COUNTERING THE NEW TERRORISM: IMPLICATIONS FOR STRATEGY

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INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is, among other things, a weapon used by the weak against the strong.[1] The United States will move into the 21st century as a preeminent, global power in a period of tremendous flux within societies, among nations, and across states and regions.[2] Terrorism will accompany changes at each of these levels, as it has in other periods of flux in the international environment. To the extent that the United States continues to be engaged as a global power, terrorism will have the potential to affect American interests directly and indirectly, from attacks on U.S. territory—including low-probability but

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[1]This analysis deliberately avoids any detailed discussion of the definition of terrorism, in part because such discussions tend to be inconclusive but also because the rapidly changing nature of the phenomenon renders many traditional definitions misleading. The fashionable and often politically charged debate about terrorism makes the definition of terrorism a highly subjective, even ethno-centric exercise. The old adage about "one person's terrorist being another's freedom fighter" summarizes the problem. In RAND's continuing research on this subject, terrorism has generally been defined by the nature of the act, not the identity of the terrorists or the nature of the cause: "terrorism is violence or the threat of violence calculated to create an atmosphere of fear or alarm," generally in support of political or systemic objectives. See Karen Gardela and Bruce Hoffman, *RAND Chronologies of International Terrorism*, various years.

[2]The fact that we are approaching a new century and a new millennium may have implications in its own right for terrorism based on apocalyptic and messianic visions and for movements interested in "giving history a shove." See Walter Laqueur, "Fin-de-Siècle: Once More with Feeling," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 31, 1996, pp. 5–47.

high-consequence "superterrorism" with weapons of mass destruction—to attacks affecting our diplomatic and economic ties abroad, or our ability to maintain a forward military presence or project power in times of crisis. The United States will also have a unique, systemic interest in terrorism as a global problem—including acts of "domestic" terrorism confined within state borders that make up the bulk of terrorism worldwide—even where the United States is not directly or even indirectly targeted. In one way or another, terrorism can affect our freedom of action, not just with regard to national security strategy narrowly defined, but across a range of compelling issues, from drugs and money laundering to information and energy policy.

Many of our high-priority national objectives have been shaken by the recent experience of terrorism. The Oklahoma and World Trade Center bombings struck at our sense of security within our borders. Attacks against U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia raise questions about our strategy for presence and stability in an area of critical importance for world energy supply. The U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania raise questions about the exposure that comes with active engagement in world affairs, and point to the risks of privately sponsored terrorism. The assassination of Prime Minister Rabin and the campaign of suicide bombings in Israel has put the Middle East peace process in serious jeopardy, threatening a critical and long-standing U.S. diplomatic objective. Elsewhere, terrorism has destabilized allies (in Egypt and Turkey), and has rendered counternarcotics relationships difficult (in Colombia and Mexico). Where societies and regions are fundamentally unstable, and where political outcomes are delicately poised, terrorism will have a particular ability to affect strategic futures.

UNDERSTANDING AND COUNTERING THE "NEW" TERRORISM

This chapter explores the problem of terrorism in the broader national and international security context. It takes as its point of departure completed analyses of terrorism trends and prospects, as well as specialized assessments of weapons of mass destruction

(WMD) and information-related risks.[3] These analyses point to the steady augmentation of traditional patterns of terrorism by new forms of the phenomenon, both as stand-alone threats and in the context of more conventional conflict (i.e., as an asymmetric strategy). This new terrorism is increasingly networked; more diverse in terms of motivations, sponsorship, and security consequences; more global in reach; and more lethal. As a result, much existing counterterrorism experience may be losing its relevance as network forms of organization replace the canonical terrorist hierarchies, or as state sponsorship becomes more subtle and difficult to expose.

Similarly, many of the leading concepts of air power in relation to counterterrorism strategy may need to be revised. There will be a continuing need for preemption, deterrence, and retaliation in relation to state sponsors. But the key tasks for air and space power in the future may have as much or more to do with the surveillance, exposure, and targeting of nonstate actors, and even individuals. The transforming contribution of air and space power to national counterterrorism strategy will be making terrorism—an inherently amorphous phenomenon—more transparent for policymakers and the international community.

This chapter focuses to a great extent on "international terrorism" and terrorism in the international arena. The problem of domestic terrorism in the United States is addressed only in passing, a consequence of the need to limit the scope and focus of the study rather than a judgment about the significance of the problem. Indeed, the problem of domestic terrorism is growing and the threat of domestic and "insider" terrorism against U.S. military facilities and personnel would be a fertile area for further analysis. It is also worth noting that terrorism experts are increasingly uncomfortable with the traditional distinction between domestic and international terror in an age of global communications and networked terrorism.[4] Many of the most serious terrorist risks to U.S. national security—above all, those of

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[3]See Chapters Two and Three.

[4]Confluence of the internal and external security environments, including terrorist risks, is especially striking in Europe with the weakening of borders and security problems linked to immigration. See Didier Bigo, "Security(s): Internal and External, the Mobius Ribbon," paper prepared for the International Studies Association, Toronto, March 18–22, 1997.

mass destruction and mass disruption in periods of crisis or conflict—can have a transnational dimension.

