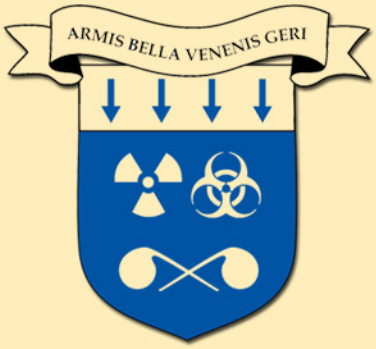
The New Insurgents: A Select Review of Recent Literature on Terrorism and Insurgency

George Michael



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A Select Review of Recent Literature on Terrorism and Insurgency

by

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About the Author

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Introduction

The face of terrorism and insurgency continues to change in the aftermath of 9/11. Prior to that event, formal hierarchically-organized groups – viz., Al Qaeda – were considered the principle terrorist threat to the United States. Osama bin Laden unequivocally declared war against America and vowed to attack U.S. interests wherever he could. The twin attacks against the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on August 7, 1998, finally provided him and Al Qaeda the notoriety he desired. By openly defying America, he hoped to rally the umma – the global community of Muslims – to his global jihad. Just a little over two years later, two of his operatives attacked the U.S.S. *Cole* as it floated in a port in Aden, Yemen for refueling. Seventeen sailors were killed and many more were injured. The U.S. Government's responses to these attacks were limited, which perhaps emboldened Al Qaeda.

The 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon were the culmination of Al Qaeda's terrorist campaign against the United States. This aggression provoked a ferocious response from the U.S. Government and set into motion a chain of events that drastically altered America's foreign policy in the twenty-first century. As a direct consequence of 9/11, the United States initiated two wars which remain unresolved.

The planning for Operation Enduring Freedom was hastily put together in order for the Bush administration to placate domestic opinion, which demanded swift retaliation for the terrorist attacks. The initial United States strategy was mostly directed at splitting the less fanatical elements of the Taliban from the hardliners. The U.S. military relied primarily on air power and Special Forces on the ground to gather intelligence, provide targeting information for aircraft, and coordinate operations with the Northern Alliance.

Fresh from quick victory in Afghanistan, by April 2002, President George W. Bush began to publicly call for a policy of regime change in Iraq. By June 2002, he announced that he would launch preemptive strikes against those countries believed to pose a serious threat to the United States. Furthermore, he added that the United States would be willing to take unilateral action if support from the United Nations and traditional

allies was not forthcoming. This approach would later be dubbed "the Bush Doctrine."

Although the U.S. military won a swift victory in a conventional war against Saddam Hussein's military forces, a protracted insurgency developed soon afterwards, which plunged Iraq into a civil war. Furthermore, as a consequence of the deterioration of the Iraqi theater, much-needed resources were diverted from Afghanistan which allowed a renascent Taliban to launch a protracted guerilla campaign against Coalition forces.

Despite differences over Iraq, after September 11, 2001, foreign governments increased coordination of their counterterrorism efforts with the United States. The global war on terror is treated not only as a military problem, but as a law enforcement problem as well. As to be expected, in the aftermath of 9/11, the federal government, with support from the American public, implemented more vigilant measures to root out terrorists at home and abroad. For instance, the PATRIOT Act was signed into law in October 2001 and in 2003, the Department of Homeland Security was created. After 9/11, there has been greater intelligence sharing not only between federal agencies, but also with state and local law enforcement agencies. Moreover, new technology has enhanced the government's ability to monitor potential terrorists and their supporters. As a result, large terrorist groups are now more vulnerable to disruption than they were in the past. However, small groups and lone wolves are still able to mount terrorist operations.

Some aspects of new technology actually favor the terrorists. The Internet is at the center of the ongoing revolution in communications and networking. The medium enables new forms of organization and greater dissemination of information. A dark side of the Internet, though, is that it can be used by terrorists to disseminate propaganda. Terrorists groups and their sympathizers can communicate with one another, raise money, and plan and coordinate operations. The Internet enables geographically dispersed people to collaborate on projects, including terrorism.

What is crucial in holding the decentralized circle together is a shared ideology. A shared narrative and doctrine enables these networks to maintain their sense of cohesion and purpose. Furthermore, the rise of the so-called new media has led to a diffusion "soft power"[1] around that world. On websites such as YouTube, people can bypass the mainstream media and post videos that are made available directly to the public. Through websites, a person can become a true believer of an ideology

without any formal connection to an organization. Furthermore, websites can even serve to instigate terrorism without any specific nexus to the perpetrators.[2]

Despite setbacks, there have been a number of key victories in the global war on terror. Most notable was on April 29, 2011, when President Barack Obama instructed the CIA to carry out a raid in the Pakistani town of Abbottabad in which Osama bin Laden was believed to have lived in a compound. Dubbed "Operation Neptune Spear," on May 2, 2011, two teams of twelve Navy SEALS carried out the raid. The SEALS stormed a compound during which bin Laden was killed in a firefight. A month later, Al Qaeda announced that Ayaman al-Zawahiri had been appointed as the leader of the organization. In the final years of his life, bin Laden served mainly as an inspirational figure, rather than an actual commander. This lack of command and control could actually made it more difficult for authorities to monitor Al Qaeda and its affiliates and supporters.[3] Globally dispersed and united by an ideology, bin Laden's movement could presage a new generation of warfare.

As the global war on terror enters its twelfth year, the United States faces an increasingly amorphous terrorist and insurgent threat. This study reviews selected recent research on terrorism and insurgency. Chapter 1 examines domestic extremism and terrorism in the United States. In *Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam*, J.M. Berger profiles numerous young men in the United States who have answered Osama bin Laden's call to global Jihad. Catherine Herridge focuses on the enigmatic Anwar al-Awlaki in her book *The Next Wave: On the Hunt for Al Qaeda's American Recruits*. An American citizen who spent much time in Yemen, al-Awlaki was once characterized as the "bin Laden of the Internet." Political extremism in the United States is not the sole province of militant Islam. As Martin Durham illustrates in *White Rage: The Extreme Right and American Politics*, a small, but persistent "white nationalist" movement is being fueled by numerous trends, including changing demographics and economic dislocations brought about by the historical process of globalization.

Chapter 2 looks at Jihadist strategies against the United States and the West. Norman Cigar analyzes the treatise of an obscure, yet influential jihadist theoretician in *Al-Qa'ida's Doctrine of Insurgency: Abd al-Aziz Al-Muqrin's "A Practical Course for Guerilla War*." In *Bin Laden's Legacy: Why We're Still Losing the War on Terror*, a prominent terrorism analyst, Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, argues that Al Qaeda has targeted the

American economy. Although the U.S. military is formidable and has waged successful counterinsurgency campaigns against Islamic radicals, Gartenstein-Ross makes the case that the global war on terror is ultimately unsustainable given the increasingly tight fiscal environment.

Insurgent theaters are covered in Chapter 3. John Ballard chronicles America's extended and conflicted involvement in the Persian Gulf in *From Storm to Freedom: America's Long War with Iraq*. In *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008*, Thomas E. Ricks recounts the events surrounding "the surge" which reversed the deteriorating U.S. military situation in Iraq in 2007. Although seemingly successful, the war in Iraq diverted resources from the Afghan theater which enabled a reconstituted Taliban to wage a guerilla campaign against United States and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) forces. Michael Hasting explores the unfolding U.S. counterinsurgency campaign in *The Operators: The Wild and Terrifying Inside Story of America's War in Afghanistan*.

Chapter 4 analyzes evolving terrorist and insurgent networks. New innovations in technology are influencing the organizational structures of terrorist and insurgent groups. Although the world had become a less hospitable place for terrorists in the aftermath of 9/11, many have adapted to the new security environment and are still able to mount operations, often with lethal effect. In *Brave New War, The Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization*, John Robb explains how the rise of small-scale, "do-it-yourself" terrorism could become more worrisome than the centrally planned attacks about which the U.S. Government seems most concerned. In their study, *War 2.0: Irregular Warfare in the Information Age*, Thomas Rid and Marc Hecker examine the intersection of technology and insurgency. As they note, two contemporaneous trends – the growing popularity of the World Wide Web and the rise of insurgencies – are shaping the course of modern warfare.

The increasing availability of dual-use technology, a dependence on computer networks, and a myriad of so-called soft targets could increase the destructiveness of terrorism in the future. Chapter 5 looks at terrorist innovations including the prospect of cyberwar and biowar. As Adam Dolnik explains in *Understanding Terrorist Innovation: Technology, Tactics, and Global Trends*, numerous factors influence the effectiveness of terrorist and insurgent groups, including their ideology, goals, organizational structures, and the countermeasures employed against them. In *Dead Silence: Fear and Terror on the Anthrax Trail*, Bob Coen

and Eric Nadler investigate the mysterious case of bioterrorism in October 2001. Coming on the heels of 9/11, two waves of letters laced with anthrax killed five people and sickened 17 more.

As Richard A. Clarke and Robert K. Knake note in *Cyber War: The Next Threat to National Security and What To Do About It*, the increasingly interconnectedness of America's infrastructure renders the nation vulnerable to attack. Terrorists are drawn to the realm of cyberspace for a number of reasons. For one thing, terrorists can potentially attack an enemy's economy by way of the Internet. It is difficult to defend against efforts to disrupt services. There are no borders of legal control. Furthermore, from the perspective of the perpetrators, cyberterrorism is more efficient and less dangerous than traditional forms of terrorist activity. No loss of life is involved and there is no need to infiltrate "enemy" territory. Cyber terrorists can commit crimes from anywhere in the world with minimal cost.[4] Recognizing this threat, President Barack Obama declared that the "cyber threat is one of the most serious economic and national security challenges we face as a nation."[5]

Chapter 6 discusses countermeasures that have been proposed to defeat terrorist and insurgent groups. Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes advance a number of proposals in an edited volume entitled *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy*. Barak Mendelsohn argues in *Combating Jihadism: American Hegemony and Interstate Cooperation in the War on Terrorism* that the international community is more likely to work together when faced with a serious existential threat.

The conclusion speculates the dynamic nature of terrorism and insurgency that we could see in the future. Various trends in technology and networking are contributing to the miniaturization of terrorist and insurgent groups around the world today. Numerous policy recommendations are proposed to confront this amorphous threat that could bedevil the nation for decades to come.

Notes

1. Joseph Nye referred to soft power as the ability to determine the framework of the debate in international affairs. Such intangibles, including media, culture, and ideology, are in contrast to tangible resources such as military and economic might.

Joseph Nye, "The Changing Nature of World Power," *Political Science Quarterly*, v. 105, Issue 2 (Summer, 1990), 7.

2. For example, the Nuremberg Files – a website operated by an anti-abortion activist in Oregon – listed the names and addresses of doctors who performed abortions. Operated by Neal Horsley, the site contained unsubtle suggestions that there should be some kind of retribution against them. In February 1999, the site was removed by its Internet service provider after a red line was drawn through the name of Dr. Barnett Slepian on the day he was killed by an anti-abortion assassin. As illustrated by this case, Internet activism blurs the distinctions on acts that constitute terrorism. Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 142; See also "Anti-abortion Website goes on trial," *USA Today* (January 7, 1999), On-line, Internet, available from http://usatoday.com/news/ndswed05.htm.

3. Lorenzo Vidino, *Al Qaeda in Europe: The New Battleground of International Jihad*, (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2006), 79.

4. Larry J. Siegel, *Criminology: Theories, Patterns, and Typologies*, Eleventh Edition, (Belmont, CA: 2013), 537.

5. "Remarks by the President on Securing Our Nation's Cyber Infrastructure," 29 May 2009, On-line, Internet, available from http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-on-Securing-Our-Nations-Cyber-Infrastructure.

CHAPTER 1

Domestic Extremism and Terrorism in the United States

Over the years, radical Islam has gained traction in the United States. Although Muslim terrorists have attacked U.S. interests overseas on many occasions, they have generally refrained from striking domestic U.S. targets. Historically, Islamist[1] activity in the United States centered more on fundraising and recruiting rather than on terrorism.[2] However, in some instances, small cells of foreign extremists have operated on U.S. soil. The 9/11 attacks demonstrated the destruction that a small number of determined terrorists could inflict on America. In the aftermath of 9/11, there was a great fear that sleeper cells would spring into action. Some of the more deadly attacks to date, however, have come from solitary individuals who have self-identified with the global jihad.

In the United States, Islam is one of the fastest growing religions due not only to immigration, but also conversions, most notably in the African-American community. Some observers argue that trends in the West, such as identity politics, are the catalyst for militant Islam. After all, the nineteen hijackers responsible for 9/11 were not radicalized in the Middle East, but rather during their time in the West. In his study, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*, the noted French scholar of Islam, Olivier Roy, argued that Muslims in the West often experience a trauma of "deterritorialization," because they feel estranged from their native lands. To overcome their anomie and alienation, young Muslims in particular find solace in a new, purified Islam, and attach themselves to a "virtual ummah" built on the World Wide Web.[3]

Over the past several years, Al Qaeda's leadership has become increasingly Americanized. In *Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam*, J.M. Berger recounts the origins of Islam in America and its radical variants that have taken hold over the past few decades. He

notes that the popularity of online forums have made it easier for these radical groups to reach out to prospective recruits. In *The Next Wave: On the Hunt for Al Qaeda's American Recruits*, Catherine Herridge focuses on one of radical Islam's most effective recruiters – Anwar al-Awlaki. A U.S. citizen of Yemeni descent, al-Awlaki exerted a strong influence over many jihadists including Major Nidal Mali Hasan, a Muslim-American psychiatrist in the U.S. Army, who on November 5, 2009, went on a shooting rampage at Fort Hood, Texas, killing 12 and leaving 31 wounded.

Extremism in America is not confined to radical Islam. During the 1990s, the extreme right appeared to gain ground as a social movement. Trends in technology, such as the Internet, enabled the movement to reach out to a potentially larger audience than in the past. Some high-profile confrontations with law enforcement authorities and horrific acts of political violence – most notably the 1995 bombing of Alfred P. Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City – seared the issue of right-wing terrorism into the public's mind. However, in the aftermath of 9/11, as a result of greater vigilance on the part of federal law enforcement agencies, the extreme right experienced a number of setbacks, as many of its leaders were arrested and prosecuted. The year 2008, however, witnessed a polarization in America that could revive the extreme right, as the financial meltdown and ensuring economic crisis created the conditions of greater grievance and the ranks of the unemployed remained high. Also, the election of America's first African-American President, Barak Obama, had a catalyzing effect, not only on the extreme right, but the more respectable conservative movement as well.

Martin Durham provides an overview of the "white nationalist" movement in *White Rage: The Extreme Right and American Politics*. As Durham explains, since the early 1980s, the extreme right has taken on an increasingly revolutionary orientation as various social trends have significantly changed the texture of the country. For those in the extreme right, America is not the same country they once knew. What is more, many in the movement consider the "damage" done too great to be repaired by conventional methods. Only radical solutions, it seems, can save the nation and race. In 2013, the Southern Poverty Law Center announced that the number of "hate" groups had reached over a thousand and the number of "anti-government patriot and militia" groups topped

1,360 – the largest figures ever recorded since the organization began counting such groups in the 1980s.[4] Consternation over immigration, multiculturalism, and a stagnant economy will most likely become more pronounced in upcoming years. The extreme right could gain traction despite formidable opposition.

J.M. Berger, *Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam*

In late July 2011, U.S. military authorities announced that an AWOL soldier, Private First Class Naser Abdo, was in custody for planning an attack on the Fort Hood Army Base, the same place that Major Nidal Hasan had struck nearly two years before. Abdo's case illustrates the "homegrown" trend in terrorism in America and Western Europe characterized by small-scale, leaderless attacks carried out jihadists operating on their own initiative. In his book, *Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam*,[5] investigative journalist J.M. Berger explores the travails of numerous Americans who have answered the clarion call to Jihad. His study draws upon an array of secondary sources and numerous interviews he conducted with academics, law enforcement, intelligence, military and diplomatic officials, as well as assorted Muslim radicals along with their family members and associates.

As Berger notes, Islam can be traced back to the early settlement of the North American continent. Though a small minority, some African Muslims were transported in the trans-Atlantic slave trade; however, over time, most of them lost their religious traditions. The origins of organized Islam in America began in 1913 when Noble Drew Ali (1886-1929) founded the Moorish Science Temple in Newark, New Jersey. After his death in 1929, the organization went into steep decline, but one of his followers, Wallace D. Fard, founded a new sect called the "Lost-Found Tribe of Shabazz," which later became the Nation of Islam. Fard later passed control of the Nation of Islam over to his most trusted disciple, Elijah Muhammad, who built the organization into a powerful African-American institution. The Nation of Islam promoted a racialist interpretation of Islam in which blacks were designated as the "original man" and whites were deemed "devils." The organization gained notoriety

in the 1960s, largely due to the efforts of its late firebrand speaker, Malcolm X.

By the 1960s, indigenous Islamic communities in America were joined by Muslim immigrants from Egypt, Iraq, and elsewhere in the Muslim world. Around this same time, the government of Saudi Arabia began to take an interest in American Islam. The Saudis were concerned about reforming the beliefs of African-American Muslim, which they viewed as heretical under the direction of the Nation of Islam. Awash with petrodollars, the Saudis promoted an ultraconservative brand of Islam. The primary vehicle was the Muslim World League. The Saudi government also sponsored trips for American Muslims to visit Saudi Arabia and receive religious indoctrination.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 galvanized the jihadist movement which extended its reach to America. Berger estimates that roughly 150 Americans sojourned to Afghanistan to take part in the war. Giving top priority to countering Soviet communism, the Reagan administration turned a blind eye to the radical Islamic clerics and Afghan fighters who toured America seeking support from Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Most notable was Addullah Azzam, a Palestinian who spent considerable time in America raising money and recruiting for the mujahedeen in Afghanistan. In 1984, he and Osama bin Laden founded the Afghan Service Bureau or MaK (Makhtab al Khadimat) as a vehicle for recruitment and fundraising. By 1988, the organization evolved into Al Qaeda. That same year, Azzam and his two sons were killed by a bomb explosion as they traveled on a road in Afghanistan.

Despite numerous international terrorists attacks that targeted American interests overseas, Islamic extremists did not conduct any major attacks inside the United States until the early 1990s. The assassination of Jewish Defense League (JDL) founder Rabbi Meir Kahane on November 5, 1990 by an Islamic militant, El Sayyid Nosair, foreshadowed a new era of Islamic extremism in America. Initially, Islamic terrorism was directed primarily by Muslims from overseas. For instance, on February 26, 1993, a small circle of Islamic extremists under the direction of Ramzi Yousef, a Pakistani, attempted to topple the World Trade Center towers. Several of the conspirators were followers of a charismatic blind cleric named Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, an Egyptian national who immigrated to the United States in 1990, despite the fact that he had been on a terrorist watch list for

his role in the 1981 assassination of President Anwar Sadat. In 1995, Rahman was convicted on seditious conspiracy charge for allegedly inspiring some of the individuals who participated in the first World Trade Center attack through his fiery rhetoric. It later transpired that the mastermind of the plot, Ramzi Yousef, was affiliated with Al Qaeda, which attracted several American recruits over the years.

One of the first to gain notoriety was John Walker Lindh who was captured by U.S. military forces during the opening days of Operation Enduring Freedom. The young man left California to travel to Yemen, where he enrolled in an Arab language school. Eventually he made his way to Pakistan and finally Afghanistan, where he attended Al Qaeda training camps and actually met Osama bin Laden. Desperate to demonstrate his commitment, Lindh volunteered to fight with the Taliban against the Northern Alliance. A few years later, another prominent homegrown, Jose Padilla, made headlines for allegedly seeking to construct a "dirty bomb." A former Chicago gang member, Padilla converted to Islam while in prison. According to U.S. authorities, Padilla had also planned to simultaneously blow up several apartment buildings supplied by natural gas. Although the cases of Lindh and Padilla appear somewhat farcical, others have been more significant.

