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AMERICA'S ENDLESS WAR ON TERRORISM

BY

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America's Endless War on Terrorism

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ABSTRACT

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On 11 September 2001, 19 suicidal terrorists killed over 3000 innocent men, women, and children in the worst attack ever on American soil. For centuries, the weak have used terror in an attempt to solve political, economic and social problems. Religious fanaticism, ethnic-nationalism, political and revolutionary ideologies and greed variously motivate the endless nature of terrorism. Just as the weapons and the tactics to counter terrorism have evolved over the centuries, terrorism itself has evolved. From the use of short swords hidden under their clothing to the threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction, the terrorists have matched counter-terrorism tactics blow-by-blow. Individual terrorist groups, like belligerent armies, can be and have been defeated. Yet, terrorism, like war, will remain an unpleasant fact of global affairs. The nature of terrorism, the fact that the terrorist evolves, and the fact that terrorism produces entangling effects will prevent the U.S. from eliminating terrorism. Nevertheless, the risk to Americans being victims of terrorism's violence however can be contained and managed by applying defensive measures to reduce target vulnerability and by attacking the causes of terrorism.

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AMERICA'S ENDLESS WAR ON TERRORISM

Clausewitz defines war as: "an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will. Force is the means of war; to impose our will on the enemy is the object."¹ War is generally conducted by means of a series of duels between the opponents' armies, governments, and will of the people to obtain a political objective. These "duels" are specific actions and counteractions carried out as each side attempts to impose its will on the other.² Over the past two decades, America has increasingly become involved in duels with terrorists —particularly with the al Qaeda network headed by Osama bin Laden.

As early as 1992, al Qaeda issued warnings to the U.S. that U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Somalia would be attacked. In October 1993, al Qaeda-trained Somalis battled U.S. forces in Mogadishu, killing 19 Americans. The U.S. pulled its troops out of Somalia shortly after this attack. In addition, in 1993, terrorists linked to al Qaeda bombed the World Trade Center, killing six and injuring 1000, in a failed attempt to topple one of the towers onto the other. The U.S. tracked down these perpetrators, and the U.S. judicial system subsequently sentenced them to long prison terms. In 1998, al Qaeda-backed terrorists bombed U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, killing 257 and injuring 5000. In retaliation, the U.S. launched 79 cruise missiles at suspected al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan and a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan. After a failed bombing of the destroyer USS Sullivan, in 2000, al Qaeda terrorists bombed the USS Cole in Yemen killing 17 sailors.³ Before the U.S. could capture those responsible for the USS Cole bombing, al Qaeda struck again.

On 11 September 2001, 19 suicidal terrorists killed over 3000 innocent men, women, and children in the worst attack ever on American soil. The responsible terrorists were Muslim extremists and members of the al Qaeda terrorist network headed by Osama bin Laden. Nine days after the attack the President of the U.S. declared before a joint session of Congress: "Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated."⁴ This unprovoked attack on the American people set in motion a reaction that will involve the U.S. in a war that will likely last for years

The U.S. has thus entered the current war against terrorism with a clearly defined objective. The war will apparently be waged in two phases: First, the terrorist network al Qaeda and its supporting Taliban government will be engaged and destroyed. Next, other terrorist groups with global reach will be identified and similarly rendered inoperative. During the first phase, U.S. and coalition forces will apply all four elements of national power (military, economic, diplomatic

and information) against the armed forces of the Taliban and al Qaeda, their supporting Taliban government, and the will of Afghan people and Islamic world to attain the following political objective (end state):

...the U.S. of America makes the following demands on the Taliban: Deliver to U.S. authorities all the leaders of al Qaeda who hide in your land. Release all foreign nationals, including American citizens, you have unjustly imprisoned. Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country. Close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, and hand over every terrorist, and every person in their support structure, to appropriate authorities. Give the U.S. full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating. These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act...hand over the terrorists...or they will share in their fate.⁵

During follow-on phases, the U.S. will identify other terrorist groups with global reach and destroy them. However, this follow-on phase may well lead the U.S. into an endless series of operations against terrorist groups.

The nature of terrorism, the fact that the terrorist evolves, and the fact that terrorism produces entangling effects will prevent the U.S. from eliminating terrorism. Nevertheless, the risk to Americans being victims of terrorism's violence however can be contained and managed by applying defensive measures to reduce target vulnerability and by attacking the causes of terrorism. This will require the U.S. to fight two separate types of war. First, it will require a series of wars waged to eliminate identified terrorist groups and the states that support them. Second, it must wage a defensive war to reduce both Americans' vulnerability to tactics used by terrorist and the causes of terrorism. The world will judge this nation, founded on the principles of liberty, justice, and equality by how it contains and manages this threat. "The lesson for civilized nations is that we must respond to the terrorist threat within the rule of law, lest we become unwitting accomplices in the terrorist's scheme to undermine civilized society".⁶

THE HISTORY OF AMERICA'S WAR ON TERRORISM

Although not universally accepted, since 1983 the Department of State has defined "terrorism as premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience".⁷ While not terrorism by the current definition, the similarities between the first U.S. encounter combating tactics used by contemporary international terrorists and dealing with the current terrorist threat can best be described by the term "déjà vu".

