element—the attractiveness of failed states to terrorists and insurgents.[3] However, the article raises another issue in this dynamic: the possibility that citizens of failed states are attracted to political violence because of deteriorating conditions within this type of state. A critical element has remained absent from this discussion—specifically, the decision-making process of ordinary citizens to engage in terrorist and insurgent activity because the state can no longer fulfill its responsibilities to them. Individuals living in failed states gravitate to political violence because the system is broken—the state has failed in its duty.

Rather than use event data to evaluate the patterns of political violence in relation to the MENA's weak states, this study seeks to understand individuals' perspectives regarding the use of violence as a political tool when the state has failed. Arab Barometer survey data indicate an insidious pattern of deprivation and oppression within weak states in the MENA that drives ordinary citizens

to engage in and support political violence. This article helps further scholarly discourse by suggesting an alternative cause of this type of violence that global indicator models of terrorism have overlooked. Until now, because those models have ignored individual-level data, they have also ignored the basic tenets of human psychology and the forces that drive seemingly rational human beings to commit irrational acts of violence.

The fact that failed states threaten people's survival ultimately compels them to obtain tangible political and economic resources through other means, which include the use of political violence. Further, the major implications for the international community are that this pattern of deprivation makes individuals in these states more susceptible to the influence of internationally sponsored terrorist groups. Consequently, failed states become breeding grounds for terrorists, who then export their radical ideologies to other parts of the world to create threats across the globe. Thus, the global war on terrorism will remain a futile endeavor if the international community ignores the importance of comprehensive state building that incorporates the sustained development of strong political and economic institutions within developing societies.[4]

The importance of this research is twofold. First, it joins the existing body of research on weak states, fragile states, and failed states by outlining a discrete set of indicators of state decline.[5] However, it goes beyond those works by evaluating how these factors work together to weaken and create chaos and anarchy within a nation where terrorism and violence then become a legitimate avenue to obtain political and economic resources.

Beyond establishing a typology of state failure, this study is also particularly timely and differs from other works on terrorism in its approach to understanding alternative root causes of this type of violence beyond those of economic decline, religious radicalism, and levels of frustration.[6] Unlike previous works that focus on macrolevel terrorist incidents and specific country cases which paint a broad picture of how weak states contribute to political violence, this article probes deeper and seeks to understand why state failure influences an individual's decision to support and commit an act of political violence.

## Terrorism and State Failure in the Middle East and North Africa

The state's main goal is to provide its citizens the public good of security. A strong state ensures that its borders are secure and that its citizens are not engaged in internal conflict.[7] The state can deliver a host of other public goods only when it sustains a reasonable measure of security within its borders and when neighboring states do so as well.[8] In contrast to strong states, failing

ones are inherently weak because of geographical, political, or economic constraints—basically strong but temporarily or situationally weak due to internal conflict, management weakness, corruption, despotism, or external threats.[9] Such nations typically exhibit ethnic, religious, linguistic, or some other type of intercommunal tension that has yet to erupt into widespread and uncontrollable violence. Per capita gross domestic product and other indicators of economic prosperity have all declined, the ability of the government to provide the essential public good of security has deteriorated or is deteriorating, and urban crime rates tend to be high or on the rise.

Whereas the failing state is in a precarious position of worsening circumstances, the failed state lacks all evidence of security and order. Most "failed states are tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous, and contested bitterly by warring factions."[10] In most cases, the government of a failed state experiences multiple rebellions and civil unrest, communal conflict, and a host of discontent directed towards it.[11] Essentially, failed nation-states cannot control their borders; their economy has deteriorated; they are involved in bitter, violent struggles; they have no functioning physical infrastructure; and their political institutions lack any form of legitimacy. In other words, a failed state cannot perform the fundamental tasks of a nation-state in the modern world.

Such states experience tremendous upheaval, which has severe, long-term implications for society. Citizens of nation-states without a functioning political system and the basic tenets of security and order are more vulnerable to the propaganda and radical agenda of terrorist groups. Thus, extremists have the opportunity to gain popular support for the use of political violence during such a tenuous period. As a result, the ordinary citizen can be persuaded to support political violence and engage in such an act as a way of attaining tangible economic and political goods that the state can no longer provide.

This particular situation has been evident in the Middle East and the Maghreb, a region afflicted by a lack of economic development and inequities in resource distribution. Thus, economic crises born of a dearth of development have crippled the states in this region, making them perpetually weak, and have driven many of those suffering from poverty to support and join terrorist organizations. Further, the conditions of state fragility in this region have also given extremist groups material for propaganda, which has facilitated their recruitment efforts and legitimized their acts of terrorism among the populace.[12]

As mentioned above, next to sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, the MENA is plagued by failed states (tables 1 and 2). Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the prevalence of state collapse and incidents of terrorism in the region, respectively. The following section discusses why these two factors are so strongly related.

**Table 1. The 2008 *Index of State Weakness* rankings for the Middle East and North Africa (based on a total of 141 countries)**

| Country | Ranking | Quintile |
|---|---|---|
| Iraq | 4 | Bottom |
| Yemen* | 30 | 2nd |
| Mauritania | 37 | 2nd |
| Algeria* | 57 | 3rd |
| Syria | 59 | 3rd |
| Iran | 66 | 3rd |
| Egypt | 78 | 3rd |
| Libya | 86 | 4th |
| Lebanon* | 93 | 4th |
| Morocco* | 96 | 4th |
| Turkey | 98 | 4th |
| Tunisia | 112 | 4th |
| Jordan* | 118 | 5th (the highest) |
| Oman | 128 | 5th (the highest) |

*Source*: Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick, *Index of State Weakness in the Developing World* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2008), 39–42, http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Research/Files/Reports/2008/2/weak%20states%20index/02_weak_states_index.PDF.

*Country case in the Arab Barometer Survey

**Table 2. "The Failed States Index 2009" rankings for the Middle East and North Africa (based on a total of 177 countries)**

| Country | Ranking | Quintile |
|---|---|---|
| Iraq | 6 | Alert |
| Yemen* | 18 | Alert |
| Lebanon* | 29 | Alert |
| Iran | 38 | Alert |
| Egypt | 43 | Warning |
| Mauritania | 46 | Warning |
| Israel/West Bank* | 58 | Warning |
| Algeria* | 73 | Warning |
| Turkey | 85 | Warning |
| Jordan* | 86 | Warning |
| Saudi Arabia | 89 | Warning |
| Morocco* | 93 | Warning |
| Libya | 112 | Warning |
| Tunisia | 121 | Warning |
| Kuwait* | 125 | Warning |

*Source*: "The Failed States Index 2009," *Foreign Policy* and the Fund for Peace, accessed 21 February 2013, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/06/22/2009_failed_states_index_interactive_map_and_rankings.

*Country case in the Arab Barometer Survey
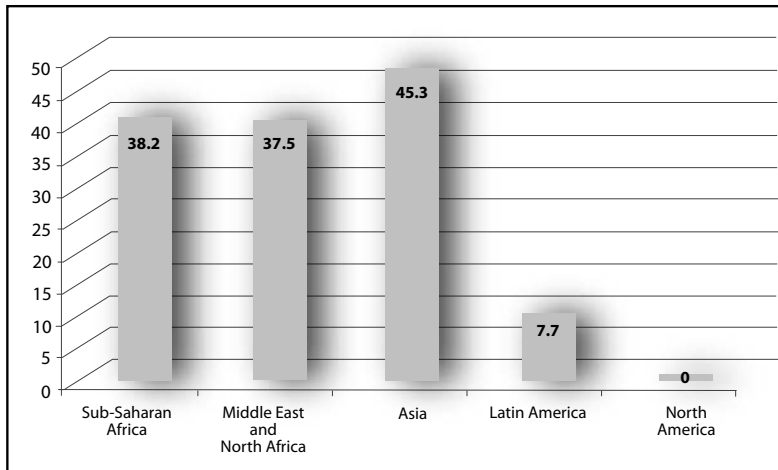
**Figure 1. Percentage of states experiencing episodes of failure by region, 1998–2003**. (Compiled by the author from James A. Piazza, "Draining the Swamp: Democracy Promotion, State Failure, and Terrorism in 19 Middle Eastern Countries," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 30, no. 6 [2007]: 521–39, http://www.politicalscience.uncc.edu/jpiazza/PiazzaSCT2007.pdf.)
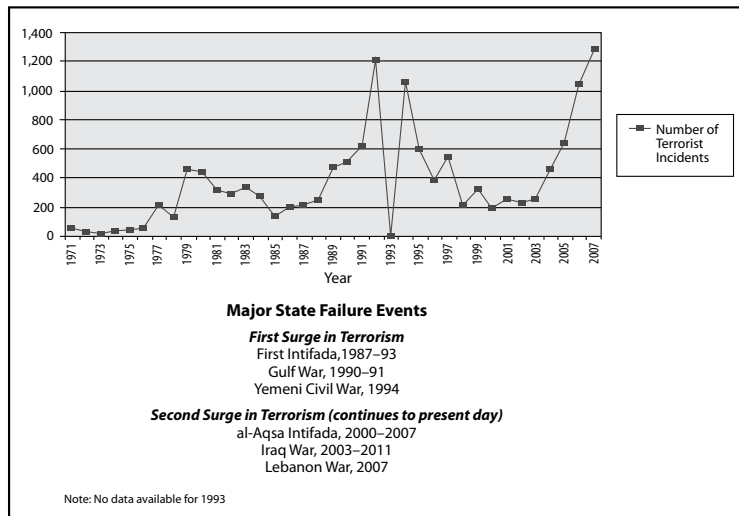


**Figure 2. Number of reported terrorist incidents and major incidents of state failure in the Middle East and the Maghreb, 1977–2007**. (Data compiled by the author from "Global Terrorism Database," National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, University of Maryland, accessed 2 February 2010, http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/.) The figure depicts two surges of terrorism, the first of which began around 1985 and sharply increased throughout the first Palestinian intifada through the Gulf War and then the civil war in Yemen. The Arab-Israeli conflict, which lies at the nexus of security concerns in the region, prompted a decrease in the violence during the Oslo Peace Process of 1993–2000 and the Camp David negotiations in 2000. However, following the breakdown in negotiation talks and former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount, the second intifada began, leading to the second surge of political violence that has steadily increased with the war in Lebanon and the war in Iraq and its ongoing insurgency.

Essential to the relationship between state failure and terrorism is the absence of the state in ungoverned territory. Like many of the states in sub-Saharan Africa, the MENA has vast stretches of land "linked to the incubation of terrorism where the central government is unable to project its power in substantial regions of the country controlled by insurgents or regional actors [or terrorists]."[13] Within the MENA, the nations of Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Lebanon have all hosted terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda and the Palestine Liberation Organization within their tribal territories and remote regions where the influence of the government is marginal if not completely absent.

Beyond ungoverned territory, the MENA is also subject to other critical features of state failure: a lack of security, illegitimate and corrupt state authority, and the inability of the government to provide public goods and services to substantial segments of the population. Together, these factors represent the conditions of state failure. Yet, within the MENA one finds three additional factors not specifically unique to the region but often considered the major causes of political violence there.

Specifically, this article also explores the effect of authoritarianism, the lack of economic development, and the dominance of religious radicalism on individual support for such violence. Within the MENA, these function as intervening factors with regard to the relationship between political violence and state failure. As mentioned earlier, other studies have not neglected to examine these issues as key contributors to terrorism in the region; rather, they have not assessed their collective influence on terrorism within the context of state failure. The following section explores this relationship in greater detail. However, it is important to understand that cultural considerations and circumstances within the MENA make the convergence of these variables crucial to our understanding of state failure in this region and of their key impact on ideological support for terrorism—more so than in any other part of the world.[14]

## Middle East Exceptionalism: Authoritarianism, Economic Development, and Religious Radicalism

### *The Absence of Democracy / Authoritarian Rule*

The MENA is dominated by authoritarian systems of governance. Of the 24 states that make up the Middle East and the Maghreb, only Israel and Turkey represent traditional democratic states. Samuel Huntington points

to the MENA as one of the regions most resistant to democratic ideals; indeed, it has yet to experience a wave of democratization.[15] Along with other scholars, he has argued that one can attribute the absence of democracy in the MENA to a complex set of factors, the most notable being the salient nature of Islam.[16]

In a multivariate cross-sectional analysis, M. Steven Fish finds that Islam shares a strong relationship with autocracy and attributes this finding to the subordinate role of women in MENA society.[17] Daniela Donno and Bruce Russett, however, observe that, in general, Arab states are more likely to be authoritarian than Islamic states.[18] Thus, debate remains as to whether or not one may attribute the prevalence of autocratic systems of governance in the region to Arab culture or to the dominance of Islam in these countries. Regardless, the prominence of autocracy in the Middle East has long been considered a cause of discord in the region.[19] That is, in these types of states, "public grievances are not addressed and are therefore allowed to fester to the point that citizens turn to extremist actors for relief. The dictatorial nature of the regime furthermore retards the public virtues of political moderation and compromise, which are necessary ingredients of non-violent political expression."[20] Despite the relationship between authoritarianism and internal conflict, the one between authoritarianism and terrorism is less defined and lacks evidential support in the current body of research.

Studies have found little evidence to suggest that the absence of democracy and the presence of authoritarian rule encourage terrorism.[21] Several have even discovered that democracies are actually more conducive to terrorist activities than authoritarian states.[22] Thus, a major consideration of this analysis involves illustrating that the features of authoritarian rule which foster conflict also foster terrorism. It is logical to assume that a relationship exists between terrorism and autocratic forms of governance, given the strength of the relationship between violent conflict and autocracy. Consequently, the fact that studies have not been able to establish this linkage highlights the weaknesses of these analyses and the data used. By utilizing survey data, this text diverges from existing approaches by identifying the repressive components of authoritarian states, within the context of state weakness, that foster individual opinions and attitudes which could then lead to terrorist behavior. This approach reveals that autocratic systems of governance are at the source of terrorism.

### Absence of Economic Development

Economic development and diversity have largely been absent in the MENA. Given an economy dependent upon natural resources (largely oil), foreign aid, and remittances, industrial development has lagged behind in the region.[23] Oil dependence plays a crucial role in the relationship between terrorism and state failure there. Some scholars point to resource scarcity as a major contributor to conflict, but a great deal of research has found empirical support for resource abundance as a factor in generating and sustaining conflict.[24] Moreover, rentier-state theory supports this assertion, and research indicates that states dependent upon one or a few natural resources have slow economic growth and are more likely to be based upon authoritarian political regimes than states with poor resources and/or diverse economies.[25]

Commentators have often cited the lack of economic development in the MENA as the principal motivation for violence in the region.[26] Lacking an inclusive economic system, the area has fostered grievances among able-bodied, educated, ideological youth who cannot find employment.[27] The ranks of terrorist organizations are filled with this disenfranchised and disillusioned segment of the population. Thus, the lack of economic development in the region has not only crippled these states, making them perpetually weak and driving many of the unemployed youth to terrorist organizations, but also has allowed something far worse to emerge. It has provided extremist groups with material for propaganda, which has facilitated their recruiting efforts, legitimized their acts of terrorism, and cultivated an ideology based upon religious radicalism.

### Religious Radicalism

Inarguably, radical Islam springs from the creation and militarization of Israel. However, scholars argue that not until the end of the Six Day War in 1967 did radical Islam and the fundamentalist organizations driving these ideologies begin to gain popularity.[28] The defeat of the Arab nations by Israel in six days infused the region with a sense of humiliation and hopelessness.[29] The failure of radical socialism in the 1950s and 1960s, along with the pan-Arabism movements, found the people of the MENA desperate to escape the perceived dominance of Western ideals and values and to find a successful political, economic, and social movement unique to the culture and dominant religion of the region.