Berger designates Ali Abdelsaoud Mohamed as the most formidable of Al Qaeda's American assets. Well-educated and conversant in Arabic, Hebrew, English, and French, Mohamed fancied himself as a spy. In fact, he was a double agent who once worked simultaneously for the CIA and the Egyptian Islamic Jihad. During the 1980s, he served as an Egyptian Army officer, but also joined the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, a group led by Ayman al-Zawahiri and linked to the 1981 assassination of Anwar Sadat. In 1986, Mohamed made his way to America and enlisted in the U.S. Army. With his knowledge of the Middle East, he was tapped to serve as the assistant director of a Middle East Seminar for the Special Operations and International Studies Department at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. While there, he was well-regarded for his expertise on Middle East affairs. He also made occasional trips to Afghanistan during which he provided professional American-style training to Al Qaeda and other Islamic militants. He even wrote a training guide for Al Qaeda.

Since 9/11, Americans have become some of the most visible representatives of Al Qaeda in the media. For instance, Adam Gadahn, (a.k.a. "Azzam the American") has emerged as a leading Al Qaeda spokesman on the Internet. Amazingly, the young native of California and convert to Islam was able to ingratiate himself into the highest echelons of Al Qaeda. A seemingly alienated youth, he underwent a radicalization process and made his way to Pakistan, where he was recruited and served as translator for the terrorist organization. In recent years, he has emerged as somewhat of an Internet celebrity on web sites such as YouTube.

Still another important figure is Anwar al-Awlaki, a Yemini-American cleric who grew up in New Mexico. He plays an important operational role for Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and has reached out to several American jihadists. Fluent in both Arabic and English, he has an encyclopedic knowledge of Islam and is regarded as a gifted speaker who is capable of moving men into action. He exerted a strong influence over Major Nidal Hasan with whom he exchanged emails several times before the attack at Fort Hood. Al-Awlaki met with Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab who was arrested for his alleged attempt to blow up a Detroit-bound flight on Christmas Day in 2009. His sermons also inspired Faisal Shahzad, a seemingly upright and assimilated middle class computer technician and U.S. citizen who lived in Connecticut but was born in Pakistan, who attempted to detonate three bombs in an SUV that was parked in the heart of Times Square in New York City in May, 2010. Zachary Chesser, a Fairfax, Virginia man who was arrested in July 2010 on charges of trying to join the Somali Islamic terrorist group as-Shabab, was an admirer of al-Awlaki as well. Once characterized as the "bin Laden of the internet," Al-Awlaki's pronouncements are broadcasted on jihadist websites and also YouTube.

Even some American women have answered the call to global Jihad as illustrated by the case of Colleen LaRose (a.k.a. Jihad Jane) who converted to Islam and met like minded followers online. In August 2009, she flew to Sweden to allegedly stalk a Swedish cartoonist whose work was deemed offensive to Islam. After returning to the United States, she was arrested in October of that same year.

According to Berger, several traits can be discerned among the American jihadists. He found that many act out of a sense of altruism in that they believe that their fellow Muslims are under attack. Nevertheless,

they often exhibit an obsession with violence and feel a strong sense of alienation. Also important is the influence of identity politics. As he explains, the allure of joining a seemingly empowered social network should not be underestimated. Here, the Internet is important insofar as it allows dissident groups to spread their message and provides a mechanism of social reinforcement.

The popularity of online forums has led to a shift in the patterns of radicalization and the profile of American jihadists. As Berger observes, prior to 9/11, someone who joined jihad did so "because he was pretty damn tough." After 9/11, self-selected jihadists are more likely to be voracious readers. The Internet enables individuals to connect with the global jihad, where they can immerse themselves in a dizzying array of radical Islamic literature. Whereas previously, indoctrination was tightly controlled by Al Qaeda and related groups in training camps, the model has changed post-9/11. First the invasion of Afghanistan destroyed the network of Al Qaeda terrorist training camps. Furthermore, the atmosphere in America became less congenial for jihadist recruiters. Today, mosques are less hospitable to extremists and monitoring is pervasive.

The declining quality of terrorist training and increased surveillance from authorities have combined to work against terrorist plotters. Arguably, the quality of recruits has declined as many of them are young men with "little practical experience in Islam, fighting, or life." Many of them could be more aptly classified as "jihobbyist" a term coined by the terrorism analyst Jarret Brachman. The jihobbyists run into trouble when they attempt to make the transition from talk to action. This lack of training is evident in the amateurishness of some of the attacks over the last few years. As Berger notes, the most prone to act are also those that are most likely to have attracted law enforcement scrutiny. In the short term at least, this will make mounting major coordinated terrorist activities extremely difficult, but not impossible.

In the realm of propaganda, Berger believes that the effect of American jihadists is limited as well. As he points out, American jihadists who immerse themselves in a foreign culture become less effective at speaking to their fellow Americans, noting the case of Adam Gadahn who seemingly acquired a vaguely Arabic-sounding accent after spending time with Al Qaeda. Gadahn's accent, however, was obviously contrived and

later abandoned. Watching his videos over the years, one can discern noticeable changes in his affect. Initially, his words were full of vitriol, and delivered with an angry demeanor. Later, he appeared more soft-spoken and pious. In his most recent appearances, he comes off as a seasoned political analyst. Gadahn is believed to be a member of Al Qaeda's media committee – as Sahab – under whose direction the propaganda has become more sophisticated. His and al-Awlaki's influence suggest that Al Qaeda's media operations are becoming more, not less effective.

Despite the sensationalism surrounding contemporary American jihadists, Berger believes that their ranks in 2010 are not exponentially higher than they were at the end of the 1980s. Rather, the perception has changed due to the increased salience of radical Islam in the wake of 9/11. Nevertheless, the number of sporadic terrorist plots and attacks suggests that the jihadist problem will persist in America at least in the near term. Not long after the death of Osama bin Laden, some U.S. officials warned that his demise could speed up the jihadist lone wolf trend. Over the past few years, Al Qaeda has become more decentralized, and therefore, a more difficult entity to stop. Berger's study will be useful to those readers who wish to gain a better understanding of this trend.

Catherine Herridge, *The Next Wave: On the Hunt for Al Qaeda's American Recruits*

In the final years of his life, Osama bin Laden served mainly as an inspirational figure, rather than an actual commander. He instructed his faithful followers that jihad was an individual duty for every Muslim who was capable of going to war. Ominously, a small, but notable, number of Americans have answered his call. In fact, American recruits are highly valued by Al Qaeda for their passports and their ability to blend in with American society. In her book *The Next Wave: On the Hunt for Al Qaeda's American Recruits*,[6] Catherine Herridge, explores the travails of some of the prominent American jihadists. For her study, she draws upon her ten-year experience reporting on the war on terror and prevails upon numerous military and intelligence officials and analysts. The chief focus of her book is on Anwar al-Awlaki who played an important operational

role for Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and reached out to several American jihadists.

For instance, al-Awlaki, exerted a strong influence over Major Nidal Malik Hasan with whom he exchanged several emails. On November 5, 2009, the Virginia-born Muslim psychiatrist in the U.S. Army went on a shooting rampage at Fort Hood, Texas, which killed thirteen people and left thirty-eight wounded. On Christmas day that same year, a young Nigerian man, Umar Farouk Abdulmutuallab, attempted to ignite an explosive device that was sewn into his underwear while he traveled on Northwest Flight 253 from Amsterdam to Detroit. According to Herridge's sources, al-Awlaki was the middleman between the bomb maker and the Nigerian whom al-Awlaki had coached on security and surveillance in Western countries.

Al-Awlaki was born in 1971 in New Mexico, where his father pursued his higher education. Sometime in 1977 or 1978, the family returned to Yemen, where the senior al-Awlaki went on to become a well-respected and well-connected government minister. In 1991, Anwar al-Awlaki returned to America to pursue a degree in engineering at Colorado State University, but misrepresented himself as foreign born, presumably to receive a $20,000 scholarship from the U.S. State Department in a program intended for foreign students. On his social security application, he erroneously claimed that he was born in Yemen and was issued a new social security number. When he renewed his passport in 1993, however, he presented his birth certificate which indicated that he was actually born in New Mexico, but used his fraudulently obtained social security number.

After graduation, al-Awlaki moved to San Diego, where he became the imam of the al-Rabat Mosque. While there in the late 1990s, he met regularly with Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Midhar, two of the 9/11 hijackers. Herridge claims that al-Awlaki was part of a support cell sent to the United States prior to 9/11. Sometime in 2001, al-Awlaki moved to Falls Church, Virginia, where he became the imam of the Dar al-Hijra Islamic Center and crossed paths with Hani Hanjour, who along with Hazmi and al-Midhar, hijacked American Airlines Flight 77 which slammed into the Pentagon. Immediately, FBI agents took an interest in al-Awlaki whom they interviewed at least four times in the first eight days after the 9/11 attacks. Nevertheless the unflappable and mediagenic al-Awlaki was often the go-to-guy for sound bites on local TV and national

broadcasts for the Muslim-American perspective on 9/11. In fact, Herridge discovered that al-Awlaki had participated in a Pentagon outreach program to moderate Muslims in the immediate aftermath of 9/11.

Despite his veneer of moderation, al-Awlaki continued to consort with Muslim radicals and came under increasing scrutiny by federal investigators. In June 2002, a Denver federal judge issued an arrest warrant for al-Awlaki based upon his fraudulent misrepresentations on his social security and passport applications in the early 1990s. Sometime in 2002, he left the United States, but returned on October 10, 2002. When he arrived at the John F. Kennedy Airport, federal agents apprehended and held him, but released him shortly thereafter because on that same day the federal judge had rescinded his arrest warrant. According to the official explanation, prosecutors did not believe that there was enough evidence to convict al-Awlaki of a crime; moreover, the ten-year statute of limitations for lying to the Social Security Administration had expired. Before the end of 2002, al-Awlaki left the United States for the last time after which he went first to England and then to Yemen.

Herridge believes that the government has not entirely come clean on al-Awlaki. During her investigation, Herridge noted that the mere mention of his name to a government official can be a conversation killer. She questions why the FBI instructed customs agents to allow al-Awlaki to reenter the country in October 2002, concluding that the decision must have come from higher up. Why then did the FBI want al-Awlaki in the country? Herridge finds it odd that the decision to rescind al-Awlaki's arrest warrant came the same day that he returned to the country. Adding further suspicion is the fact that the U.S. Government has not released all of the intercepted emails between the Fort Hood killer Major Nidal Hasan and al-Awlaki.

As Herridge explains, through the new media, offbeat loners can be self-radicalized and become dedicated terrorists. She characterized al-Awlaki as a "virtual recruiter" who almost never met his jihadists in person. In the final months of his life, al-Awlaki encouraged American jihadists to launch lone wolf attacks on their own initiative. In addition to his propaganda, U.S. officials believed that al-Awlaki was involved in the operational planning of terrorist attacks as well. After his return to Yemen, he skillfully used his connections to expand his influence in the jihadist movement. Despite his U.S. citizenship, in the spring of 2010, he was

placed on the CIA's kill or capture list. On September 30, 2011, two Predator drones fired Hellfire missiles at a vehicle carrying al-Awlaki and other suspected Al Qaeda operatives as they traveled on a road in Yemen's al-Jawf province. Shortly thereafter, Yemen's Defense Ministry announced that al-Awlaki had been killed.

Herridge's book is interesting, but leaves many questions about al-Awlaki unanswered. Moreover, she omits important details about al-Awlaki's activities after he left America, including his stay in England and his role in Al Qaeda in the Arabia Peninsula while in Yemen. Surprisingly, Herridge made no mention of another prominent American jihadist – Adam Gadahn, (a.k.a. "Azzam the American") – arguably the most recognized American Al Qaeda spokesman on the Internet. The young native of California and convert to Islam is believed to be an important member of Al Qaeda's media committee – as Sahab – under whose direction the organization's propaganda has become more sophisticated. In recent years, Gadahn has emerged as somewhat of an Internet celebrity on web sites such as YouTube.

Still, Herridge provides an interesting journalistic study on the radicalization of American jihadists and their connections to their ideological brethren overseas. As such, it will be of interest to students of terrorism and political extremism.

Martin Durham,
White Rage: The Extreme Right and American Politics

In the aftermath of 9/11, interest in the American far right has waned among academics, as more and more are focused on the topic of Islamic radicalism. Yet, as Martin Durham demonstrates, the far right persists in the United States and has adapted to the post-9/11 environment. *White Rage: The Extreme Right and American Politics*[7] surveys the American far right in the post World War II era. Although small, this volume provides a broad and detailed overview of the American far right.

What is useful about Durham's analysis is his typological approach, as he seeks to clarify the various orientations that compose the fractured American far right. For example, the far right consists collectively of both the radical right and the extreme right. The radical right has a long

pedigree and its ideological underpinnings can be traced in large part to the John Birch Society and the Minutemen organizations that gained notoriety in the 1960s. The militia movement is the most recent manifestation of this segment and attained much salience in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing. Race creates a sharp delineation between the radical right and the more revolutionary segments of the extreme right, which includes Christian Identity, Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazi, and other assorted "white nationalist" organizations. Race is integral to the extreme right, but less prominent in radical right. What animates the former is the belief that the white race is under attack and faces an existential threat from non-white races. Jews are identified as the principal enemy whose aim is to mobilize the non-white masses against the white population. As Durham points out, members of Christian Patriot groups usually explicitly eschew race as an organizing principle yet nonetheless share a conspiratorial worldview not unlike the racialist denizens of the extreme right. Despite these surface differences, there is a considerable amount of overlap and cross-fertilization among these various groups.

According to Durham, the landmark 1954 U.S. Supreme Court *Brown v. the Board of Education* decision, which sounded the death knell for racial segregation, was the catalyst that shaped the contours of the contemporary extreme right. Yet, to better place the movement in context, Durham discusses some of its antecedents, such as Father Joseph Coughlin, William Dudley Pelley, the German American Bund, Lothrop Stoddard, Madison Grant, Gerald L.K. Smith, Lawrence Dennis, and Henry Ford. Several orientations of the far right are covered in separate chapters in the book, including neo-Nazi organizations, the myriad of Klan groups, and Christian Patriots and militia members. Durham explains how various individuals have shaped the movement's ideology, including George Lincoln Rockwell, William L. Pierce, David Lane, Tom Metzger, Wesley Swift, Richard Butler, and Willis Carto.

The role of various religious sects that influence the movement are covered as well, including Christian Identity, Odinism, Cosmotheism, the Church of the Creator, and even the late Robert Miles' Dualism. Although they usually agree on the primacy of race, theological and ideological differences can at times be substantial and thus hinder cooperation.

Women are playing an increasingly active role in the movement. Durham discusses their contributions and their often conflictive

relationships with their male counterparts in what has traditionally been a patriarchal movement. Nevertheless, the movement has long been concerned with women, as they are seen as vital for the future of the race. In movement literature, women are often depicted as the weak link in chain in that they are susceptible to miscegenation, thus threatening the long-term survival of the race. For many years, women tended to play supportive roles in the movement. In recent years, however, women are encouraged in some quarters to fight alongside the men.

Most important for this journal, Durham explains the debate over the efficacy of terrorism that has taken place within in the extreme right subculture. As he points out, some believe in the efficacy of "leaderless resistance" while others believe that such an approach is doomed to failure; only a larger, guerilla style organization would be feasible in mounting racial revolution. Moreover, they argue that a substantial amount of preparatory work must be done before mounting a revolutionary campaign. To do otherwise would invite the repression of authorities and amount to organizational suicide. Still others eschew violence for strategic and normative reasons.

Durham explores the connections among the various groups and activists. Although radical rightists and conservatives share a great deal in common, Durham observes that forging an alliance between the two camps has not been fruitful. Cooperation among activists has usually been elusive, as they often find themselves involved in internecine feuds. Still, some have succeeded in building bridges, most notably, Willis Carto whose *Spotlight* and *American Free Press* newspapers have appealed to readers in virtually all segments of the far right. Durham also chronicles the extreme right's various efforts to reach out to activists from other movements across the political spectrum, including the far left, black nationalists, and radical Islam. As of yet, not much tangible has come out of these efforts. Interestingly, Durham discusses the far right's ambivalent response to 9/11 and its aftermath. Some activists explicitly endorsed the Islamic terrorists and valorized their terrorism, while others attributed the attacks to a government conspiracy and rejected any prospect of cooperating with Islamic radicals despite their common enemy of political Zionism. Internationally, the extreme right's identity has shifted from the nation to a broader trans-national conception of race. Under the rallying cry, "White Power" activists seek to mobilize whites on a global scale to

meet the sundry challenges of globalization, including sweeping third world immigration and multiculturalism.

Despite its notoriety and persistence, the movement remains weak and marginalized in American politics owing to a number of factors, including the two-party electoral system which militates against the emergence of viable minor parties. Perhaps more important, according to Durham, is the ferocious nature of the disputes between different organizations and personalities in the movement. Still, although numerically weak, as Durham observes, even small numbers can have a devastating effect when resorting to violence, especially in an era in which new technology serves as a force multiplier. Durham provides a very-nuanced study of the movement and draws upon an impressive array of primary and secondary sources for his analysis. This book will be useful to students and scholars interested in political extremism. Its readability makes it suitable for laypersons as well.

Notes

1. According to Daniel Pipes, Islamism is essentially an effort to transform the religion of Islam into a contemporary political ideology not unlike fascism and communism. Islamism offers a vanguard philosophy with a complete program to improve man and remake society. Daniel Pipes, *Militant Islam Reaches America*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002), 91.

2. In the United States, radical Islamists have sometimes received support from the more respectable Islamic organizations. Their oft-expressed enmity for America notwithstanding, Islamists are ironically drawn to the country for a number of reasons. In their home countries they often face repression by the police and security agencies. Thus they find it attractive to flee to the United States, a country with the rule of law, separation of church and state, wealth, excellent communication, and transportation. Muslims, as a demographic group, seem to fare very well in America. Average income for Muslims appears to be higher than the average income in the United States; a 1996 survey found that the medium household income for Muslims was $40,000 versus $32,000 for the country as a whole. Pipes, *Militant Islam Reaches America*, 157.

3. Olivier Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

4. Mark Potok, "The Year in Hate & Extremism," *Intelligence Report*, (Spring

2013), Issue 149, On-line, Internet, available from http://www.splcenter.org/home/2013/spring/the-year-in-hate-and-extremism.

5. J.M. Berger, *Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam*. Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, Inc., ISBN: 978-1597976930. A version of this review was originally published in *Military Review*, Vol. XCII No. 3 (May-June 2012), 96-97.

6. Catherine Herridge, *The Next Wave: On the Hunt for Al Qaeda's American Recruits.* Crown Forum, 2011, ISBN: 978-0307885258. Originally published in *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 69 (2013), 101-102.

7. Martin Durham. *White Rage: The Extreme Right and American Politics*. London & New York: Routledge, 2007, 95. ISBN-10: 0415362334. Originally published in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 21. No. 2 (Spring 2009), 341-343.