The following discussion places terrorism in strategic context by exploring terrorist threats to U.S. interests and future sources of risk, examines past U.S. and allied experience, offers a framework for counterterrorism strategy, and provides overall findings and implications for the U.S. military.

TERRORISM IN STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Terrorist Threat to U.S. Interests: Four Dimensions

Terrorism provokes alarm and repugnance, but how meaningful is it as a threat to U.S. national security? Where does terrorism rank in relation to other security challenges? To gauge the extent of terrorism's challenge in strategic terms, it is useful to explore the terrorist threat to U.S. interests in four key dimensions: direct, indirect, systemic, and asymmetric. At the same time, perceptions and policies in relation to terrorism are being shaped by changing definitions of security and the evolving place of terrorism on the spectrum of domestic and international conflict.

Direct Threats

The most dramatic and proximate source of risk arises from direct terrorist attacks against U.S. citizens and property, overseas or on U.S. territory (or against U.S. forces in peacetime). The United States has been a leading target of international terrorists, a trend that shows few signs of abating.[5] Until recent years, however, few of these attacks took place within the United States, partly because traditional terrorist groups found the prospect of operations in the United States too difficult, politically counterproductive, or simply unnecessary. Most observers now believe the threshold for significant international terrorism in the United States has been crossed, especially in the wake of the World Trade Center bombing and the 1997 apprehension of terrorist bombers in New York. The prospect of further direct attacks within U.S. territory, coupled with

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[5]See Chapter Two.

the increasing lethality of international terrorism, has begun to inspire new concerns about "homeland defense," above all defense against terrorist use of nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons against urban targets.

Regardless of changes in the size of the U.S. military presence abroad, there will always be more than enough U.S. citizens and interests engaged around the world (as businessmen, diplomats, students, and tourists) to provide ready targets for terrorists looking to strike at the United States. But the changing motivations and agendas of terrorists may raise the symbolic value of more-direct attacks against targets on U.S. territory. State sponsors, bent on revenge (e.g., Iraq or Libya), might see special merit in supporting operations within the United States. Similarly, movements with transcendental objectives, whether religious or political, may place greater emphasis on acts that shake the confidence and security of U.S. citizens at home. At the same time, the rise of terrorist networks blurs the distinction between domestic and international terrorism, and could facilitate the use of amateur proxies, including self-appointed proxies, for attacks within our borders.[6] Terrorist groups have already found the United States to be a fertile environment for fundraising and associated political activities. Some of this infrastructure could also be used to support more violent activities.

Terrorist motives for the direct attack of U.S. targets may be practical, systemic, or symbolic. In practical terms, terrorists may seek to alter U.S. policy or to influence public opinion with a specific objective (e.g., non-intervention in a regional conflict). In such cases, the use of force is likely to be limited and tailored to achieve a political end without an unintended backlash. Palestinian terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s fit this pattern, as did the attacks by Puerto Rican separatists in New York and at Muniz Air Base in 1981.[7] Unlike Western Europe, the United States has not suffered from pervasive "systemic"

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[6]"Amateurs" along the lines of the conspirators involved in a July 1997 plot to bomb a Brooklyn, New York, subway station.

[7]The January 13, 1981, attack by a Puerto Rican terrorist group known as the Macheteros at Muniz Air National Guard base destroyed eight A-7 aircraft and damaged two others, causing some $45 million in damage. The same group claimed credit for a 1979 attack on a U.S. Navy bus. Jo Thomas, "Puerto Rico Group Says It Struck Jets," *New York Times*, January 13, 1981, p. 1.

terrorism, aimed at provoking fundamental social or political change. But the bombing in Oklahoma City as well as the militia movements suggest the existence of a reservoir of potential terrorism along these lines. Symbolic attacks, such as the bombing of Pan Am 107 or the World Trade Center bombing, imply fewer constraints on lethality and potentially much more destructive attacks. Without dismissing the potentially significant harm in terms of loss of life, economic disruption, and erosion of public confidence from direct attacks motivated by practical and systemic agendas, the strategic effect of such attacks is likely to be limited. Leading terrorism analysts tend to agree on the general ineffectiveness of terrorism as a weapon against well-established democracies, although some exceptions should be noted.[8] Certainly, there is little to indicate that terrorism or the threat of terrorism has been successful in changing U.S. policy on issues such as support for key allies or the use of force, much less questions of territorial integrity or domestic public policy. Similarly, the United States has not been a particularly fertile ground for ideological extremism of any stripe.

The Khobar Towers attack appears to have embraced both practical and symbolic motives—encouraging the departure of U.S. forces from Saudi Arabia, a blow to the Saudi regime, and, not least, a strike at U.S. power and prestige.[9] To the extent that the United States remains engaged as a strategic actor around the globe—or at least in key regions—the terrorist instrument is likely to remain as an attractive means of striking at far-flung manifestations of American power and influence, as well as host regimes (the symbolic component). It may also be an attractive tactic or strategy (if part of a campaign) to compel a U.S. withdrawal from specific regions or to severely limit the prospects for access, overflight, and security cooperation. The scale and value—in lives, money, and strategic utility—of the U.S. military overseas presence makes it an attractive target for terrorists motivated by practical and symbolic agendas.[10]

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[8]Likely exceptions include the apparent success of IRA and Palestinian terrorism in compelling policy changes and gaining a seat at the political table.