The tactics used by terrorists are not a new phenomenon. America's first encounter with international terrorist's tactics started shortly after she won her independence from Britain. The

Barbary states (Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli) attacked American shipping, taking American citizens hostage and holding both the ships and citizens for ransom. These events spurred the first debates on how to respond to this tactic. Thomas Jefferson argued for a military response, even though the U.S. had no a navy. He was sure that "half a dozen frigates would destroy their commerce...by constant cruising and cutting them to pieces piecemeal."⁸ John Adams, on the other hand, felt it would be cheaper to pay tribute than build a navy, since the tribute would serve the same purpose. Congress agreed with Adams and \$80,000 was set aside to pay tribute. Over the next ten years, the U.S. ended up paying the Barbary states \$2 million as ships and hostages continued to be seized. While the Barbary states did not use the hostage taking for political ends, the hostage taking did cause political problems in the U.S.

The early American hostages, held by the Barbary states, and their families appealed to the American public and government for their release. Thomas Jefferson was deeply affected by the plight of the hostages of the Barbary states. At one point, Jefferson used a very familiar strategy, still used by governments today. In 1787, he gave the Barbary states the impression that the U.S. would not make concessions in hopes that the Barbary states would lower their ransom demands. This "wait'em out"⁹ policy led to the Barbary states taking more hostages and the American public blaming Jefferson for their prolonged captivity as the Barbary states increased the ransom demands for the hostages' release.¹⁰

The U.S. made the first arms-for-hostages' deal in 1795, to secure the release of hostages and to secure peace. The U.S. entered into a peace treaty with the dey (governor) of Algiers, turning over to Algiers almost a million dollars in naval arms, frigates, and cash. Although the payments did result in the release of 100 hostages held by Algiers, other Barbary states took even more hostages. The payments did not prevent Algiers from continuing the practice of taking hostages in future years.

The U.S. also found it difficult to gain and maintain international cooperation in dealing with the Barbary terrorism threat.¹¹ U.S. attempts to gain international support in this first war against international terrorism yielded moral support from the European countries, but not much else. The comparatively weak pirate states would have been no match for the combined powers of Europe, also victimized by the pirates. The European powers allowed the Barbary pirates to operate in a sense as unofficial surrogate warriors in Europe's ongoing economic war: "The very advantages gained by one country from the depredations on the commerce of another would have made co-operation... difficult."¹² Diplomacy backed by naval squadrons, blockading the coast and engaging in bitter gunboat actions, brought the rulers of the Barbary states to terms.

Another American experience with terrorism occurred in 1979. The seizure of American embassy personnel in Tehran, Iran deeply affected President Jimmy Carter. His handling of the Tehran embassy hostage situation, including a failed rescue attempt, turned American public opinion against him and may have been the major factor in his failure to be re-elected. The hostages were released after the U.S. agreed to return the Shah's assets, cancel U.S. claims against Iran, guarantee that the U.S. would not intervene in Iranian affairs, and free all Iranian financial assets.¹³ These concessions may have secured the release of the embassy hostages but may have opened the door to further terrorist activity.

During the 1980's, the Iranian backed Hizballah took 17 Americans hostage in Lebanon. The number held at any one time changed, as some hostages were released and others killed. In the summer of 1985, the Reagan administration devised a plan to trade arms to Iran to gain political influence in the region. Profits from weapons sales would be used to support the Contras (U.S. backed freedom fighters) in Nicaragua and to secure the release of the core group of seven hostages being held in Lebanon. "After all the maneuvers, all the secret deals, and all the public revelations and anguish over the trading of arms for hostages, the final tally was three Americans freed and six more taken captive."¹⁴

The U.S. current war on terrorism is meeting lack of cooperation for similar reasons. The war against the Taliban and al Qaeda has the general support of most of the world governments, but widening the war on terrorism has met with resistance from Arab states. This group is concerned that expanding the war "could affect groups opposing Israel and backing Palestinians that some nationals consider legitimate national liberation movements."¹⁵

ENDLESS NATURE OF TERRORISM

One Druze is walking down the road with grenades, machine guns, and daggers weighing him down from head to foot. He passes a fellow Druze who inquires why his friend is carrying so many weapons. The first Druze replies that he is going to Abdullah's house to kill all the people there because they killed his ancestors one hundred year ago. The second Druze looks at his friend in amazement and exclaims, "One hundred years ago?!! What's the rush?"¹⁶