CHAPTER 2

Jihadist Insurgent Strategy

From the 1970s through the late 1990s, jihadists focused their efforts primarily on targeting the "near enemy" – that is, so-called apostate regimes in the Middle East that they believed were inadequately Islamic. This struggle even took precedence over the war against the United States and Israel, or the "far enemy."[1] By the late 1990s, however, the security services in the Middle East demonstrated that they could quell the various radical Islamist movements, thus rendering a repositioning of jihadist strategy. A faction in the jihadist movement – with Osama bin Laden in its vanguard – determined that by attacking the "Zionist-Crusader alliance" and their collaborators, they could re-vitalize their movement and reverse its decline.[2] By striking at the head of the snake, they believed that it would be possible to ultimately bring down the apostate regimes in the Middle East.

In *Al-Qa'ida's Doctrine of Insurgency: Abd al-Aziz al-Muqrin's "A Practical Course for Guerilla War,"* Norman Cigar examines the revolutionary strategy advanced by one of the founders of Al Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula (QAP) Along with practical advice on how to launch terrorist and guerilla attacks, Al-Muqrin also advanced a grand strategy on how to expel the U.S. military from the Middle East.

As some observers have commented, in essence, Al Qaeda is mounting a global version of fourth-generation warfare against the United States and its allies. In essence, fourth generation warfare is an evolved form of insurgency that endeavors to use all available networks – political, social and military – to convince the enemy's decision-makers that their strategic goals are unattainable or not worth the cost.[3] Based on this reasoning, Osama bin Laden's strategic approach has viability. In *Bin Laden's Legacy: Why We're Still Losing the War on Terror*, Daveed Gartenstein-Ross argues that Al Qaeda has targeted the soft underbelly of

America – the economy. He counsels that it will be difficult to maintain the large homeland security apparatus in America and continue to prosecute wars overseas for an extended period of time. Osama bin Laden was greatly influenced by his experiences in the Soviet-Afghan War of the 1980s. He even went so far as to take credit for the downfall of the Soviet Union, as that war set in motion various trends and developments that ultimately contributed to its dissolution. It is one of the foundational beliefs of Al Qaeda that a major setback in the Middle East could usher in a similar scenario for the United States. Paul Kennedy's notion of "imperial overstretch" may be applicable to contemporary America, as its military is committed to numerous hot spots around the world.[4] According to one estimate, the financial cost of fighting bin Laden's network has reached $3 trillion when "economic consequences" are taken into account.[5] Over the long haul, operations of this scale will be difficult to maintain even for the U.S. military with its extended commitments around the world.

Norman Cigar, *Al-Qa'ida's Doctrine of Insurgency: Abd al-Aziz al-Muqrin's "A Practical Course for Guerilla War"*

The persistence of Al Qaeda in the aftermath of 9/11 despite the concerted efforts by the United States and its allies to dismantle the organization has generated interest in Islamist grand strategy. The writings of Al Qaeda luminaries, such as Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri's *Knight Under the Prophet's Banner* and Abu Musab al-Suri's *A Global Islamic Resistance Call*, have been examined with interest in Western intelligence circles. Less known is the work of the late Abdel Aziz al-Muqrin whose treatise advances a guerilla strategy suitable for contemporary Islamic insurgents. In his book, *Al-Qa'ida's Doctrine for Insurgency: Abd Al-Aziz Al-Muqrin's "A Practical Course for Guerilla War,"*[6] Norman Cigar, a retired Army intelligence officer and currently a research fellow at the Marine Corps University in Quantico, Virginia, translates and analyzes al-Muqrin's text and provides biographical information on the Saudi Islamist as well.

Born in 1973, in the city of Riyadh, Abdel Aziz al-Muqrin was raised in a religious household. Eager to make his contribution to jihad, in 1990, he left for Afghanistan, where he first gained combat experience. Over the next several years, he fought in a variety of theaters including Algeria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Somalia. After serving two years and seven months in prison in Saudi Arabia for his insurgent activities in Somalia, he was released because of good conduct after which he returned to Afghanistan in time to take part in fighting against U.S. forces in 2001. During his stay, he met Osama bin Laden who encouraged him to return to Saudi Arabia to help establish an affiliate group called Al Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula (QAP). Within a short time, al-Muqrin assumed leadership of the organization, but not long thereafter in 2004, he was killed in a shootout with police in Saudi Arabia after he and other members were cornered in a gas station. After his death, he attained cult status among jihadists in Saudi Arabia.

To Al Qaeda, Saudi Arabia is viewed as a pivotal country in their struggle. First, the country has a unique role in the Islamic world as the focus of religious observance insofar as it is the custodian of the two holiest sites in Islam – Mecca and Medina. Moreover, the desert kingdom has an enormous potential impact on regional stability. Finally, the presence of U.S. nationals engaged in economic, military, and diplomatic activities in the country is significant as well. From the 1970s through the late 1990s, jihadists focused their efforts primarily on targeting the "near enemy," so-called apostate regimes in the Middle East that they believed were inadequately Islamic. This struggle even took precedence over the war against the United States and Israel, or the "far enemy." By the late 1990s, however, the security services in the Middle East demonstrated that they could quell the various radical Islamist movements, thus necessitating a new jihadist strategy. A faction in the movement – with Osama bin Laden in its vanguard – determined that, by attacking the "Zionist-Crusader alliance" and their collaborators, they could re-galvanize their movement and reverse its decline. By striking at the head of the snake, they believed that it would be possible to ultimately bring down the apostate regimes in the Middle East, including the House of Saud.

Al-Muqrin combines his experience as a man of action with guerrilla warfare theory. Consistent with the "far enemy" approach, his initial strategic goal was to expel U.S. forces from the Persian Gulf after which

the mujahedeen would overthrow apostate regimes in the region and reestablish the Caliph. Echoing Leon Trotsky's concept of permanent revolution, al-Muqrin calls for a permanent jihad that will not be completed until all people of the world accept Islam as their faith. His Islamic piety notwithstanding, his analysis is sober and realistic. He counsels the mujahedeen that they must first recognize certain preconditions before launching jihad.

First, they must establish a cadre of committed fighters. To that end, he stresses the importance of ideological conformity insofar as is solidifies the unity of purpose among the mujahedeen which can compensate for their lack of a strong chain of command. Second, conditions on the ground must be suitable so that the mujahedeen can count on the support of the populace. Yet, even if these conditions are not present, the mujahedeen should not remain passive. Instead, they should seek to hasten a revolutionary situation by mobilizing popular support, thus creating the conditions necessary to launch an insurgency. Not unlike Mao Tse-Tung, al-Muqrin advises that it is vitally important to obtain the support of the people in whose name they fight. He places much emphasis on the human element, underscoring the importance of morale and commitment. In order to rally Muslims to their cause, the mujahedeen must attain victories to demonstrate their viability and energize the population.

Also similar to Mao, al-Muqrin advances a three-phase strategy into which he organizes his guerilla war. In the first – the "strategic defense" – the mujahedeen conduct combat intended to exhaust the enemy. He even invokes the metaphor of the "war of the flea" borrowing the analogy from Robert Taber's classic study on guerilla warfare. Rather than engaging in large scale confrontations, he advises the mujahedeen to mount small hit-and-run attacks in order to induce the enemy forces to overextend themselves. In the second phase – the "strategic balance" or the "policy of a thousand cuts" – the mujahedeen establishes popular support and takes control of liberated areas on which it can build bases and media centers. Finally, in the third – "decisive phase" – the targeted government exhibits sharp divisions which requires massive foreign aid. After the regime's political and economic collapse, the mujahedeen attain victory. This scenario presupposes that the government's presence will shrink in the countryside and will retreat to the larger cities. Unlike Mao's scheme in

which guerilla forces are transformed into a regular army, al-Muqrin's model is reminiscent of Afghanistan in which the loosely-organized mujahedeen prevailed over the post-Soviet government. Still, his model is closer to Mao, rather than Clausewitz, in the sense that it does not call for a decisive engagement, but rather focuses on inflicting a series of attacks that ultimately causes the enemy's morale and will to collapse.

Al-Muqrin's manual contains much discussion on tactics as well, including assassinations, intelligence operations, kidnappings, the use of explosives, infiltration and exfiltration, attacking motorcades, and operational techniques within cities. Despite his desire for martyrdom, surprisingly, his manual does not advance suicide operations; in fact, there is much discussion on how to exit operations after they have been conducted. In order to destabilize the Saudi government, al-Muqrin suggests striking economic targets, viz., the oil industry. As far as human targets are concerned, he gives priority to attacking first Jews, followed by Christians, and then apostates. Not unlike his peer Abu Musab al-Suri whose tome, *A Global Islamic Resistance Call*, advances a "leaderless jihad" strategy, al-Muqrin's manual envisages a virtual audience who can access it on their own and thus craft plans on their own initiative without guidance from a central command.

Norman Cigar's book will be of interest to students of jihadist strategy and tactics and is a good companion to previous studies such as Brynjar Lia's *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of al-Qaida Strategist Abu Mus'ab al-Suri* and Walid Phares' *Future Jihad: Terrorist Strategies Against America*.[7]

Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, *Bin Laden's Legacy: Why We're Still Losing the War on Terror*[8]

On the demise of Osama bin Laden, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta has announced that victory over Al Qaeda is now within reach. But Gartenstein-Ross of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies argues that the U.S. Government is in a far weaker position relative to Al Qaeda now than prior to 9/11 due to its failure to grasp Al Qaeda's grand strategy.

One of the foundational beliefs of Al Qaeda is that the cost of prosecuting the Soviet-Afghan war contributed to the collapse of the Soviet economy. Gartenstein-Ross contends that Al Qaeda's current strategy

toward the United States is of a piece with that approach: Escalating the conflict with the United States in as many arenas as possible will drive up the costs of defense measures, bleeding the U.S. economy.

Gartenstein-Ross finds that U.S. policymakers have not adapted well to Al Qaeda's strategy. Duplication of efforts and the politicization of the issue have both driven up budgets and soured the citizenry on the task at hand. By broadening the focus on the war on terrorism through the invasion of Iraq, the Bush administration diverted critical resources from Afghanistan, allowing the Taliban and Al Qaeda to rebuild their organizations, and simultaneously presented Islamists with a stage from which they could mobilize Muslims around the world for a "defensive" jihad. With the United States attention focused elsewhere, Al Qaeda expanded its operations into more theaters, including Yemen and the Horn of Africa. Nor have the Arab upheavals of 2011 been a major setback for Al Qaeda; the author argues that the terrorist group is well positioned to take advantage of the turmoil. If the new governments cannot fulfill the rising expectations of the Arab people, then extremist ideologies offering simple solutions could flourish.

In order to defeat Al Qaeda and the jihadist threat, Gartenstein-Ross calls for depoliticizing the war on terror. To be sustainable over the long haul, the expense of national security must be reduced, and to that end, he offers a series of policy recommendations and reforms in intelligence and similar areas. To help Americans survive terrorist attacks, efforts should be made to build community resilience. Finally, he calls for lessening U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

Cogently argued and well-written, Gartenstein-Ross' study will be of great interest to those who want a better understanding of the strategic dimensions of the global war on terror as well as those seeking solid policy recommendations for U.S. national security.

Notes

1. A chief ideologist in this regard was the Egyptian Muhammad Faraj whose tract, *The Neglected* Duty, argued that any means necessary were justified in order to

overthrow apostasy regimes. Faraj was affiliated with Jama At al-Jihad and played an important role in the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. For more on Faraj, see Walter Laqueur, *No End to War: Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century*, (New York: Continuum, 2003), 37; and Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*. (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 17-18.

2. Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 3.

3. Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century*, (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004).

4. Paul Kennedy recognized an historical pattern whereby throughout history, empires expand beyond their capacity to maintain hegemony. At first an imperial domain may buttress an empire, but eventually the costs outweigh the benefits, and hence lead to decline and disintegration. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1989).

5. In 2008, Linda J. Bilmes and the Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph E. Stiglitz estimated that the invasion of Iraq would cost an estimated $3 trillion when the economic consequences and ancillary costs were taken into account (e.g., treating wounded veterans). Linda J. Bilmes and Joseph E. Stiglitz, *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict* (New York: Norton, 2008).

6. Norman Cigar, Al-Qa'ida's Doctrine of Insurgency: Abd Al-Aziz Al-Muqrin's "A Practical Course for Guerilla War," Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, Inc., 2009, ISBN: 978-1597972536. Originally published in Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 22 No. 1 (Winter 2010), 124-126.

7. Brynjar Lia, *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of al-Qaida Strategist Abu Mus'ab al-Suri*, (Columbia University Press, 2008); Walid Phare, *Future Jihad: Terrorist Strategies Against America*, (Palgrave MacMillian, 2005).

8. Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, Bin Laden's Legacy: Why We're Still Losing the War on Terror, (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2012). Originally published in Middle East Quarterly, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Summer 2012), 88-89.

CHAPTER 3

Insurgent Theaters

The terrorist attacks on 9/11 occasioned a swift response from the U.S. military. In his early speeches following the attacks, President George W. Bush offered the Taliban leniency if it would hand over Osama bin Laden. However, by October, the Taliban had made it clear that it would not cooperate and give in to this demand. As a consequence, Operation Enduring Freedom was launched that month. By early December 2001, a synchronization of U.S. Special Forces, the Northern Alliance, and air power eventually broke the Taliban defenses. The U.S. military successfully combined a strategy that included high-technology and low-tech conventional warfare. Very few American troops were used for the original campaign. Amazingly, during the conventional phase of the conflict, an estimated 100 CIA officers, 350 Special Forces soldiers, and 15,000 Afghanis defeated a Taliban army of approximately 50,000 to 60,000 as well as several thousand Al Qaeda fighters.[1]

In March 2003 the Bush administration launched its military campaign against Saddam Hussein, dubbed Operation Iraqi Freedom. After just a few weeks of battle, United States and coalition troops won a decisive victory despite pockets of fierce Iraqi resistance. Elation was short-lived, however, as a loose collection of former Baathists, foreign fighters, elements of Al Qaeda, and regular Iraqi citizens coalesced to wage a guerrilla war of resistance. By the summer of 2003, Iraq appeared to have emerged as the pivotal theater in the global war on terror. John Ballard provides a detailed history of the U.S. military's involvement in the region in his study *From Storm to Freedom: America's Long War with Iraq*.

In *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the Military Adventure in Iraq*, Thomas E. Ricks recounts "the Surge" which commenced in early 2007. Crucial to creating a stable Iraq was securing Baghdad and the

safety of the people who live there. Prior to the surge, U.S. military forces concentrated on an "enemy-centric" approach in that they sought first and foremost to kill enemy combatants. This approach was problematic, however, because of the nature of guerilla warfare. When outnumbered, insurgents tend to melt in the crowd and wait to fight another day. Instead, the new strategy implemented during the surge was "population-centric" insofar as it sought as its primary objective to protect the population and gain their trust and cooperation. Eventually, the so-called "Anbar Awakening" resulted in Sunni tribes making common cause with coalition and Iraqi government forces. What was crucial was having enough boots on the grounds to provide security for the population so that it could resist Al Qaeda and related militants.[2]

In Afghanistan, a renascent Taliban has emerged to threaten the fragile government established after Operation Enduring Freedom. Although the invasion succeeded in toppling the Taliban regime, it failed to destroy Al Qaeda's organizational infrastructure and much of the leadership escaped across the border to Pakistan. This failure to finish the job would have serious consequences in the years ahead. The "light footprint" military approach worked well during the conventional phase of the conflict, resulting in a quick overthrow of the Taliban regime, but this approach was not sufficient for the peacekeeping phase that followed. As America's military leaders and diplomats became preoccupied with Iraq, less attention was focused on Afghanistan. As a consequence, there were not enough boots on the ground to mount an effective is population-centric counterinsurgency campaign.

By 2003, Iraq had overshadowed Afghanistan as the central theater in the war on terror in the minds of U.S. political leaders, which led to a major diversion of resources and political attention away from the country, thus allowing the insurgency to gain strength and momentum. As the security situation began to crumble, the Taliban and other insurgent groups began mounting more aggressive offensive operations against the Afghan government and Coalition forces. In his controversial book, *The Operators: The Wild and Terrifying Inside Story of America's War in Afghanistan*, Michael Hastings focuses on General Stanley A. McChrystal, the commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and his entourage. Although often unflattering, Hastings' journalism reveals much insight into America's longest war.

At the present time, the Afghanistan is at a strategic tipping point. With the death of Osama bin Laden, there is tremendous domestic political pressure on President Barack Obama to bring the troops home. Although the Afghan military and police forces have improved in recent years, as yet, they do appear ready to take over full control of the country's security. The security situation in Iraq remains precarious as well. Since the departure of U.S. combat forces at the end of 2011, the country has seen renewed sectarian violence. These developments suggest that the U.S. mission in the region is far from over.

John Ballard, *From Storm to Freedom: America's Long War with Iraq*

In retrospect, President George W. Bush's decision to invade Iraq in March 2003 appears to have been the critical turning point in the global war on terror. Prior to the invasion, America was clearly winning the conflict. Just a few months after the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. military routed the Taliban in a conventional campaign in Afghanistan. Greater coordination of counterterrorism efforts between the U.S. and allies resulted in numerous arrests of terrorist leaders and operatives, effectively dismantling Al Qaeda. The invasion of Iraq, however, gave the terrorist organization a new lease on life insofar as it provoked a classic "defensive" jihad that galvanized Islamic fighters in the region. Two important books explore the Iraqi theater and its impact on the war on terror.

In his book, *From Storm to Freedom: America's Long War with Iraq*,[3] John R. Ballard, a retired Marine veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom and currently a professor of strategic studies at the National Defense University, explores the long and conflictive relationship between the two countries. As Ballard explains, ethnic and sectarian divisions pose a serious governance challenge to Iraq and impinge on the country's foreign relations. For instance, Saddam Hussein's repression of the restive Shia population put Iraq on a collision course with the new Islamic republic of Iran whose leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini threatened war. In Saddam's mind, Iraq served as a shield against the Persian and Shia threats to the Sunni Arabs in the Gulf region of the Middle East.

Seizing an opportunity to demonstrate his leadership to the Arab world, Saddam invaded the Iranian province of Khuzistan where vast oil reserves and a large Arab population resided. Despite this initial victory, the Iranian army fought back hard and a long stalemate ensued. The war took a heavy toll for both sides inflicting 1.5 million casualties and forcing millions more to become refugees. Yet, at the end of the conflict, none of the major issues that caused the fighting had been resolved.

According to Ballard, three factors impelled Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait. The first was the financial and economic crisis Iraq experienced as a result of the near decade-long war with Iran. Second, Saddam feared that demobilizing much of his large army would exacerbate the troubling economy by increasing unemployment. Finally, Saddam sensed an opportunity to seize for himself a larger role among the leadership of the Arab world by resisting outsiders and calling for renewed influence on the part of Muslim nations in the Middle East. Ominously, Saddam's army could have easily rolled into Saudi Arabia, and by doing so, could have controlled roughly 65 percent of the world's oil reserves, thus raising the specter of oil blackmail against the United States and its allies.

At the cusp of the first Gulf War, the Cold War was nearing a conclusion presaging an era of greater cooperation between America and Russia and an expanded role for the United Nations in conflict resolution. Pledging to work through the UN, President George H.W. Bush skillfully assembled an international coalition to dislodge the Iraqi Army from Kuwait. In great detail, Ballard recounts the strategies and tactics employed by the U.S. forces under the leadership of Army General Norman Schwarzkopf in the Gulf. Despite the lopsided military power arrayed against him, Saddam believed that if he could inflict significant casualties on U.S. forces, America would lose the political will to continue fighting, resulting in a negotiated end to the war in which the Iraqi leader could save face and maintain his grip on power. The severe air campaign, however, which relentlessly pounded Iraqi positions for over a month and the speed of the coalition ground forces, overwhelmed the Iraqi army. Still, the elite Republican Guard forces survived mostly intact and were able to quell the subsequent rebellions by the Shia in the south and the Kurds in the north.