The radical Islamist movements supplemented—or in many cases, supplanted—the government as the source of economic and social goods,

which, in the end, conferred political power on these groups as well. Consequently, drawing upon a large membership base of educated, unemployed individuals frustrated with the political and economic situation in the region, the Muslim Brotherhood, Fatah, Hamas, and other radical Islamic groups have successfully promoted and implemented their agenda of violence.

As discussed previously, this study diverges from previous works by not simply looking at the individual effect of certain factors on the occurrence of terrorism.[30] In the case of religious radicalism, it holds that nothing about the religion of Islam accounts for the emergence of popular support for radical ideologies—or terrorism, for that matter. Instead, the lack of economic development, coupled with exposure to radical Islam, explains an individual's support for political violence. Consequently, this article examines these two features of state failure together, elaborating upon them in the discussion of methodology and findings.

## State Failure: The Main Hypothesis

The hypothesis that guides this analysis maintains that failing and failed states are breeding grounds for political violence, primarily because of their weak rule of law and the absence of a security infrastructure capable of monitoring territorial borders. However, the conditions in failing and failed states can also drive individuals to resort to violent activities as a way of realizing some measure of security and obtaining tangible political and economic goods.

Strong states provide one basic, fundamental public good that weak states lack: that of security.[31] Without security, it is difficult for states to offer other basic goods indicative of their stability. The following four hypotheses capture the dimensions of state weakness.

### Public Good of Security

### Hypothesis 1: Individuals Who Feel That the State Does Not Provide Adequate Personal Security Are Likely to Support Political Violence

This hypothesis is grounded in the notion that individuals who have been victims of a violent act will turn to political violence as a means of obtaining some measure of security that the state has failed to provide. Thus, they are likely to engage in violent acts against the state or to support groups that may commit such acts but at the same time offer ad hoc security. This particular phenomenon proceeds from what some sociologists have identified

as the key factor that contributes to gang membership. Studies have found that adolescent males who have witnessed violence or have been victims of violence no longer believe that the state and its security personnel can protect them.[32] Consequently, they seek protection from alternative groups, such as a gang, even as the gang itself commits violent acts. Kathryn Seifert applies this particular cognitive behavior not only to the recruitment of gang members but also to cults and terrorist organizations. She maintains that adolescents' exposure to war and genocide increases the likelihood that they will grow up to become violent and participate in social violence practiced by terrorist organizations.[33] In the MENA, where both adults' and adolescents' exposure to violence is not uncommon, those citizens are more accepting of political violence than individuals in regions where such exposure is less prevalent. Clearly, personal insecurity has the potential to lead to support for and participation in political violence.

### Presence of the State

### Hypothesis 2: The Greater the Presence of the State, the Less Likely an Individual Will Participate in and Support Political Violence

In every known case of state failure, the absence of the state's influence is captured by the existence of ungoverned territory, an area characterized by large stretches of land within a state without rule of law exercised by the central government. These spaces are typically located in rural areas beyond governmental influence or in mountainous, rough terrain.[34] Such territory is a recipe for disaster. Without the presence of the government and security personnel, nonstate actors such as rebel groups, terrorist cells, paramilitary units, and insurgents can organize themselves in these spaces and engage in illegal, dangerous activities. Given what we know about ungoverned territory, this hypothesis maintains that the greater the presence of the state, the less likely an individual will engage in or support political violence.

### State Authority

### Hypothesis 3: The Greater the Authority and Legitimacy of the State, the Less Likely an Individual Will Participate in and Support Political Violence

The logic behind this hypothesis is that leadership sets the tone for the state. If people perceive the state authority as corrupt or as having seized power through illegitimate means, then the state will have difficulty convincing citizens to adhere to basic laws and institutional rules.[35] The only

exception occurs when state leaders use violence and coercion rather than functioning institutions to maintain authority and legitimacy. In those cases, states maintain power and authority only through oppression and the use of repressive tactics. However, in the end, state repression can subdue the populace for only so long in the face of deteriorating conditions brought about by state failure.

### Provision of Public Goods

### Hypothesis 4: When Citizens Are Provided Tangible Public Goods, They Are Less Likely to Participate in and Support Political Violence

Once the state ensures the public good of security, other tangible goods such as an education system, a health care system, a transportation system, a mail-delivery system, and other basic services become its essential responsibilities.[36] When states fail to offer these fundamental services, individuals must seek alternative ways of accessing them.[37] That is, they may resort to political violence or throw their support to terrorist organizations and insurgent groups because they believe that they will succeed where the state has failed.

## Additional Hypotheses: Factors Unique to the Middle East

As discussed previously, this study hypothesizes that the climate of state failure engenders political violence. In the case of the MENA, certain cultural factors unique to the region coexist to create a situation of failure. Thus, beyond the features of state failure outlined in the preceding section, three additional factors—both unique and central to state weakness in the MENA—demand examination.

### Prevalence of Autocracy

### Hypothesis 5: Given the Presence of Autocratic Governance, Citizens of These States Are More Likely to Participate in and Support Political Violence

### Lack of Economic Development

### Hypothesis 6: When Citizens Perceive Their State As One That Lags Behind in Economic Development, They Are More Likely to Participate in and Support Political Violence

*Religious Radicalism*

***Hypothesis 7: Given the Prevalence and Acceptance of Widespread Radical Religious Ideology, Citizens Exposed to These Ideals in Their States Are More Likely to Participate in and Support Political Violence***

This article hypothesizes that, in addition to the lack of the public good of security, the absence of the state, a weak state authority, and the lack of provision of public goods, the prevalence of state failure in the MENA also proceeds from the dominance of autocratic regimes in the region, a lack of economic development, and the presence of mainstream religious radicalism. As demonstrated by the statistical models, these factors work together to create a climate of state failure in the area. As a result, this situation encourages citizens to support and engage in political violence to attain political and economic concessions from the state.

## Data and Methodology

The data for this analysis come from the Arab Barometer Survey, which canvasses between 750 to 1,300 respondents of voting age from each of the seven MENA countries. In each country case, the survey team conducted face-to-face interviews, using various methods of data collection. In Algeria, Morocco, and Kuwait, the survey employed an area probability sample, basing quotas for age, education, and gender upon the most recent census. In Jordan, a sample of 100 clusters was randomly selected from the master sample, organized according to the number and geographic location of the families to ensure adequate representation. In Lebanon, the survey drew a nationally representative sample from a master sampling frame developed by *Statistics Lebanon*.[38] A nationally representative sample was also drawn in Yemen but in multiple stages from 21 Yemeni governorates proportional to the population in each governorate. Finally, in Palestine, the survey utilized a three-stage cluster sampling method based upon the most recent national census.

*Dependent Variables*

Two dependent variables measure the concept of "support for political violence." Together, they capture individuals' attitudes regarding the use of violence as a legitimate tool to secure tangible goods or concessions from the state.

**Dependent variable 1: Political violence**. The first measure of political violence is based upon the following question in the Arab Barometer Survey:

Question (Variable=Violence1a–Violence1e): "Do you think the following operations are terrorist operations or not?"[39]

| Operations | Terrorist | Not Terrorist | Have Not Heard of Them | Don't Know [Do Not Read] | Decline to Answer |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Amman Hotel Explosions | | | | | |
| 2. Egyptian Explosions (Sharm al Sheikh/Dahab) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 |
| 3. London Underground Explosions | | | | | |
| 4. Madrid Train Explosions | | | | | |
| 5. Casablanca (Morocco) Explosions | | | | | |

To estimate the model, I set the value "1" to zero, value "2" to one, and coded the remaining values as "missing data" for each incident. I did so because I am interested only in those respondents who favor the use of violence in relation to those who do not. I do not know the motivations of respondents who have not heard of the incidents, do not have an answer, or have declined to answer, so this information is not useful to me.

Given this study's definition of terrorism, the incidents listed above represent acts of political violence; thus, I code the variable in this manner because if respondents do not consider these events acts of terrorism, then I infer that they support these actions and the use of violence. The transformation of the variable allows me to determine which dimensions of state failure increase the likelihood that individuals support the use of political violence. On the one hand, the value "1" indicates that the respondent does not consider the incidents cited acts of terrorism and therefore sanctions the use of this type of violence. On the other hand, the value "0" indicates that the respondent considers the incidents cited acts of terrorism and does not support the use of this type of violence.

**Dependent variable 2: Political violence**. The second measure of political violence is based upon the following question in the Arab Barometer Survey:

Question (Variable=Violence3): "Do you agree that armed groups are justified in attacking civilians in Iraq in order to resist the American occupation?"

Value Labels: 1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Disagree, 4=Strongly Disagree, 8=Can't Choose [Do Not Read], 9=Decline to Answer [Do Not Read][40]

To estimate the model, I set the values "1" and "2" to one, values "3" and "4" to zero, and coded the remaining values as missing data. Most people agree that using armed violence against civilians to make a political statement or force certain concessions from the government is an act of terrorism. Therefore, this variable—more so than the other two dependent variables—clearly indicates whether or not the respondent sanctions the use of political violence. The transformation of this variable leaves me with a measure of political violence, whereby respondents' agreement with this statement implies that they support political violence and their disagreement implies that they do not sanction such violence.

Before turning to a discussion of the explanatory variable, I must make two points about the proxy measures for political violence. First, at no point do these measures indicate whether respondents support the use of political violence against their own government—actually, quite the opposite since the second question mentions terrorist acts against the American occupation of Iraq. Therefore, it is likely that some of the respondents may support the use of political violence against the United States but not against their own state. I acknowledge the flaws that come with using these variables as measures of political violence against a respondent's home state, which raises my second point.

The literature on political violence in the MENA finds that negative attitudes towards the West, particularly the United States, often correlate with dissatisfaction with one's own government: "A continued sense of humiliation through covert and direct foreign support for repressive regimes as well as direct foreign intervention has left many [in the MENA] disillusioned with their own governments, as well as those of the major Western powers."[41] Support for the use of terrorism against the United States or any other state in the MENA should suggest support for the use of political violence against a respondent's own state.

Table 3 and figure 3 bolster this argument. The Pearson Correlation Analysis (table 3) reveals a strong correlation between the two measures of political violence. Although the coefficient results for the variable that involves

terrorist violence against the United States report weaker relationships with the other constructs, the relationships still remain statistically significant. Further, figure 3 supports the findings of the correlation analysis. The percentage of respondents who consider the incidents of violence terrorist acts is consistent with my argument and our understanding of the nature of terrorism. The respondents overwhelmingly believe that the violence committed against targets in the MENA and civilians in other countries constitutes terrorists acts.

**Table 3. Pearson Correlation Analysis for measures of political violence**

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Amman Hotel Explosions | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- |
| 2. Egyptian Explosions (Sharm al Sheikh/Dahab) | .6704*** | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- |
| 3. London Underground Explosions | .4559*** | .5811*** | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- |
| 4. Madrid Train Explosions | .4677*** | .5712*** | .9125*** | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- |
| 5. Casablanca (Morocco) Explosions | .6305*** | .7085*** | .6525*** | .6692*** | ---- | ---- | ---- |
| 6. Armed groups are justified in attacking civilians in Iraq in order to resist the American occupation | .1045*** | .1054*** | .0935*** | .0993*** | .1015*** | .1668*** | ---- |

Note: ***$p < .01$ for two-tailed test[42]
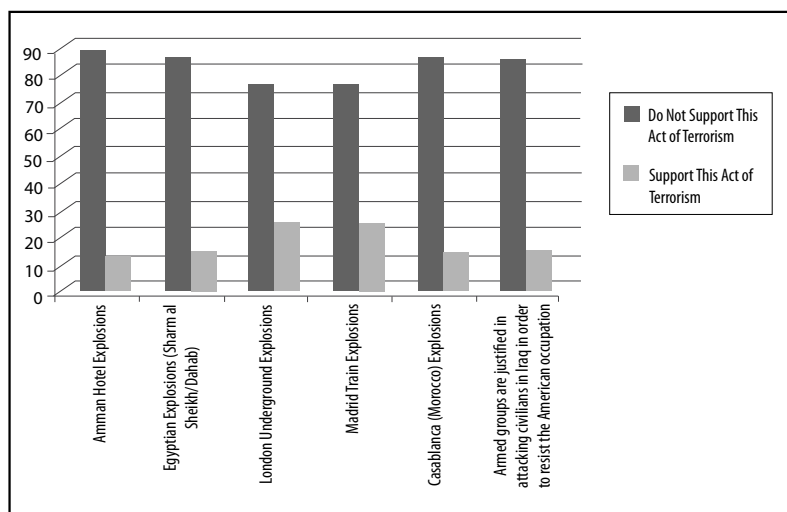


**Figure 3. Percentage of respondents who support the use of political violence**

The findings in table 3 and figure 3 lend credence to my assertion that negative attitudes towards the West are also correlated with dissatisfaction with one's own government. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, regardless of the region where the terrorist incident took place, the notion that individuals sanction this type of violence should imply that they support the use of political violence in general. Thus, there is a strong probability that they also support this type of violence against their own state.

### Explanatory Variables

**The public good of security**. The first explanatory variable derives from a single measure of the public good of security and captures individuals' opinions regarding how secure they feel. The greater the feelings of personal insecurity, the more likely individuals will condone the use of political violence against the failed state that did not protect them. Furthermore, they are highly likely to support groups that engage in political violence because the latter often protect them.

The measure for the public good of security is based upon the following question in the Arab Barometer Survey:

> Question 1 (Variable=Security1): "Generally speaking, how safe is living in this (city/town/village)?"
>
> Value Labels: 1=Very Safe, 2=Safe, 3=Unsafe, 4=Very Unsafe, 8=[Do Not Read] Can't Choose, 9=[Do Not Read] Declined to Answer[43]

To estimate the model, I coded the values "8" and "9" as missing data for both variables. Removing these values leaves me with a scale that indicates an increase in perceived insecurity. Given the measurement of this explanatory variable, a positive coefficient signifies that a higher level of perceived insecurity increases the likelihood that a respondent will support political violence.

**The presence of the state**. The second explanatory variable, the presence of the state, stems from a single measure with five dimensions. Together, they capture individuals' opinions regarding the ease with which they can contact and receive services from the government. The more visible and accessible the government, the more likely the state is present. Similarly, the less visible and less accessible the government, the greater the likelihood that it is not present in the respondent's region, thus implying the presence of ungoverned territory—where terrorist groups tend to flourish.

Measures for the presence of the state are based upon the following questions in the Arab Barometer Survey:

Question 1 (Variable=Presence1–Presence5): "Based on your experience, how easy or difficult is it to obtain the following administrative or social services from the government?"[44]

| *Service* | *Very Easy* | *Easy* | *Difficult* | *Very Difficult* | *Never Tried* | *Can't Choose [Do Not Read]* | *Decline to Answer [Do Not Read]* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. An identity document (such as a birth certificate, driver's license, or passport) | | | | | | | |
| 2. Registering a child in primary school in the public system | | | | | | | |
| 3. Medical treatment at a nearby clinic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 9 |
| 4. Help from the police when you need it | | | | | | | |
| 5. Access to individuals or institutions to file a complaint when your rights are violated | | | | | | | |

To estimate the model, I code the values "8" and "9" as missing data for the five variables. Removing these values leaves me with a scale that indicates an increase in the perceived absence of the state. I recoded the variables to invert the scale whereby "5=never tried" becomes zero, "4=very difficult" becomes 1, "3=difficult" becomes 2, "easy=2" becomes 3, and "very easy=1" becomes 4. I inverted the scale because I do not wish to drop the value "5=never tried." In some cases, upper-class individuals with the means to obtain these services from privatized sources would not rely upon the government for them. Therefore, it is not that the government is not present and accessible but that these individuals go elsewhere. At the same time, people of a lower economic status may need these services but are apathetic towards the government and its ability to provide them. Because I do not know the motivations behind an individual's reasons for not attempting to obtain these services from the government, I cannot remove the value. If I did, I would lose information. Recoding this variable leaves me with a scale that denotes the perceived presence of the state. Given the measurement of this variable and my hypothesis, a negative coefficient would indicate that the perceived *absence* of the state increases the likelihood that a respondent will support political violence.