The history of conflict is as long as history itself and terrorism in one form or another is often a tactic in these conflicts. For as long as there have been the "strong", there have been the "weak" that used terrorism as a tactic to force social change or simply to exact revenge for injustice or perceived injustice. One of the earliest recorded wars against terrorist tactics can be traced back to biblical times: The Romans fought the first war on terrorism in the first century. Jewish Zealots and Sicariis used assassinations and other forms of violence as a means to start

a revolutionary uprising against Roman rule in Palestine. The violence expanded on both sides until open warfare broke out. The conflict ended at Masada when 900 Jewish Zealots committed suicide rather than surrender.¹⁷ Many of today's conflicts can be traced back to events that occurred hundreds or even thousands of years ago. Much of today's terrorism linked to Islamic fundamentalism dates to the seventh century split between the Shiite and Sunni sects. Likewise, ethnic-religious violence in Northern Ireland has its origins in the religious wars of the same century.¹⁸ The 1991 civil war between Croats and Serbs originated in the fourteenth century. Moreover, it was further exacerbated by atrocities committed by Croats against Serbs during World War II, increasing the hatred between the two groups. After Serbs ambushed him, a Croatian National Guardsman expressed his feelings very bluntly: "Next time, I will wipe out every Serb living in these villages. I want revenge."¹⁹

LEGITIMACY AND TERRORISM

Defining a terrorist is like defining beauty; it resides in the eye of the beholder. Charles Yost, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, explained this bluntly in a 1972 interview with the Christian Science Monitor: "The fact is, of course, that there is a vast amount of hypocrisy on the subject of political terrorism. We all righteously condemn it—except where we ourselves or friends of ours are engaging in it. Then we ignore it or gloss over it, or attach to it tags like 'liberation' or 'defense of the free world' or 'national honor' to make it seem like something other than what it is."²⁰ The "winner" determines which acts are justified and legitimate. The justification used, not only by terrorists but also by nations, for committing acts that they would not commit under normal conditions repeatedly comes down to the action (or rationalization that); the ends justify the means.

Under normal circumstances, bombing a primarily civilian target as reappraisal for an attack on a primarily military target would not be just. Yet, four months after the Japanese bombed the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, the U.S. retaliated against Japan by bombing Tokyo. The sixteen-plane raid, lead by Colonel James Doolittle, had little direct military significance other than to boost the morale of the American people,²¹ who celebrated the Doolittle Raid as the first great moral victory against the evil Japanese Empire. In Clausewitzian terms, the raid strengthened the will of the American people.

The U.S. justified the strategy of annihilation of Japan as a means of forcing Japan to surrender without an invasion of Japan proper, thereby saving hundreds of thousands of military casualties. This occurred "...at the very time when General Spaatz in Europe was denying there had been U.S. Army Air Forces (AAF) terror bombing of Dresden, the AAF were opening

against Japan a terroristic city-bombing campaign which was to surpass even what the Royal Air Force had done.”²² The American aerial campaign killed hundreds of thousands of Japanese civilians and created eight-and-a-half million refugees. The 9 March 1945 fire bombing of Tokyo alone killed 83,793 and injured 40,918, destroying a quarter of the buildings and leaving one million homeless.²³ Nations officially at war are not the only parties that justify extreme measures to ensure their ways of life. Non-state actors use the same strategies.

Campaigns of terrorism have raged in Palestine since the end of World War I—Jew against Arab, Arab against Jew, and both Arab and Jew against outsiders. In an effort to drive the British out of Palestine, numerous Jewish ethnic-nationalism militant groups targeted the British with terror campaigns. On 22 July 1946, six men dressed as Arabs placed several milk churns filled with TNT in Jerusalem’s King David Hotel, the billet of British officers. The bomb exploded at 12:37 P.M. killing 91, including Britons, Arabs, and Jews. The group Irgun Zvai Leumi, under the command of Menachem Begin, planned and executed this act. All sides—including many Jews, such as David Ben-Gurion, the first prime minister of Israel—called Irgun “the enemy of the Jewish people” and condemned this act.²⁴ Nevertheless, the Irgun group survived and Begin survived to become the Israeli Prime Minister.

The bombing of the King David Hotel and the strategy of annihilation of Japan are similar in that both actions produced innocent civilian victims. The paradox between the moralistic claims of the perpetrators and disregard for victims is resolved in two ways: “either by reinterpreting the qualities of the victim, making him or her conform to the overriding world view, or by denial of responsibility because of some other agency’s inaction.”²⁵ The moral restraint the U.S. showed in the bombing campaign in Europe became irrelevant in the Pacific. American resentment toward the Japanese was harsher than any animosity toward Germany. The bitterness of Pearl Harbor, the already high American casualties, and suicide attacks, and lesser ethnic ties to Orientals than Germans most likely contributed to the casual cruelty toward Japan.²⁶ Menachem Begin eventually acknowledged the loss of life in the King David Hotel bombing: “...the toll of lives was terrible.”²⁷ However, Begin assigns the blame for the loss of life on the British for not evacuating the hotel in response to warnings, not on Irgun group for placing the bomb. Revulsion toward wanton violence is easily come by. Acceptance of responsibility for such violence is not easily realized.