The administration of Bill Clinton continued a policy of opposition to Iraq, which included the enforcement of no-fly zones that were imposed after the war, ostensibly to prevent the Iraqi army from repressing the Kurdish and Shia populations. Furthermore, the Clinton administration maintained the sanctions regime imposed on Iraq which resulted in widespread privation among the population. When news stories reported the extent of the suffering, it created a serious public relations problem for the United States, which finally allowed for the oil-for-food program that eased restriction on Iraq's sale of oil so that the country could purchase food and medical supplies. Ultimately, the sanctions regime failed to loosen Saddam's grip on the government so other plans were proffered to remove him from power. To that end, in May 1998, President Clinton signed the Iraqi Liberation Act whereby the United States provided assistance to Iraqi opposition groups. The UN Security Council created the UNSCOM (United Nations Special Commission) inspection regime to search for and dismantle the Iraq WMD program. Iraq's failed compliance of UN Security Council resolutions was used as a legal justification for the invasion in March 2003.

The attacks on 9/11 altered America's strategic approach in the Middle East. The so-called Bush doctrine advanced the notion of preemptive war as a reasonable measure to protect America from the threat of the nexus of terrorism, WMD, and rogue states. In the months after 9/11, the Bush administration fostered the spurious perception that Saddam's regime was involved in 9/11, thus shaping public opinion in a mood that supported an invasion. The alacrity with which a small number of U.S. forces defeated the Taliban added to the perception that a war against Saddam could be prosecuted with a light footprint and little cost in blood and treasure. Still, the Bush administration's policy of preemption was seen by many in the international community as an overreach of American authority. Even without much support, the U.S.-led military effort quickly defeated Saddam's forces which had been weakened during the previous conflict and the interregnum that followed.

Although the conventional phase of the war went smoothly, the transition to the post-hostilities phase was problematic. Under the initial leadership of Paul Bremer, the Coalition Provisional Authority failed to establish security in the country. Widespread looting in the immediate aftermath of the conventional phase of the war undercut the credibility of

the new occupation regime. The policy of "de-Ba'athification" removed experienced policeman, teachers, and bureaucrats from their positions, which resulted in civil chaos and widespread disaffection particularly with the Sunni segment of the Iraqi population. The demobilization of the army created a large pool of unemployed men, many of whom joined the growing ranks of the insurgents who began a deadly campaign against the occupation authorities. The foreign elements led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi provoked sectarian conflict with the Shia population that brought the country to the brink of civil war by 2006. Swearing allegiance to Osama bin Laden, Zarqawi became the recognized leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq.

Explaining leadership styles, Ballard points out that President George H.W. Bush used a formal and coordinated approach to the first Gulf war. In the interregnum, President Bill Clinton used a less deliberative and less organized approach to containing and deterring Saddam's Iraq. Finally, George W. Bush employed a more secretive and less coordinated process in Operation Iraqi Freedom and the peacekeeping mission that followed.

For the U.S. military, Ballard points out several important lessons learned from the experience in Iraq. Concerning tactical implications, the most recent war demonstrated the limits of technology. Despite its formidable technological advantage, the U.S. military had difficulty countering the relatively crude improvised explosive devices (IEDs) which accounted for a plurality of U.S. casualties. Coalition integration improved after Desert Storm, but was only effective among those countries that shared similar training and war-fighting doctrine. As a result of the Gold-Nichols Act of 1986, there was greater interoperability of the various services (that is, the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines). In the second U.S.-Iraq war, the so-called Abrams Doctrine (named after General Creighton Abrams), was effectively implemented, as National Guard and Reserve units were integrated with active duty units. Despite these success stories, the protracted nature of the conflict demonstrated to the American public that modern war could not always be won quickly and unambiguously.

The strength of Ballard's study is its detail in explaining both the United States and Iraqi military operations in the two wars. Ballard meticulously recounts the critical events, decisions, and battles of the

enduring conflict between America and Iraq. A wide array of both primary and secondary sources informs his analysis.

Thomas E. Ricks, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008*

In *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008*,[4] Thomas E. Ricks, a Pulitzer Prize winner and the *Washington Post's* senior Pentagon correspondent focuses on the "Surge" which commenced in early 2007 as an effort to stabilize the security of Iraq. Written in a journalistic style, his story begins on November 19, 2005, when a Marine Corps unit was hit by a roadside bomb as it traveled on a road in Haditha. Angered by the attack, the surviving Marines inflicted revenge on a number of Iraqis in the village. The incident at Haditha was emblematic of what was wrong with the United States counterinsurgency approach theretofore, which concentrated first and foremost on attacking the enemy and treating "civilians as the playing field on which the contest occurs."

By late 2006, President George W. Bush realized that the U.S. military campaign in Iraq was headed toward defeat. At both home and abroad, the administration was rapidly losing support for the war effort. The mid-term elections in 2006 proved to be a major turning point in the war. With power transferred from Republicans to Democrats in both the House and the Senate, the new partisan alignment made the continued course for the war politically untenable. Without this "thumping," as George Bush called it, a major revision in strategy may not have been implemented.

In great detail, Ricks recounts the events leading up to Bush's decision to escalate the U.S. military deployment in Iraq. In December 2006, the noted historian, Fred Kagan assembled a handful of analysts and military planners in the American Enterprise Institute building in Washington, D.C., to craft a new strategy. The basic concept they arrived at was to redeploy U.S. troops in Iraq in such a way so that they could better protect the population. The new strategy, though, was viewed with great skepticism in many quarters. Some military leaders, for example, actually opposed the surge fearing that it would stretch soldiers to the

breaking point. Instead, they called for greater Iraqi control of the security forces. The Air Force and the Navy were both opposed to the surge which would favor the Army and Marine Corps in budget battles. Even Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki was only lukewarm to the idea of the surge. His reasoning was similar to Army General John Abizaid who worked on the theory that the U.S. military presence was an irritant that gave rise to the insurgency. Despite this opposition, insiders led by Army General Jack Keane persuaded Bush to embark on a new strategy that would concentrate on protecting the Iraqi people. He and Army General H.R. McMaster argued that a larger U.S. military footprint was necessary in order to establish order without which the country would collapse.

The chief architect of the surge strategy was David Petraeus, a general who came out of the "light infantry" Army. Although the "heavy army," that is, units built around tanks and other armored vehicles, was important in the conventional phase of the conflict, it was woefully inappropriate for the counterinsurgency campaign that ensued. Over time, Petraeus developed a very close working relationship with his commander-in-chief, George W. Bush with whom he often communicated directly by phone thus bypassing layers of command. With a Ph.D. in international relations from Princeton, Petraeus surrounded himself with military advisors, who received doctorate degrees from top-flight universities combined with combat experience in Iraq. Along with Army Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl and others, Petraeus wrote *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual*. Drawing upon the French officer David Galula's influential 1964 treatise *Counterinsurgency: Theory and Practice*, the manual posited that that ultimately, the population was the contested prize between the counterinsurgent and his enemy. Such an approach placed greater emphasis on protecting the population and less on so-called kinetic operations, that is, killing and capturing the insurgents. Previously, U.S. troops hunkered down in forward-operating bases or "FOBs" effectively removing them from the Iraqi people. This approach failed to provide adequate protection to the Iraqi people from the violence that was ravaging the country. The cornerstone of the new counterinsurgency effort was to protect and gain the trust of the population.

When the last of the surge brigades and support troops arrived in June 2007, the total U.S. troop level in Iraq reached 156,000 with another

180,000 contractors. By late July of that year, American losses began to drop sharply. Several factors accounted for the stabilization. First, the new force posture of placing troops among the people did much to stanch the violence. Second, much of the ethnic cleansing conducted by Shia militias was already completed. As a result, some of the Baghdad neighborhoods that were once heavily Sunni became overwhelmingly Shia and sectarian strife subsided. Third, later that year, American authorities brokered a cease fire with Moqtada al-Sadr, the firebrand, anti-American Shia cleric and leader of the Mahdi Army. Fourth, under the new strategy, U.S. forces were all pursuing the same goal in the same way, as the various divisions and brigades coordinated and synchronized their operations. Finally, the most important factor was turning parts of the Sunni insurgency away from fighting the coalition forces. Eventually, Al Qaeda's atrocities and lack of respect for tribal sensibilities precipitated a backlash. As a result, the tribes became more amenable to the coalition forces and the fledging Iraqi government. The so-called "Anbar Awakening" resulted in Sunni tribes making common cause with coalition and Iraqi government forces. American commanders signed up tens of thousands of former insurgents to become local militias in a program that came to be known as Sons of Iraq. Still challenges remained. As the Sunni insurgency was in retreat, the Shia militants reasserted themselves.

In March 2008, his Mahdi Army launched rocket attacks against the Green Zone from the Sadr City area, effectively ending the truce that Moqtada al-Sadr Sadr was supposed to follow. In retaliation, Iraqi Prime al-Maliki ordered an attack against Sadr's forces in Basra. Soon thereafter, Sadr ordered his troops to stand down. By cracking down on the Shiite militias, Maliki demonstrated his desire to stop the sectarian violence. Moreover, the Iraqi Army gained new respect and increased confidence from American leaders that Iraqis could assume a greater role in their own security. By mid-2008, the surge was over and violence was at its lowest level of the entire war. Despite previous strategic mistakes, President Bush's gamble to deploy an additional 30,000 U.S. forces appears to have paid off as a remarkable stabilization in the security of Iraq ensued.

Nevertheless, the surge did not accomplish all of the desired objectives. For instance, it failed to lead to political reconciliation. Rather, a bottom-up accommodation, or calmness was achieved. Ricks states that the best grade the surge could receive is a solid incomplete. Although

tactically successful, strategically, it fell short of its goals. The country still risks fragmentation and sectarian strife remains endemic. For the U.S. military, the war in Iraq has taken a heavy toll. Officers and sergeants are leaving in great numbers and the quality of recruits has gone down.

Despite the remarkable improvement in the security of the country, Iraq remains a critical theater in the war on terror. Rising tensions between the United States and Iran could impel the latter to destabilize Iraq through its proxies. Both Ballard and Ricks provide cogent studies to better understand the dynamics in the region.

Michael Hastings, *The Operators: The Wild and Terrifying Inside Story of America's War in Afghanistan*

As the U.S. military enters into its eleventh year of operations in Afghanistan, public support for the effort dwindles, as a solid majority of Americans now believe that the war is going badly and is not worth fighting.[5] In *The Operators: The Wild and Terrifying Inside Story of America's War in Afghanistan*,[6] the journalist Michael Hastings explores the recent history of America's longest military campaign through the prism of General Stanley McChrystal and his staff. Not long after his story first broke in June of 2010 in *Rolling Stone* magazine, General Stanley McChrystal was forced to resign. The episode illustrated the deepening division between the White House and the Pentagon over the appropriate prosecution of the war.

Hastings begins his story in the autumn of 2008, when conditions noticeably deteriorated in Afghanistan. At that time, some major media outlets – including the *New York Times* – suggested that the Unites States was losing the war. Under the leadership of General David McKiernan, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) had reached a stalemate. McKiernan's main problem seemed to be a matter of style, as he preferred a low key public relations approach with the media. Though well-respected by his peers, McKiernan was looked upon as a member of the "old school" generation of generals, unlike Generals David Petraeus who championed the popular counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine. Refusing to resign, Defense Secretary Robert Gates effectively fired McKiernan, which amounted to the first sacking of a wartime commander

since President Harry S. Truman removed Douglas MacArthur at the height of the Korean War. By removing McKiernan, the Pentagon saw an opportunity to escalate and reset the war in Afghanistan.

McKiernan's replacement, General Stanley McChrystal, was the first Special Forces soldier to have assumed such a prominent battlefield command. Over the course of his career, McChrystal learned to walk a very fine line in the rigid military hierarchy, yet still succeed. He first entered the public spotlight in March of 2003, when he served as the Pentagon spokesman during the invasion of Iraq. Later that year, he took over as commander of the Joint Special Forces Operations Command, overseeing the most elite units in the military, including Delta Force, the Navy Seals, and the Rangers. Relentlessly, his special forces rooted out terrorists, most notably, Abu Musab al-Zaraqawi, the recognized leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq. His willingness to get results endeared him to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Vice President Dick Cheney, even when it included bending the rules or skipping the chain of command. Controversy seemed to always follow him. For instance, in Iraq, he oversaw a network of prisons where detainees were beaten and tortured. Furthermore, he was accused of attempting to whitewash the friendly fire death in Afghanistan of Pat Tillman, the NFL star who joined the army not long after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The pitched political battles that occurred over troop levels in Afghanistan are recounted by Hastings. Essentially, there were two major camps in the debate. The Pentagon wanted a big footprint in order to launch a comprehensive counterinsurgency program. The other camp, led by Vice President Joe Biden, favored a small footprint consisting of U.S. Special Forces that would focus on hunting and killing the remnants of Al Qaeda. Through sporadic and strategic leaks, McChrystal was able to force Obama's hand. In September 2009, *Washington Post* writer Robert Woodward published McChrystal's confidential assessment of the war in Afghanistan which concluded that the U.S. military was on the verge of "mission failure." The story spurred Washington to take action and in the end, Obama agreed to the 40,000 additional troops that McChrystal requested with the proviso that they begin leaving in July 2011, a year earlier than the general had wanted.

President Barack Obama, who voted against the 2003 invasion of Iraq when he was a senator from Illinois, pushed for fixing Afghanistan, which

he identified as the most important theater in the war on terror. But civil-military relations have been strained by the Afghan war, which led to disagreements over planning. As Hastings explains, several members of McChrystal's staff questioned Obama's ability to lead the war effort. Early into his term, military leaders sensed that the new president was uncomfortable with the military. The Pentagon – filled with many Republicans from the Bush years – viewed him with suspicion. McChrystal was disappointed over Obama's lack of engagement in the war. In Afghanistan, Hastings relates the tenuous relationship between U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry and McChrystal who often clashed over strategy. McChrystal also had difficulty selling his counterinsurgency plan to Afghan President Hamid Karzai whom Hastings depicts as a less-than-competent leader of very questionable legitimacy who effectively rigged the presidential election in 2009.

McChrystal operated in the shadow of General David Petraeus whose counterinsurgency campaign in Iraq – the Surge – did much to stabilize the security in that country. Applying that template in Afghanistan, though, has been more challenging. Petraeus, who wrote *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, argued that the cornerstone of the new strategy was to protect and gain the trust of the population. So-called kinetic operations, that is, killing and capturing the insurgents, were given less emphasis. The goal was to recreate the Afghanistan of 1979, before it was wracked with foreign invasion and internecine warfare. For McChrystal, it was imperative to switch from the "shoot-first-and-blow-shit-up" soldiering of the Special Forces to the COIN emphasis on protecting the civilian population. To that end, he issued a tactical directive that encouraged soldiers to avoid shooting in situations in which civilians could be harmed. Over time, however, soldiers became frustrated with the new policy that hampered their ability to fight back.

The growing insularity of the U.S. military from the rest of the country is worrisome. As Hastings points out, less than 1 percent of the American population currently serves in the military or has any connection to the ongoing wars. According to his reasoning, the guilt of the general public for not having served in the military is covered up by an uncritical attitude toward those who have served. As for what motivated the soldiers, Hastings found it was not so much the objectives of the war, but rather, a

near metaphysical quality that one attained through the tribulation that involved sacrifice and the risk of one's life. To his loyal entourage, McChrystal was an historic figure who gave them a sense of identity.

Why did McChrystal agree to the story? According to Hastings, the general sought to immortalize his image as a "badass" and a "snake-eating rebel" which would be cultivated by a cover story on *Rolling Stone* magazine. As the war in Afghanistan extended to the end of the decade, it is not surprising that Hastings found that McChrystal and his entourage often comported themselves irreverently in the style of soldiers on the front line, displaying "frustration" and "arrogance" and "getting smashed" and "letting off stress." Not long after the story was released, President Obama fired McChrystal and named General David Petraeus as the new commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan. According to Hastings, what was most troubling about the story to the White House's national security team was not that it questioned the competence of the president and his advisors, but rather its suggestion that the troops were in near revolt against McChrystal.

In a protracted guerilla campaign, perceptions are important. According to Hastings, the "military-media-industrial complex" in large measure shapes policy on the Afghan war. Ostensibly, Operation Enduring Freedom was launched to capture Osama bin Laden and crush Al Qaeda in retaliation for the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Over time, however, bin Laden was practically forgotten in the U.S. military effort in Afghanistan. In a sense, his death at the hand of Seal Team Six was anticlimactic. Nevertheless, his death gave the Obama administration the political cover needed to declare victory in Afghanistan and begin the drawdown of troops. White House officials could now make the case that the Afghan surge had worked.

The war on terror, Hastings explains, did not unfold as it was originally planned. When it first commenced, President George W. Bush announced that there would be no "battlefields or beachheads." Rather, there would be a secret war, conducted in the dark with no holds barred. As it turned out, however, there were battlefields and beachheads after all, as evidenced by the fighting in Kabul, Kandahar, Baghdad, Fallujah, and Mosul. To Hastings, the military approach was misguided. Citing a 2008 RAND study – "How Terrorist Groups End: Implications for Countering al Qa'ida"[7] – he insists that the best way to defeat terrorist networks is

through law enforcement, rather than military force. Rejecting the "safe havens" pretext for the war, Hastings argues that terrorists do not need to take over a country and establish a sanctuary insofar as numerous terrorist plots have been planned and carried out in the West.

Overall, Hastings paints a grim picture of the U.S. experience in Afghanistan. After the U.S. military withdraws, he believes that the warlords will take over. He questions the quality and reliability of the Afghan Army in whose ranks drug use and corruption are rife. Moreover, Afghan soldiers have occasionally opened fire on United States and ISAF soldiers, brining into question their long term loyalty to the new regime. Despite the substantial cost in blood and treasure, Hastings avers that the United States was losing to "illiterate peasants who made bombs out of manure and wood." His pessimism, though, is arguably overstated. To be sure, gauging progress in a guerilla war is inexact due to the tenuous quality of the metrics used to measure success. Nevertheless, according to a 2011 survey conducted by the Asia Foundation, the proportion of respondents expressing some level of sympathy for the insurgents groups reached its lowest level that year (29 percent). Moreover, despite serious concerns about government corruption, security, and their economic future, nearly half of all Afghan respondents said that their country was moving in the right direction.[8] Considering the daunting challenges involved in building a functioning state and civil society in the tribal and war-torn country, problems are to be expected. Still, the U.S. mission in Afghanistan is far from accomplished and Hastings provides a window to view it warts and all.

Notes

1. Seth G. Jones, *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan*, (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009).

2. David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

3. John R. Ballard, *From Storm to Freedom: America's Long War with Iraq*, (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press), ISBN: 978-1591140184. Originally published in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 21 No. 1 (Winter 2012), 157-161.

4. Thomas E. Ricks, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008*, (New York, NY: The Penguin Press), ISBN: 978-1-59420-197-4.

5. In a *New York Times*/CBS News poll conducted in March 2012, 69 percent of those Americans surveyed opposed the U.S. war in Afghanistan. According to a *Washington Post*/ABC News poll, 60 percent of respondents said the war in Afghanistan had not been worth the fighting. Elisabeth Bumiller and Allison Kopicki, "Support in U.S. for Afghan War Drops Sharply, Poll Finds," *New York Times*, March 26, 2012, On-line, Internet, available from http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/27/world/asia/support-for-afghan-war-falls-in-us-poll-finds.html?_r=1.