[9]A sense of the various likely motivations of the Khobar Towers bombers can be found in a series of articles from the Arab press; see "The Saudi Bombing: Dissident Explains Why 'Indigenous' Groups May Do It Again," and "Why U.S. Forces Aren't Welcome in Saudi Arabia," *Mideast Mirror*, July 1 and 4, 1996.

[10]For a more detailed discussion, see Chapters Two and Three.

Symbolic terrorism of sufficient scale presents a different type of challenge. Certainly, terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction on U.S. soil, or against U.S. civilian or military targets abroad, would be a watershed event, especially if highly destructive. Concerns about the potential use of nuclear or other unconventional devices on U.S. soil—arguably higher now than during the nuclear targeting of the Cold War years—have become a significant feature of the national security debate.[11] Wider availability of WMD materials and expertise, coupled with the increasingly transcendental agendas of terrorist groups, are at the heart of this concern.[12] To the extent that terrorist use of WMD for symbolic purposes succeeds in significantly altering strategic thinking and perceptions of risk—as it almost certainly would—it might have a strategic effect by definition.

Certain types of terrorist campaigns aimed at the U.S. economy and information infrastructure could also impose significant costs.[13] The potential for information-based attacks on the banking, telecommunications, and electric-power systems is now widely debated. RAND analysis certainly suggests that terrorist networks are steadily acquiring the expertise to engage in such attacks, although their motivation to do so remains largely untested. Terrorists may well be more interested in "keeping the Net up" to use for their own intelligence and disinformation purposes.[14] Similarly, with the exception of hackers who acquire political agendas, terrorists are unlikely to engage in information warfare as an alternative to more destructive attacks. They are more likely to employ IW as a force multiplier—in combination with more conventional tactics—to avoid detection or to complicate efforts at mitigation and response. The progression from military and political targets to economic

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[11]See, for example, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and R. James Woolsey, "Defend Against the Shadow Enemy," *Los Angeles Times*, June 1, 1997, p. M5.

[12]See Robert H. Kupperman, "United States Becoming Target for Terror Forays," *National Defense*, January 1995.

[13]One variant might be a "dirty" conventional bomb—high-explosive combined with commercially available radiological material. Who would rent office space in a commercial center where such a device had been detonated, regardless of any clean-up? The result might be a potent weapon of economic denial in urban settings.

[14]See Chapter Three.

infrastructure—and potentially to information systems—has already been noted in relation to the evolution of IRA terrorism.[15]

Indirect Attacks Affecting U.S. Interests

Terrorist campaigns need not directly threaten U.S. lives and territory to affect American interests. Many U.S. allies, as well as key regional states, confront serious challenges arising from terrorism. Terrorism in Israel and the Palestinian territories is a potent spoiler in relation to the Middle East peace process—a key U.S. diplomatic interest—as well as threatening the stability of the West Bank and Gaza. PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party), Islamist, and leftist terrorism in Turkey affects the stability of a key NATO ally. Islamist violence in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East threatens the security of pro-U.S. regimes. The need to contain internal violence distorts the behavior of key actors, limiting their ability to play a positive regional role. Similar effects can be seen as a result of political and drug-related terrorism in Mexico, Colombia, and elsewhere in Latin America and the Caribbean.[16] Terrorism on America's southern periphery impedes political reform and, in many cases, prevents the development of bilateral cooperation on trade and investment. It can also be an important engine of uncontrolled migration and refugee movements affecting the United States.

Terrorism aimed at allied states can also have a more direct effect on U.S. citizens and interests, as witnessed through the 1970s and early 1980s in Western Europe and Japan. Acts carried out by groups such as the Red Brigades, the Bader-Meinhoff gang, Action Direct, November 17, and the Japanese Red Army Faction, aimed primarily at their own societies, occasionally spilled over into violence against American civilians and military personnel. Not only are terrorist risks becoming transnational, but with the growth of multinational businesses and nongovernmental organizations, the potential victims of terrorists are becoming less national and more global in character. Indeed, this has long been the case with international air

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[15]Douglas Hayward, "Terrorists Target the Net," *TechWire* (Brussels), May 8, 1997.

[16]See Max G. Manwaring, "Security of the Western Hemisphere: International Terrorism and Organized Crime," *Strategic Forum*, No. 137, April 1998 (Institute for National Strategic Study, National Defense University).

travel; carriers may be national airlines, but the passengers are likely to be of varied nationality.