ROOTS OF TERRORISM

The basic motivations for terrorism are many and can be as simple greed or as complex as religious and ethnic conflicts that date back hundreds or even thousands of years. Criminal and

drug-related terrorism are most comprehensible. The motivations for the criminal terrorist and "narco-terrorist" are greed and power, so they are "self-centered". In order for the money and power to be of use, they must live to enjoy the rewards. Terrorists motivated by ethnic-nationalism and political-idealism are "cause-centered"; they view their acts as for the greater good of the cause, making them much harder to deal with. It is very difficult to distinguish the terrorist motivated by ethnic-nationalism or political-idealism from the freedom fighter. The only difference between the ethnic-nationalist and the political-idealist terrorist and the freedom fighter is legitimacy, and legitimacy is determined by which side you are on. The most dangerous and by far the most difficult terrorist to deal with is the religious terrorist who is "divine-authority centered". Such zealots believe they have moral justification to commit any act by any means necessary to fulfill the will of God.

Criminal and Narco-Terrorist

The motivation for criminals and "narco-terrorists" is the personal reward of money, power and in some case revenge. Huge sums of money —and the power that money brings with it— can motivate criminals to commit acts of that seem to rival other types of terrorism in their disregard for human life. "It has been estimated that between 1982 and 1990, the Colombian drug cartels killed over 1000 public officials."²⁸ Although it may appear that there is no limit to their violence, there are limiting factors; the requirement of self-preservation of the criminal and crime being his business, preservation of the business. This requirement of self-preservation and profitability, of the business, places constraints on acts in which he are willing to perpetrate.

Death is an occupational hazard that the criminal accepts; but the higher the risk of death, the less motivated the criminal. For obvious reasons, the criminal is not willing to commit an act that guarantees his death no matter how great the personal rewards. Cornered, the narco-terrorist or criminal may engage in a dramatic shoot-out with authorities that may end in their death. However, since the criminal and narco-terrorist are motivated by greed and power, there is no benefit in dying. In fact, dying in the act of the crime defeats the purpose of the crime.

Where as there are criminal terrorists who commit acts of terror for the sake of committing these acts, the general rule is that the acts of violence are just business. Acts of terror or extreme violence may serve to protect the business, as in the case of Colombian drug cartels killing public officials. Alternatively, the acts of terror may be his business, as with the Barbary states holding hostages for ransom. Taking hostages and holding them for ransom has become a popular method of financing insurgency and other activities through out the world. Acts of terror designed to protect the business are normally directed at the threatening parties, not at

the public. Terrorists who are in the business of taking hostages and holding them for ransom are not going to stay in business very long if they always return dead hostages.

Ethnic-Nationalism and Political-Idealism

The motivation of the ethnic-nationalist or political-idealist terrorist diminishes the requirement for self-preservation and eliminates the profit motive. The "cause" is the motivation for the ethnic-nationalist or political-idealist terrorist. While the narco-terrorist or criminal must live to benefit from their acts of terror, the ethnic-nationalist and political-idealist does not have the same requirement of self-preservation. Although the requirement to live has diminished, just as the American soldier is willing to give his life for his country, the purely ethnic-nationalist and political-idealist is willing to die while participating in high-risk operations. Suicide however, is rarely included as part of the original plan.

During Texas' War of Independence from Mexico in the winter of 1835-1836, a force of about 189 men under the command of Colonel Travis held off a Mexican force of 4000. Colonel Travis sent pleas for help, declaring, "I shall never surrender or retreat."²⁹ The siege lasted 13 days; Colonel Travis made good on his promise to never surrender or retreat. Only four people survived the battle: the wife of an officer, her baby and the baby's nurse, and Colonel Travis' slave Joe.³⁰ The Texans did not enter the Alamo to commit suicide for the "cause", but they were willing to fight to the last man for the "cause".

To underestimate the resolve of the ethnic-nationalist and political-idealist would be a mistake, just as General Santa Anna underestimated the resolve of those 189 Texans. The trend in ethnic-nationalist and political-idealist attacks reflects the fact that they seldom take huge risks with their lives. They prefer to attack soft targets with weapons that provide some stand off distance. Bombing public places by means of timers or remote detonating devices, assassinations, and hijacking or kidnapping persons that travel with little or no protection are favorite tactics. Humanitarian aid activities, missionaries and journalist are vulnerable to such tactics.³¹ These preferred tactics reflect the desire for self-preservation, but in no way diminishes their resolve. Cornered, they may fight to the death for their cause or continue the fight even after capture.

Although not as dramatic as the Texans at the Alamo, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the European political-idealist Baader-Meinhof group became involved in a 'war' against 'capitalism and imperialism'. The group was responsible for kidnapping and murdering business leaders as well as several bombings and arson attacks against Western military installations in Europe. After the capture of Baader and Meinhof, while they were serving life prison terms, they and

other members of the group continued their fight through accusations of torture and a hunger strike, eventually committing suicide.³² The ethnic-nationalist and political-idealist use the hunger strike and other forms of suicide to advance the cause, but not for personal reward.