**The state authority**. The third explanatory variable, state authority, derives from three measures that capture individuals' opinions regarding

their trust in the government and their belief in its legitimacy. If they perceive state authority as corrupt and untrustworthy, the state will have difficulty convincing citizens to adhere to its laws and institutional rules. Thus, the absence of state authority encourages citizens to engage in political violence as a means of protesting the corrupt and illegitimate government. The measures of state authority are based upon the following questions in the Arab Barometer Survey:

Question 1 (Variable=Trust1–Trust5): "For each [institution], please tell me how much trust you have in them. Is it a great deal of trust, quite a lot of trust, not very much trust, or none at all?"[45]

| Institution | A Great Deal of Trust | Quite a Lot of Trust | Not Very Much Trust | None at All | Don't Know (Don't Read) | Decline to Answer (Don't Read) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Prime Minister | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 9 |
| 2. The Courts | | | | | | |
| 3. Parliament | | | | | | |
| 4. The Police | | | | | | |
| 5. Political Parties | | | | | | |

To estimate the model, I coded the values "8" and "9" as missing data. Removing these values leaves me with a scale that indicates an increase in the perceived lack of trust in government officials who represent the state. Given the measurement of these independent variables and my hypothesis, a positive coefficient would indicate that the perceived lack of trust in the government increases the likelihood that a respondent will support political violence.

Question 2 (Variable=Legitimate1): "On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election held in [country name]? Was it:"

Value Labels: 1=Completely Free and Fair, 2=Free and Fair, but with Minor Problems, 3=Free and Fair, with Major Problems, 4=Not Free or Fair, 8=[Do Not Read] Can't Choose, 9=[Do Not Read] Decline to Answer[46]

Question 3 (Variable=Corrupt1): "Here are some statements that describe how widespread corruption and bribe taking are in all sectors of [country name]. Which of the following statements reflects your own opinion the best?"

Value Labels: 1=Hardly Anyone Is Involved in Corruption or Bribery, 2=Not a Lot of Officials Are Corrupt, 3=Most Officials Are Corrupt,

4=Almost Everyone Is Corrupt, 8=[Do Not Read] I Don't Know, 9=[Do Not Read] Decline to Answer[47]

To estimate the model, I coded the values "8" and "9" as missing data for the variables Legitimate1 and Corrupt1. Removing these values leaves me with a scale that indicates an increase in the perceived presence of corruption among elected officials (Corrupt1) and the lack of government legitimacy (Legitimate1). Given the measurement of these independent variables and my hypothesis, a positive coefficient would indicate that the perceived presence of government corruption and lack of government legitimacy increases the likelihood that a respondent will support political violence.

**The provision of public goods**. The fourth explanatory variable, the provision of public goods, relies upon a single proxy measure that captures individuals' opinions regarding the state's ability to offer citizens essential public and social services. Citizens will perceive a state that cannot and/or does not provide such services as weak and will likely resort to other means of obtaining them, mainly through political violence. In support of the hypothesis, a state that does not supply essential public services to its citizens encourages them to engage in or support political violence as a method of gaining access to these goods and services.

The measure for the provision of public goods is based upon the following question in the Arab Barometer Survey:

Question 1 (Variable=Goods1): "Do you agree with the following statement: 'The government does all it can to provide citizens with all services.'"

Value Labels: 1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Disagree, 4=Strongly Disagree, 8=[Do Not Read] Can't Choose, 9=[Do Not Read]Decline to Answer[48]

To estimate the model, I coded the values "8" and "9" as missing data. Removing these values leaves me with a scale that indicates the increasing ability of the government to provide citizens with necessary public services. Given the measurement of this variable and my hypothesis, a negative coefficient would indicate that the perceived inability of the government to offer citizens public goods and services raises the likelihood that a respondent will support political violence.

**Prevalence of autocracy**. The fifth explanatory variable, the prevalence of autocracy in the region, is based upon two related proxy measures that capture individuals' opinions regarding their belief that authoritarianism is

the most important problem facing their country. Individuals who consider the prevalence of authoritarianism in their country the most (or second-most) important problem confronting their state will likely hold negative feelings and attitudes towards the repressive nature of authoritarian states. Therefore, they are more likely to support political violence against the state than those who do not consider authoritarianism a major issue.

The measure for the prevalence of autocracy is based upon the following questions in the Arab Barometer Survey:[49]

> Question 1 (Variable=Autocracy1): "In your opinion, which of the following is the most important problem facing [country name] today?"
>
> Value Labels: 1=Economic Situation, 2=Corruption, *3=Authoritarianism*, 4=Ending the US Occupation of Iraq, 5=The Arab-Israeli Conflict, 8=[Do Not Read] I Don't Know, 9=[Do Not Read] Decline to Answer[50]
>
> Question 1 (Variable=Autocracy2): "Which of the following is the *second* most important problem facing [country name] today?"
>
> Value Labels: 1=Economic Situation, 2=Corruption, *3=Authoritarianism*, 4=Ending the US Occupation in Iraq, 5=The Arab-Israeli Conflict, 8=[Do Not Read] I Don't Know, 9=[Do Not Read] Decline to Answer[51]

To estimate the model, I recoded value label "3=Authoritarianism" to one, all other values to zero, and the values "8" and "9" as missing data. The new coding structure leaves a dichotomous measure that allows me to isolate those individuals who consider authoritarianism a major problem in their state. Given the measurement of this variable and my hypothesis, a positive coefficient would indicate that those individuals who consider authoritarianism a major problem in their country are more likely to support political violence.

**Lack of economic development**. The sixth explanatory variable, the lack of economic development in the region, is based upon two proxy measures that capture individuals' opinions regarding their belief that it is the most important problem facing their country and that economic conditions there are bad. The measure for the lack of economic development derives from the following questions in the Arab Barometer Survey:

> Question 1 (Variable=EconDev1): "In your opinion, which of the following is the most important problem facing [country name] today?"

Value Labels: *1=Economic situation*, 2=Corruption, 3=Authoritarianism, 4=Ending the US Occupation in Iraq, 5=The Arab-Israeli Conflict, 8=[Do Not Read] I Don't Know, 9=[Do Not Read] Decline to Answer[52]

Question 1 (Variable=EconDev2): "How would you rate the current overall economic condition of [country name] today?"

Value Labels: 1=Very Good, 2=Good, 3=Bad, 4=Very Bad, 8=[Do Not Read] Don't Know, 9=[Do Not Read] Decline to Answer[53]

For the variable EconDev1, I maintained the original coding for the value label "1=Economic Situation." I recoded all of the other values, setting them to zero, and coded the values "8" and "9" as missing data. The new coding structure leaves a dichotomous measure that allows me to isolate those individuals who consider the economic situation in their country a major problem. Given the measurement of this variable and my hypothesis, a positive coefficient would indicate that those individuals who consider the economic situation the most important problem facing their country are more likely to support political violence.

For the variable EconDev2, I coded the values "8" and "9" as missing data. Removing these values leaves with a scale that indicates increasing dissatisfaction with the economic situation in one's state. Given the measurement of this variable and my hypothesis, a positive coefficient would indicate that the perceived inability of the government to properly manage the economic situation in an individual's country enhances the likelihood that a respondent will support political violence.

**Religious radicalism**. As outlined in the theoretical arguments discussed at the beginning of this article and in the findings of earlier research, the dominance of radical Islamic ideologies has contributed to intrastate conflicts in the region. Therefore, the seventh explanatory variable, the presence of religious radicalism, comes from two proxy measures intended to capture extreme interpretations of religious doctrine. Radical Islamic views alone cannot explain political violence in the MENA. Therefore, in addition to estimating this variable as an independent factor in the model, I also interact it with the measures for authoritarianism and lack of economic development. Radical Islam has managed to flourish only because of the lack of political and economic development in the region. Consequently, I expect to find that individuals who consider authoritarianism and the lack of economic development major problems in their state will also hold radical Islamic

ideologies. A repressive political climate and poor economic conditions permit terrorists to manipulate religious fervor; thus, they can also successfully promote political violence against the state.

The measure for religious radicalism is based upon the following questions in the Arab Barometer Survey:

Question 1 (Variable=Religion1): "In your opinion, how important is ... the following [principle] as a guide for making the laws of your country? ... The government should implement only the laws of the sharia."

Value Labels: 1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Disagree, 4=Strongly Disagree, 8=[Do Not Read] I Don't Know, 9=[Do Not Read] Decline to Answer[54]

Question 2 (Variable=Religion2): "Today as in the past, Muslim scholars and jurists sometimes disagree about the proper interpretation of Islam in response to present-day issues. For ... the [following statement] ... please indicate whether you agree strongly, agree, disagree, or disagree strongly with the interpretation of Islam that is presented. ... If a Muslim converts to another religion, he must be punished by execution."

Value Labels: 1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Disagree, 4=Strongly Disagree, 8=[Do Not Read] I Don't Know, 9=[Do Not Read] Decline to Answer[55]

To estimate the model, I coded the values "8" and "9" as missing data. Removing these values leaves me with a scale that indicates a decrease in support for radical Islamic ideals as the scale moves higher. Given the measurement of this variable and my hypothesis, a negative coefficient would indicate that the greater the support for radical Islamic ideologies, the greater the likelihood that a respondent will support the use of political violence.

### Controls

I operationalized a series of control variables that capture the socioeconomic conditions of the respondents. These include the variables level of education, employment status, age, and gender, which serve as appropriate indicators of an individual's socioeconomic position within that country. Their inclusion in the model controls their influence on the relationship between the selected independent conditions and political violence. See the appendix for a description

of these variables and their measurement. Table 4 describes each of the variables included in the analysis.

**Table 4. Variable names and description of the concepts measured**

| Variable | Indicator Concept |
|---|---|
| Violence1a–Violence1e | Measures Political Violence<br>Indicates that respondents do not believe that the following are terrorist attacks:<br>- Amman hotel explosions<br>- Egyptian explosions<br>- London underground explosions<br>- Madrid train explosions<br>- Casablanca explosions |
| Violence2 | Measures Political Violence<br>Indicates that respondents believe that armed groups are justified in attacking civilians in Iraq in order to resist the American occupation |
| Security1 | How safe they feel |
| Presence1–Presence 5 | The ease or difficulty with which citizens may obtain the following services from the government<br>- Identity document<br>- Registering a child for public school<br>- Medical treatment at a nearby clinic<br>- Help from the police when needed<br>- Access to government in order to file a complaint when rights are violated |
| Trust1 | Measures State Authority<br>- Do they trust the prime minister? |
| Trust2 | Measures State Authority<br>- Do they trust the courts? |
| Trust3 | Measures State Authority<br>- Do they trust the parliament? |
| Trust4 | Measures State Authority<br>- Do they trust the police? |
| Trust5 | Measures State Authority<br>- Do they trust the political parties? |
| Legitimate1 | Measures State Authority<br>- Indicates how they would rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election |
| Corrupt1 | Measures State Authority<br>- Indicates widespread corruption in all sectors of the respondent's country |
| Goods1 | The government does all it can to provide social services |
| Autocracy1 | Authoritarianism is the most important problem facing their state |
| Autocracy2 | Authoritarianism is the second-most important problem facing their state |
| EconDev1 | The economic situation in the respondents' nations is the most important problem facing their state |
| EconDev2 | The current overall economic condition in their state is bad |
| Religion1 | The government should implement only laws of Sharia |
| Religion2 | If a Muslim converts to another religion, he must be punished by execution |
| Education | Respondent's highest level of education |
| Gender | Gender |
| Employment | Respondent's employment status |
| Age | Respondent's age |

## *Models*

I conducted cross-sectional analysis using logistical regression to determine which dimensions of state failure elevate the probability that an individual will support political violence in the selected country cases. To test my assumptions, I estimated two logit regression models. (A logistical regression predicts the outcome of a categorical dependent variable based on one or more predictor variables, converting the empirical relationship between the dependent variable and predictor, or independent variable, into a probability score.) The first logit model indicates respondents' support for political violence and includes the variables that I identify as features of state failure, along with the variables prevalence of autocracy, lack of economic development, and religious radicalism (fig. 4). The second logit model (fig. 5) resembles the one in figure 4 but includes the interactions among religious radicalism, authoritarianism, and economic development.

$$Model\ 1 = ln\left(\frac{p_i\,(violence)}{1 - p_i\,(violence)}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Security + \beta_2 State\ Presence + \beta_3 State\ Authority +$$

$$\beta_4 State\ Legitimacy + \beta_5 Public\ Services + \beta_6 Authoritarianism + \beta_7 Religion + \beta_8 Economic\ Development +$$

$$\beta_9 Employment + \beta_{10} Education + \beta_{11} Age + \beta_{12} Gender + e$$

**Figure 4. Model of state failure with measures specific to the MENA: Authoritarianism, religious radicalism, and economic development**

$$Model\ 2 = ln\left(\frac{p_i\,(violence)}{1 - p_i\,(violence)}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1\ Security + \beta_2 State\ Presence + \beta_3\ State\ Authority +$$

$$\beta_4 State\ Legitimacy + \beta_5 Public\ Services + \beta_6 Authoritarianism + \beta_7 Religion + \beta_8\ Economic\ Development +$$

$$\beta_9\ Employment + \beta_{10} Education + \beta_{11} Age + \beta_{12} Gender + \beta_{13} Authoritarianism * Religion +$$

$$\beta_{14}\ Religion * Economic\ Development + \beta_{15} Authoritarianism * Economic\ Development + e$$

**Figure 5. Model of state failure with measures specific to the MENA: Authoritarianism, religious radicalism, and economic development (including interactions)**

## *Results*

Table 5 reports the binary logit estimates for the model indicating the probability that a respondent will support political violence. The results reveal that the variables which capture the concept of state failure—those measured

by the absence of the public good of security, the absence of the state, the perceived absence of the legitimacy of state authority, the lack of trust in state authority, and the lack of essential public goods—all influence a citizen's decision to support terrorism.