6. Michael Hastings, *The Operators: The Wild and Terrifying Inside Story of America's War in Afghanistan*, (Blue Rider Press, 2012), ISBN: 978-0399159886. Originally published in *Prism*, Vol. 3 No. 4 (September 2012), 146-149.

7. The RAND Corporation, "How Terrorist Groups End: Implications for Countering al Qa'ida," On-line, Internet, 13 April 2012, available from http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_briefs/2008/RAND_RB9351.pdf.

8. The Asia Foundation, "Afghanistan in 2011: A Survey of the Afghan People," On-line, Internet, 12 April 2012 available from http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/KeyFindingsAGSurveyBookFinal.pdf.

CHAPTER 4

Evolving Terrorist and Insurgent Networks

The global Islamic resistance movement has endured despite a multi-national effort to eradicate it after 9/11. Since the war in Afghanistan commenced in October 2001, Al Qaeda has been moving toward a more decentralized approach to terrorism. Initially, jihadists were adversely affected by the 9/11 attacks in that they provoked a massive response from the United States and its allies. Moreover, the ensuing backlash provided the political elite in the Middle East the opportunity to suppress the Islamists and other oppositional voices in the name of fighting terrorism.[1] Even those Islamist groups not affiliated with Al Qaeda now found themselves caught up in the new dragnet. According to some estimates, by early 2003, roughly two-thirds of the leadership has been killed or captured since 9/11, including many of the top leaders.[2] In the wake of 9/11, no country could afford to be accused of harboring terrorists. Thus the strategic environment was drastically changed for the jihadists.[3] With the commencement of Operation Enduring Freedom in October 2001, Al Qaeda initially lost its sanctuary in Afghanistan. Consequently, the organization was deprived of vital resources and much of its financial assets were confiscated.[4] Although Al Qaeda skillfully employed terrorism in the past, some observers believe that the leadership gravely miscalculated by provoking a ferocious response for which the organization was unprepared.[5]

Nevertheless, Al Qaeda quickly reformulated from a centralized organization into a series of autonomous organizations driven by local concerns, which allowed the network to endure. Al Qaeda 2.0, as defined by Peter Bergen, suggests a decentralized alliance of terrorists spread throughout the world.[6] Since Operation Enduring Freedom, Al Qaeda has been transformed into a more diffuse terrorist network that can still strike at U.S. targets abroad.[7] The organization has no single center of gravity,

but rather multiple ones. This flexibility enables Al Qaeda to effectively prosecute asymmetric warfare.[8]

The global war on terrorism can be conceptualized as a series of small wars within the context of a larger global insurgency with Al Qaeda in the vanguard position. What is unique about the war on terror is that it involves a complex interaction between local and global forces that include tribal and postmodern groups and preindustrial and globalized cultures. Globalization has connected geographically distant groups that could not previously coordinate their actions. As a consequence, this development enables transnational groups to mount operations on a world-wide scale.[9]

The Internet enables geographically dispersed people to collaborate on projects. The online encyclopedia *Wikipedia*, for example, demonstrates how thousands of dispersed volunteers can create a fast, fluid, and innovative product that can outperform some of the largest and best-financed enterprises.[10] "Crowdsourcing" can be applied to insurgency and terrorism as well. In his study, *Brave New War: The Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization*, John Robb presages an "open-source" style of warfare based on networks, not unlike those that predominate in the software industry. In open source efforts, the collective weight of the volunteers exceeds that of contributions from any individual, company, or group of companies. Similarly, in the realm of insurgency, a seemingly simple operation such as an attack using an improvised explosives device (IED) often requires a division of labor consisting of a financier, a bomb maker, an "emplacer," and a "triggerman."

As the history of guerilla warfare has demonstrated, one of the most important objectives of an insurgency is to survive. More often than not, guerilla wars are not won militarily; rather, insurgents persist in their struggle until they force a political solution to the conflict. Historically, the critical factor that enables an insurgency to persist over a long period of time is support from the populace. New technology, however, allows for smaller and smaller groups to remain viable even without a broad base of support. As Thomas Rid and Marc Hecker observe in their study *War 2.0: Irregular Warfare in the Information Age*, terrorist and insurgent groups no longer require a large following popular following to survive over time. With the growing popularity of the Internet, it is now possible for a relatively low number of highly-motivated and geographically

dispersed followers to share a cause and carry out terrorist attacks on their own initiative with no traditional command-and-control hierarchy.

John Robb, *Brave New War: The Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization*

In his book, *Brave New War: The Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization*,[11] John Robb, a former Air Force officer and U.S. counterterrorism operation planner, presages an "open-source" style of warfare based on networks not unlike those that predominate in the software industry. In open source efforts, the collective weight of the volunteers exceeds the possible contributions of any single individual, company or groups of companies. Similarly, in the realm of insurgency, a seemingly simple operation such as an improvised explosives device (IED) attack often requires a division of labor consisting of a financer, a bomb maker, an emplacer, and a triggerman. Robb explains how the rise of small-scale, "do-it-yourself" terrorism could become more worrisome than the centrally planned attacks about which the U.S. Government seems most concerned.

Echoing previous observations made by Martin van Creveld in *The Transformation of War* and Rupert Smith *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World*, Robb discards the idea of state-versus-state conflict in the future. Wars conducted by nations, at least in the West, tend to be highly-constrained affairs. Growing interdependence among nations tends to restrain war along with a growing moral consensus on its inappropriateness as a means by which to settle conflicts. Since the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, states have had a near monopoly on power in the realm of international affairs; however, states are now losing control in domains that were previously in their purview, such as borders, economies, finances, people, communications, and even war. Today, we are witnessing the age of the "super-empowered individual" who, if adequately armed with a weapon of mass destruction, could declare war on the world. This development departs from previous paradigms of warfare. The threat from such "global guerillas," Robb avers, is far more serious than that offered by terrorists and guerillas of the past.

Although he does not explicitly propound a new "generation" of warfare, the reader is left with the impression that a "fifth" generation is on the horizon. Robb briefly discusses the four generations of warfare which were originally identified back in 1989 in the seminal article written by William Lind et al. titled "The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation." First generation warfare, which reached its apogee in the Napoleonic wars in the early nineteenth century, was characterized by conflicts in which adversaries sought to amass huge armies that confronted each other on the battlefield in the hope of winning a singly decisive victory. Various economic, political, and social trends contributed to this style of warfare, including increasing wealth, which provided more resources for war, and the emergence of nationalism and patriotism, both potent forces that facilitated the mobilization of the entire country for war. Second generation warfare, which brought new technology and firepower to bear on the battlefield – *viz*., the machine gun and heavy artillery – nullified the power of mass mobilization and resulted in stalemate and trench warfare. Such tactics exemplified combat operations in World War I. Third generation warfare came into fruition during World War II, when improvements in armor, airpower, and communications allowed for maneuver warfare on an unprecedented scale. As a consequence, firepower combining air and land operations could be synchronized against an enemy. This allowed for a numerically inferior army to prevail over a larger army with greater resources, as evidenced by the *Wehrmacht's* stunning victory over the French army in the Blitzkrieg of May 1940. Mao Tse-Tung's peasant-based guerilla strategy is widely considered to be paradigmatic of fourth-generation warfare. His main innovation was adding an ideological component to the guerilla war framework in which a single-party doctrine instilled a sense of revolutionary fervor in insurgents who were led by a unified command structure. Once the insurgency mobilized the peasant population and established a certain critical mass, it was prepared to launch large-scale attacks and seek to overthrow the government.

As Robb explains, contemporary insurgents often lack a unified command structure and a clear strategic endgame. For example, in contradistinction to the Maoist model, Al Qaeda does not endeavor to take over the government of a state; rather, the organization operates more as an instigator of change, rather than an embryonic government. Out of the

chaos it foments, it creates the conditions for change in the Middle East, while contemporaneously seeking to force the United States to withdraw from the region. Similarly, the insurgency in Iraq focuses on how to disrupt or spoil the political order in that country rather than replacing it. Using the comparison with the world of commerce, according to Robb, the Iraq insurgency has a "long tail" in the sense that is not made of a single army with one goal. Rather, it is composed of hundreds of smaller groups – an open-source community network – who in the aggregate, are able to wreak considerable havoc and destruction. This characteristic makes it difficult for Coalition forces to target the movement because it lacks a recognizable center of gravity in the form of a leadership structure or singular ideology.

Robb is particularly concerned about the vulnerability of infrastructure to sabotage. Inasmuch as power systems are so intertwined, disrupting one could cause a cascade of failures throughout the system. Drawing upon the terminology first used by David Al Deptula, Robb explains how such "effects-based operations" (EBO) could cause a huge disorder in a complex system. Inasmuch as cities are the hubs for modern economies, their infrastructures are extremely susceptible to systems disruption. The petroleum industry is also highly vulnerable to such sabotage as evidenced by the insurgent attacks on pipelines that resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenue for the fledging Iraqi government. Low-cost operations carried out by saboteurs could inflict enormous costs on their targeted country. On a somber note, Robb speculates that if such sabotage techniques were even lightly employed in the target-rich West, "we could see a rapid onset of economic and political chaos unmatched since the advent of blitzkrieg." Furthermore, as Robb points out, it is erroneous to assume that system shocks that sweep the global system will originate exclusively in what Thomas P.M Barnett referred to in his book *The Pentagon's New Map* as the "Gap," that is, unstable and weak states that are disconnected from the rest of the world (the "Core") and not actively involved in the ongoing historical process of globalization. Such "black swans" – uncertain events that have a major effect on markets and systems – Robb warns, are unpredictable and could quite likely originate in the "Core" as demonstrated by the chaos in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005.

This short volume cogently captures the essence of the evolving nature of contemporary insurgencies and how they employ all available networks, including political, social, and military, to pursue their strategic goals. It will be of particular interest to students of insurgency, guerilla warfare, and terrorism.

Thomas Rid and Marc Hecker, *War 2.0: Irregular Warfare in the Information Age*

Thomas Rid and Marc Hecker examine the intersection of technology and insurgency in their study *War 2.0: Irregular Warfare in the Information Age*.[12] Whereas previously military applications spurred novel media technologies such as radio, television, and the Internet, today that asymmetry has been reversed, as it is now the new media that shapes contemporary warfare. Technology has increased the options for irregular forces, more so than for governments and armies, but in counterintuitive ways. For some irregulars in the information age, warfare is becoming less "population-centric" than it was in the past, but although the "start-up" costs for insurgencies have been lowered, paradoxically, it may actually now be more difficult for rebels to take control of a state than it was in the past.

According to the authors, a critical juncture emerged when "Web 2.0" arose after the dot-com bubble burst in the year 2000. Out of the rubble, a new crop of fresh web-based companies and services emerged that offered interactivity and "user-generated content," thus ushering in a new era of communications which allowed much greater and broader participation from users, not only in the spheres of commerce and social networking, but terrorism and insurgency as well. Ironically, Rid and Hecker find a reversal of historic trends concerning the influence of communications on warfare. Whereas regular armies now engaged in counterinsurgency operations are refining the use of modern information technology for *external* purposes to reach the local population in the theater of operations, contemporary insurgents are increasingly using the Internet for *internal* purposes to communicate with fellow irregulars.

Rid and Hecker provide various case studies to illustrate how new media affects warfare. Within the U.S. military, they found that in recent

years, much greater emphasis has been placed on civil support operations, which have actually been elevated to the same level of importance as offensive and defensive operations. For many years, the U.S. military had somewhat of an adversarial relationship with the media that was informed by the experience in the Vietnam War. In subsequent conflicts, the military leadership sought to limit access of the media and control information flows. This approach, however, became untenable in the second Iraq War, as soldiers maintained online blogs and journals in which they recounted their in-country experiences, thus circumventing policy restrictions on new releases. More important, insurgents and their supporters became increasingly sophisticated in getting out their side of the story. The U.S. military has adapted and now uses elements of the new media, including YouTube and similar platforms, to post videos and improve public relations.

Similarly, in the Iraq War, the British Ministry of Defense attempted to control public statements from its officer corps; however, improved contacts between commanders and journalists kept information flowing, often on a non-attribution basis. Whereas the U.S. online military culture tends to be professional in nature, the British military has developed an online culture that includes a raunchy side, perhaps reflecting the British press's more aggressive journalistic style. Unlike Britain and the United States, Israel does not emphasize winning "hearts and minds," or appealing to the benevolent emotions of its adversaries. Such efforts are considered futile because of Israel's tarnished image in much of the world. Nevertheless, the new IDF leadership has begun to reverse this approach by embracing web 2.0 platforms to get out its side of the story. Still, the main theme is highlighting the strength of the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) to both Israel and her adversaries.

The authors identify Hezbollah as the terrorist group with the most sophisticated media apparatus. Not only does the organization take advantage of the new media, but it has developed a formidable conventional media as well, including a highly-successful television station – *al Manar* (the Beacon). Even the retrograde Taliban have become more media savvy and internationally oriented, despite retaining a local focus. Since the commencement of Operation Enduring Freedom, the alliance between the Taliban and Al Qaeda has deepened and the former has learned much about media outreach from the latter.

The most interesting example of the impact of the new media on terrorism is the case of Al Qaeda. Even before 9/11, Al Qaeda was an insurgent group in exile without a national popular base of support. Rather, the organization attracted a pan-Islamist global crop of fighters that were financed by sympathizers from across the world. Graduates of training camps operated worldwide and Al Qaeda planned attacks without geographical limitation. New communications technology amplified this trend and enabled the movement to survive and continue operations without popular support in the classic sense of the term. The Internet makes jihadist terrorism more global in scope insofar as it reduces the need for physical contact and makes possible the formation of a decentralized structure of autonomous groups that share the same ideology. This trend makes leaderless jihad possible.

A Syrian member of Al Qaeda, Abu Musab al-Suri, advanced an operational strategy of decentralization to fit contemporary conditions in his 1,600–page on-line tome, *A Global Islamic Resistance*, which seeks to provoke a global Islamic uprising led by autonomous cells and individual jihadists. What is critical is a shared ideology that serves to create a feeling of common cause and unity of purpose. The power of the Internet is integral to al-Suri's strategy of individual terrorism in that it serves as a mobilization tool. Although his writing may not come across as particularly tech-savvy, as Rid and Hecker point out, when his theory was conjoined with the Web, an effective composite was created.

Nevertheless, Al Qaeda's appropriation of the new media has, to a certain extent, taken much control out of the leadership's hands. As a result of the democratization and decentralization of the media, would-be leaders may find it increasingly difficult to exercise control over the debate in their ideological circles. Inasmuch as the Al Qaeda movement is so dispersed, the leadership could find it more difficult to exert control, beyond offering mere inspiration.

The most significant aspect impact of technology on guerilla war, Rid and Hecker argue, is that the traditional role of the population has been altered. Drawing upon research in the field of business, they explain how certain trends in commerce can be applied to contemporary insurgency. For example, Chris Anderson of *Wired* magazine developed the concept of the "long-tail" to explain how new Internet platforms, such as Amazon, enable firms to employ a marketing niche strategy in which they can sell

large volumes of unique items to a larger number of customers instead of selling only a smaller variety of popular items in large quantities. Likewise, Rid and Hecker argue that a similar logic applies to terrorism and insurgency in the sense that it no longer requires a large popular following for a group to survive over time. A relatively small number of highly-motivated, partly self-recruited, and geographically dispersed followers can share an extremist cause without broader popular appeal, thus making niche terrorism possible. Thus the critical mass of people necessary to pass the threshold of an established and enduring terrorist group has been drastically lowered, but paradoxically, this development makes it more difficult for the group to attain power. Although it is now easier for insurgents and terrorists to enter the game, it is more difficult for them to evolve into a viable insurgency capable of taking over a state. As a consequence, modern terrorists groups tend to move away from popular appeal thus making it less likely that they could consolidate and assume political power. Because of their internal weakness, they cannot reasonably be expected to defeat their conventional and democratic opponents who are militarily, economically, culturally, and politically stronger. Thus the global jihad is self-limiting, yet, will likely persist for a long time because it cannot be entirely defeated either.

What makes this study particularly interesting is the integration of trends in technology and organizational theory with terrorism and insurgency. In doing so, the authors have produced a significant contribution to the field of contemporary warfare.

Notes

1. Montasser al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda: The Story of Bin Laden's Right-Hand Man*, (London and Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2004), 4-5.

2. "Al-Qaeda 'extinct within a year,'" On-line, Internet, 9 October 2003, available from http://www.news.com.au/common/story_page/o,4057,7431422%5E1702,00.html.

3. al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda*, 95-99.

4. Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 52.

5. Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century*, (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004), 130-152.

6. Peter Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of al Qaeda's Leader*, (New York: Free Press, 2006).

7. Faye Bowers, "Al Qaeda's profile: slimmer but menacing," *Christian Science Monitor*, 9 September 2003.

8. Paul R. Rich, "Al Qaeda and the Radical Islamic Challenge to Western Strategy,'" *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Volume 14., No. 1, (Spring 2003), 47.

9. David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

10. The software engineer Ward Cunningham created the first wiki in 1995. One of his fundamental assumptions was that people who collaborate tend to trust one another. His user-editable website became the model for subsequent wikis. Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams, *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything*, (New York: Portfolio, 2008), 111. As of 2008, Wikipedia had approximately 2.2 million entries – twenty-three times the amount of entries in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Jeff Howe, *Crowdsourcing: Why the Power of the Crowd is Driving the Future of Business*, (New York: Crown Business, 2008), 61.

11. John Robb, *Brave New War: The Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization*, (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2008), ISBN: 978-0470261958. Originally published in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 22 No. 3 (Summer 2010), 473-475.

12. Thomas Rid and Marc Hecker, *War 2.0: Irregular Warfare in the Information Age*, (Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger Security International, 2009), ISBN: 978-0313364709. Originally published in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 22 No. 2, (Spring 2010), 332-334.

CHAPTER 5

Terrorist Innovation and Weapons of Mass Destruction

Historically, technological advances enhanced the disruptive potential of terrorism. In fact, one reason for the rise of modern terrorism was the increasing availability of firepower to groups wishing to overthrow governments. For example, the introduction of dynamite was a catalyst for the anarchist movement which launched bombing campaigns in Europe and America. More recently, the attacks on 9/11 changed threat perceptions in the United States because it brought together two threats that were much more serious in combination than they were isolation – i.e., radical Islam and weapons of mass destruction (WMD).[1]

Several trends suggest that the likelihood of terrorists using WMD today is greater than in the past. For one thing, such weapons are more readily available; a steady dissemination of dual-use equipment enables the production of chemical and biological weapons. Moreover, contemporary terrorists are more likely to be inspired by millenarian ideologies than the secular ideologies that animated earlier terrorists, thus increasing their proclivity to use WMD.[2] Militarily, inasmuch as U.S. armed forces are in such a strong position of superiority vis-à-vis other militaries, America's international adversaries have few options other than asymmetric unconventional attacks. Adam Dolnik examines the factors that enhance a terrorist group's effectiveness in *Understanding Terrorist Innovation: Technology, tactics and global trends*. For Dolnik the key factor is ideology because it informs the terrorist group's goals and strategies to effect them.

Bioterrorism is within the reach of small terrorist groups. To date, the most worrisome case of bioterrorism involved anthrax. As Bob Coen and Eric Nadler explain in *Dead Silence: Fear and Terror on the Anthrax Trail,* a lone wolf could potentially use this biological agent for lethal

effect as evidenced by the case of Dr. Bruce Ivins. Shortly after 9/11, two waves of letters laced with anthrax were sent to two U.S. senators and some media outlets in Florida. By early November 2001, five persons had died from the contaminated letters and another seventeen were sickened. If the government's case against Ivins is to be believed, it illustrates the destructive potential of lone wolf terrorism and bio-weapons.