Religious Terrorism

"Religious conflicts are among the oldest and bloodiest forms of violence. Before there were wars fought over political ideologies or nationalism, there was religious violence."³³ Terrorism has often been a weapon in these wars. Religious beliefs can be so strong that there is no room for compromise. Wars and conflicts have arisen because one religious group attempted to spread their "true" religion requiring other religious groups to defend their "true" religion. Religion is not the cause of these conflicts, but religion can both allow and support the conflict.³⁴ Religious terrorism has two characteristics that make it particularly dangerous.³⁵

The first characteristic is the ability and need to morally justify what would normally be immoral acts. "Believing that God is on one's side is a powerful incentive to action."³⁶ Secular terrorists as Colombian drug cartels, Baader-Meinhof, and Begin and his Irgun group, justify their acts using the concept that the "ends justify the means". The religious terrorist answers to a higher order, believes that divine authority, which no human has a right to alter, sanctify both the ends and means.³⁷

The religious terrorist does not have to look very hard to find accounts of divine intervention in national and international affairs. Religious writings are powerful tools used by religious terrorists to justify their acts both to themselves and most importantly, to their followers. These writings contain more than lists of happenings and, like other historical writings, interpret data in light of national and religious convictions. Events did not just happen. Battles were not won through superiority of armaments or numbers, but because the deity was personally involved.³⁸ An example of a religious writing where divine authority sanctifies both the end and the means is in the Old Testament of the Bible.

God commanded Moses to return to Egypt and to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and into the promised land of Canaan. Moses appealed to the Pharaoh to release the Israelites. Despite a series of ten worsening plagues sent by the Lord, which included the Nile turning to blood, invasions of locusts and flies, and an epidemic of boils, the Pharaoh refused to release the Hebrew slaves. Finally, the Lord declared that at midnight the first born of every family and every animal in Egypt would die. As God had declared, the first born in every Egyptian household, including the first born of the Pharaoh died. According to the story, it is very clear

that Moses was "called" to speak for the deity and to lead the "chosen people" to the "promised land". The deity was personally responsible for sending ten worsening plagues.

The faithful determine whether ancient religious writing is historic fact, partial historic fact filled in with myths and legends, or fiction. The story of Moses could be interrupted as an illustration of the faithful triumphing over the unfaithful or taken literally. Taken literally the story proves the deity not only condones, but in extreme cases, may personally participate in acts of extreme violence. The religious terrorist can easily twist such stories to justify his own acts of terrorism. Many clerics describe their decision to turn to the Lord's work as a more than a mere decision but as a "calling". Religious terrorists have described the same "calling" by the deity.

This "calling" and use of divine authority, sometimes appearing in dreams or visions, is evident from sound bites taken from transcripts of videotaped conversations between Osama bin Laden and an unidentified Shaykh after the 11 September 2001 bombing of the World Trade Center and Pentagon. The Shaykh confirms that the bombing was by divine authority and that bin Laden was the chosen one on numerous occasions:

You have given us weapons, you have given us hope and we thank Allah for you. ...The elderly...everybody praises what you did, the great action you did, which was first and foremost by the grace of Allah. This is the guidance of Allah and the blessed fruit of jihad. ...Fight them, Allah will torture them, with your hands, he will torture them. He will deceive them and he will give you victory. Allah will forgive the believers, he is knowledgeable about everything." ...No doubt, it is a clear victory. Allah has bestowed on us...honor on us...and he will give us blessing and more victory during this holy month of Ramadan. And this is what everyone is hoping for. Thank Allah America came out of its caves. We hit her the first hit and the next one will hit her with the hands of the believers, the good believers, the strong believers. By Allah, it is a great work. Allah prepares for you a great reward for this work.³⁹

Osama bin Laden appears to claim divine authority in saying "I was ordered to fight the people until they say there is no god but Allah, and his prophet Muhammad. ...Those young men said in deeds, in New York and Washington, speeches that overshadowed all other speeches made everywhere else in the world. This event made people think (about true Islam) which benefited Islam greatly."⁴⁰ To justify the killing of the large number of innocent people bin Laden asks: "What is the stand of the Mosques there (in Saudi Arabia)?"⁴¹ The Shaykh replies: "He ('Ulwān) said this was jihad and those people were not innocent people. He swore to Allah."⁴² Bin Laden and the Shaykh both recount stories of dreams that could be interpreted to confirm that the bombing was not the responsibility of bin Laden, but the that idea was revealed to many by a deity.

The second characteristic of religious terrorism is "martyrdom". Personal reward and advancement of a cause motivate the martyr. Unlike the criminal who must live to enjoy the personal rewards of his action, only death brings the martyr's personal reward. The martyr believes that the deity guarantees his personal reward and the reward is everlasting. Like the ethnic-nationalist or political-idealist, the martyr is convinced that his cause is just. The martyr not only believes that his cause is just, but has divine authority to use whatever means necessary to further the cause. Combining these powerful motivations produces a monster released onto society.