**Table 5. Binary logit estimates of support for political violence**

| Variable | Violence1a-Amman | Violence1b-Egypt | Violence1c-London | Violence1d-Madrid | Violence1e-Casablanca | Violence2 | Violence3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Security1 | .227 (.157) | .352** (.166) | .302** (.132) | .184 (.134) | .158 (.171) | .105 (.091) | -.058 (.124) |
| Presence1 | .079 (.112) | .035 (.118) | .019 (.093) | .112 (.095) | -.053 (.122) | -.112* (.058) | -.168** (.078) |
| Presence2 | .103 (.091) | -.069 (.088) | .042 (.070) | .025 (.070) | -.086 (.092) | .046 (.044) | -.051 (.061) |
| Presence3 | .146 (.114) | .091 (.118) | -.013 (.088) | -.011 (.089) | .088 (.122) | -.055 (.055) | .154 (.075) |
| Presence4 | -.178* (.099) | -.155 (.106) | -.048 (.077) | -.082 (.078) | .012 (.109) | .082 (.055) | -.025 (.075) |
| Presence5 | .005 (.115) | -.041 (.123) | -.131 (.087) | -.085 (.087) | -.153 (.118) | .001 (.055) | .210 (.072) |
| Trust1 | .035 (.128) | .161 (.132) | .021 (.098) | -.097 (.099) | -.042 (.134) | .180** (.062) | .144* (.084) |
| Trust2 | .364** (.137) | .056 (.136) | .129 (.104) | .082 (.109) | -.100 (.142) | -.304*** (.070) | .025 (.096) |
| Trust3 | .137 (.136) | -.196 (.132) | .188* (.103) | .278** (.104) | -.045 (.138) | .122** (.059) | .034 (.079) |
| Trust4 | .439*** (.126) | .681*** (.130) | -.056 (.098) | -.004 (.102) | .434*** (.132) | -.020 (.064) | -.130 (.089) |
| Trust5 | .001 (.126) | .026 (.125) | -.032 (.094) | -.162* (.095) | -.124 (.124) | -.158** (.059) | -.331*** (.077) |
| Legitimate1 | .303** (.109) | .037 (.108) | .057 (.084) | .056 (.085) | .331** (.115) | .006 (.053) | .002 (.071) |
| Corrupt1 | .161 (.151) | .357** (.158) | .286** (.115) | .381*** (.116) | .099 (.156) | -.029 (.075) | .168* (.096) |
| Goods1 | -.055 (.110) | .126 (.120) | -.153 (.094) | -.094 (.096) | .015 (.130) | .014 (.065) | -.180** (.087) |
| Autocracy1 | .099 (.509) | -.045 (.485) | .394 (.361) | .019 (.391) | .455 (.467) | -.544** (.232) | -.215 (.343) |
| Autocracy2 | -.115 (.412) | .307 (.365) | -.114 (.294) | -.477 (.321) | -.343 (.449) | -.595*** (.172) | -.196 (.235) |
| EconDev1 | .701*** (.219) | -.106 (.215) | .254 (.174) | .215 (.177) | .152 (.228) | -.314** (.117) | .012 (.155) |
| EconDev2 | -.255* (.144) | -.279* (.150) | -.309** (.109) | -.260** (.110) | -.199 (.150) | .060 (.073) | -.022 (.092) |
| Religion1 | -.496*** (.127) | -.405** (.134) | -.545*** (.103) | -.653*** (.106) | -.351** (.136) | -.237*** (.067) | -.023 (.092) |
| Religion2 | -.407*** (.105) | -.683*** (.121) | -.500 (.085) | -.373*** (.084) | -.676*** (.122) | -.247*** (.062) | -.082 (.078) |
| Gender | -.034 (.216) | -.017 (.222) | -.781*** (.182) | -.376** (.179) | -.214 (.234) | -.113 (.120) | -.383** (.165) |
| Age | .006 (.010) | .004 (.009) | -.004 (.007) | -.010 (.008) | .029** (.009) | -.008* (.004) | .004 (.006) |
| Education | .337*** (.073) | .129* (.072) | .221*** (.058) | .203*** (.059) | .225** (.075) | -.042 (.039) | -.030 (.054) |
| Employment | .225 (.237) | .377 (.247) | -.331* (.181) | -.231 (.186) | .373 (.255) | .034 (.123) | -.450** (.164) |

**Table 5. Binary logit estimates of support for political violence (*continued*)**

| Variable | Violence1a-Amman | Violence1b-Egypt | Violence1c-London | Violence1d-Madrid | Violence1e-Casablanca | Violence2 | Violence3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Interactions* | | | | | | | |
| Autocracy1*EconDev1 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Autocracy1*EconDev2 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Autocracy1*Religion2 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Religion2*EconDev1 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Religion2*EconDev2 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Constant | -6.94*** (1.09) | -4.34*** (1.08) | -.953 (.815) | -.956 (.832) | -3.40** (1.08) | 2.39*** (.499) | -.173 (.652) |
| Observations | 1990 | 1958 | 1861 | 1809 | 1730 | 1571 | 1606 |
| Pseudo R$^2$ | .2638 | .2391 | .1831 | .1753 | .1895 | .0785 | .0677 |
| LR $\chi^2$ | 265.91 | 223.56 | 238.67 | 220.55 | 155.24 | 170.99 | 93.12 |
| Prob > $\chi^2$ | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |

Note:  ***$p$ < .01 for two-tailed test; ** $p$ < .05 for two-tailed test; *$p$ <0.1 for two-tailed test; standard errors in parentheses

With regard to the variables economic development, the presence of autocratic government, and religious radicalism (included in the model, given my argument that these factors are unique to the MENA), only the measure of religious radicalism consistently has both statistical and substantive significance. The findings indicate that religious radicalism is a strong predictor of support for political violence—not surprising in light of the existing literature. Nevertheless, it does contradict my hypotheses and the belief that radical Islam alone cannot explain an individual's support for political violence. For that reason, I delve deeper into this finding in the conclusion of this article. In addition to religious radicalism, the model does reveal only weak support, at best, for the measure designated lack of economic development. The variable EconDev1 is substantively and statistically significant in only one equation. Although it has statistical significance in a second equation, the interpretation of the coefficient contradicts the hypotheses. Thus, these results convince me that with regard to the MENA, the lack of economic development alone is not enough to turn individuals to political violence. (I expand upon this notion in greater detail in a discussion of the model in table 6, below.)

Therefore, although the variable autocracy is not significant in the model and only marginal support exists for economic development, I remain certain that these variables are still important to the discussion of the relationship between state failure and terrorism. However, as I previously observed, I consider these factors intricately tied to one another, and thus, as we have seen in this model, by themselves they exert little influence on support for political

violence. Perusal of the statistical model in table 6 will show that, when examined collectively as interaction terms, these factors have a greater impact on support for political violence.

Finally, the control variables gender, age, education, and employment have a significant effect on support for political violence. The findings suggest that men and young adults are more likely to lend such support. Further, unemployed individuals are more likely to support the use of political violence. Finally, the more educated the respondents, the more likely they will support political violence. Regarding the results of the control variables in the model, I am sure that we are seeing findings specific to the region, which has a substantial proportion of young, educated, but unemployed males. The literature suggests that members of this group—dissatisfied with unemployment despite their educational achievements—are most easily swayed by propaganda and radical ideologies used by terrorist groups to recruit this segment of the population.[56]

Table 6 reports the binary logit estimates for the model which indicates the probability that a respondent will support political violence. This model differs from the one in table 5 in that it incorporates interactions among the variables economic development, autocracy, and religious radicalism. The findings reveal that the model of state failure remains stable in this equation. The variables measuring the absence of the public good of security, the absence of the state, the perceived absence of the legitimacy of state authority, the lack of trust in state authority, and the lack of essential public goods all influence a citizen's decision to support terrorism. The substantive interpretation of the control variables also remains consistent. Young, educated, unemployed males are more likely to support political violence. Moreover, of the three factors I consider specific to the MENA, only religious radicalism has both statistical and substantive significance. The dominance of this variable in the two models and across the equations suggests that it is a salient factor in predicting support for terrorism.

The findings with regard to interactions among economic development, autocracy, and religious radicalism are very telling. Unlike table 5, which indicates that the variables autocracy and economic development appear to have no effect on support for political violence, table 6 reveals that these factors have significant influence on a respondent's decision to support terrorism. The findings suggest that the presence of autocracy and a lack of economic development influence one's decision to support terrorism. The same holds true for the presence of autocracy and religious radicalism. Finally, the interaction between the presence of religious radicalism and the lack of economic development is the most consistent of the interaction terms across all equations, suggesting that

this relationship significantly affects one's decision to support political violence. In sum, the findings in table 6 are consistent with the hypotheses. (Table 7 lists the specific hypotheses supported by the regression analysis.) Specifically, economic development, autocracy, and religious radicalism have a stronger predictive influence on support for political violence when examined together as interaction terms than they do when incorporated into the model as discrete factors.

**Table 6. Binary logit estimates of support for political violence: State failure model with measures specific to the MENA (authoritarianism, religious radicalism, and economic development as interaction terms)**

| Variable | Violence1a-Amman | Violence1b-Egypt | Violence1c-London | Violence1d-Madrid | Violence1e-Casablanca | Violence2 | Violence3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Security1 | .235 | .354** | .307** | .187 | .142 | .075 | -.043 |
| | (.159) | (.168) | (.133) | (.134) | (.173) | (.092) | (.125) |
| Presence1 | .078 | .037 | .020 | .104 | -.045 | -.123** | -.177** |
| | (.111) | (.118) | (.093) | (.095) | (.123) | (.058) | (.079) |
| Presence2 | .090 | -.107 | .040 | .032 | -.105 | .052 | -.042 |
| | (.091) | (.089) | (.070) | (.070) | (.094) | (.044) | (.062) |
| Presence3 | .143 | .095 | -.013 | -.018 | .102 | -.046 | .158 |
| | (.116) | (.119) | (.089) | (.090) | (.123) | (.056) | (.076) |
| Presence4 | -.177* | -.092 | -.049 | -.086 | .013 | .081 | -.024 |
| | (.100) | (.108) | (.078) | (.079) | (.111) | (.055) | (.076) |
| Presence5 | -.005 | -.037 | -.131 | -.078 | -.139 | .002 | .191 |
| | (.117) | (.124) | (.088) | (.088) | (.119) | (.056) | (.074) |
| Trust1 | .044 | .158 | .022 | -.098 | -.034 | .185** | .158* |
| | (.129) | (.132) | (.098) | (.099) | (.135) | (.063) | (.084) |
| Trust2 | .355** | .046 | .132 | .088 | -.123 | -.334 | .026 |
| | (.135) | (.134) | (.105) | (.109) | (.143) | (.071) | (.096) |
| Trust3 | .129 | -.205 | .188* | .280** | -.049 | .121** | .016 |
| | (.135) | (.132) | (.103) | (.105) | (.139) | (.059) | (.080) |
| Trust4 | .437*** | .656*** | -.065 | -.008 | .419** | -.015 | -.143 |
| | (.126) | (.130) | (.099) | (.103) | (.134) | (.064) | (.091) |
| Trust5 | -.014 | -.005 | -.035 | -.152 | -.126 | -.152** | -.348 |
| | (.126) | (.128) | (.095) | (.096) | (.126) | (.060) | (.079) |
| Legitimate1 | .305** | .021 | .053 | .064 | .321** | .005 | .004 |
| | (.110) | (.109) | (.085) | (.086) | (.117) | (.053) | (.072) |
| Corrupt1 | .177 | .376** | .293** | .379*** | .136 | -.002 | .173* |
| | (.152) | (.156) | (.116) | (.116) | (.155) | (.075) | (.097) |
| Goods1 | -.050 | .133 | -.156* | -.102 | .025 | .006 | -.157* |
| | (.110) | (.122) | (.095) | (.096) | (.132) | (.066) | (.089) |
| Autocracy1 | -2.24** | -.697 | .368 | -.483 | -.088 | -.187 | -.191*** |
| | (1.04) | (.801) | (.563) | (.652) | (.892) | (.344) | (.591) |
| Autocracy2 | -1.36 | .098 | -.109 | -1.22* | -.984 | -.691** | -1.41** |
| | (.919) | (.668) | (.563) | (.698) | (.965) | (.326) | (.500) |
| EconDev1 | .510 | -.158 | .171 | .088 | .067 | -.175 | -.025 |
| | (.339) | (.389) | (.274) | (.268) | (.397) | (.142) | (.200) |
| EconDev2 | -.372** | -.684*** | -.337** | -.235* | -.415** | .003 | -.305** |
| | (.179) | (.185) | (.138) | (.139) | (.192) | (.085) | (.110) |
| Religion1 | -.490*** | -.286** | -.529*** | -.657*** | -.274** | -.201** | .032 |
| | (.133) | (.139) | (.107) | (.110) | (.141) | (.069) | (.093) |
| Religion2 | -.168 | -.243 | -.385** | -.304** | -.375** | -.343*** | .202* |
| | (.170) | (.169) | (.125) | (.126) | (.171) | (.039) | (.110) |
| Gender | -.014 | .026 | -.783*** | -.367** | -.184 | -.109 | -.391** |
| | (.220) | (.228) | (.182) | (.179) | (.236) | (.121) | (.168) |
| Age | .006 | .005 | -.004 | -.009 | .028** | -.009** | .004 |
| | (.010) | (.010) | (.007) | (.008) | (.009) | (.004) | (.006) |
| Education | .356*** | .121* | .222*** | .207*** | .212** | -.034 | -.045 |
| | (.076) | (.073) | (.058) | (.059) | (.075) | (.039) | (.054) |
| Employment | .283 | .398 | -.325* | -.229 | .415* | .003 | -.141** |
| | (.242) | (.252) | (.182) | (.186) | (.256) | (.124) | (.168) |

**Table 6. Binary logit estimates of support for political violence: State failure model with measures specific to the MENA (authoritarianism, religious radicalism, and economic development as interaction terms) (*continued*)**

| *Interactions* | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Autocracy1*EconDev1 | -3.00** | -.862 | -.059 | .512 | .167 | .792** | -.771 |
| | (1.24) | (.831) | (.596) | (.669) | (.937) | (.355) | (.530) |
| Autocracy1*EconDev2 | 1.95** | .163 | -.541 | -.210 | -.781 | -.450 | 1.69** |
| | (.853) | (.658) | (.490) | (.546) | (.720) | (.309) | (..495) |
| Autocracy1*Religion2 | 1.76** | .754 | .457 | .927* | 1.23 | -.359 | 1.36** |
| | (.819) | (.675) | (.497) | (.575) | (.831) | (.320) | (.457) |
| Religion2*EconDev1 | .540 | .199 | .149 | .146 | .147 | -.791*** | .199 |
| | (.396) | (.434) | (.311) | (.311) | (.443) | (.216) | (.277) |
| Religion2*EconDev2 | .268 | 1.47*** | .237 | -.024 | .909** | .569** | .924** |
| | (.371) | (.380) | (.284) | (.293) | (.390) | (.233) | (.281) |
| Constant | -7.39*** | -4.70*** | -1.21 | -1.18 | -3.87*** | 2.81*** | -.393 |
| | (1.13) | (1.13) | (.846) | (.861) | (1.13) | (.540) | (.703) |
| Observations | 1990 | 1958 | 1861 | 1809 | 1730 | 1571 | 1606 |
| Pseudo $R^2$ | .2802 | .2602 | .1858 | .1788 | .2014 | .0889 | .0941 |
| LR $\chi^2$ | 282.41 | 243.29 | 242.13 | 224.91 | 164.95 | 193.64 | 129.36 |
| Prob > $\chi^2$ | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |

Note:  ***$p < .01$ for two-tailed test; ** $p < .05$ for two-tailed test; *$p <0.1$ for two-tailed test; standard errors in parentheses

## Table 7. Hypotheses supported by the logistical regression analysis

| *Hypotheses* | *Variable and Concept Measured* |
|---|---|
| Absence of the Public Good of Security | Security2-Respondent Feels Safe |
| State Presence | Presence1-Identity Document<br>Presence4-Help from the Police<br>Presence5-Government Access to File Complaint When Rights Are Violated |
| State Authority | Trust1-Trust Prime Minister<br>Trust2-Trust the Courts<br>Trust3-Trust Parliament<br>Trust4-Trust the Police<br><br>Legitimate1-Free and Fair National Election<br><br>Corrupt1-Corruption in All Sectors of the State |
| Provision of Public Goods | Goods1-The Government Provides Social Services |
| Economic Development | EconDev1-Economy Is the Most Important Problem Facing the Nation |
| Religious Radicalism | Religion1-Sharia Law<br><br>Religion2-Execution If One Converts to Another Religion |
| Interactions | Autocracy2*EconDev1<br>Autocracy2*EconDev2<br>Religion1*EconDev2<br>Autocracy1*Religion2 |
| Controls | Gender<br>Age<br>Employment Status-Employed or Not Employed<br>Education-Respondent's Highest Level of Education |

## Conclusion

The MENA has occupied the center of international politics for the last 50 years. The creation of Israel, subsequent wars, the Iranian revolution, oppressive authoritarian regimes, and the existence of dangerous terrorist networks and activity have made the region the subject of scholarly discourse and debate, producing much research on the region and the sources of violence. This article has drawn upon this material but has sought to fill the gaps that remain, one of which is the absence of research on the relationship between state failure in the region and political violence. As this study has demonstrated, the political and economic conditions found in weak states positively influence individuals in deciding whether or not to support terrorism. Beyond that finding, this study has also arrived at conclusions regarding existing theories of violence in the MENA that have important implications for future research.