Systemic Consequences

A third perspective focuses on the overall consequences of terrorism, worldwide and domestic, for the international security environment and U.S. global engagement. The body of "international terrorist incidents," as defined by the leading terrorism databases, captures only a small fraction of global terrorism. Terrorist acts associated with international causes and Western targets claim the lion's share of media attention and policymakers' concern, but the vast bulk of terrorism worldwide is contained within state borders and is local in character. Factional terrorism in Algeria has probably claimed over 80,000 lives since 1992, and multiple incidents with as many as 100 deaths each continue to occur on a weekly basis. In Northern Ireland alone, deaths from domestic terrorism in some years have been four times the number of deaths from international terrorism in Europe as a whole.[17] If one includes the ethnic terrorism in sub-Saharan Africa, the Balkans, and the Caucasus, it becomes clear that terrorism's global toll in lives, property, and stability is larger indeed.

As a global power with global interests, the United States will be affected by instances of large-scale ethnic terrorism, even if the effects of this chaos—the breakdown of social and political order described by Robert Kaplan in terms of "the coming anarchy"—are distant and long term.[18] Mass terrorism in central Africa may be held at arm's length in Western perceptions. But even smaller-scale instances of ethnic terror in the Balkans, the Caucasus, or elsewhere in the former Soviet Union or China could significantly affect the strategic evolution of these regions. Third World and newly independent states are not only the major settings for terrorism, they are also the least well equipped in terms of resources and expertise to counter terrorist

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[17]There were, for example, 62 in 1989. Paul Wilkinson, "Terrorist Targets and Tactics: New Risks to World Order," in Alison Jamieson (ed.), *Terrorism and Drug Trafficking in the 1990s*, Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, Aldershot, Dartmouth, UK, 1994, p. 9.

[18]Robert Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy," *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 273, No. 2, February 1994, pp. 44–76.

challenges (although they may not feel the same constraints as liberal democracies in this context).[19]

Terrorism in the War Paradigm

Fourth, terrorism can take the form of an "asymmetric" strategy employed by adversaries in conflict with the United States or its allies, as a substitute for more conventional attacks, as a waypoint to more direct aggression, or as an adjunct to conventional warfare. This notion of terrorism in the "war paradigm"[20] is most likely to arise from the perception that the United States, and the West (including Israel) more generally, have developed an unassailable capacity for conventional warfare. As a result, regional competitors wishing to change the political or territorial order must contend with a perceived revolution in military affairs that has conferred disproportionate advantages on the most developed military powers. The experience of the Gulf War offers a key lesson in this regard. The Gulf War and subsequent operations in the Gulf, Bosnia, and elsewhere may also be seen as confirming the political will of the United States and its allies to use force in support of regional order.

A potential aggressor reviewing this experience may well draw the conclusion that terrorism (as well as other unconventional instruments such as the use of weapons of mass destruction) might be employed as a means of subverting regional competitors without necessarily triggering a U.S. response. Terrorism might provide a means of throwing deployed forces off balance, gaining time for the aggressor to consolidate a cross-border operation against a U.S. ally. Finally, it may also represent an attractive means of striking at the United States directly, for symbolism or revenge, and as a means of influencing U.S. public opinion when the costs and benefits of intervention are in debate. Some of these objectives might be achieved simply through the *threat* of terrorist attacks. The threat to use terrorists as a low-tech delivery system for chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons adds a troubling dimension.

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[19]Wilkinson, "Terrorist Targets and Tactics," p. 9.

[20]I am grateful to RAND colleagues John Arquilla, David Ronfeldt, and Michele Zanini for this term (see Chapter Three).

That said, the systematic use of terrorism as a strategy by regional powers confronting the United States can face substantial obstacles, as the Iraqi experience during the Gulf War suggests. During the run-up to war in the Gulf, it was widely and reasonably predicted that Saddam Hussein would mobilize sympathetic terrorist organizations to engage in attacks on Western targets, both civilian and military.[21] In the event, terrorism was a negligible feature of the crisis, and Iraqi-sponsored terrorism certainly did not constitute anything like the potent "fifth column" some had envisioned. A range of explanations has been offered for the failure of Saddam Hussein's announced terrorism campaign, including pressure by other state sponsors (e.g., Syria), lack of planning and effective communications (exacerbated by the bombing campaign against Baghdad), and effective Western antiterrorism measures. The prospect for terrorist attacks against harder military targets in the Gulf was probably doubly limited by the short notice and the general unpreparedness of terrorist groups, especially those with close ties to Baghdad such as the Palestinian Liberation Front and the Fatah Revolutionary Council, for attacks on deployed forces.[22] With better preparation, both political and material, the outcome might have been quite different. Moreover, as discussed below, it may be too soon to gauge the longer-term effects of the Gulf War on Iraqi-sponsored terrorism.

A variation on this theme of terrorism as an asymmetric strategy goes further to suggest that unconventional modes of conflict will stem not just from the desire to outflank the United States but from a shift in the nature of conflict itself. In this paradigm, unconventional terrorist attacks on the sinews of modern, information-intensive societies will become the norm, largely replacing conventional conflicts over the control of territory or people. Carried to its logical conclusion, this is a future in which terrorism of all sorts, and especially information-related terrorism, becomes a more pervasive phenomenon, or even the dominant mode of war. It may, by definition,

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[21]See, for example, Bruce Hoffman, *The Ultimate Fifth Column: Saddam Hussein, International Terrorism, and the Crisis in the Gulf*, RAND, P-7668, August 1990.