Islam does not condone suicide. It was not considered suicide when on 9 April 1985, San'ah Muheidli, a 17 year-old girl, exploded a car bomb amongst an Israeli convey killing two, wounding two, and killing herself. Rather, she was chosen for martyrdom. One does not chose to become a martyr as one chooses to commit suicide. Rather Allah chooses one for martyrdom because of "special merit". Members of groups such as Hamas indicate their willingness to become martyrs but Allah's representatives on earth based on merit make the choice.⁴³

Unlike the criminal, soldier, ethnic-nationalist and political-idealist that accept death as an occupational hazard, the martyr goes to his death with the *bassamat al-farah*, the "smile of joy".⁴⁴ "Martyrdom, because of its promise of merit hereafter, is an act of joy, symbolized by this smile."⁴⁵ San'ah Muheidli before becoming a martyr completed her required will expressing her joy "...be merry, to let your joy explode as if it were my wedding day."⁴⁶

"What looks like a charred, smoldering hole in the ground is truly a memorial to heroism. ...They fought back... and they sacrificed themselves for others."⁴⁷ This quote could as easily been used by Osama bin Laden to describe the martyrdom of the four men that hijacked United Flight 93 as it was used by Governor Tom Ridge to describe the heroism of the passengers of the doomed flight. Once the four hijackers of Flight 93 killed the flight crew, their martyrdom was unstoppable. The passengers struggled with the hijackers and apparently prevented the airplane from reaching its intended target. From flight recorder tapes, experts were unable to determine exactly what happened but the confrontation led to Flight 93 crashing killing all 45 passengers and crew. The heroism of the passengers may have saved hundreds lives at the intended target, but they did not prevent the terrorist attack.⁴⁸ Only space and time has relegated Flight 93 to an almost secondary event of 11 September. The hijacking of Flight 93, taken independently, with the intent of crashing it into an open field killing 45, would have been a major terrorist incident. The willingness with which these terrorist except death, make individual terrorist incidents almost impossible to stop without some loss of life once they are set in motion.

The roots of terrorism range from simple greed to a complex mixture of conflicting ethnic, political, and religious beliefs made even more complicated by historic conflict. The acts terrorist are willing to commit are governed by two factors —his motivation, and how he justifies the “means to the ends”. The stronger the terrorist’s motivation and justification, the more dangerous the terrorist will become. The danger increases from the criminal and narco-terrorist motivated by greed alone to the ethnic-nationalist and political-idealist that try to legitimize themselves as “freedom fighters” who believe that the “ends justify the means”, to finally the religious terrorist who uses divine-authority to justify both the “ends and means”.

EVOLUTION AND ADAPTATION OF TERRORISM

“An almost Darwinian principle of natural selection thus seems to affect terrorist organizations, whereby every new terrorist generation learns from its predecessors....”⁴⁹ During the 1970s, the popular method of terrorism could be classified as “events of duration.”⁵⁰ Small groups of primarily politically motivated terrorists took hostages or hi-jacked aircraft in an effort to win concessions. The U.S. and other countries responded by forming anti-terrorism units (e.g., Delta Force, GSG-9) to destroy terrorist groups in the act.

In the 1980s, terrorist tactics changed to “conclusive events” that happened too quickly for anti-terrorism units to react.⁵¹ An example of this type is the 1988 in-flight bombing of Pan Am 103. Two Libyan government airline employees placed a suitcase containing a bomb on the airplane. The bomb exploded over Scotland killing 278 people. The 80s saw terrorist motivations change from solely political goals to economic (drug traffickers in Columbia, for example) and religious goals.⁵² The decade also saw a shift in the targets of terrorism to Western democracies. “Half of the worldwide incidents in the 1980s were aimed at only 10 countries; one third of the total were targeted directly at the U.S.”⁵³

It could be argued that the U.S. entered the current “war” on terrorism in the 1980s. This decade saw a shift in the targets of terrorism to Western democracies. The U.S. started to respond with military action. One example was the 15 April 1986 bombing of airfields, the government command post, and suspected terrorist training camps around the Libyan port cities of Tripoli and Benghazi. Reagan ordered the bombing after irrefutable evidence indicated that Libyan leader Muammar Khaddafi was responsible for the bombing of a West Berlin discotheque killing American servicemen.

“Although the volume of terrorist incidents worldwide has declined in the 1990s, the percentage of terrorist incidents with fatalities has increased.”⁵⁴ The year 1996 had the lowest number of worldwide terrorism incidents in 23 years (250), but in fact had the fourth highest

fatalities (510) since monitoring began in 1968.⁵⁵ The number of religious terrorist groups, terrorism's rising lethality, and attacks by Islamic religious extremist directed at the U.S. continued during the 1990's.

Terrorism has evolved from identifiable organizations with a clear-cut command and control system and a defined set of goals. Organizations such as the Red Army Faction in Germany, the Red Brigades in Italy, and ethno-national movements like the Abu Nidal Organization and Irish Republican Army bombed targets, kidnapped, and/or assassinated targets symbolic of their economic exploitation or political repression. Their main goal was to draw attention to their cause not the casualty count. These groups generally issued communiqués taking credit, and groups like the Provisional Irish Republican Army issued warnings in advance.

Today, less-cohesive groups with more religious and millenarian goals have joined these tradition terrorists. These new terrorists do not appear to have specific demands as in the past and do not claim direct credit for their acts of violence. Body count seems to be as important as the act its self. The August 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania (257 killed, 5000 injured) seem to fit this pattern. The bombings appear to have been planned and financed by Osama bin Laden although he has not claimed credit.⁵⁶ The only warning or credit was bin Laden's February 1998 supplement to his publicly declared war on the U.S. "(because of its support for Israel and the presence of American military forces in Saudi Arabia) with a *fatwa*, or Islamic religious edict."⁵⁷ These evolving organizations are the deadliest threats, and certainly al Qaeda ranks high among them.