The results of the model of state failure found in table 5 are consistent with the overarching hypothesis of this text: that the measures of state failure serve as significant predictors of individual support for political violence. The findings reveal that the absence of the state, the absence of the public good of security, the lack of state authority, and the lack of the provision of public goods are important to making decisions about supporting political violence and terrorism. One must make a consequential point about these findings, however.

Because the Arab Barometer data have no such concrete measure of support for political violence, I had to use proxy variables. The latter represent important indicators of the willingness of individuals to support political violence by seeking their opinion about well-documented terrorist attacks. That is, the expectation was that those individuals who did not consider these events terrorist attacks were more likely to support political violence, based upon what one could only perceive as a predisposition to support radical, violent behavior. The results reveal a general consensus among the respondents, in the sense that the geographic location of the attack (Europe versus MENA) led to expected cultural delineations. For example, the public good of security proved less important to the respondent's decision if the incident took place outside the Middle East and/or North Africa. In other words, the results reveal that certain conditions of state failure were more important to respondents, given the location of the terrorist incident. As I indicated, this was expected. One would not expect a respondent who lives in the MENA to consider the absence of the public good of security important when it concerns a terrorist incident in Madrid. However, the lack of the public good of security does become important to respondents when the attack occurs in a country within their region because the

effects are far more tangible to them. Still, despite some of the discrepancies between the estimated equations and the geographic locations of the attacks, the model of state failure indicates that conditions of state failure are salient contributors to individual support for political violence.

In the model of state failure that includes variables considered important to the MENA (see table 6), the findings are mostly consistent with the hypotheses. First, the model depicted in table 5 remains stable. Thus, in the presence of additional variables, the conditions of state failure continue to affect support for political violence. Further, the variable religious radicalism seems a strong predictor of such support.

Although scholars assert that the presence of authoritarian regimes, a lack of economic development, and the widespread prevalence of religious extremism in the region explain the violence, I have argued otherwise, hypothesizing that as individual factors, these variables would have no significant impact on support for political violence. The relationship among the variables as interaction terms would prove to be the explanation that scholars have sought but could not support by means of statistical models. The results for the most part are consistent with my hypotheses, with the exception of religious radicalism—a consistent predictor of support for political violence that has forced me to reevaluate my position. Apparently there is something unique and enduring about religious extremism in the region that makes it such an important contributor to political violence. Yet, of the three variables that I consider specific to the region, this one is the most difficult to control in society if one wishes to address terrorism.

Evidently, the presence of state failure and religious radicalism in the Middle East and the Maghreb is a combustible combination. In an effort to address terrorism, the international community can promote economic development and foster democratic ideals in the region, but it cannot tell people what to believe when it comes to their religion. Thus, without addressing what lies at the root of religious radicalism, political violence will continue to plague the region and will export terrorists and terrorist threats to other parts of the world. This analysis stops short of investigating the sources of religious radicalism. I can postulate that the lack of economic development and the presence of authoritarian regimes play a role, as I indicated at the beginning of this article. However, I do not test this assumption—that is something for future works to explore. However, we should examine and dissect the causes of religious radicalism if we wish to understand how this single factor represents such a significant predictor of political violence and

if we wish to address religious extremism in an already fragile region plagued by deeply rooted religious factions.

Finally, as I have argued, the interactions among authoritarianism, economic development, and religious radicalism are significant predictors of support for political violence. This finding is consistent with my understanding of the interconnectedness of these factors. Together, they create a climate in the region ripe for terrorism and political violence, as illustrated by the results. In addition, the control measures reveal that educated, unemployed young men are more likely to support violence—a finding consistent with the literature on terrorism.

In conclusion, state failure has a devastating effect on any state, but in the MENA, where a lack of economic development, the prevalence of authoritarian regimes, and the presence of religious radicalism have already had a destructive influence on these states, the conditions of state failure have left the region crippled. Until the serious pursuit of state-building efforts, state failure has positioned the Middle East and North Africa as an enduring frontier for terrorism and political violence.

# Appendix

**Table 8. Descriptive statistics**

| Variable | Observations | Mean | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Violence1a | 5,901 | .114 | .317 | 0 | 1 |
| Violence1b | 5,791 | .138 | .345 | 0 | 1 |
| Violence1c | 5,452 | .238 | .426 | 0 | 1 |
| Violence1d | 5,267 | .235 | .424 | 0 | 1 |
| Violence1e | 5,027 | .152 | .359 | 0 | 1 |
| Violence2 | 5,013 | .577 | .494 | 0 | 1 |
| Violence3 | 6,373 | .143 | .350 | 0 | 1 |
| Security1 | 7,979 | 1.99 | .721 | 1 | 4 |
| Presence1 | 7,974 | 2.72 | 1.11 | 0 | 4 |
| Presence2 | 7,800 | 2.51 | 1.43 | 0 | 4 |
| Presence3 | 7,984 | 2.25 | 1.14 | 0 | 4 |
| Presence4 | 7,847 | 1.81 | 1.40 | 0 | 4 |
| Presence5 | 7,700 | 1.43 | 1.16 | 0 | 4 |
| Trust1 | 7,616 | 2.59 | 1.12 | 1 | 4 |
| Trust2 | 7,603 | 2.58 | 1.09 | 1 | 4 |
| Trust3 | 7,582 | 2.78 | 1.09 | 1 | 4 |
| Trust4 | 7,737 | 2.42 | 1.10 | 1 | 4 |
| Trust5 | 7,239 | 3.13 | 1.01 | 1 | 4 |
| Legitimate1 | 6,439 | 2.32 | 1.17 | 1 | 4 |
| Corrupt1 | 7,547 | 2.64 | .830 | 1 | 4 |
| Goods1 | 5,342 | 2.54 | 1.04 | 1 | 4 |
| Autocracy1 | 6,451 | .057 | .233 | 0 | 1 |
| Autocracy2 | 6,258 | .1011 | .302 | 0 | 1 |
| EconDev1 | 6,451 | .574 | .494 | 0 | 1 |
| EconDev2 | 7,877 | 2.86 | .894 | 1 | 4 |
| Religion1 | 7,616 | 2.05 | .995 | 1 | 4 |
| Religion2 | 6,820 | 2.37 | 1.13 | 1 | 4 |
| Education | 8,098 | 3.75 | 1.73 | 1 | 7 |
| Gender | 8,119 | .492 | .499 | 0 | 1 |
| Employment | 8,054 | .479 | .499 | 0 | 1 |
| Age | 6,799 | 35.9 | 13.1 | 18 | 90 |

*Control Variables*

1.  Education

Question Number: Q703

Variable Label: Education of respondent

Value Labels: 1=Illiterate, 2=Elementary, 3=Primary, 4=Secondary, 5=College Diploma (Two Years), 6=Bachelor's Degree, 7=Master's Degree or Higher, 97=Not Clear

*To estimate the model, I coded the value "97" as missing data.

2. Employment Status

Question Number: Q704

Variable Label: Employment Status of Respondent

Value Labels: 1=Employed, 2=Not Employed, 97=Not Clear

*To estimate the model, I labeled the values so that "0" equals not employed and "1" equals employed. I then coded the value "97" as missing data.

3. Gender

Question Number: Q702

Question: Respondent's gender

Variable Label: Gender of respondent

Values: 1, 2
Value Labels: 1=Male, 2=Female

*To estimate the model, I labeled the values so that "0" equals male and "1" equals female.

4. Age

Question Number: Q701

Question: Respondent's age

Variable Label: Age of respondent

Values: 18–90

Value Labels: N/A

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49. In both questions, authoritarianism ranks third, after economic situation and corruption.

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# A Call for a New Counterinsurgency Theory

CDR Sidney Ellington, USN, Retired*

## The End of a War but Not of Uncertainty

On 19 December 2011, the last vehicle convoy of American troops and equipment withdrew from Iraq to Kuwait, bringing an end to almost nine years of war. As promised by President Barack Obama in the fall, all US Soldiers would be home by Christmas.[1] In contrast to the return of troops from the region 20 years earlier, following the first Gulf War, these returning combat veterans enjoyed no ticker-tape parades or over-the-top fanfare back in the United States.[2] In fact, the last departing Soldiers didn't even have "time for goodbyes to Iraqis with whom they had become acquainted" since details of the departure convoy remained secret to minimize the likelihood of an attack from either Iraqi insurgents or "Iraqi security officers aligned with militias."[3]

Troops have returned from Iraq, but the United States is still engaged in Afghanistan. However, this war will end soon as well. According to a strategic partnership agreement signed by President Obama and Afghan president Hamid Karzai, US forces will draw down "at a steady pace" until the United States hands over all security responsibilities to the Afghan leadership in 2014.[4] This drawdown is occurring faster than some people, including retired Army general and former Central Intelligence Agency director David Petraeus, wish to see.[5] However, the president has stated that the United States can reach its goal in Afghanistan of ensuring that "no safe haven [exists] from which al Qaeda or its affiliates can launch attacks against [the US] . . . homeland or [its] . . . allies."[6] He has also remarked

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that, given the huge cost of the wars in terms of both blood and treasure during a period of "rising debt and hard economic times . . . it is time to focus on nation building here at home."[7]

Although predicting what the future holds for both Iraq and Afghanistan after US forces leave is impossible, some indicators suggest that both countries will face difficulty with internal security once they are completely on their own. In Iraq the final exodus of American forces coincided with a political crisis in Baghdad as "a large group of mostly Sunni lawmakers" boycotted the Iraqi Parliament following a surge of arrests by the Shiite-dominated government that had systematically rounded up "hundreds of former Baath Party members" and placed them under arrest.[8] The day following the pull-out of the last of the US combat forces, the Shiite-dominated Iraqi government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, after "preparing a case against [Iraqi vice president Tariq al-Hashimi] . . . on terrorism charges," ordered the arrest of the Sunni lawmaker and leader of the Iraqiya Party.[9] This action led to speculation "that Iraq's leaders may now be using the very institutions America has spent millions of dollars trying to strengthen—the police, the courts, the media—as a cudgel to batter their political enemies and consolidate power."[10] Then, less than a week after the exit of the final US military combat units, a series of explosive blasts rocked Baghdad, signaling a "deepening political and sectarian crisis" and handing the Iraqi capital its "deadliest day in more than a year."[11]

Additionally, the Iraqi Shia-dominated central government has ordered the Sunni Awakening—a militia force of about 80,000 that had proved enormously helpful to the United States in hunting down insurgents and members of al-Qaeda since the 2007 surge—to disband and turn in its weapons. Without the buffer between the Awakening and the central Iraqi government, tensions are rising. Reportedly, a voluntary disbandment and weapons turn-in will not happen anytime soon, leading to more uncertainty regarding what the future holds for Iraq.[12] Further still, known terrorist Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri has sworn to "conduct 100 attacks in Iraq" to avenge the death of former al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, leading some senior US officials to express concern that the withdrawal from Iraq may spur a resurgence of al-Qaeda in Iraq.[13]

Moreover, concerns exist regarding the US troop pullout in Afghanistan. There, a substantial part of the counterinsurgency strategy (in addition to a

larger troop presence) has assumed that plentiful aid and higher incomes for local Afghans would foster security, thus helping defeat the Taliban. However, the World Bank issued a gloomy report arguing that the pullout of US and North Atlantic Treaty Organization troops in 2014 would most likely plunge the country into an economic recession that, in turn, would worsen the security situation and possibly lead to complete collapse of the country since it currently receives most of its revenue "from American military and civilian spending."[14]

Thus, the future of both Iraq and Afghanistan is anything but certain. As the war in Iraq ends and the one in Afghanistan moves along a set timetable leading to its conclusion in 2014, one should reflect upon the US military involvement in Iraq, which, as one writer put it, appears along a continuum "from hope to barbarity, from swaggering invasion to quiet departure."[15] This article seeks to focus that reflection upon military doctrine that transformed completely, primarily because of the stubborn insurgency. The violent insurgency followed President George W. Bush's victory speech delivered only weeks after US forces commenced hostilities in Iraq. At that time, President Bush declared, under a banner reading "Mission Accomplished," that "major combat operations in Iraq have ended."[16] Tragically, yet ironically, the war in Iraq would drag on for over eight more years.

## A Doctrinal Shift

With the benefit of hindsight, one might be tempted to conclude that President Bush, at the time he gave his victory speech, was completely out of touch with realities on the ground. However, one must note that, considering the Iraq war up to that particular point in time in terms of conventional warfare and Army doctrine, US forces had indeed accomplished the mission. After all, the objective, as outlined by the president in a nationally televised speech a mere 42 days earlier, was "to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger."[17] Further, in the same speech, President Bush assured the American people that the United States had "no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people" and that our forces "would be coming home as soon as their work [was] done."[18] Taking these words in the context of the 1991 Gulf War, many people expected that 2003's Operation Iraqi Freedom would follow along similar lines.

The military's run from Kuwait into Baghdad during the first days of Iraqi Freedom had taken place with "stunning" swiftness, using unprecedented speed of heavy-armored maneuver as a "force multiplier" and with "skill, precision . . . [and] a minimum of casualties."[19] When Baghdad fell and the Iraqi government fled, "the mission, as defined for the military as getting rid of the [Saddam Hussein] regime, had indeed been accomplished."[20] Yet, America celebrated a mission accomplished amid signs that an insurgency had begun to brew.[21] Rapidly gaining momentum, it would become something that the leadership of the US Army, steeped in the doctrines of conventional warfare, would be slow to recognize. The level of violence grew over the summer of 2003, and by the fall, people began comparing this insurgency with the last one that involved the United States—Vietnam.[22]

The situation in Iraq, however, was not simply another Vietnam, where America confronted a determined and unified guerrilla force supported by the North Vietnamese Army. US forces on the ground in Iraq had to contend with a combination of insurgent attacks, sectarian violence, and terrorist strikes from al-Qaeda of Iraq—Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's group. As the violence in Iraq grew worse during 2004–6, a group of officers assigned to the Doctrine Division of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, began to rewrite a much outdated doctrine for counterinsurgency. Led by Lieutenant General Petraeus, who had completed two tours in Iraq, the group included input from not only current and former military practitioners of counterinsurgency but also journalists, human-rights advocates, and academics.[23] Amazingly, the team completed the new doctrine in a mere 13 months and released it to the field in late 2006, just as President Bush ordered a "surge" of 20,000 additional troops to deploy to the Iraqi theater of operations, selecting General Petraeus to lead the effort.