The threat of cyberterrorism increases in severity each year as we increase our reliance on information technology. There is a much larger potential pool of cyber-terrorists than there are for WMD. Furthermore, carrying out a cyber attack presents no immediate physical threat to the perpetrator. What is particularly worrisome about the prospect of cyber-terrorism is that it could be inflicted on the technological infrastructure from a great distance by a few persons at low personal risk. Moreover, because of the relative simplicity of equipment, an individual could act alone without the support of a terrorist network. Richard A. Clarke and Robert K. Knake explore these prospects in *Cyber War: The Next Threat to National Security and What to Do About It*. Inasmuch as the U.S. infrastructure is so dependent on computer technology, Clarke and Knake argue that America is particularly vulnerable to cyber warfare. Moreover, the decentralized nature of the Internet militates against top-down countermeasures.

Adam Dolnik, *Understanding Terrorist Innovation: Technology, Tactics, and Global Trends*

Previously, terrorists were believed to be conservative in their methods, favoring less lethal tried-and-true tactics, *viz*., conventional explosives and guns. During much of the 1970s and 1980s, secular terrorists were seen as rational actors in the sense that they wanted just enough drama to get their message across, yet not commit acts of violence so horrific that they would alienate too many people. With the advent of the "new terrorism," however, some analysts have presaged the emergence of radical extremists who have no compunctions in inflicting mass-casualty attacks with the use of innovative methods and/or weapons of mass destruction. What factors contribute to terrorist group innovation? Why are some groups conservative in their approach, while others are inclined to adopt new technologies and unconventional tactics in their

operational repertoire? Adam Dolnik seeks to answer these questions in a thorough academic study, *Understanding Terrorist Innovation: Technology, Tactics, and Global Trends*.[3]

In order to better explain innovation, Dolnik chose for his case studies four terrorist groups that represented both poles from the innovation scale to include highly innovative groups to more conservative ones. Examining the various trajectories, these groups traveled in their terrorist campaigns, he sought to identify which variables impinged on the tactical and strategic choices that they made. Drawing upon several key terrorism databases, Dolnik developed a scrupulous study of the campaigns of these selected terrorist groups.

Dolnik identified, the Japanese cult Aum Shinrikyo (Supreme Truth), which operated from 1987-1995, as the most innovative terrorist organization in recent history. The primary reason for its innovativeness was the cult's apocalyptic ideology, which sought to usher in a global Armageddon out of which it would emerge to build a new order based on the precepts advanced by its messianic leader Shoko Asahara, whose theology syncretized elements of Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, and anti-Semitic and anti-Free Masonry conspiracy theories. Enamored of high technology, Asahra sought to indiscriminately inflict high casualties believing in a distorted type of karma – *poa* – that would redeem his victims, as thus provide them with favorable afterlives. To that end, the group pursued sophisticated weaponry, including nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, the latter of which was used in the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway in March 1995. Furthermore, the group's formidable resources – its coffers reached an estimated $1 billion – enabled the group to seriously carry out plans for the procurement and development of such weapons. Finally, the group included more than twenty university-trained scientists who brought much expertise that allowed for the development of such grandiose strategic plans.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command (PFLP-GC), a terrorist organization founded by Ahmed Jibril in 1968 as breakaway faction of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), also exhibited a high level of innovation. The group's ideology favored innovative tendencies insofar as it sought to conduct spectacular military operations that were seen as part of a larger anti-imperialist effort that was consistent with the *zeitgeist* of that period. Most

notably, the PFLP-GC conducted numerous high-profile skyjackings and bombings with destroyed several planes in mid-flight with the use of a novel device known as the altimeter bomb. Furthermore, the group operated in a milieu in which it faced strong competition from like-minded Palestinian rejectionist groups that vied for support from other Arabs and state sponsors. As a consequence, the PFLP-GC had incentive to up the ante through high-profile attacks in order to attract the attention of prospective supporters

The Riyadus-Salikhin Suicide Battalion (RAS) – a Chechen Islamist terrorist organization founded by the warlord Shamil Basayev – was mostly innovative in its tactics, rather than the weaponry it employed. Its relatively short, yet deadly campaign which lasted from 2002 to 2004, included several daring raids into Russia that garnered international notoriety. With a casualty rate of nearly 100 fatalities per attack, RAS was one of the most lethal terrorist organizations in recent history. Seeking to adopt a strategy of attrition, Basayev emphasized high casualties against his Russian adversaries in their own territory. The high-profile operations in which hostages were seized in the heart of Russia required careful planning and coordination. The most notable incident occurred in September 2004 when Chechen militant seized a school in the town of Beslan. In a controversial attempt to rescue the hostages, Russian security recklessly stormed the building which ultimately resulted in the death of over 331 people, half of whom were children.

The Greek terrorist group Revolutionary Organization November 17 (17N), which was active from 1975 to 2002, occupied the low end of the innovation continuum. This group's main objectives were to pressure the Greek government to withdraw from the NATO alliance, and force an end to the U.S. military presence in Greece, generally opposing capitalism and imperialism. In practice, however, the group's strategy fell far short of its lofty goals, as it never made a serious effort to reach out to the Greek masses. The group did not actually seek to seize political power and never sought to become a mass movement; rather, it pursued an image of a "Robin Hood-like mystical force" and acted as a "symbolic instrument of social justice." In the main, its terrorist campaign consisted of sporadic political assassinations. Furthermore, the group held a ritualistic use of weaponry, relying on a simple .45 caliber Colt semi-automatic pistol in

several of its assassinations and eschewed high-casualty attacks. The group's target selection and tactics were rigid as well.

According to Dolnik, several key variables function as predictors of terrorist group innovation. First and foremost, the role of ideology is important insofar as it frames the group's worldview and determines its core objectives and the strategy for how they are to be achieved. Furthermore, it determines the identification of the "enemy" and the means by which to defeat him. According to his study, ideologically flexible and strategically adaptive groups are more likely to be innovative than those whose ideology and strategy are constant throughout their lifetimes.

The milieu within which a terrorist group operates can also influence its proclivity for innovation. Identified by Dolnik as the "the relationship with other organizations" variable, competition from like-minded groups can spur innovation, as rivals adapt in order to obtain a comparative advantage in the same operational theater. The greater the overlap in goals, ideologies, and ambitions of these groups, the more likely they will pursue innovative tactics and technologies.

With respect to the "countermeasures" variable, groups that experience a strong response from governmental forces have a great incentive to innovate. Those groups that face effective countermeasures are believed to be more inclined to innovate in order to surmount this challenge. Target-hardening efforts on the part of authorities force terrorist groups to seek alternative ways to mount attacks through new weapons and/or tactics.

Finally, it goes without saying that groups with more resources, *ceteris paribus*, are more likely to innovate insofar as they have the wherewithal to do so. The "resources" variable includes both human and material assets. If members of the terrorist group have a high degree of technical awareness, then they are more likely to innovate. Greater funding allows terrorist groups to acquire more sophisticated and expensive weaponry. Those groups, however, that enjoy state sponsorship may actually be more constrained with respect to WMD because the donor state could face severe retribution if discovered that it was responsible for conveying such weapons.

The good news, according to Dolnik, is that the most extreme and apocalyptic groups that would seem to be most inclined to use Chemical,

Biological, Radioactive, and Nuclear (CBRN), are also those least likely to possess those characteristics necessary in order to breach the technological hurdles to mount such attacks. Furthermore, such groups are also more likely to be identified beforehand by authorities because of their radicalism. As a consequence, "the likelihood of a successful mass-casualty CBRN attack remains comparatively low."

The case studies examined in the book provide the reader with a cogent analysis of how varied terrorist groups develop tactics and implement them in their campaigns. In sum, Dolnik has produced a fine study that explores the factors that lead to terrorist group innovation and will be of use to policymakers, scholars, and the general public.

Bob Coen and Eric Nadler, *Dead Silence: Fear and Terror on the Anthrax Trail*

Biological weapons could be even potentially more lethal than nuclear bombs, as diseases killed scores of people in the last century. For instance, the smallpox from which approximately 500 million people died in the twentieth century, killed more than the estimated 320 million people who died during the same period of all military and civilian casualties of war, cases of influenza during the 1918 pandemic, and all cases of AIDS worldwide. Adding to these fears is the fact that biological weapons are difficult to detect and the hurdles to acquiring and developing them are much lower than they are for nuclear weapons. The anthrax-laced letters sent in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 raised the specter of bio-terrorism. In October 2001, letters containing anthrax spores were sent to the offices of Senators Tom Daschle (D-SD) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT), as well as to representatives of the media. Five persons eventually died from the contaminated letters and another seventeen were sickened. Had the anthrax been employed more effectively, it could have done even greater damage and possibly shut down the mail system nationwide. In the book *Dead Silence: Fear and Terror on the Anthrax Trail*,[4] two journalists, Eric Nadler and Bob Coen explore the convoluted road leading to these bio-attacks. Their investigation reads like a detective novel, but leaves important questions unanswered.

The anthrax used in the letters was weaponized, thus suggesting that it could only have been produced in a sophisticated military lab beyond the expertise of a non-state entity. As the authors point out, anthrax occurs naturally throughout the world and is generally found in the blood of grazing animals, such as cows, goats, and sheep. The majority of victims are afflicted with cutaneous anthrax, which is easily treatable and rarely fatal. When weaponized, though, the spores can result in pulmonary anthrax which produces lesions, hemorrhaging, and is fatal in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred within one week of affliction.

The anthrax trail led the authors to South Africa. Their investigation examined Project Coast – a top secret program of the Apartheid-era South African government to develop biological and chemical weapons. During that period, the Pretoria government faced a red threat from the North, as the communist bloc supported various Marxist rebels in Namibia and Rhodesia, and a black threat from within. The authors speculate that anthrax was used in Rhodesia against black rebel groups. Officially, the project was disbanded in 1993 by President F.W. de Klerk who ordered the destruction of all original documents related to the program.

Early on in the "Amerithax" investigation, the FBI identified Dr. Steven Hatfill as a "person of interest." Dr. Hatfill also had links to South Africa. After receiving a degree in biology from a Kansas college, Hatfill served a short stint in the Army followed by a year in Zaire to work with a Methodist missionary doctor. In 1978, he enrolled in the Godfrey Huggins School of Medicine in Salisbury, Rhodesia. After graduation, he moved to South Africa and later returned to America where he worked in a variety of jobs in the biomedical field finally landing a position at Fort Detrick and Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC). Authorities eventually identified the anthrax as the "Ames strain," which is highly lethal and originated from a dead Texan cow that had passed through the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, where it got its moniker. In 1980, the strain was sent to Fort Detrick in Maryland. Although Hatfill was never charged, the FBI investigated him thoroughly for five years; eventually, he was exonerated and awarded a $5.8 million payout.

Prior to 9/11, civilian laboratories were not well-guarded and were rarely monitored to see if customers placing orders were acquiring them for a legitimate use, despite the fact that there had been several cases of

threats of bio-warfare attacks in the United States. In August 2008, Dr. Bruce Ivins – a research scientist at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) – was identified by the FBI as the person responsible for sending the anthrax-laced letters. In October 2001, he was among a select group of experts that viewed the anthrax powder sent to Senator Tom Daschle during which he reportedly marveled at its sophisticated properties. The microbiologist lived in a modest home not far from where he worked at Fort Detrick, Maryland. On July 27, 2008, before he could be arrested, Ivins consumed a heavy dose of prescription Tylenol with codeine and collapsed in his house and was then taken to a hospital where he died two days later. On August 6, 2008, the FBI officially concluded that Ivins was solely responsible and on February 19, 2010, the FBI formally closed its investigation.

Ivins, though, seemed like an unlikely suspect. An unprepossessing sixty-two-year-old scientist, he was a churchgoing, piano-playing husband and father of two adopted children. Nevertheless, he confided to friends that he suffered from paranoid delusions and schizophrenic symptoms and spent a week in a psychiatric ward just before returning home to commit suicide.

The case against Ivins was circumstantial and involved sophisticated microbial forensics. Although the spores were derived from the same strain of anthrax, different grades were used in the various letters. Moreover, there are some hurdles that would have to be surmounted in order to launch a bio attack of such sophistication. The particle size of the pathogen must be small enough to be taken in by the lungs. Milling biological weapons into a small granular powder requires considerable expertise. As the authors explain, there is still no consensus on whether the spores were easily accessible to persons with connections to ordinary labs, or required access to more sophisticated equipment. Some experts were highly skeptical of the government's case. The anthrax found in the letters sent to the offices of Senators Daschle and Leahy was highly-sophisticated, causing some experts to believe that such a weaponized form of the toxin was beyond the reach of Ivins. For example, Richard Spertzel, the former head of the biological weapons section of UNSCOM from 1994-1999, averred that the anthrax that Ivins allegedly used in the letters sent to Senators Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy could not have been produced at the laboratory at which he worked. Furthermore, the

particles were coated with a polyglass silica that had not been previously seen used in that fashion before. Silica prevents anthrax from aggregating, thus making it easier to aerosolize. And according to an FBI leak, each particle was given an electric charge which caused the particles to repel each other at the molecular level thus increasing the spores' retention in the lungs. Spertzel concluded that the potential lethality of the anthrax used exceeded any type of powdered product found in the now defunct U.S. Biological Warfare Program. Although he believes that Ivins was a brilliant scientist, he does not think that he had the requisite knowledge of the multiple disciplines of, or access to, the technology necessary to produce that anthrax that was used in the attacks. Representative Rush Holt (D-NJ) introduced H.R. 1248 – "The Anthrax Attacks Investigations Act of 2009," which called for the establishment of a national commission to study the matter further.

Adding to the suspicion are the strange deaths of several prominent microbiologists since the anthrax attacks. The most notable case was David Kelly, a respected British bacteriologist who was employed by the British Ministry of Defence. Kelly investigated Saddam Hussein's bio-war program and was enmeshed in a controversy in which he allegedly had an unauthorized discussion with a journalist about a British government's dossier on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq in May 2003. A few months later, Kelly was found dead near his home in Harrowdown Hill. His death – presumably brought about by a slit on his wrist and the consumption of twenty-one painkillers – was ruled a suicide by a committee presided over by Lore James Brian Edward Hutton. However, a British author, Norman Baker, maintained that Kelly was murdered, as the forensic evidence did not support the case of suicide in his estimation. While these deaths raised suspicion in some quarters and provided grist for Internet conspiracy mills, the *New York Times Magazine* countered that the number of those scientists fell within statistical norms.

Dead Silence is interesting investigative journalism into various bio-warfare programs, including those in Russia, South Africa, and the United States; however, it does not provide a strong theory as to who was ultimately behind the anthrax letter attacks. Some important details were left out, including the case of the 9/11 hijacker, Ahmed al-Haznawi, who was treated in Fort Lauderdale for a lesion that might have resulted from

exposure to anthrax. Nevertheless, the book raises important questions and will be of interest to students of terrorism and WMD.

Richard A. Clarke and Robert K. Knake, *Cyber War: The Next Threat to National Security and What to do About It*

The information sector has long been an important dimension in war. During World War II, for example, Britain's Ultra program managed to break German secret codes which contributed to the Royal Air Force's great success in the Battle of Britain. Likewise, thanks to Magic – the U.S. decipherment of Japanese secret codes – the U.S. military won a major victory at Midway despite being outnumbered. In their book, *Cyber War: The Next Threat To National Security And What to do About It*,[5] Richard A. Clarke, a former White House counterterrorism advisor to both the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations, and Robert K. Knake, an international affairs fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations explore cyberspace as a new realm of conflict.

Although the Internet has contributed much to the global economy and contemporary culture, Clarke and Knake point out that decentralized design gave short shrift to security. As the authors explain, originally, the Internet was designed for a limited number of tight-knit researchers and not the billions of loosely-connected users who often do not know one another. They identify several major weaknesses. First, the Domain Name System allows hackers to misdirect web surfers to phony web pages, thus potentially ensnaring them in scams. Second, a lack of governance over the Internet leads to a lack of administrative guidance and control over a critical element of the nation's information infrastructure. Third, almost all information on the Internet is open and unencrypted and could be potentially misused for malevolent purposes. Finally, the Internet is vulnerable to malicious attacks, such as viruses, worms, and phishing scams collectively known as "malware."

Several anecdotes of cyber war are discussed in the book, which the authors define as "actions by a nation-state to penetrate another nation's computers or networks for the purposes of causing damage or disruption." The book opens with a recounting of the Israeli Air Force's September 6, 2007 raid on a nuclear complex in Syria. The authors speculate that the

Syrian air defense system was disabled by Israeli hackers, thus allowing Israeli bombers to target the facility unscathed. Years prior to this incident, the CIA waged an early form of cyber war against the Soviet Union. In the early 1980s, the CIA introduced malicious code into the design of software for pipeline technology that the agency allowed Soviets spies to purloin from a Canadian company. Eventually, the control software malfunctioned in 1982, resulting in the most massive nonnuclear explosion ever recorded – over three kilotons.

In recent years, Russia has demonstrated adeptness in cyber warfare and sabotage. For example, in April 2007, after the Estonian government's decision to move a Soviet World War II memorial and some nearby graves from central Tallinn to a military cemetery located elsewhere, Russian hackers disrupted Estonian government websites. The highly charged incident, known as Bronze Night, inflamed nationalist sentiments on both sides. During the affair, the attacking computers – called "botnets" – directed a flood of internet traffic from infected "zombies" (computers that are under remote control unbeknownst to their users) in a DDOS (distributed denial of service) attack which were designed to crash and/or jam Estonian networks. Such botnet-directed malicious activities take place in the background and thus do not appear on the user's screen. Eventually, it transpired that the attacks emanated from Russia; moreover, the computer code in the malicious program had been written on the Cyrillic-alphabet keyboard. Just over a year later, cyber attacks hit Georgian government and media outlet sites, presumably in an effort to prevent Georgians from learning what was going on during the crisis in South Ossetia in August 2008. It later transpired that websites used to launch the attacks were linked to the Russian intelligence apparatus.

China is the country about which Clarke and Knake are most concerned for its capacity to wage cyber war against the United States. Arousing suspicion, China established two network spy stations in Cuba, one to monitor U.S. Internet traffic and another to monitor DoD communications. By the end of the 1990s, Chinese strategists converged on the idea that cyber warfare could be used by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to overcome its qualitative military deficiencies vis-à-vis the United States. Such an approach is seen as part and parcel of the "unrestricted warfare" advanced by Colonels Qiao and Wang Xiangsu of

the PLA in their book of the same name which encompasses a full spectrum of mechanisms, both conventional and unconventional.

The United States, Clarke and Knake argue, is particularly susceptible to cyber warfare for a number of reasons. First, the United States has a greater connectedness of its critical infrastructure, including electrical power, air traffic control, pipelines, and supply chains, than any potential adversary nations. Second, in the United States, much of the Internet is operated by private companies and thus lacks governmental oversight. Third, the owners of these companies are often politically powerful and able to prevent, or dilute, government regulation. Finally, the U.S. military is highly networked and thus threatened by potential cyber attacks. Such vulnerabilities, Clarke and Knake contend, could invite attack from a potential adversary.