[22]These and other factors limiting Iraqi terrorism during the Gulf War are discussed in W. Andrew Terrill, "Saddam's Failed Counterstrike: Terrorism and the Gulf War," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 16, pp. 219–232.

have its greatest effect on the most highly developed economies, above all, the United States.[23]

Terrorism in various forms may be used deliberately by an adversary to deter certain types of attacks in war or during periods of tension in which U.S. intervention is likely. The use of air power, in particular, may face constraints imposed by mass hostage taking, including the dispersal of hostages to likely target sites. This tactic has been employed by Bosnian Serbs as a deterrent to NATO attacks, as well as by Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War and by Chechen separatists in their conflict with Moscow. This constraint can also be a factor in the more general problem of the discriminate use of air power in urban settings.

Changing Definitions of Security

A principal characteristic of terrorism, distinguishing it from many other forms of violence, is its ability to strike directly at perceptions of personal security. The potential for nuclear war or cross-border aggression by states may inspire a sense of fear among individuals, but the sense of vulnerability is collective and abstract. Individuals will certainly be the victims of conflict between states, but leaderships and military establishments are most often seen as the real targets.[24] By contrast, terrorism may be indiscriminate or precisely targeted, but in either instance the victims are individuals within society.

This characteristic of terrorism is arguably gaining visibility from the point of view of perpetrators and sponsors as well as publics and governments as post–Cold War definitions of security evolve. In addition to a greater emphasis on "economic security," "environmental security," and other issues that were of distinctly secondary importance during the Cold War, security perceptions are now increasingly driven by concerns about personal security and what

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[23]A vision of radical change in the strategic environment along these lines is offered in Michael Vlahos, "The War After Byte City," *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 1997.

[24]Even deliberate attempts to terrorize populations through strategic bombing are really aimed at weakening support for leaderships and military power.

may be termed "security of identity."[25] The terrorist instrument has particular leverage in both contexts. For example, the victory of Benjamin Netanyahu in the most recent Israeli elections was less the result of a referendum on the peace process than a referendum on personal security in the wake of multiple terrorist attacks. In many places around the world—including the United States—debates about security are to a great degree about personal security rather than the security of the state. This is certainly true in much of the Third World, and increasingly true in the former Soviet Union, where terrorism and crime are now rampant. One indicator of this phenomenon has been the rapid growth in private security services worldwide. This privatization of security may have some negative consequences for counterterrorism to the extent that more material and know-how finds it way into terrorist hands.

Security of identity has emerged as an important issue in many settings. It is not necessary to accept arguments about a global clash of civilizations to acknowledge that perceptions of cultural identity are shaping relations between societies and regions in the post–Cold War era. Violent reactions can arise when identities are under siege, sometimes in the form of terrorism. Current examples include the Uighur region in western China, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, and the Kurdish region of southeastern Turkey. Reactions to cultural assimilation can also take the form of global fears of cultural imperialism—a criticism most often aimed at the United States with its overwhelming role as purveyor of international tastes and information. The net result of this trend may be to increase the exposure of institutions engaged in integrative activities of all sorts (U.S. entertainment and communications firms, the European Union (EU) bureaucracies, regional organizations, etc.) to terrorist action.

Terrorism and the Conflict Spectrum

The canonical terrorist campaign in support of national liberation, religion, or ideology represents only a small portion of the ends to which terrorism is harnessed—and perhaps not even the most per-

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[25]On security of identity, see, for example, Fernanda Faria and Alvaro Vasconcelos, "Security in North Africa: Ambiguity and Reality," *Chaillot Paper,* WEU (Western European Union) Institute for Security Studies, No. 25, September 1996, p. 5.

vasive. Terrorism occupies an increasingly broad place on the conflict spectrum, from activity barely distinguishable from crime or vendetta, through conventional terrorism in support of political and transcendental objectives, to potential "superterrorism," perhaps as a means of proxy war. The common denominator throughout is the use of terrorism as a tactic, an aspect in which terrorism is becoming more diverse. Indeed, the vocabulary of terrorism analysis reflects this diversity, with increasing reference to narco-terrorism, environmental terrorism, economic terrorism, info-terrorism, and other threats traditionally outside mainstream security concerns. Nor are these new dimensions of terror discrete points on the conflict spectrum. Rather, they may be difficult to differentiate at the margins and may reinforce one another. For example, the immense proceeds of drug trafficking can encourage narco-terrorism as a means of holding governments and rival cartels at bay, but may also increase the resources at the disposal of overtly political terrorist movements.[26] Similarly, there is growing suspicion that maritime piracy, an increasingly serious problem in many places around the world, is being carried out in some instances with state sponsorship. Terrorist movements are well placed to participate in such activities.[27]

To the extent that terrorist movements move toward network forms of organization and behavior, their ability to shift focus from one application of terrorism to another, or to pursue multiple applications simultaneously, will increase (as in the confluence of drug-related and political terror). Movements with political or religious agendas, but adept at applying similar tactics in other settings, may be recruited as proxies by state or nonstate sponsors looking to strike indirectly at U.S. or regional regimes. Terrorism's increasingly amorphous and diffuse nature has implications beyond the question of tactics and specific targets. Its diffusion is changing the nature of terrorism as a strategic problem.