EFFECTS OF TERRORISM ON THE U.S.

As stated in President Bill Clinton's administration's National Security Strategy (NSS), the vital interests of the U.S. include territorial integrity of the U.S. and its allies, safety of U.S. citizens at home and abroad, protection against weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation, economic well-being, and protection of critical infrastructures.⁵⁸ In support of these ends, the U.S. has mounted an aggressive response to terrorism. The strategy pressures terrorists, deters attacks, and responds forcefully to terrorist acts. The current policy to combat international terrorism relies on the following principles: enhanced law enforcement and intelligence efforts, vigorous diplomacy, and economic sanctions, and when necessary, military force.⁵⁹ Recent actions taken by the Bush administration indicate the response taken toward terrorist and the countries that support them will become more aggressive.

Before the 11 September 2001 attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, terrorist attacks inside the U.S. by foreign terrorists were small-scale and terrorism was not seen as a

threat to national survival. As recently as 1996, an American citizen was 36 times more likely to be murdered and 188 times more likely to be raped than be killed in a terrorist attack. Just 5 years ago, there were 18,000 murders and 96,122 forcible rapes in the U.S.⁶⁰ as opposed to 510 deaths due to terrorist attacks worldwide⁶¹. Purely based on loss of life, domestic crime appeared to be a greater threat to U.S. security than terrorism.

The 11 September attacks affected at least two vital interests outlined in the NSS. First, the horrific death toll and media reports about weapons of mass destruction eroded America's previously unshakeable sense of security. The New York Times cites gas mask sales going up 3000 percent on the west coast and the price of masks going up from \$15 to \$150 on eBay.⁶² "Many stores reported surging sales of end-of-the-world goods...."⁶³ Americans have retreated to their television sets, put off vacations, and businesses have cut their travel budgets by 40 percent.⁶⁴

Second, America's economic well-being, as well as the international community's, was struck with a mix of blunt force and surgical precision. Analysts predict the airline industry may lose as much as \$7 billion in 2001 and will reduce flights by 20 percent because of widespread fear of flying.⁶⁵ As of 1 October, over 144 thousand job cuts are expected. New car sales, long a bell-weather of consumer confidence, are down 20 percent since the 11 September attack.⁶⁶ Additionally, these and other economic down turns will have significant second and third order effects. The Middle East economy will experience a reduction in oil exports, Europe will see fewer tourists, and global markets will show the strain of both consumer and corporate skepticism. The critical infrastructure of New York City will take years and billions of dollars to repair while the Pentagon will require a minimum of \$250 million in repairs. New York City will have to replace over 300 highly trained fire and police personnel, property damage estimates are \$20 billion, and lost productivity could be as high as \$60 billion.⁶⁷ The nation will rebuild buildings, but recovery of the national psyche will be a longer struggle.

RECOMMENDATIONS

President Bush's current policy dealing with al Qaeda and the Taliban government is only the first step in reducing the threat of further attacks on Americans. The U.S. must wage two types of war simultaneously. While neither type of war will eliminate terrorism, they can obtain the limited objective of marginalizing terrorist activity. First, conduct total war against identified terrorist groups and the governments that support them. Second, and most importantly, conduct a limited war to reduce the causes of terrorism with the objective of reducing the risk of acts of terrorism directed toward Americans. Clausewitz draws a distinction between two types of war:

absolute or total war and limited war.⁶⁸ The objective of total war is the complete elimination of your opponent while the objective of limited war is to obtain a favorable peace.⁶⁹ Destroying the individual terrorist or even the terrorist group will at best provide only a temporary solution. An even more able opponent will quickly fill the void while waging a limited war against the governments and the people who support terrorism overtly, covertly, or inadvertently will attain a more permanent solution.

Total war is offensive in nature and considers terrorist acts directed towards the U.S. or its citizens an act of war. The objective of total war must be to destroy identified terrorist groups and the governments that support them. The use of military force must be threefold: preemptive strikes to destroy potential terrorist threats, in retaliation for terrorist acts, and to replace governments that support terrorist groups. The fear that terrorism creates is dependent on the ability to deliver future violence. Just as one deals with the playground bully, the leadership and the people of the U.S. must display the physical and moral courage to teach the terrorist that the nation will fight back at all cost. This type of warfare will require the full spectrum of intelligence gathering to identify potential terrorism targets, states that support terrorism, and individual terrorist leaders both at home and abroad, as well as applying the military strength to quickly defeat identified threats.

There are considerable risks in total war. Terrorists will use collateral damage, inherent in military operations, as a weapon to erode national will and international support. Since many terrorist groups espouse religion, they will portray repeated attacks as retaliatory against their religion, ultimately leading to global polarization. This polarization will quickly cause regional coalitions to collapse leading the U.S. to either retreat or act unilaterally. The slippery slope of unilateral action could lead to a cycle of violence like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with the potential to escalate into a major theater war.