If one were to judge success or failure of the new doctrine in Iraq based on levels of violence, then it is safe to say that it had a tremendous impact. Before the surge and implementation of the new counterinsurgency doctrine, the violence in Iraq was staggering, compared to the situation 12 months after Petraeus took command. Even though Iraq's religious and political "factions remained murderously divided," by late 2008 the violence had reached its lowest level of the entire war.[24]

By the time Petraeus left Iraq, he had transformed the battlefield from a bloody quagmire to a much more stable and secure area. Questions regarding

the long-term direction of Iraq remain unanswered, but the 2007 surge allowed the US military to negotiate cease-fire agreements with tribal leaders and turn former insurgents (e.g., the Awakening Forces) into armed supporters. As a result of the Army's use of counterinsurgency doctrine, by late 2008 "kebab stands and coffee shops had reopened across the city, and many ordinary Iraqis felt safe enough to venture out of their homes at night."[25]

Although the new counterinsurgency doctrine had a pronounced effect on the security situation in Iraq, US Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24 / Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, December 2006—now often referred to as the Petraeus Doctrine—has had an even greater (and arguably longer-lasting) impact on the US military as a whole.[26] Referring to the doctrine as "radical," the introduction to the University of Chicago Press's edition of the manual boldly proclaims that it "challenges much of what is holy about the American way of war" and that "it demands significant change and sacrifice to fight today's enemies *honorably*" (emphasis added).[27] FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 quickly became the cornerstone of what is now referred to in Defense Department circles simply as "the long war," suggesting that counterinsurgency, as a primary doctrine of military operations, is here to stay.[28] Indeed, given the number of articles about counterinsurgency written by military officers for professional journals such as *Joint Force Quarterly*, *Parameters*, or *Military Review* or the emphasis on that subject in the training curriculum upheld by the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, Louisiana, then it certainly seems that the doctrine espoused by General Petraeus has superseded all others. According to the center,

> JRTC scenarios allow complete integration of Air Force and other military services as well as host-nation and civilian role players. The exercise scenarios replicate many of the unique situations and challenges a unit may face to include host national officials and citizens, insurgents and terrorists, news media coverage, and non-governmental organizations.[29]

For clarity, all Army ground-combat units must go through a JRTC rotation prior to deploying. The training outlined above differs vastly from the AirLand Battle focus of the JRTC just a dozen years ago when the Army followed what was then commonly referred to as the Powell Doctrine, named after Gen Colin Powell, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who presided over the 1991 Gulf War.

This doctrine grew from the Army's self-examination following the less-than-desired outcome of the Vietnam War. Struggling to discover how the US military could have "won all of the battles but lost the war," the Army turned to the Army War College and, in particular, Col Harry G. Summers, who spearheaded a research effort that used Clausewitzian theory and the classic principles of war to critically examine the failure in Vietnam.[30] Summers concluded that the Clausewitzian trinity of government, the people, and the military had been dysfunctional during Vietnam. In brief, the civilian government failed to establish clear strategic goals, the war did not have the full support of the American people, and the Army failed to employ the proper military strategy to ensure victory. The colonel's book *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (1982) provided the foundation for a transformation in Army doctrine in the years between Vietnam and the first Gulf War.

In its most basic form, the Powell Doctrine sought to make sure that America didn't repeat the mistakes of Vietnam. Specifically, the United States should weigh certain criteria before entering into a war: (1) that all other options short of war to resolve the conflict had been exhausted, (2) that the resolution of the conflict was of vital interest to the United States, (3) that a clearly defined and militarily attainable political objective had been selected, (4) that the option of going to war had the full support of the American people and their elected representatives, (5) that the US military would use overwhelming force, and (6) that a well-thought-out and executable exit strategy had been planned and determined.[31] The Powell Doctrine was on full display during the Gulf War of 1991, and FM 3-0, *Operations*, 14 June 2001, outlined the latest revision of the doctrine in detail. Unlike FM 3-0, FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 moves the Army away from a doctrine of state-versus-state warfare and toward small wars and insurgencies. Although a detailed juxtaposition and analysis of these two manuals lie outside the limited scope of this article, table 1 highlights the major differences between the two.

**Table 1. FM 3-0,** *Operations*, **and FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5,** *Counterinsurgency*: **A side-by-side comparison**

|  | *FM 3-0* | *FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5* |
|---|---|---|
| Most Recent Date Published | June 2001 | December 2006 |
| Foundational Theorist | Carl von Clausewitz | David Galula |
| Focus / Center of Gravity | Enemy Force | Population Centric: Winning Hearts and Minds |
| Priority | Offensive Operations | Establishing a Secure Environment for the Local Population |
| Purpose | Total Domination of Enemy Force | Fostering Economic and Political Stability |
| Scope | Full-Spectrum Joint Military Operations | Balance between Combat and Interagency Coordination Based on Local Situation |
| Primary Tactic | Violence of Action<br><br>Speed of Maneuver<br><br>Armor / AirLand Battle | Employment of a Mix of Familiar Combat Tasks with Skills More Often Associated with Nonmilitary Agencies |
| Strategy | Force Projection | Oil-Spot Strategy: Establishing Security in One Area and Then Moving to Secure the Next |
| Primary Threat | Enemy Army | Insurgents and Terrorists |
| Size of Footprint | Large | No Larger than Necessary |
| Use of Force | Overwhelming: Collateral Damage Acceptable | Minimize Civilian Casualties, Limit Collateral Damage |
| Risk | Minimize as Much as Possible | Short-Term Risk Is an Operational Necessity |
| Desired Outcome | Defeat of Enemy Army | Defeat of Insurgency, Leading to a Stable and Secure Society |
| Memorable Contextual Quotation | "First we are going to cut its head off, then we're going to kill it." Gen Colin Powell, US Army | "No better friend. No worse enemy. First, do no harm." Gen James Mattis, USMC |

Importantly, both doctrines are driven by their own theoretical writings. Carl von Clausewitz, the nineteenth-century Prussian army officer whose classic book, *On War*, has been read and dissected by countless American officers during their tours as war college students since the end of Vietnam, probably had the most influence on the Powell Doctrine, not to mention the US military. By the 1990s, "Clausewitz studies [had] become something of a cottage industry for military intellectuals."[32] Indeed, up until the last five years or so, the ideas of this particular warrior-philosopher undergirded most modern American military thought. Originally published in 1832, *On War* has been translated countless times and has served as the subject of

volumes of books and papers. Phrases from the text have become commonplace in discussions of military strategy and tactics; these include *mass*, *maneuver*, *friction*, *centers of gravity*, *economy of force*, *strategic defensive*, and—probably the most famous—*war as an instrument of policy*.

Clausewitz supplied much of the theoretical framework for the Powell Doctrine, but the theoretical precepts that guided development of the Petraeus Doctrine appear in the writings of David Galula (1919–67), a French army officer whose firsthand experiences in wars of insurgency range from Mao's revolution in China to the colonial war in Algeria. One need only look at the acknowledgments section of FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 to discover the high regard in which the authors of the doctrine held Galula's work. John Nagl, one of the key contributors, writes in the foreword to the University of Chicago Press's edition that "of the many books that were influential in the writing of Field Manual 3-24, perhaps none was as important as David Galula's *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*."[33] Despite their familiarity with Clausewitz, military officers had considerably less knowledge of Galula's work prior to the publication of FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5. For example, when this writer attended the Naval Postgraduate School in 1994–95, studying in the Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict academic curriculum, the reading list did not include Galula's work. Thus, one can safely surmise that Galula's treatise may still not enjoy the notoriety of Clausewitz's. In fact, had the United States not found itself embroiled in an insurgency in Iraq, Galula still might not be part of the required reading for military officers. I, for one, had no exposure to *Counterinsurgency Warfare* until 2004, when a retired Air Force colonel and faculty member at the Joint Special Operations University introduced me to a scanned version of an old, worn copy of the then-out-of-print text, assuring me that I needed to read the book as soon as possible. Since many individuals outside military circles may still have no familiarity with Galula's thesis, this article would do well to quickly cover the essence of this important work and place his theory in the context of the environment following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 (9/11) and the war in Iraq.

## Galula and His Theory of Counterinsurgency

Even on the surface, Galula's work appears vastly different from that of Clausewitz. For starters, Clausewitz's *On War* numbers more than 850

pages—Galula's *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, a mere 143. Yet, the latter has had a profound effect on the US military in the last five to seven years.

A monograph published by the US Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute in 2010 contains the only biographical material available on Galula.[34] This short, insightful study points out that his theory of counterinsurgency grew out of a decade-long experience in China during Mao Tse-tung's People's War. For Mao, the first fundamental step in a revolutionary movement called for "arous[ing] and organiz[ing] the people" because "guerrilla warfare basically derives from the masses and is supported by them . . . [and] it can neither exist nor flourish if it separates itself from their sympathies and cooperation."[35] Stationed in China, Galula observed the war firsthand and apparently became so "immersed" in the conflict that at one point he was captured by Mao's communist guerrillas, spending a week in captivity.[36] Galula was highly impressed with the guerrillas' indoctrination of and friendship with the local people.[37] As deduced by his biographer Ann Marlowe, it makes sense that Galula developed his theory of counterinsurgency as a counter to Mao's theory of revolutionary guerrilla war.[38]

A reading of *Counterinsurgency Warfare* makes evident Galula's respect for the teachings of Mao; in fact, the introduction opens with a quotation from Mao. Galula points out that he wishes to "define the laws of counter-revolutionary warfare, to deduce from them its principles, and to outline the corresponding strategy and tactics."[39] In other words, he was attempting to overcome the "vacuum of studies" in the area of "concrete courses of action" for those engaged in "counterrevolutionary" operations.[40] In short, Galula was drafting a doctrinal guide for a specific type of "protracted" and "internal conflict" known as "colonial" warfare.[41] Galula points out that the "problem" of colonial warfare is concentrated mainly in the "underdeveloped" regions of the world, stating that this particular type of warfare "is not acute in the developed parts of the world."[42] At the time of Galula's writing, his home country of France was attempting to maintain control of its colonies; thus, he was speaking to a situation—indigenous uprising against the colonial power—not present in the world today. The article will return to this important point later.

Galula considered revolutionary war a political struggle whose primary objective is the population.[43] He warns that whoever controls the population

physically and secures its active support will win the war because "the exercise of political power depends on the tacit or explicit agreement of the population."[44] Success for the counterinsurgent in this endeavor, Galula warns, is very costly. He even speculates that the ratio of expenses between the counterinsurgent and the insurgent "may be ten or twenty to one, or higher."[45]

The outline of the insurgency doctrine that Galula uses in his work also reflects Mao's influence on his theory. Mao, who had analyzed revolutionary guerrilla warfare in his treatise *On Protracted War* (1938), postulated that this type of conflict included three phases. During the first, the strategic defensive, insurgents would build political strength among the population. The second phase, the strategic stalemate, saw guerrilla forces increasing their strength, consolidating their control of a territorial base area of operation, and accelerating the level and intensity of attacks on the government's strategic defensive positions in the major cities and along its main lines of communication. In the strategic offensive, Mao's third phase of protracted war, the insurgent commits regular, conventional forces in the final drive against the government.[46]

One can easily see Mao's imprint on Galula's thinking as he describes the "orthodox pattern" of communist revolution.[47] Primarily, Galula wished to propose a theory of counterinsurgency that would prove effective against communist revolutionaries. Consequently, for the purposes of clarity, he expands his reinterpretation of Mao's three phases of revolutionary war into five steps: (1) creation of a party, the "basic instrument for the entire revolutionary process"; (2) recruitment of other antigovernment groups as allies to present a "united front" of the people against the government, which then aids in gaining support of the people; (3) commencement of a protracted guerrilla warfare campaign against the capitalist and imperialist government and the establishment of operating bases about the country to maintain links with the population; (4) creation of an "insurgent regular army" to permit conventional "movement warfare" against the government's forces, exploiting the army's ability to move about quickly and leverage its superior intelligence as well as its "simple but effective cross-country logistical facilities afforded by the organized population"; and (5) launching of an annihilation campaign against the government forces and political structure once the insurgent forces are strong enough.[48]

Although Galula seems to emphasize the protracted model of guerrilla warfare, he notes a different one employed by the National Liberation Front in Algeria—the "Bourgeois-Nationalist" pattern. In this much more brutal model, better suited for operations in an urban environment, he sees only two steps: (1) the use of concentrated, coordinated, and synchronized waves of seemingly random yet spectacular bombings as a way to gain publicity for the insurgent movement and its cause, and (2) the use of "selective terrorism" or targeted killings of "some of the low-ranking government officials who work most closely with the population."[49]

To counter both models of insurgency, Galula offers four laws of counterinsurgency that reflect his emphasis on population as the center of gravity in a war of revolutionary insurgency. His first law maintains that the support of the population is as necessary for the counterinsurgent as it is for the insurgent. For Galula, the population includes three groups: an active minority that supports the insurgent cause, an active minority that supports the government, and an inactive and neutral majority. In short, he argues that counterinsurgent forces must win the support of the neutral majority: "The technique of power consists in relying on the favorable minority in order to *rally the neutral majority* and to neutralize or eliminate the hostile minority" (emphasis added).[50] Thus, Galula's second law of counterinsurgency holds that one gains and holds support for the government through the active minority that supports that government, which leads into his third law—support of the population for either the insurgent or the counterinsurgent is conditional.[51] That is, this third law posits that the portion of the local population that Galula classifies as the neutral majority will support the stronger force. He argues that counterinsurgents must communicate through their actions that they have the will, means, and ability to win.[52] To clearly communicate commitment and determination to win, Galula's fourth law of counterinsurgency advances the notion that the counterinsurgent must display an "intensity of effort," a "vastness of means," and a willingness to see the conflict through its "long duration."[53] By these means, counterinsurgents will relieve the local population from the threat presented by insurgent forces and convince it of the counterinsurgency's inevitable victory. According to Galula, counterinsurgents should demonstrate these concentrated efforts, massive resources, and vast personnel "as early as possible."[54] For Galula, a "ratio of force of ten or twenty to one

between the counterinsurgent and the insurgent is not uncommon when the insurgency develops into guerrilla warfare."[55] These statements lead the reader to surmise that, in an ideal scenario, this display of concentrated effort, massive resources, and vast personnel should occur during what Mao would term the strategic defensive phase or what contemporary scholars would call the "proto-insurgency."[56]

Galula's four laws of counterinsurgency represent an "oil spot" strategy for winning a war of insurgency, which one can compare to "an oil drop that upon striking a cloth gradually seeps outward."[57] Thus, as counterinsurgent forces clear one area of insurgent activity and establish a "base area," they then "gradually seep outward to pacify more regions and transform them into secure, government-controlled areas."[58] Galula offers an eight-step strategy for conducting a successful counterinsurgency campaign in each "selected area":

1. Concentrate enough armed forces to destroy or to expel the main body of armed insurgents.

2. Detach for the area sufficient troops to oppose an insurgent's comeback in strength, install these troops in the hamlets, villages, and towns where the population lives.

3. Establish contact with the population, control its movements in order to cut off its links with the guerrillas.

4. Destroy the local insurgent political organizations.

5. Set up, by means of elections, new provisional local authorities.

6. Test these authorities by assigning them various concrete tasks. Replace the softs and the incompetents; give full support to the active leaders. Organize self-defense units.