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[26]The Provisional IRA and, in particular, the PKK have come to rely extensively on drug smuggling as a source of support for politically motivated terrorism. See Jamieson, 1994.

[27]Libyan sponsorship is alleged in several instances of piracy and ship-disappearances off the North African coast. "Those in Peril on the Sea," *The Economist*, August 9, 1997, p. 40.

One consequence of the growing pervasiveness of terrorism as a tactic across the conflict spectrum is that counterterrorism may be less and less accurately portrayed as a stand-alone activity. Counterterrorism strategies are becoming a prominent feature of a range of public policies and national strategy objectives, from urban emergency preparedness and drug policy to regional security assistance and power projection.

Future Terrorism Geopolitics

Terrorism and counterterrorism have most often been seen through a regional lens, with a natural focus on key regions such as the Middle East where terrorism has been pervasive and capable of reshaping political and strategic futures. Domestic terrorism, especially in the Third World, has been relatively neglected despite the enormous volume of incidents. Most recently, it has become fashionable to look beyond domestic and regional terrorism to consider transnational or global challenges. As other parts of this analysis suggest, there is good reason to take various transnational risks more seriously given the increasingly free movement of people and information, and the rise of networks based on these trends.

Despite these factors, it is arguable that the bulk of terrorism of whatever sort, worldwide, will have national or regional sources, even if terrorist activity crosses state and regional divides. True network terrorism may arise, where grievances and activists exist without reference to geography but are based solely on shared, functional agendas. Single-issue ideological or religious movements already exhibit some of these qualities. Yet much terrorism touching on U.S. interests will have an identifiable source, whether functional or geographic, with implications for counterterrorism strategy and planning.

Ethnic Separatism and Frustrated Nationalism. The post-1945 decolonization struggles brought a wave of terrorist campaigns affecting North and sub-Saharan Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, as well as the territories of the colonial powers themselves. In some cases, such as Algeria, the scale of terrorist violence associated with this period has left an enduring legacy. The post-Soviet, post–Cold War environment has encouraged a new wave of ethno-nationalist violence and much outright terrorism. In recent

years, terrorism has been an instrument of large-scale "ethnic cleansing" in the Balkans, the Caucasus, and central Africa. The impetus to create new states out of nations, and at a minimum, to carve out greater autonomy for ethnic groups, seems likely to persist as a key feature of the post–Cold War world.[28] As in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, terrorism is likely to be an accompanying feature of ethnic and national assertiveness. In particular, terrorism is likely to be most prominent as a catalyst in the early stages of ethnic conflict, "as a violent prelude to state formation," and in later stages as an expression of frustration or revenge in ethnic and nationalist endgames.[29] Where insurgent movements have adopted terrorist tactics, this use of terrorism could increase as movements are defeated or contained.[30]

For every separatist movement that succeeds, many are likely to be unsuccessful, and the resulting frustration and perhaps desire for revenge against central authorities and intervening powers may be strong. The increasing incidence of terrorist attacks against SFOR (the UN Stabilization Force) in Bosnia and the persistence of Chechen attacks against Russian targets even in the wake of a settlement provide useful examples.[31] This phenomenon may also be present in the Middle East, where few would now disagree that a Palestinian state is inevitable. Yet the contours of the Palestinian-Israeli end-game are being defined by terrorism, despite the apparent success of the decades-long Palestinian drive for self-determination. In other cases—the Basque Homeland and Freedom movement, known by its Basque initials as ETA, in Spain and the Provisional IRA in Northern Ireland are exemplars—the political situation may evolve sufficiently to make the original terrorist cause

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[28]See Graham E. Fuller, "Redrawing the World's Borders," *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 1997.

[29]James Der Derian, *Antidiplomacy: Spies, Terror, Speed, and War*, Blackwell, Cambridge, 1992, p. 105. For a discussion of the various roles of ethnic terrorism, see Daniel Byman, "The Logic of Ethnic Terrorism," unpublished paper prepared for the Council on Foreign Relations roundtable on terrorism, April 1997.

[30]Brian Michael Jenkins, *Future Trends in International Terrorism,* RAND, P-7176, 1985, p. 8.

[31]Recent terrorist threats against U.S. targets in Albania, and the August 1998 bombing of the U.S. Information Center in Kosovo, provide further examples.

an anachronism.[32] But the tradition and infrastructure of terror remain and pose a continuing residual threat to security.

Looking ahead, the successor states of the former Soviet Union represent a reservoir of ethno-nationalist terrorism. Unlike other such reservoirs in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, political violence emanating from these countries has a higher potential to affect U.S. interests given the region's energy reserves, the presence of nuclear weapons, and the general significance of Russian futures for international security.