Deterrence, as the authors point out, is fundamentally different in the realm of cyber space than it was for nuclear strategy during the Cold War. In the latter, offensive operations would soon be detected an invite massive retaliation. In the former, by contrast, offensive operations can often be kept secret through the use of logic bombs and viruses that can lie dormant and activated later on command. Moreover, attribution is much murkier in cyber war in that it can take a while to identify the source of attacks. Such tactics, according to Clarke and Knake, have already been carried out by China which planted logic bombs in the U.S. computer systems in 2009 and occasioned little reaction. Espionage in cyberspace is now much easier and can be potentially more successful as it is far easier to spy on nations than it was using human intelligence in the past. Infinitely more data can be illicitly acquired online than through the traditional method of turning adversary contacts and agents. This development is particularly worrisome for private industry insofar as intellectual property has frequently been stolen from U.S. firms.

Although the United States probably has the greatest potential to wage cyber war owing to its technological advancement and large population of computer savvy people, the great reliance on networks makes the country particularly vulnerable. By contrast, North Korea, a country that Clarke and Knake assert has already waged cyber attacks against the United States in the past, has little connectivity, thus its infrastructure is relatively immune to cyber attack. Likewise, the networks that make up the Chinese Internet infrastructure are controlled by the

government. This "Great Firewall of China" – a kind of national intranet akin to an internal network of a company – would give that country an advantage in a cyber showdown with the United States insofar as China could disconnect its slice of the Internet in the event of a cyber attack from a hostile party. In cyber war, Clarke and Knake counsel, one must consider a country's cyber offensive and defensive capabilities along with its dependence on the Internet, specifically, the extent to which its infrastructure is dependent on networked systems.

In order to mitigate the risk of cyber attacks, Clarke and Knake advance a defensive strategy that includes a triad which consists first of a backbone – the Tier 1 Internet Service Providers (AT&T, Verizon, Level 3, Qwest, and Sprint) – that manages the overwhelming majority of Internet traffic in the United States. Inasmuch as virtually all Internet traffic in the United States traverses one of these major ISPs at one point or another, if this traffic could be scanned for malware, then the Internet could be secured and thus prevent attacks from reaching their intended targets. Admittedly, this would raise a technical problem of inspection and a policy problem concerning privacy. To overcome the technical problem, the authors recommend applying existing technology to create a deep packet inspection system to scan traffic for malicious malware that would not lead to any significant delay in Internet usage. To ensure privacy, they advocate the creation of a Privacy and Civil Liberties Protection Board to provide oversight and guard against illegal spying. The second prong of the defensive triad would be to secure the nation's power grid. To this end, regulation could be implemented that would require electric companies to make it next to impossible to obtain unauthorized access to the control network for power grids. Finally, the third prong involves the Department of Defense, which the authors counsel should upgrade its networks by using better encryption, implementing better log-in protocols, segmenting the networks on a "need to know" basis, monitoring all networks for unauthorized connections, and installing better firewalls and antivirus and intrusion prevention software on all computers in its network. Given the criticality of cyber war, Clarke and Knake argue that the authority to wage such operations should reside with the president, not unlike the authority to launch nuclear weapons.

This is a well-informed book that seeks to initiate a broad public dialogue about cyber war, but could be improved upon with a much-

needed index. Although much of this book is speculative owing to the still novel nature of cyber war, it deserves a serious reading and will be of interest to students of terrorism, national security, and information technology.

Notes

1. Francis Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 66-94.

2. Jessica Stern, *The Ultimate Terrorists*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 8-10.

3. Adam Dolnik. *Understanding Terrorist Innovation: Technology, Tactics and Global Trends,* (Routledge, 2007), ISBN: 10: 978-0-415-42351-9. Originally published in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 21. No. 1 (Winter 2009), 179-182.

4. Bob Coen and Eric Nadler, *Dead Silence: Fear and Terror on the Anthrax Trail*, (Counterpoint, 2009), ISBN: 978-1582435091. Originally published in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 23 No. 2 (Spring 2011), 310-312.

5. Richard A. Clarke and Robert K. Knake, *Cyber War: The Next Threat to National Security and What to do About It,* (Ecco, 2010), ISBN: 13: 978-1-58542-551-8. Originally published in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 23 No. 1 (Winter 2011), 124-126.

CHAPTER 6

Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency Strategies

As to be expected, in the aftermath of the 9/11, the federal government, with support from the American public, called for more vigilant measures to root out potential terrorists at home and abroad.[1] President George W. Bush issued several executive orders that, *inter alia*, blocked terrorist financing, established an Office of Homeland Security, and allowed for the detention and trial of some non-citizens in military tribunals.[2] In 2003, the Department of Homeland Security was created, which entailed the most thoroughgoing reorganization of the government bureaucracy since the creation of the Department of Defense in 1947. After the 9/11 attacks, Attorney General John Ashcroft and FBI Direct John Mueller refocused the bureau's efforts on detecting and thwarting future terrorist attacks.[3] To that end, greater emphasis has been placed on intelligence collection and sharing. In an edited volume – *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy* – Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes assemble a collection of essays from a variety of specialists. Numerous avenues to combating terrorism are covered including law enforcement, military, intelligence, and diplomacy.

The war on terror created new opportunities for a realignment of United States relations with other nations. For instance, there are new possibilities for dialogue and cooperation with China and Russia in security areas as both of these countries have an interest in quelling Islamic radicalism.[4] The Chinese government has launched a campaign against Muslim Uighur separatists in Xinjiang. For many years, Russia has been involved with the jihadist struggle, first in Afghanistan in the 1980s, and since the early 1990s, fighting Muslim separatists in the breakaway province of Chechnya. Although initially reluctant to fully support the U.S.-led global war on terror, after suffering from spectacular terrorist

operations, countries such as Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and Morocco finally joined the effort with enthusiasm.[5]

In order to successfully prosecute the global war on terror (sometimes dubbed "the long war"), multilateralism is essential. But as Barak Mendelsohn notes in *Combating Jihadism: American Hegemony and Interstate Cooperation in the War on Terrorism*, interstate cooperation is not automatic. In order to forge a broad multinational coalition, the United States must convince other nations of the terrorist threat and articulate a set of strategies and policies that are consistent with the interests of the international community.

Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes, *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy*

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, numerous strategies have been advanced by academics, blue ribbon panels, and government agencies to confront the threat from the "new terrorism." Editors Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes assemble an array of experts in *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy*[6] to address the various aspects of this challenge. In doing so, they present a comprehensive framework for conceptualizing policy in this area. The major components necessary to develop a grand strategy are reviewed and analyzed.

Audrey Kurth Cronin, a terrorism specialist for the Congressional Research Service at the Library of Congress, searches for the current sources of contemporary terrorism by examining four levels of analysis – the individual, the organization, the state, and the international system. At the level of the individual, Cronin concurs with recent research that suggests that most terrorists do not exhibit demonstrable psychopathologies. However, she argues that it is important to distinguish between the psychological motivations for the potential "pool," or recruits, and the leaders of terrorist organizations insofar as the two segments are likely to be driven by different factors. At the level of the organization, Cronin points out that terrorism is fundamentally a group activity, and as such, cannot properly be understood without reference to such variables as shared ideological commitment, group identity, peer pressure, indoctrination, and group reinforcement. The third level takes into account

the role of the state. For many years, the U.S. Government assumed that state sponsorship was crucial for the maintenance of a serious terrorist entity. In that vein, Claire Sterling's classic study, *The Terrorist Network*, illustrated the role of the Soviet Union in enabling various national liberation and leftist terrorist organizations around the world. The trend of state sponsorship accelerated after the Iranian Revolution of 1979, as the new Islamic Republic entered into the international terrorism business by supporting Hezbollah and other related terrorist groups. However, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the moderation (until recently) of the Islamic Republic reversed this trend. Be that as it may, the past decade has demonstrated that certain terrorist groups – e.g., Al Qaeda, Aum Shinrikyo – could inflict lethal attacks without state sponsorship. Finally, the fourth level of analysis, the international system, considers broad trends such as Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations," which presaged that global conflict in the twenty-first century would be animated by differences in culture. Indeed, Huntington's prediction that Islam and the West were on a collision course appears prescient in the aftermath of 9/11. Also important is the historical process of globalization, which influences the international context within which terrorism operates.

David C. Rapoport, emeritus professor of political science at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), examines broad cycles in the history of terrorism over the past 125 years. As he sees it, a certain *Zeitgeist* defines each major wave of modern terrorism. According to Rapoport, each wave has a life cycle of about one generation and employs its own unique tactics to effect its goals and language to justify its ideological principles. The first wave commenced in Russia during the late 1880s and later appeared in Western Europe, and the Balkans. This "Anarchist wave" was the first real global terrorist experience. The second wave appeared in the 1920s and was characterize by anti-colonialism. The Treaty of Versailles raised the aspirations for self-determination among people living under the yoke of colonialism. World War II accelerated this trend, as more and more erstwhile colonial subjects attained their independence. The third wave was spearheaded by the "New Left," which criticized "the establishment" in the West for not living up to its democratic ideals. Radicals in the West, such as the Weather Underground, the Red Army Factions, and the Red Brigades drew inspiration from and sought to make common cause with various

liberation movements in the Third World including the Viet Cong and the PLO. Rapoport marks the year 1979 as the genesis of the fourth wave. In that year, three important events occurred – the Iranian Revolution, the start of a new Islamic century, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. What the first three waves all shared in common was that they were all inspired by secular ideologies that generally called for greater democracy, self-determination, and social justice. By contrast, the fourth wave informed by militant Islam marks a departure from this pattern. In this sense, the fourth wave is anti-democratic in that it rejects secularism and in its stead, explicitly calls for elements of a theocracy including the establishment of the *Shariah*, or Islamic law. The tactic of suicide terrorism is the major innovation of the fourth wave. Rapoport cautions that Islamic terrorism wave may outlast the previous waves insofar as it is inspired by religion, which has proven to be far more durable than secular ideologies.

Martha Crenshaw, professor of government at Wesleyan University, evaluates the American strategy of combating terrorism. As she explains, in the main, strategy is about making the available means produce the desired ends. Toward this goal, she recommends a balanced approach that would identify the most serious threats and the appropriate methods to counter them. One factor that militated against the development of an effective counterterrorist grand strategy is the tendency for democratic governments to ignore issues until they reach a certain level of criticality. Prior to 9/11, too many other issues and pressing problems had the effect of keeping terrorism in the "realm of the ordinary." However, after 9/11, terrorism could no longer be given short shrift and a comprehensive strategy was in order. Toward this end, the Bush administration announced its *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* in September 2002, which was followed by the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* in February 2003. Together, these two documents called for strong measures including pre-emption, unilateralism, and regime change for those countries that posed a potential threat. Crenshaw argues that support from other nations is indispensable for United States counterterrorist efforts.

Michael Sheehan looks at the role of diplomacy in the U.S.-led war on terrorism. Sheehan, the deputy commissioner for counterterrorism of the New York City Police Department, argues for the use of all available

foreign policy instruments to influence critical countries to cooperate with the United States. He advocates an approach that would strip away the terrorists' political agenda and focus on their criminal acts. Although a focus on "root causes" might initially sound more humane and principled, it could also prove fruitless as evidenced by the fact that many of Al Qaeda's leaders come from relatively wealthy Persian Gulf countries that lack endemic poverty. Globalization has spurred the migrations of people across national borders. This trend has resulted in numerous diasporic enclaves in other countries that often support their co-ethnics involved in terrorism in their home countries. Therefore, as Sheehan points out, foreign governments have a vested interest in cooperating with the U.S. Government's counterterrorism efforts in that they often face the same terrorist threats. To further this cooperation, the U.S. Government can provide financial, security, and military aid. Sheehan argues that the State Department is best suited to coordinate these efforts insofar as it is in its traditional purview to interface with foreign governments.

Paul Pillar points out the crucial role of intelligence in the campaign against terrorism. As an intelligence analyst with broad experience in the CIA, Pillar delineates the proper functions of the U.S. counterterrorist intelligence apparatus. Intelligence, as Pillar sees it, is the linchpin of an effective counterterrorist strategy insofar as it provides information on groups, cells, and individuals that seek to inflict harm the United States. In order to effectively confront the transnational nature of the new terrorist threat, Pillar believes that it is important to piece together disparate information collected from a wide variety of sources – human, technical, and open source – from many different places, though this could require that the United States deal on occasion with regimes and individuals with "blood stained pasts." Pillar opines that reliance on field operations officers fluent in the language and steeped in the foreign culture, is impractical and over romanticized. At the end of the day, Pillar advises that American policymakers must have an appreciation for what intelligence assets can and cannot accomplish in order to develop a sensible counterterrorism strategy.

Lindsay Clutterbuck, a detective chief inspector in the Specialist Operations Department of the Metropolitan Police, London, reviews the two conceptual models of combating terrorism – i.e., "the criminal justice model" and the "war model." He calls for an approach that would

integrate both models, arguing that they are not mutually exclusive, but rather, two ends of a continuum to be employed alternatively under appropriate conditions. The best strategy would integrate both approaches as part of a holistic strategy. Inasmuch as the threat from terrorism is constantly changing, Clutterbuck recommends a flexible approach drawing upon both law enforcement techniques and the military force would be most effective.

Timothy D. Hoyt, an associate professor at the U.S. Naval War College, examines the feasibility of the military approach to combating terrorism. As he observes, the tragic events of 9/11 occasioned a new paradigm that allows for the increased use of U.S. military power to confront international terrorism. However, he counsels that the use of military force must be carefully correlated with political objectives if this strategy is to be successful. As he points out, traditionally, American strategic culture views war as a last resort, but once employed, it should be waged with maximum force in order to be won quickly and exact maximalist objectives (e.g., unconditional surrender and regime change). One serious obstacle when targeting terrorists is that they usually lack a center of gravity. State sponsors and those that harbor terrorists could be targeted, but "new terrorist" networks that are amorphous and decentralized are difficult to target. In order to meet this challenge, Hoyt advocated "jointness" at two levels – first, increased interagency cooperation in the U.S. Government that would harness all tools of national power to eliminate Al Qaeda and its affiliates and second, increased cooperation between the United States and its coalition partners.

Adam Roberts, a professor of international relations at Oxford University, reviews the legal aspects regarding international conflict and their implications for the current war on terrorism. The war on terror raises issues involving the right to resort to the use of force (*jus ad bellum*) and the appropriate use of force in war (*jus in bello*). Related to this is proportionality that sets out the criteria for limits in the prosecution of war. As Roberts observes, this principle is in conflict with current U.S. military doctrine, which favors the overwhelming use of force to achieve victory quickly with a minimal amount of American casualties. Another thorny issue is the proper treatment of captured enemy combatants. Inasmuch as Islamic terrorists act independently of any state, should they be granted prisoner or war status and its attendant legal protections?

Roberts avers that existing international law, however imperfect it may be, should continue to guide policy regarding the proper conduct in the war on terror.

Carnes Lord, a professor at the U.S. Naval War College, appraises the application of psychological-political instruments. He points out that the U.S. Government dismantled much of its public diplomacy apparatus after the end of the Cold War. Whereas United States Information Agency (USIA) programs such as Voice of America and Radio Free Europe reached many listeners in Eastern Europe, similar programs have not made many inroads in the Middle East. Lord calls for a three part strategy that includes first, a war of ideas that discredits Islamism; second, a political-legal approach that encourages foreign governments to crack down on the public advocacy of radical Islam and the organizations that espouse it; and third, a political-institutional approach that suppresses Pakistani madrassas that can serve as incubators for future jihadists.

Patrick M. Cronin, an assistant administrator for policy and program coordination of the U.S. Agency for International Development, explains the efficacy of foreign aid and how it can be used to gain cooperation of foreign countries in the war on terrorism. Assuming no significant increases in foreign aid, Cronin points out that the U.S. Government must make painful and calculated choices that give priority to its foreign policy agenda in which combating terrorism looms large. Observing that foreign aid is an integral part of national strategy, Cronin argues for a systematic approach that would reward those counties that demonstrate commitment to promoting economic growth, political reform, and social development. Furthermore, assistance should be granted to restore stability in fragile and failed states. Finally, assistance can be used to help strengthen institutions that can deliver social services and create political and economic opportunities for its citizens, and in doing so, "drain the swamps" of frustration out of which terrorists emerge.

Daniel Gouré, the vice president of the Lexington Institute (a non-profit public policy research organization), expounds on the role of homeland security in the larger grand strategy. He identifies three operational foci for homeland security. First, barrier creation and transportation security must be strengthened, yet not place an undue burden on international commerce. Second intrusion detection and response entails neutralizing terrorists and their supporters who have

already entered the country. Finally, consequence management involves protecting the nation's critical infrastructure, defending against catastrophic terrorism, and preparing and responding to emergencies. At the end of the day, Gouré believes the only strategy that is likely to be effective in securing the homeland is one that emphasizes offensive action and even pre-emption. Through this aggressive approach, coupled with modest improvements in current programs designed to close obvious gaps, a high degree of security could be obtained.

Finally, Audrey Kurth Cronin synthesizes the various essays and offers her advice for developing a more effective and balanced strategy against terrorism. As numerous critics have observed, by declaring a war on "terrorism" the U.S. Government has embarked on an open-ended campaign against a tactic that probably will never be fully eradicated. Cronin argues for a more focused response that explicitly targets Al Qaeda and its associated groups insofar as they pose the most serious threat to the United States and its interests. An integrated strategy that makes best use of the instruments discussed including diplomacy, foreign aid, intelligence, law enforcement, and military force could be tied into an effective grand strategy. However, to meet this challenge the bureaucracy, characterized by a hierarchical structure, must be able to adapt and forge agile connections among its agencies so that it can combat the amorphous network of Al Qaeda. Cronin cautions that an over-reliance on the use of military force could be counterproductive, as evidenced by the war in Iraq, which has siphoned off resources that could be used against Al Qaeda, alienated important allies in the counterterror coalition, and engendered renewed anti-Americanism in many parts of the world.

What makes this volume significant is its thoroughness and specificity in dealing with the various aspects of counterterrorism policy. Numerous experts bring their experience to bear on different aspects that are essential to the development of a grand strategy. The contributors draw from contemporary trends that impinge on contemporary terrorism, most notably the process of globalization and the networked quality of Al Qaeda. The amorphous structure of Al Qaeda has allowed it to adapt and survive despite tremendous opposition. To meet this challenge, the authors suggest a flexible approach that includes increased cooperation and coordination not only among U.S. Government agencies, but also their counterparts in foreign countries as well as private entities including non-

governmental organizations, interest groups, and civic organizations. Various features of contemporary organizational theory including decentralization, individual initiative, flat organizational structures, network connections, individual empowerment, and bottoms-up management could be employed to counter the threat of the new terrorism. There is also an appreciation of what Joseph S. Nye Jr. referred to as "soft power." As the authors observe, the war on terror is in large part a contest to win over the hearts and minds of the people of the Islamic world and wean them away from the blandishments of the radical Islam. Therefore, as Audrey Cronin opines, an effective strategy must include an element of "positive power" – e.g., providing aid, reconstruction, demonstrating a commitment to democracy and freedom – as well as "negative power" – e.g., military and law enforcement measures. Most important of all, the authors argue for a comprehensive strategy, drawing upon the resources from many segments of society devoted to an achievable and well-articulated endgame is necessary to win the war on terror and secure the homeland. *Attacking Terrorism* succeeds in presenting the "big picture" of counterterrorism strategy to policymakers, scholars, and the general public.