The objective of the limited war must be a defensive war to reduce both Americans' vulnerability to tactics used by terrorist and the causes of terrorism. This limited war will require the same intensity as the current total war against al Qaeda and the Taliban. The application of all elements of national power, not just military, to reduce the vulnerability of American citizens and facilities world-wide and to reduce the causes of terrorism will in turn reduce Americans' risk of being the target of terrorist violence. This approach focuses on prevention and punishment, and requires a combined effort to correct the underlying social aspects of terrorism: economic, racial, geopolitical, and religious differences.

Local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies will receive the heavy task to detect and prevent terrorist activity and bring terrorists to justice. This will give rise to defensive measures

and increased security at airports, embassies, major government buildings, critical infrastructure, and military installations. This will also require aggressive diplomatic efforts to develop international cooperation offering collective intelligence gathering, effective and enforceable legal treaties, to include full extradition powers.⁷⁰ The full weight of economic, informational, and diplomatic pressure will be leveraged on nations that harbor or support terrorism. The U.S. must use every element of national power to bring terrorists to justice, to include military force.

To reduce the causes of terrorism, the U.S. must change the mood of resentment that its foreign policy has generated through out the Muslim world. From one end of the Muslim world to the other, the perception is that the U.S. uses a double standard when dealing with the Muslims. These perceptions include but are not limited to: America attacks Iraq if it invades Kuwait, but allows Israel to bulldoze Palestinian homes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It ostracizes a Muslim nation like Sudan for oppressing its Christian minority, but allows Russia to bomb its Muslim minority into submission in Chechnya. While the U.S. has supported "freedom fighters" in Nicaragua and other places, it labels Muslim groups fighting in the Indian state of Kashmir terrorist. The state-run media across the Middle East often fan the flames of anti-American sentiment because that helps focus citizens' minds on something other than their own government's shortcomings. Arab TV stations broadcast countless stories and pictures of Israeli soldiers shooting Palestinian children, Israeli tanks shelling Palestinian homes and the fact that the U.S. provides Israel with billion of dollars of military and economic aid to perpetrate these attacks.

CONCLUSION

This is a no-lose proposition for the terrorist. If the government does not give in, the terrorist promises further (and often delivers) terrorism. This induces further criticism of the government and more, increasingly desperate calls to heed the terrorist demands. If the government succumbs, the terrorist scores an obvious victory; even if the terrorist agrees to a temporary hiatus (which he seldom does), the citizen knows that his government has caved in and betrayed his trust yet again.⁷¹

Unlike other areas of policy that involve U.S. national security, conventional military pressures used alone cannot end terrorism. As non-state actors, terrorists have interests and motives that are not rationally formulated. Therefore, the government's normal military and policy mechanisms for dealing with threats that come from rational actors in international affairs are not effective in ending terrorist activities.

Whether the terrorists are motivated by ideology or religion, or a combination of both, the terrorist declares unrestricted warfare on the society he is attempting to change. "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" is repeatedly used by terrorist to legitimize their murderous acts. Terrorists and groups that support them use acts of war committed by regular and guerrilla military forces that result in innocent civilian blurring the distinctions between legitimate warfare and terrorism. The distinction between targets chosen in warfare and targets chosen by terrorism is the connection of the victims and the "cause" the attack is trying to remedy. While freedom fighters attack a superior enemy, terrorist choose to attack defenseless civilians. "It is that the ends of the terrorist do not justify the means they choose. It is that the choice of means indicates what the true ends are. Far from being fighters for freedom, terrorists are the forerunners of tyranny."⁷²

The deliberate systematic killing of the innocent civilians to attain a political end is not a new phenomenon by any stretch of the imagination. Terrorism has an endless nature; governments have been waging war on terrorism or at least the tactics used by terrorists since the beginning of recorded history. History has proven that governments can win wars against individual terrorist groups. The U.S. stopped the Barbary states from taking American hostages by building a navy and attacking the pirates in their homeports. Since the Barbary states were motivated by greed, U.S. victories made the continued taking of American hostages too costly for the Barbary states. The Romans ended the Jewish Zealots use of terror tactics by laying siege to Masada where 900 Jewish Zealots committed suicide rather than surrender. These and countless other victories over terrorist groups have served only to reduce the risk of being the victim of terrorism not end terrorism.

The terrorist has the advantage; he can analyze our strengths and weakness in designing likely counter moves. After the disastrous raid in Mogadishu that cost so many American lives, Aideed told USMC General Zinni, "We knew where we were, we knew where you were and we know which way you would have to come to rescue your soldiers."⁷³ The terrorist does not have to adopt a circumscribed set of tactics or a limited arsenal of weapons or be dictated by operational conservative organizations to succeed. Rather they may embark on grandiose operations involving unconventional weapons and tactics to include the possible use of weapons of mass destruction. Contemporary international terrorists have dispelled any notion that they have a stone-age mentality and do not understand modern technology. The attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon proved this all too vividly.

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