7. Group and educate the leaders in a national political movement.

8. Win over or suppress the last insurgent remnants.[59]

FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 reflects the influence of Galula's theory of counterinsurgency and its population-centered approach: "[Counterinsurgency] requires Soldiers and Marines to be ready both to fight and to build" through the use of a "combination of offensive, defensive, and stability operations."[60] The manual notes that the counterinsurgency campaign has the goal of creating a situation in which the local government is "accepted as legitimate by most of [the] uncommitted middle [of the local population]," which occurs only when the people believe they are "secure from insurgent intimidation."[61] After establishing and maintaining such security, the counter-

insurgent can stabilize the population by meeting its essential needs (food, water, clothing, shelter, and medical treatment). This provision of essential services is critical in any counterinsurgency campaign because "if the HN [host nation] government provides reliable, essential services, the population is more likely to support it."[62]

FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 refers to establishing security and providing essential services as a manpower-intensive endeavor.[63] As mentioned above, Galula recommended 10–20 counterinsurgents per single insurgent fighter.[64] FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 takes into consideration the difficulty of identifying the exact number of insurgent fighters, suggesting a ratio of 20–25 counterinsurgents for every 1,000 residents in an area of operations.[65]

Therefore, according to both Galula's counterinsurgency theory and counterinsurgency doctrine as outlined in FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5, using a population-centric approach will produce a successful campaign. Galula defines success as the "permanent isolation of the insurgent from the population," maintained not by military force alone but "by and with the [willing cooperation of] the population."[66] Similarly, FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 defines a successful counterinsurgency campaign as one that "depends on the people taking charge of their own affairs and consenting to the government's rule."[67] However, given the context of current events and projected global trends, does the type of manpower-intensive, population-centric approach to counterinsurgency continue to offer the correct tactic? Will the application of intensity of effort and vastness of means lead to the type of successful counterinsurgency envisioned by FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5? Does success in counterinsurgency equate to victory in conventional war? In light of the current fiscal concerns of the global economic order, particularly within Western industrialized democracies, is the application of today's counterinsurgency doctrine even possible?

## FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 and Galula's Counterinsurgency Theory in a Twenty-First-Century Context

Probably the most important of Galula's laws of counterinsurgency is the fourth, which declares that "intensity of efforts and vastness of means are essential."[68] Any attempt to examine American counterinsurgency in light of the post-9/11, post–Iraqi Freedom context must consider key areas related to this law: the impact of vastness of means (1) in terms of the large

numbers of troops necessary to successfully execute the oil-spot strategy, (2) in terms of the fiscal cost of waging a prolonged war of counterinsurgency, and (3) on national will. One should also reflect upon a fourth aspect of American counterinsurgency in the twenty-first century: the meaning of victory in a war of insurgency.

## *Troop Strength*

By January 2007, the insurgency in Iraq appeared to have spiraled completely out of control. An analysis by the Central Intelligence Agency in November 2006 described the situation as one resembling "anarchy and 'civil war.'"[69] In response to the deteriorated situation, President Bush ordered a surge of an additional 20,000 troops deployed to Iraq to "bring security to the people of Baghdad."[70] In a nationally televised speech, the president justified the increase in force levels to "hold the areas that [had] been cleared."[71] Mincing no words, he explained that, in previous security sweeps when US forces had cleared an area of insurgents and had "moved on to other targets, the killers returned."[72] The surge sought only to improve the daily lives of Iraqi citizens and bolster their confidence in their leaders, giving the Iraqi government the "breathing space it needs to make progress in other critical areas."[73]

The speech signaled a shift in strategy toward one built around the classic population-centric counterinsurgency theory of Galula—one focused on protecting the Iraqi people.[74] Without doubt, the surge enjoyed tactical success in the form of a de-escalation of violence and improved overall security, but six years afterward it remains unclear whether or not the fundamental social and political problems in Iraq that lay beneath the insurgent violence have been eliminated. Why? How is it that after years of US training and support as well as US-Iraqi combined military operations, the future of Iraq still appears so uncertain?

One may find an answer in the surge itself. A recent report by the RAND Corporation brings into question the concept of using large-scale foreign military interventions as part of a counterinsurgency strategy:

> History provides no basis for expecting large-scale foreign military intervention to make COIN [counterinsurgency] victorious. Rather, there is a correlation between large-scale foreign military intervention and unsuccessful COIN. The larger the foreign troop presence—France in Algeria, France and the United States in Indochina, the USSR in Afghanistan—the worse the outcome tends to be.[75]

These findings run directly counter to the classic counterinsurgency theory of Galula and to the doctrine in FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5. David Kilcullen, a modern-day Galula who has written extensively on contemporary insurgency, also asserts that a large foreign force on the ground is detrimental. He argues that the global insurgency facing the West today does not fit the classic model and is more akin to "hybrid warfare."[76] According to Kilcullen, in the context of global insurgency, the West does not contend with the traditional insurgent who holds a specific aim such as the overthrow of the local government. Rather, the global insurgency includes two classes of enemy—the local guerrilla with local concerns and the transnational terrorist with a much more "global outlook." Members of the local population, who may possess a "strong dose of traditional anticolonialism" and may oppose "the impact of modernity in its westernized, American-dominated form," then join an insurgency for primarily defensive reasons when they observe large numbers of foreign troops and consider them an occupying force.[77] Kilcullen writes that

> the local fighter is therefore often an accidental guerrilla—fighting us because we are in his space, not because he wishes to invade ours. He follows folk-ways of tribal warfare that are mediated by traditional cultural norms, values, and perceptual lenses; he is engaged (from his point of view) in "resistance" rather than "insurgency" and fights principally to be left alone.[78]

If the RAND study's findings and Kilcullen's thesis concerning the accidental guerrilla are correct, then one would conclude that the degree of numerical strength—one of the cornerstones of Galula's theory of counterinsurgency and of FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5—may not contribute to victory when applied in a noncolonial, contemporary context.[79] Consequently, one could surmise that the surge of forces in 2007 may have realized gains visible only as long as US forces remained in place. Sometimes individuals closest to the situation have the clearest view and can provide the best assessments; for at least some of the Soldiers who participated in the surge, their predictions weren't very optimistic. For example, Army staff sergeant Jose Benavides of Miami, Florida, deployed to Baghdad as part of the surge and witnessed firsthand the decrease in sectarian and terrorist violence. He assessed the situation simply yet pessimistically: "If the Americans leave, the sectarian violence will flare up."[80] Now that US combat forces have withdrawn, time will determine the accuracy of the sergeant's prediction. However, early

indicators, such as the spate of bombings currently plaguing Iraq, may prove Benavides correct sooner rather than later.[81]

## *Fiscal Costs*

Today, the United States has serious concerns about its fiscal situation. Now that combat troops have left Iraq and are scheduled to leave Afghanistan by the end of 2014, America is rethinking its defense strategy for what will likely be "an age of austerity."[82] Washington is looking for ways to cut the federal budget, and many Americans across the political spectrum—from Tea Party Republicans to Occupy Wall Street Democrats—want a large portion of those cuts to come from defense spending.

Wars are expensive—particularly prolonged campaigns such as Iraq and Afghanistan with large numbers of troops on the ground. Much has been written regarding the total costs of fighting these wars, and many individuals argue that the costs of the counterinsurgency campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan are largely responsible for the nation's current economic status, which recently suffered a downgrade from a "AAA" credit rating to a "AA-plus."[83] Both economists and international relations scholars have concluded that the total costs of the Iraq war to the United States, including future expenses (such as providing health care for returning war veterans) that will continue to escalate even after the last of the troops withdraw, will exceed $3 trillion.[84]

The state of the US economy has concerned the American electorate since the 2008 recession began. At present, "the country faces persistently high unemployment, a growing deficit, a shrinking middle class, and a sluggish housing crisis."[85] Some scholars are highly skeptical that the United States will return to vigorous growth anytime soon.[86] Meanwhile, the electorate is demanding action, and elected representatives are responding. In years past, defense budgets have enjoyed only modest cuts during times of fiscal belt-tightening, and lawmakers from the Democratic Party pushed most of them. Not so this time around: more than 50 percent of Republican freshmen lawmakers have voted in favor of proposals to cut defense spending.[87] Reportedly, some of the proposed defense budget cuts could reach as high as 25 percent. Spread over the next five years, they would drop the total defense budget from its current level of $700 billion to $522.5 billion.[88] Former secretary of defense Leon Panetta, finding him-

self under intense political pressure to cut spending, went on record advocating a "smaller, lighter, more agile, flexible joint force" rather than "maintaining a ground force large enough to conduct a long, bloody war and then [follow-on] stability operations."[89] In other words, in the face of fiscal belt-tightening, Mr. Panetta sought to reduce troop levels and restructure the force in a way that will make it even more difficult to field the numbers of troops that both the classic counterinsurgency theory of Galula and FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 call for. Indeed, the Pentagon's focus on reducing the size of the force to something smaller and more agile has the full support of President Obama.[90]

The impact, according to former senator David Boren, cochairman of President Obama's Intelligence Advisory Board, is that the United States must "reprioritize what we have to do."[91] Benjamin Friedman of the CATO Institute observes that the smaller number of ground troops "encourage[s] policymakers to employ the armed services less promiscuously, keeping American troops—and the country at large—out of needless trouble."[92] Mr. Friedman's value judgments aside, the final troop levels may make it very clear to even the most hawkish of policy makers that the United States can no longer carry out another protracted campaign of counterinsurgency using the so-called oil-spot principle, as in Afghanistan and Iraq. Indeed, more scholars and policy makers are beginning to call for retrenchment, arguing that the United States needs to "[shift its overseas] commitments and resources from peripheral to core interests" and "use the resulting 'retrenchment dividend' to foster recovery at home."[93] Thus, the call for the United States to "eschew its present fascination with nation building and counterinsurgency" has begun.[94] In all likelihood, America will continue to encounter problems presented by a huge national debt and a sluggish economy, making Americans less willing to tolerate another long counterinsurgency campaign.

### *National Will*

Galula's first law of counterinsurgency—that "support of the population is as important for the counterinsurgent as for the insurgent"—can also be applied to the domestic population at home.[95] Long, expensive wars wear away the domestic population's support of the counterinsurgent, which can contribute to defeat as quickly as anything else. In his analysis of the Vietnam

War, Harry Summers reached this conclusion, writing that the failure to acquire national will or support of the American people "was one of the major strategic failures."[96]

## Victory

When it comes to winning and losing, Americans simply hate to lose. The legendary Vince Lombardi, probably the most celebrated football coach of all time, famously said that "winning isn't everything; it's the only thing."[97] Some Americans would likely disagree with Coach Lombardi's extreme view of the importance of winning an athletic contest, but very few would question his view of winning when applied to warfare—one espoused throughout America's history by both its generals and presidents. For example, speaking to the nation from the Oval Office in March 2003, on the night that the United States launched its invasion of Iraq, President Bush vowed, "This will not be a campaign of half measures, and we will accept no outcome but victory."[98]

In the United States, victory in war is critical to maintaining public support for that war. Conflict is expensive, in terms of both blood and treasure, and the cost is borne by those who serve in the armed forces and those at home who pay taxes and provide political support for the effort. For this reason, the populace must perceive the costly and bloody effort as worthwhile. Therefore, one of the most critical factors begins with a clearly articulated definition of victory. In instances when victory "is not clearly articulated or achieved, a depressing sense of futility can ensue," leading to a loss of public support for the war effort.[99] Further, "from the viewpoint of political leaders, an inadequate understanding of the complexities surrounding victory can result in decision-making paralysis, embarrassment, and loss of internal and external support, escalating postwar violence, pyrrhic triumphs, and ultimately foreign policy failure."[100] America's "way of war" has historically involved using conventional forces in a strategy of annihilation.[101] In a conventional war between nation-states, one can thus see victory as the annihilation of a nation's military forces and a follow-on surrender by the defeated government, at which point the victorious nation-state "gets to use its power to hurt coercively" the other side and gain concessions.[102] In other words, wars traditionally applied force for the purpose of realizing political objectives—a type of victory that the American people can easily define

and understand. Those who fought and won the most recent war that conforms to this definition became known as America's "greatest generation."[103] Similarly, Americans had no trouble recognizing victory following the 1991 Gulf War, which removed the Iraqi army from Kuwait, and the troops came home to ticker-tape parades. If most Americans view victory in warfare this way, can it apply to a war of insurgency? Further, given that "being successful [in warfare] is most likely if complete clarity exists about the meaning of success" and "without a clear strategy with clear goals in war, there is no good way to gauge progress," is victory even possible in a war that uses a population-centric approach with a vague goal of winning hearts and minds?[104]

In his recent study of the meaning of victory in warfare, Robert Mandel points out that the meaning of military victory has changed since the Cold War. Rather than define it in overarching terms as in generations past, he posits that victory entails two phases: military victory and strategic victory. According to Mandel, "War is won, or lost, in two phases—military outcomes on the field of battle, and the battle to win the peace through reconstruction and reconciliation afterward; what is won on the battlefield can be lost entirely thereafter if the countries attacked are not turned into better and safer places."[105]

In a war of insurgency waged by the United States, as exemplified by Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, American troops will eventually pull out. This inevitability, however, was not the case when Galula developed his theory of counterinsurgency. He participated in and wrote about colonial wars of insurgency, usually against communist guerrillas bent on overthrowing the colonial ruler and establishing an indigenous government. In this regard, the "oil spot strategy" or "oil stain principle" makes perfect sense. In the colonial wars of insurgency fought during the Cold War, the colonial power had no intention of leaving the area since it considered the territory and resources part of its empire. In the case of Americans as counterinsurgents, US political leaders, military leaders, and the people all know, going in, that the end state includes a complete withdrawal of combat forces and the territory left to its indigenous leaders. Indeed, should the United States have an unlimited amount of time and resources to secure an entire territory, as Galula posits in step two of his counterinsurgency general strategy, and "sufficient troops to oppose an insurgent's comeback in strength," then it might attain both military and strategic victory.[106] However,

America is not a colonial power and will not have unlimited resources and an unlimited amount of time to conduct a protracted campaign; thus, those elements should not become part of American counterinsurgency planning.

Consequently, there will always be a chance of losing the gains secured by military victory following the departure of US forces. Since a war of insurgency does not involve annihilating an enemy army or taking and holding ground, it is entirely possible to win all of the battles yet lose the war—certainly the US experience in Vietnam. Although it is too early to tell for sure in Iraq, given the current series of events that have taken place since the withdrawal of US forces, we may be witnessing another case of America's winning a military victory only to suffer a strategic defeat. Over the next several years, the events in Iraq and Afghanistan will be of interest to students of counterinsurgency. If the history of major counterinsurgency campaigns since World War II is any indicator, then both conflicts will likely end in military victory followed by strategic defeat.