Religious Extremism and "Postmodern" Terrorism. The rise of religious terrorist movements over the past two decades is significant in several respects. First, it represents a significant shift away from the measured political agendas associated with ideological and national liberation groups active in the 1960s and 1970s.[33] Second, and partly as a result of its transcendental or "total" character, it has been responsible for much of the increase in terrorism's lethality over the past decade. Third, religious terrorism is in no sense limited to Islamic extremists. Terrorism has been a favored tactic for violent confrontations across religious faultlines within and between states, whether in Kashmir, the former Yugoslavia, Egypt, or Sudan. Among Palestinians, Bosnians, Chechens, Sikhs, and others, politicized religious movements have played a key role in the evolution of political violence and have emerged as a geopolitical force.[34] There is little evidence that terrorism is losing its salience in this setting.

The approach of the millennium has significance for a variety of religious and transcendental groups. The result could be an even more potent tendency toward nihilist and transcendental violence which has accompanied the end of previous centuries. Extremist millenarians and other groups on the pattern of the Aum Shinrikyo (Supreme

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[32]See Marlise Simons, "Spain Turns on Rebels with Outrage," *New York Times*, July 18, 1997.

[33]For an excellent discussion of the characteristics of religious terrorism, see Bruce Hoffman, *Holy Terror: The Implications of Terrorism Motivated by a Religious Imperative*, RAND, P-7834, 1993.

[34]See Magnus Ranstorp, "Terrorism in the Name of Religion," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 50, No. 1, Summer 1996; and Mark Juergensmeyer, "The Worldwide Rise of Religious Nationalism," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 50, No. 1, Summer 1996.

Truth) cult in Japan may well wish to "give history a shove" through acts of superterrorism with weapons of mass destruction, and U.S. and other Western societies generally may offer especially symbolic targets. Such groups may also be among the most likely to envision transnational acts of destruction and disruption. In this context, it is notable that by 1995 the Aum cult responsible for the lethal sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway had more members in Russia than in Japan.[35] Groups motivated by apocalyptic impulses, together with the maturing of more traditional politically oriented terrorist movements, suggest the rise of what Walter Laqueur has described as "postmodern terrorism."[36]

Low-Intensity Product of Regional Rivalries. The post–Cold War world abounds in active state-to-state rivalries, largely along south-south rather than north-south lines. Some rivalries will result in conventional threats to borders and direct confrontations between regimes. In other cases, the costs of direct confrontation may be too high or outcomes too uncertain. Those states may wish to exert pressure through other means, including terrorism, most likely carried out through proxies. Current examples include North Korean sponsorship of terrorism against South Korea; Syrian and Iranian support for PKK terrorism in Turkey; Sudanese and Iranian support for Islamist terrorism in Egypt and other Middle Eastern states; and Pakistani sponsorship of Kashmiri terrorism in India. A revived Iraq with regional ambitions might well turn to the terrorism instrument as a lever in dealing with neighboring regimes. In Europe, the potential for Western intervention in Balkan rivalries may fuel less-direct attempts at pressure and subversion through terrorism.[37] Alleged Greek support for the PKK could, if relations deteriorate

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[35]Walter Laqueur, "Fin-de-Siècle: Once More with Feeling," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 31, 1996, p. 38.

[36]See Walter Laqueur, "Postmodern Terrorism," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 5, September–October 1996.

[37]This would mark a return to traditional patterns of political violence in the Balkans. Prior to World War I, Serb and Macedonian nationalism were virtual bywords for terrorism. Some of the most violent groups active in that period still exist, including IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization).

in the Aegean, lead to an escalating tit-for-tat campaign of state-sponsored terrorism.[38]

New Ideological Clashes. In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the notion of ideological struggle disappeared from the strategic scene. Those regimes still professing a socialist or communist agenda—Cuba, North Korea, China (in a formal sense)—appeared as quaint anachronisms. In the realm of terrorism, few vigorous movements remain on the extreme left. Some, such as the Shining Path and Tupac Amaru movements in Peru have suffered striking defeats in recent years. In Italy, Germany, France, and elsewhere in Europe, leftist and anarchist terror has been effectively contained since the early 1980s.[39]

Has this apparent triumph of liberal capitalism entirely undercut the ideological bases for 20th-century terror? The outlook in terms of political violence is not as clear as speculations about the "end of history" might suggest. Indeed, it is possible that the apparent victory of liberal democracy in the Cold War also contains the seeds of a reaction, perhaps of violence. Economic transformation and reform across the former communist bloc is producing uneven results and is engendering resentment in many quarters. Even in the West, the dismantling of the welfare state, especially in Europe, is having a divisive effect on societies with high rates of unemployment. Elsewhere, economic reform and higher rates of economic growth are producing marked disparities in income and a mounting perception of inequality. In countries such as Mexico, Turkey, Egypt, and Indonesia, the divide between "haves" and "have nots" is making issues of class and economic opportunity central to political change. Given past experience in societies as diverse as 19th century Russia and 20th century Iran, it would be surprising if some portion of frustration with economic conditions did not find expression in acts of

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[38]Perception may be as important as reality in this regard. Turkish claims of a Greek role here remain difficult to substantiate beyond the open political support of the PKK by some Greek politicians.