Barak Mendelsohn, *Combating Jihadism: American Hegemony and Interstate Cooperation in the War on Terrorism*

In his book, *Combating Jihadism: American Hegemony and Interstate Cooperation in the War on Terrorism*,[7] Barak Mendelsohn, an assistant professor of political science at Haverford College, examines the global response to new security challenges in the aftermath of 9/11. In order to place his study in academic context, he draws upon international relations theory, specifically – the English School – which sees states as members of an international society that is held together by shared norms, values, and general goals. In this system, the role of the "hegemon," or dominant power, is of vital importance insofar as it sets the international agenda and takes the lead in preserving order. When faced with a systemic threat, in this case, contemporary jihadism, Mendelsohn argues states come together to meet the challenge. This drive for self-preservation facilitates interstate

cooperation not unlike threats that serve to bond people at the intrastate level.

According to Mendelsohn, Al Qaeda's extreme Salafist ideology, combined with the organization's intentions and capabilities, puts the movement on a collision course with the rest of the world. He chronicles the evolution of the global jihadist movement, which began to take its contemporary form during the Soviet-Afghan War. According to Mendelsohn, Osama bin Laden's chief contribution to jihadist strategy was that he provided an explanation for the movement's surprising success against the Soviet Union and designed a strategy that focused on drawing the United States into a war by waging spectacular acts of terrorism against it. In making Afghanistan the principle battleground, he strategically theorized that American ground forces could be trapped and beaten not unlike the Soviet and British forces before them. According to this reasoning, such a failure could trigger a process of collapse, not unlike that which beset the Soviet Union.

Despite all the criticism leveled against the Bush administration's unilateralism, Mendelsohn points out that the United States has usually pursued a multilateral approach in combating global jihadist terrorism. Initially after 9/11, there was broad-based sympathy for America, as many countries offered assistance, even if only nominal and symbolic, which nevertheless provided tremendous legitimacy to United States efforts to eradicate the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. For the first time in its history, NATO invoked Article 5 of its charter, which mandates alliance members to come to the defense of a member when it is attacked. Although Operation Enduring Freedom was mainly a unilateral United States military effort, NATO countries did play a leading role in the stabilization and reconstruction phase of the mission. Moreover, for a few months after 9/11, AWACS aircraft from NATO actually patrolled United States skies. For the war effort, the United States entered into a number of bilateral agreements with individual countries, most critically, Pakistan whose cooperation was essential. Despite regional rivalries, Russia supported United States intervention by allowing the U.S. military to use bases in the former Soviet Republics in Central Asia over which it still exerted a strong influence. Middle Eastern governments helped out as well.

Although terrorism was on the international agenda prior to 9/11, the issue did not have a strong sense of urgency; however, as Mendelsohn explains, that soon changed. On September 28, 2001, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 1373, which condemned terrorism and called for increased cooperation to combat it. Also, the UN designed a Global Program against Terrorism under the auspices of its Office of Drugs and Crime. The thrust of the program was to criminalize terrorism and its financing as well as encouraging interstate cooperation at the bilateral, regional, and international levels. To monitor and assist in the implementation, the Security Council established the Counterterrorism Committee. In addition, the International Treaty for the Suppression of Terrorism Financing which was initially adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1999, was strengthened.

There was greater cooperation in the realms of intelligence and border security as well. The new nature of war has occasioned a shift in focus from a traditional military invasion to the risk of infiltration of society by individuals. In Europe, the criteria of asylum laws have hardened by broadening the grounds for refusal. Increasingly, countries are now more willing to share information from databases on suspected terrorists and their supporters.

One of the most worrisome aspects of contemporary terrorism is the prospect of a radical group obtaining a weapon of mass destruction. Osama bin Laden has unequivocally stated his intention to acquire WMD to supplement his capabilities. Reportedly, Al Qaeda attempted on several occasions to acquire WMD, including nuclear weapons, albeit without success. What is more, the previous spectacular acts of terrorism that Al Qaeda has orchestrated suggest that the group would have no compunctions over using WMD. Prior to 9/11, there were a number of anti-proliferation treaties, including the Chemical Warfare Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, and the Non-Proliferation Treaty, all of which gained greater salience after the attacks. After seven years of negotiation, the UN established the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Signed in 2005, the treaty seeks to prevent the export of sensitive nuclear technology, most notably, uranium enrichment and plutonium processing technology. Bilateral action was also taken. For example, the 1991 Soviet Nuclear Threat Reduction Act (later renamed the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program), which

seeks to secure loose weapons from the former Soviet Union, was improved upon in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks and led to the creation of the G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. And in May 2003, the Bush administration announced another bilateral agreement – the Proliferation Security Initiative – a multilateral effort to combat the transportation of WMD.

Support, though, was far less forthcoming for the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. The Bush administration's policy of preemption was seen by many in the international community as an overreach of American authority. At first the Bush administration pursued a unilateral approach, but under the encouragement of Secretary of State Colin Powell, decided to internationalize the issue by taking it to the UN. Powell made his case before the UN, but it failed to authorize military action; instead, after long negotiations, it adopted Resolution 1441 which determined that Iraq was in material breach and would face "serious consequences" if it failed to comply fully. Despite these efforts, the Bush administration failed to secure broad-based international support. Although the international community was unable to restrain the United States, it nevertheless denied it legitimacy. The administration lost credibility in the aftermath of the invasion when no evidence was uncovered to substantiate allegations that Saddam Hussein's regime possessed WMD. Nevertheless, there was still a considerable collective effort to prevent the proliferation of WMD.

As Mendelsohn points out, interstate cooperation is not automatic; rather it requires a consensual understanding that the international society is under attack coupled with an articulation of strategies and policies that are consistent with recognized international principles. The international society provides a normative framework that restricts the hegemon's actions. Although it may be tempted to act unilaterally, when it does so against the desires and norms of a large number of other states, cooperation tends to falter, as evidenced by the United States experience in Iraq. Thus Mendelsohn counsels that the hegemon should not act as if it has carte blanche; by doing so, it risks alienating other states and makes cooperation more difficult in other realms of policy, which are increasingly interrelated and interdependent as illustrated in the Iraq war, which diverted resources away from the fight against Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and also intensified the appeal of the global jihadist movement. As a consequence, opposition to the Iraq war prevented

numerous countries from shouldering the burden in Iraq with the United States. Mendelsohn's book is a much-needed study on an understudied topic and will be of most use to a specialized audience, including graduate students, academics, and policymakers.

Notes

1. For example, in the Senate by a vote of 98-0, and in the House of Representatives by a vote of 420-1, Congress passed a joint resolution authorizing President Bush to use "all necessary and appropriate force" for those responsible for the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack.

2. Rubin, Barry, and Judith Colp Rubin (eds.). *Anti-American Terrorism and the Middle East: A Documentary Reader*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 339-343.

3. D. Eggen and J. McGee, "FBI Rushes to Remake Its Mission," *Washington Post*, November 12, 2001, A01.

4. "Introduction" in Kurt M. Campbell and Michele A. Flournoy (eds.), *To Prevail: An American Strategy for the Campaign Against Terrorism*, (The CSIS Press: Washington, D.C., 2001), 5-6.

5. Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 52.

6. Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes, (eds.), *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy*, (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press), ISBN: 0878403477. Originally published in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Fall 2006), 609-614.

7. Barak Mendelsohn, *Combating Jihadism: American Hegemony and Interstate Cooperation in the War on Terrorism*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), ISBN: 978-0226520117. Originally published in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 24 No. 3 (2012), 522-524.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

Throughout history, various political, social, and technological factors have influenced the development of conflict, warfare, and strategy. Recent trends suggest that we could be on the cusp of a new type of terrorism and insurgency, which is being driven mainly by technology. A unique innovation we see today is the emergence of human networks and how they influence contemporary conflicts.

One important social trend is a change in how communities are formed. Today, many people are shifting allegiances from nations to causes. New technology, including cell phones and the Internet, make networking across national boundaries easier and cheaper than in the past. This development has resulted in a potentially larger pool of followers from which extremist and terrorist movements can recruit. Several extremist subcultures feel existentially threatened by the historical process of globalization and are willing to fight against governments and parties believed to be its agents. The encroaching process of globalization will undoubtedly generate opposition from those who feel threatened with a loss of identity and culture. Here the Internet has been important because it allows disparate groups to spread their message and exchange ideas. The rise of the new media has ushered in a new era of communications which allows much greater and broader participation from users, not only in the spheres of social networking, but terrorism and insurgency as well.

The main characteristic of this new face of terrorism is the increasing power and capabilities of smaller and smaller entities. Although the groups that espouse certain causes may be small and seemingly inconsequential, nevertheless, they can potentially generate quite a bit of destructive power. As new technology continues to spread along with the capabilities of developing weapons of mass destruction, just a few angry people now have the potential to cause unprecedented mayhem.

This new organizational paradigm presents numerous challenges to counterterrorism agencies insofar as traditional hierarchies have a difficult time fighting networks. Furthermore, contemporary terrorists often operate in the "cracks and gray areas of society, striking where lines of authority crisscross." As a result, it is not always clear which agencies should take responsibility in countering a particular terrorist threat insofar as it can cross areas of responsibilities of different agencies. Finally, in a federal system such as the United States, terrorists can traverse several jurisdictional boundaries, thus confusing who has primary authority in handling such cases.[1]

Guerilla-style conflicts will predominate in the current century. Over the past few decades, the occurrence of state-to-state conflicts has been steadily declining; however, a great deal of conflict persists within states. Furthermore, population growth, although subsiding, still makes for a crowded world in which grievances and instability can flourish. According to the noted military historian Martin van Creveld, "attempts by post-1945 armed forces to suppress guerillas and terrorists have constituted a long, almost unbroken record of failure – a record that, as events in contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan testify, continue to the present day."[2] If the track record of guerillas has been so successful, the appropriate question might then be: How and why do insurgencies emerge and attain critical mass?

Weak governance provides fertile ground for insurgencies to take hold. Usually, the government can respond to unlawfulness swiftly and effectively, but when the state is substantially weakened and cannot provide adequate protection to its population, insurgents can assert an alternative authority. At first, insurgents are small in number, but endeavor to present themselves as large and significant by committing numerous attacks. Through terrorism, the insurgents demonstrate that the government does not have a monopoly on force, thus intimidating part of the population into passivity. When insurgents first gain control of an area, a majority of people will remain spectators and try to ascertain which side is winning the conflict. In such a situation, although initially not favorably disposed to the insurgents, members of the population may comply with them in order to protect themselves and their families. To be sure, ideological indoctrination will win over some segments of the populations, but the rest are kept in line through intimidation. Thus it is imperative that

a counterinsurgency strategy consider the individual's plight and motivation for self-preservation.[3]

Andrew Mack argued that the reason why big nations lose small guerilla wars is due to differentials in the political will to fight that are rooted in different perceptions of the stakes at hand. As Carl von Clausewitz noted, war is a contest of wills, and in small wars, there is usually a disparity in this regard. Whereas the great power does not feel existentially threatened by the insurgents, the latter often sees the struggle as a matter of survival. Moreover, insurgents tend to take a long view of history, while counterinsurgents tend to take a short view, thus the former can often outlast the latter.[4] Thus superior strength of commitment can compensate for military inferiority.[5]

Essentially, counterinsurgency efforts can be conceptualized as a continuum encompassing two disparate approaches. On the one end – the direct approach – is the annihilation of rebel forces. However, a strategy based on attrition can be problematical in counterinsurgency insofar as it runs the risk of producing collateral damage and by doing so, antagonizing the population. Furthermore, with the ubiquity and pervasiveness of the contemporary media, there is much greater transparency today than in the past. Abuses can quickly be broadcasted around the world. On the other end of counterinsurgency – the indirect approach – consists of winning the loyalty of the people. The indirect approach seeks to divide the insurgency from the people. Although this approach can take a long time and requires considerable patience, in the long term it is usually more effective.[6] A proven effective method for undermining an insurgency is to split the rank and file away from the leadership through calculated reforms that address the grievances of the people.[7]

Armed intervention should be a last resort because it risks setting in motion a chain of events that can lead to a protracted insurgency. Although the U.S. military is formidable, in the main, it is still designed primarily to fight conventional wars. Yet, the security challenges facing America in this century will require troops that have capacity in nation building and peacekeeping. In order to avoid what David Kilcullen referred to as the "accidental guerilla syndrome," U.S. policy makers should resist the urge intervene in conflicts around the world. When intervention is necessary, a full-spectrum strategy should be implemented that includes separating the insurgents from the people, winning local

allies, connecting the population to the government, and building local governmental capacity. To be effective over the long haul, U.S. military and policy makers need to forge partnerships with local government administrators, civil society leaders, and local security forces. A comprehensive approach should focus on the entire region and seek to disrupt terrorist infrastructures in neighboring countries, shut down insurgent havens, and controls borders.[8]

Gaining the trust of the affected communities is vitally important for several reasons, not the least of which is that they can provide intelligence, which is critical in a counterinsurgency program. In fact, information gathered from informants has been the most important factor leading to the arrest of terrorists in the United States.[9] Understanding the radicalization process can give investigators clues as to who might be susceptible to the blandishments of terrorist movements.[10] By cooperating with affected communities, law enforcement authorities can gain insight as to who could be prone to becoming a terrorist.

Disseminating counter narratives in the affected community could quell the tensions that give rise to political violence. One innovative initiative underway to counter online extremism is a software program that would allow the U.S. military to secretly manipulate social media sites by using fake online identities. In March 2012, it was announced that a California company was awarded a contract by the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) to develop an "online persona management service" that would enable one U.S. serviceman to control up to ten identities based around the world. The operators would seek to influence Internet discussions and spread pro-American propaganda.[11]

To be sure, government authorities should deal resolutely with terrorists who commit serious crimes. Blanket repression against extremist and dissident subcultures that hold unpopular beliefs, though, should be avoided. Although state repression can be effective, especially if the targeted group or community has not established deep roots, it can also backfire. Arguably, the 1992 Ruby Ridge[12] and 1993 Waco fiascos were counterproductive. In particular, the siege of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, which resulted in the death of 76 persons, was the event that enraged Timothy McVeigh and set him on his course of action, which culminated in the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal building in Oklahoma City – the most horrific act of domestic

terrorism prior to 9/11. The resentment resulting from the way in which the government handled these two events did much to fuel the Militia movement in the mid-1990s.[13]

Numerous trends are leading to the miniaturization of terrorism, warfare, and conflict around the world. Geopolitical factors are changing the nature of terrorism. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and several communist bloc states were covert supporters of terrorism. Initially after the Cold War, terrorism went into steep decline in large part because several leading terrorist groups lost material support from communist states. The collapse of the Soviet Union drastically changed the security environment within which terrorists operate. The rise of the unipolar era in which one superpower predominates, has made the world a less congenial place for large, clandestine terrorist groups. In an era of U.S.-dominated globalization, states have more to gain by accommodation with the West rather than confrontation. This development works against the viability of large terrorist organizations; they are more vulnerable to disruption because governments are coordinating their counterterrorism efforts with the United States. And for obvious reasons, this trend accelerated after 9/11.

Technology is has also influenced the development of terrorism. On the one hand, new surveillance technology has enabled governments to better monitor dissident groups and potential terrorists. On the other hand, the Internet allows like-minded activists to operate on their own initiative without the direction of a formal organization. Enhanced communication capabilities allow for new flexible models of organization that eschew traditional leadership structures and enable collaboration by disparate parties that are geographically dispersed. Furthermore, the rise of the so-called “new media” has led to a diffusion so-called soft power around that world that has increased access to groups and individuals who have traditionally not had much influence in the marketplace of ideas.

Greater interconnectedness makes the infrastructure more vulnerable to disruption as a perturbation could precipitate a cascading effect throughout the system. The availability of more lethal weapons, and dual use technology could lead to deadlier attacks. Finally, although the historical process of globalization has improved the life opportunities of many people, it can be highly disruptive as it upturns relations among citizens, cultures, economies, societies, and governments.

The events of 9/11 occasioned a new paradigm that allows for the increased use of U.S. military power to confront international terrorism. Traditionally, American strategic culture views war as a last resort, but once employed, it should be waged with maximum force in order to be won quickly. One serious obstacle when targeting terrorists is that they usually lack a center of gravity. State sponsors and those that harbor terrorists could be targeted, but the new terrorist networks that are decentralized are difficult to target. To meet the security challenges posed by contemporary terrorists and insurgents, the U.S. Government must develop a broad coalition that includes allied governments, the public, and affected communities. In an increasingly tight fiscal environment, a multilateral effort that involves numerous parties is necessary in order to maintain a counterterrorism campaign that could last decades.

Notes

1. John Arquilla, David Ronfeldt and Michele Zanini, "Networks, Netwar, and Information-Age Terrorism," in Ian Lessler, et al. *Countering the New Terrorism*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1999), 53-55.

2. Martin van Creveld, *The Changing Face of War: Lesson of Combat, from the Marne to Iraq*, (New York: Ballantine Books, 2006), 219.

3. Raymond Millen, "The Hobbesian Notion of Self-Preservation Concerning Human Behavior during an Insurgency," *Paramters*, (Winter 2006-07), 4-13.

4. Thomas Rid and Marc Hecker, (*War 2.0: Irregular Warfare in the Information Age*. Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger Security International, 2009), 49.

5. Andrew Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict," *World Politics* 27, no. 2 (1975), 175-200 in Jeffrey Record, *Beating Goliath: Why Insurgencies Win*, (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, Inc., 2007), 1-9. For example, in 1975, the government in Hanoi announced that Communist forces during the "American period" of the Vietnam War had sustained 1.1 million dead and also an estimated two million civilian dead. However, political will in and of itself is not a sufficient condition to prevail. For example, Adolf Hitler evinced strong political will but nevertheless lost the Second World War.

6. John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons*

from Malaya and Vietnam, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 26-28.

7. Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency & Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare*, (Dulles, VA: Brassey's, Inc., 1990), 138.

8. David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

9. A study by Chris Hewitt found that the use of informants was the single most important factor leading to the capture of terrorists. Christopher Hewitt, *Understanding Terrorism in America: From the Klan to Al Qaeda*, (London: Routledge, 2003), 89-90.

10. For an overview of the research on Islamic radicalization, see Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Laura Grossman, *Homegrown Terrorists in the U.S. and U.K.*, (Washington, D.C.: FDD Press, 2009).

11. "US spy operation that manipulates social media," *The Guardian*, 17 March 2011, On-line, Internet, available from http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2011/mar/17/us-spy-operation-social-networks.

12. The Ruby Ridge incident occurred in 1992 when federal law enforcement officers ambushed the home of Randy Weaver, a White separatist living in the desolate hills of Idaho. Weaver's young son and wife as well as one Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) agent were killed in what many observers believed was a badly botched operation by the federal government. For more on the siege at Ruby Ridge, see Jess Walter, *Every Knee Shall Bow: The Truth and Tragedy of Ruby Ridge and the Randy Weaver Family*, (New York: Regan Books, 1995).

13. The Militia, or Patriot movement, gained much attention in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing. In the 1990s, the main impetus for the militia movement was gun control laws, such as the Brady bill, which were perceived to threaten the Second Amendment. In October 1992, a meeting in Estes Park, Colorado that was convoked by a Christian Identity minister, Pete Peters who exhorted activists to organize at the local level. According to some accounts, this event laid the groundwork for the contemporary militia movement by urging right wing activists to organize militias at their local levels. Soon after, the Militia of Montana and the Michigan Militia were formed. Amazingly the idea caught on in large part due to such technology such as facsimile machines and the Internet. It was not long before militia-style organizations began appearing around the nation. For more on the militia movement, see Kenneth S. Stern, *A Force upon the Plain: The American Militia Movement and the Politics of Hate*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), See also David A. Niewert, *In God's Country: The Patriot Movement in the Pacific Northwest*, (Pullman, WA: Washington State University, 1999).

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