## Conventional versus Global Insurgency: Fundamental Differences

Thus far, this article has argued that as the United States leaves Iraq after waging war for more than eight years and prepares to leave Afghanistan after what will be a 13-year war, the type of classic / vastness of means / population-centric counterinsurgency campaign as advocated by theorist David Galula no longer applies. Following US Army counterinsurgency doctrine, based on classic counterinsurgency theory, the counterinsurgent should use the oil-spot strategy by securing an area with a force of proper ratio of troops to local population. Then, after having firmly established security and putting the area completely under control, the counterinsurgent repeats the process in other areas until the insurgents are isolated from the local population and no longer pose a threat. Yet, the local population's perception of vastness of means (with regard to troop levels as an occupying force) can create accidental guerrillas, thereby making the situation worse. Further, because the contemporary counterinsurgent does not intend to keep his forces deployed indefinitely in the campaign, does not intend to inflict coercive punishment on the defeated government, and does not intend to strip the controlled territory of natural resources, then a classic counterinsurgency campaign can inflict tremendous fiscal strain. The prolonged loss of blood and treasure

can result in a withdrawal of support for the campaign by the counter-insurgent's domestic population, resulting in a loss of national will. As Gil Merom points out, "Democracies are prone to fail in protracted small wars" primarily due to a lack of domestic support back home.[107] Stephen Walt's summation of the US counterinsurgency campaign in Iraq lends support to Merom's argument: "If victory is defined as achieving your main objectives and ending a war with your security and prosperity enhanced, then both of these conflicts [Iraq and Afghanistan] must be counted as expensive defeats."[108]

This article maintains that classic counterinsurgency theory no longer applies because the insurgency that poses a threat to the vital interests of the United States in the foreseeable future is not the same type that threatened the vital interests of Western powers in Galula's day—basically a rebellion against a colonial power, as mentioned earlier. Many people identify today's struggles as "global insurgencies, which differ from conventional ones in several ways—especially in terms of the overall goal of the insurgent."[109] Conventional insurgents wish to "overthrow or oppose a state or regime by force of arms."[110] So their overarching goal is more specific and usually directed at the local power structure. Conversely, the objective of the global insurgent is "more grandiose and ethereal" in scope—to overthrow or oppose the Westphalian system of nation-states.[111] For example, al-Qaeda—described as waging a global insurgency against the West—wishes to upset relations between Western nation-states and those populated with large concentrations of Muslims.[112]

Such differing goals make a conventional insurgency campaign much more territorial and centralized, focused on gaining the support of the local population. As Mao put it, "The richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people."[113] The conventional insurgent maintains targets within territorial boundaries so that he can display the weakness of the local government. The global insurgent, however, is nonterritorial, striking US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in one coordinated attack and urban mass transportation systems in London or Madrid in another. He does not need to win the battle for the hearts and minds of the local population. Rather, he wishes to gain the financial support or operational services of ideo-logically like-minded individuals from anywhere in the world who are drawn to the cause by a well-framed message put forth by one or a few dynamic leaders who can convince large numbers of rational people to put

themselves at a high level of personal risk to support the cause. Technological advances in communications make the global insurgent part of a flat, worldwide network form of organization instead of a traditional, group-based hierarchy.[114]

The tactics of the conventional insurgent also differ from those of his global counterpart. Whereas the latter relies primarily on terrorist attacks designed to incur large numbers of fatalities, the conventional insurgent depends less on terrorism and more on sabotage and guerrilla warfare. The conventional insurgent "seek[s] to aggravate such social and political dissension as exists and to raise the level of political consciousness and of revolutionary *will* among the people" (emphasis in original), but the global insurgent wants to inflict as many casualties as possible on the perceived enemy population.[115] That is, the global insurgent, using "the strategy of a thousand cuts," simply desires to inflict as much physical and economic pain as possible on the powerful states of the global order in order to attain "relative strategic balance."[116]

Theories specifying motivational factors that drive insurgents to either engage in violence or support the insurgency also differ between the conventional and global actor. For the former, these include the perception of occupation, which, as discussed earlier, can create an "accidental guerrilla" and/or a relative sense of deprivation.[117] In short, Relative Deprivation Theory, developed by Ted Robert Gurr, posits that internal violence is an outraged reaction to exploitation and relative deprivation—the perception held by the local population that they receive an unequal portion of economic wealth relative to others at the top of the socioeconomic ladder.[118] As the expectations of the local population become unequal with their material gains, therefore, the likelihood of conflict with the state's elites increases.

Although both Relative Deprivation Theory and the Accidental Guerrilla Syndrome explain the motivational factors driving the conventional insurgent, Jessica Stern's framework of grievances provides a way of understanding factors that motivate the nonterritorial global insurgent. She argues that several fundamental grievances, held individually or in various combinations, can lead individuals to commit to the type of terrorist violence distinguishing today's global insurgency. These are alienation, humiliation, demographic shifts, historical wrongs, and claims over territory.[119] Robert Leiken adds support to Stern's thesis by noting that many of Europe's second- and

third-generation Muslim immigrants feel cultural and social alienation and a resulting humiliation—the result of their host countries' failure to integrate them into European society. This then leads many of these "angry Muslims" to join the global insurgency "to slaughter Westerners."[120] To summarize, fundamental differences exist between the classic, territorial-based conventional insurgency of the kind Galula experienced during the 1950s and 1960s, and the type of global, nonterritorial insurgency of today, as epitomized by the al-Qaeda movement (table 2).

**Table 2. Conventional versus global insurgency: A side-by-side comparison**

|  | *Conventional Insurgency* | *Global Insurgency* |
|---|---|---|
| Goals of Insurgent | Specific—such as the overthrow of the local government | Complex, thematic—such as the overthrow of the global order |
| Power Source | Support from local population | Worldwide support of ideologically like-minded individuals |
| Center of Gravity | The local population | Insurgent funding sources, communications, training, international travel, dynamic leadership |
| Organizational Structure | Hierarchical: either by single group or by village/tribe | Flatter, networked, and Internetted |
| Insurgent's Primary Tactic | Local terrorism, sabotage, guerrilla warfare | International terrorism, hybrid warfare |
| Source of Insurgent Motivation | Sense of deprivation, perceived occupation | Strong sense of grievance |

To this point, this article has asserted that conventional insurgency differs fundamentally from global insurgency of the type waged by al-Qaeda against the West. Further, it has argued that classical counterinsurgency theory, with its emphasis on a population-centric approach to the development of a counterinsurgency campaign will not lead to successful outcomes, given the contexts of contemporary global insurgency. Yet, this same Cold War–era, population-centric model of counterinsurgency forms the foundation for US Army counterinsurgency doctrine. Thus, the US military needs a new theoretical lens through which to view contemporary global insurgency.

According to a saying among people in military circles, "We always fight the last war." That is, the institutionalized military traditionally adopts lessons learned from the most recent campaign and spends the interwar

period updating equipment, doctrine, and training to avoid making these mistakes during the next war. Of course, the flaw of this approach manifests itself in the fact that no two wars are ever alike and that concentrating on past enemy behavior can easily lead to a complete misjudging of a future adversary's capabilities, strategy, and tactics. The French learned this when they took the lessons from World War I and sat behind the Maginot Line preparing for a German invasion. Meanwhile, Germany's panzer divisions rolled around the fortified positions of the French army and into Paris. In Vietnam the United States found that the strategy and tactics which brought victory during World War II did not result in either the closing of the Ho Chi Minh Trail or the prevention of the fall of Saigon.

As the United States leaves Iraq and Afghanistan, it appears (based on the JRTC training curriculum, at least) that the Army will continue to operate under the Petraeus Doctrine and prepare for the next territorially based counterinsurgency campaign. Among other goals, this article seeks to advance an alternative to the population-centric approach to counterinsurgency in hopes it will add to the literature in a way that spurs discussion and debate. The remainder of this article outlines some general thoughts on this matter.

## From Winning Hearts and Minds to Causing a Loss of Balance

Some individuals believe that the strategy of the global insurgent, at least in the case of al-Qaeda, involves drawing the United States into small wars of insurgency to drain American resources and political power.[121] Further, commentators argue that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have indeed signaled a waning of American global dominance and have underscored the limits of US power.[122] Joseph Nye has long maintained that in a globalized, interdependent world, traditional "hard" military power becomes less effective.[123] Because the final outcome in Iraq remains in doubt, one can insist that this thesis certainly applies to a counterinsurgency campaign. In his latest work, Nye advocates the use of "smart power[, which] is the combination of the hard power of coercion and payment with the soft power of persuasion and attraction."[124] So the right question seems to be, Can America employ and use "smart power" as part of its counterinsurgency strategy rather than the large-footprint, population-centric approach which has guided US counterinsurgency doctrine since the promulgation of FM

3-24/MCWP 3-33.5? In other words, can the United States still effectively combat insurgents without adhering to the oil-spot principle?

The answer to both of these questions is a resounding yes. However, rather than win the battle for the hearts and minds of the local population, counterinsurgent strategy should cause a loss of balance by the global insurgent. This concept, as a part of a larger strategy of warfare, was developed by Miyamoto Musashi (1584–1645), one of Japan's most renowned warriors, known to the Japanese as *Kensei* or "Sword Saint."[125] In his *Book of Five Rings,* written in 1645, he observes that

> many things can cause a loss of balance. One cause is danger, another is hardship, and another is surprise. You must research this. In large-scale strategy it is important to cause loss of balance. Attack without warning where the enemy is not expecting it, and while his spirit is undecided follow up your advantage and, having the lead, defeat him. Or, in single combat, start by making a show of being slow, then suddenly attack strongly. Without allowing him space for breath to recover from the fluctuation of spirit, you must grasp the opportunity to win.[126]

For Musashi, causing an enemy to lose balance would then throw him into confusion:

> To throw into confusion—this means making the enemy lose resolve. In large-scale strategy, we can use our troops to confuse the enemy on the field. Observing the enemy's spirit, we can make him think, "Here? There? Like that? Like this? Slow? Fast?" Victory is certain when the enemy is caught up in a rhythm which confuses his spirit. In single combat, we can confuse the enemy by attacking with varied techniques when the chance arises. Feint a thrust or cut, or make the enemy think you are going to close with him, and when he is confused you can easily win. This is the essence of fighting, and you must research it deeply.[127]

Musashi's advice is more applicable to developing a strategy for defeating the global, nonterritorial insurgent than is Galula's because of differences in (1) the insurgent's strategy, (2) the centers of gravity, and (3) the primary concern for the counterinsurgent. The strategy of the insurgent during Galula's time started with the strategic defensive and increased the level of support from the local population until the insurgent could field an army large enough to go on the strategic offensive. The strategy of the global insurgent involved drawing his powerful enemy into small wars that would bleed him both of blood and treasure. Whereas the center of gravity for a classic insurgency is support of the local population, that for a contemporary global insurgency is the insurgent's funding, communications network, ability to train those wishing to join the insurgency, and access to international travel.

The primary strategic concern for the counterinsurgent in a classic insurgency entails preventing vertical escalation of insurgent violence within the country, but that of the counterinsurgent in a global insurgency is preventing horizontal escalation of terrorist violence across borders, of the type demonstrated by attacks in Kenya; Tanzania; New York and Washington, DC; Bali; and Madrid.

Some analysts fervently believe that addressing the unique concerns inherent in counterinsurgency will take a holistic or whole-of-government approach encompassing many different state and nonstate agencies.[128] Although a critique of the whole-of-government approach to counterinsurgency lies outside the scope of this article, it certainly appears that counterinsurgency strategy is evolving in this general direction. Indeed, in 2009 former secretary of defense Robert M. Gates formally adopted the concept in the *Quadrennial Roles and Missions Review Report*.[129] However, this article wishes to focus on the US military's specific role in a global, transnational, nonterritorial counterinsurgency. Very often the military's part in a conventional, territorially based insurgency involves using conventional ground forces to reestablish security and the rule of law.[130] This article favors the use of military smart power to address the three concerns listed above and at the same time follow Musashi's edicts. This calls for approaching global, transnational, nonterritorial counterinsurgency from a different theoretical precept—namely, acknowledging that the centers of gravity in such an insurgency are variables (e.g., the source of funding, communication, training, easy access to international travel, and dynamic leadership). Each of these centers of gravity falls within the sphere of interest of the US government, but not all of them fall within the sphere of influence of the US military.

If one makes use of a theoretical framework or lens to bring to light the above-mentioned centers of gravity, then those that fall within the sphere of influence of the US military are the dynamic leaders and training compounds. To destroy or significantly disrupt these centers of gravity, the military should rely on the surgical precision of special operations, such as those conducted by remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) and special operations forces. From a purely military perspective, the military can use the skill sets possessed by special forces and the force-multiplying effects of RPAs above all methods to cause the global insurgent to lose his balance and throw him

into confusion. Thus, special operations should become the key military element in the waging of a contemporary counterinsurgency campaign.

Contrary to Galula's warning that "small commando-type operations . . . cannot represent the main form of the counterinsurgent's warfare," special operations forces and RPAs or drones, with their surgical-strike capabilities, have repeatedly disrupted the global insurgent's activities, created confusion, eliminated dynamic leaders, and caused losses of balance.[131] As of late, U.S. special operations forces have enjoyed a string of successful kill/capture missions, the most notable of these being the US Navy SEAL raid in May 2011 that resulted in the death of Osama bin Laden. Similarly, the United States has increased its use of drone strikes in the Middle East, conducting more than 260 RPA operations since 2009, the most infamous of which was the drone strike in September 2011 that killed Anwar al-Awlaki, an American-born Yemeni cleric and anti-US propagandist. Primarily, these strikes have sought to eliminate al-Qaeda and Taliban leadership in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but their regional scope is expanding—witness the al-Awlaki hit in Yemen. Ultimately, such actions have vastly limited the global insurgent's ability to coordinate his large-scale terrorist attacks—a fact most profoundly brought to light when the documents seized from bin Laden's home in Abbottabad, Pakistan, revealed just how weak al-Qaeda had become since the 9/11 attacks. Correspondence recovered during the raid "shows bin Laden and his lieutenants lamenting al Qaeda's lack of funds and the constant casualties from U.S. drone strikes."[132]

Advocating this approach as the primary and theoretically based role of the US military in counterinsurgency operations will no doubt prove controversial because the larger institutionalized military generally sees special operations in more of a support role. Further, as posited by John Nagl, who has written extensively on an army's ability to learn and adapt, "Changing an army is an extraordinarily challenging undertaking."[133] Consider the fact that the US Army has fought insurgents in two theaters since 2003 and has learned some painful lessons, suffered some large setbacks, has developed and is currently carrying out a new doctrine, and has had this new doctrine vetted via a skillfully coordinated surge in Iraq. Many people affiliated with the Army urge that the lessons on counterinsurgency learned in Iraq become institutionalized so that we never repeat the mistakes of that war. They also insist that the Army codify a whole-of-government

approach and become more proficient at building societies that can stand on their own.[134] In short, advocates of the Petraeus Doctrine (evidently the overwhelming majority) see future conflict as a result of a "clash of civilizations."[135] They believe that the US military will continue its involvement in protracted counterinsurgency campaigns, in which the application of force will constitute "a lesser part of the soldier's repertoire."[136]

However, history is full of mistaken predictions regarding the nature of future war. Following World War I, the British military saw its primary role as maintaining order and security within its colonial empire. Thus, the British were ill prepared for the German blitzkrieg, and an entire British expeditionary force found itself trapped at Dunkirk.[137] Some have argued that the US military, by focusing so strongly on counterinsurgency operations, is in the process of reinventing itself as a constabulary "adept . . . at nation-building but shorn of adequate capacity for conventional war-fighting."[138]

Thus, echoing a call made by Stephen Walt, the US military and civilian leaders should remember what the military is good at doing and what it is not good at doing.[139] During the era of the Powell Doctrine, the US military proved itself highly capable of maneuver warfare, as reflected by its performance in the 1991 Gulf War and the rapid assault on Baghdad. The military "is *not* good at running other countries, particularly in cultures . . . [where] there are deep ethnic divisions and few democratic traditions" (emphasis in original).[140] Along a similar vein, US special operations forces are adept at direct-action missions, special reconnaissance, and security *assistance* (as opposed to *providing* security), all of which are critical in a counterinsurgency campaign. These skills, combined with the tremendous capabilities brought to bear by RPAs, can go a long way—and at much less cost—toward keeping the global insurgent off balance and confused. Galula pointed out that an "insurgency is usually slow to develop and is not an accident, for in an insurgency leaders appear and then the masses are made to move."[141] RPAs and special operations forces can monitor and strike those leaders after they appear and before they have a chance to organize followers and plan such damaging operations as those that al-Qaeda inflicted on the West from the mid-1990s through the mid-2000s.

It is time to reexamine counterinsurgency theory in a contemporary context. The oil-spot principle and its emphasis on winning hearts and minds no longer applies in the same ways it did during the Cold War. In fighting a

global insurgency, the United States should try to defuse such a war—not wage and win it. Consequently, this article argues that military decapitation strikes should become an important element of the United States' counter-insurgency efforts. If the SEAL team's direct-action mission against bin Laden had taken place in the late 1990s, when the Clinton administration targeted him, would an article such as this one have even been necessary?

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