[39]Greece and Turkey still face minor terrorist risks from this quarter: Dev-Sol and Dev-Yol in Turkey (the PKK also professes a leftist ideology); and November 17 in Greece.

terrorism. Anarchism and communitarianism may yet reemerge as sources of terrorist violence in the 21st century.[40]

However, the connection among economic deprivation, political frustration, and terrorism is not clear or direct. Contemporary research has not been able to demonstrate any clear-cut relationship "between poverty, scarcity, inflation, or any other socioeconomic indicator and terrorism. Indeed, countries experiencing the highest levels of terrorism are often among the economically and socially most advanced nations in their region, and often the least authoritarian."[41] As with other forms of political turmoil and violence, relative rather than absolute deprivation may be a more significant influence on the rise of terrorism.

Extreme right-wing terrorism existed alongside the more prominent leftist groups of the 1970s and early 1980s, and was responsible for highly lethal attacks, especially in Italy and Turkey. In the 1990s, right-wing extremism emerged as a violent force in Germany, Austria, and elsewhere in Europe. Attacks against immigrants and "foreigners" have been at the heart of these movements, but given their nationalist character, it is not inconceivable that U.S. military forces and civilians in Europe could emerge as targets. In the United States, right-wing militia and survivalist movements are a prominent source of terrorist risk, and are increasingly networked with like-minded groups worldwide. In short, ideologically motivated terrorism in the developed world is now as likely to emerge from the right as from the left.

Another potential source of terrorism might arise from the evolution of international relations along the conflictual, "civilizational" lines suggested by Samuel Huntington.[42] At their most ragged, these civilizational frictions could have terrorism as a central feature, both within societies (especially the "torn" societies in Huntington's model) and among states—or like-minded groupings of states, par-

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[40]At least one observer identifies a totalitarian impulse in modern terrorism. See Fred Charles Iklé, "The Second Coming of the Nuclear Age," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 1, 1996, pp. 119–128.

[41]Jenkins, 1985, p. 6.

[42]See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order,* Simon and Schuster, New York, 1996.

ticularly where conventional military confrontations are deterred or impractical. Among current terrorist movements, the extremist transnational Islamic groups (e.g., the Arab Afghans) come closest to this model. Taking the Huntingtonian approach to extremes, one might speculate about the possibility of terrorist groups acting against the United States with Chinese sponsorship sometime in the 21st century, against the background of a U.S.–China cold war. A revived and antagonistic Russia could also emerge as the sponsor of terrorist proxies acting against U.S. interests and impelled by nationalist rather than leftist ideology. More likely, official and intellectual criticism in Asia and elsewhere of Western cultural dominance could encourage extremists, perhaps beyond the control of governments, to carry this critique into the terrorist realm.

Crime, Drugs, and the Privatization of Security—and Terror. Transnational crime, much of it related to drug trafficking, has emerged as a leading source of violence within both developed and developing societies.[43] The weight of this criminal activity in many economies encourages the spillover of criminal violence into the political realm. States in Latin America and elsewhere are becoming destabilized through narco-terrorism. In Italy, the war between organized crime (the Mafia, Ndraghetta, and Camora) and the state has at times spilled over into acts of outright terrorism.[44] In Turkey, proceeds from the drug trade have been used to support PKK terrorism as well as the counterterrorist activities of right-wing nationalist groups.

Colombia provides the most striking contemporary example of this problem and its bearing on U.S. interests. There, private paramilitary armies exist alongside the Colombian military, violent drug cartels, and left-wing insurgents. Terrorist tactics have become the norm in relations among these groups, and Colombia now faces the dismal prospect of deterioration into a narco-state or outright disintegration.[45] Colombian terrorism is also beginning to undermine

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[43]Bruce Hoffman identifies crime as a clear trend, especially in Colombia and Peru, where drug cartels have developed close links with terrorist and guerrilla organizations. Hoffman, 1998, pp. 27–28.

[44]For example, the May 1993 bombing of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy.

[45]James L. Zackrison and Eileen Bradley, "Colombian Sovereignty under Siege," *Strategic Forum*, National Defense University, Washington, DC, May 1997.

regional stability, with particular effect on the border with Venezuela.[46] One consequence of this situation has been Colombia's emergence as a leading source of international and specifically anti-U.S. terrorism—Colombia led the global tally of anti-U.S. incidents with 56 in 1995 and 53 in 1996.[47]

As the United States becomes more heavily involved in counternarcotics cooperation with Mexico, Peru, Panama, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Brazil—and possibly, Colombia—the potential for narco-terrorism against U.S. targets, civilian and military, will likely increase. Any proposals for expanded assistance, including air interdiction, will raise new force protection problems for U.S. forces deployed to the region.[48] In an era of transnational terrorist networks (and drug cartels have been at the forefront of such networking), it is possible for narco-terrorists to strike for practical or symbolic reasons at U.S. targets far from the area of operations in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The spread of transnational violence associated with international criminal activity is also one of the elements fueling rapid growth in the private security field worldwide. Multinational corporations, nongovernmental aid organizations, and others exposed to criminal and politically motivated terrorism are increasingly reliant on the services of security firms, which now must be considered antiterrorism actors in their own right, alongside states and international organizations. This trend is particularly pronounced in Latin America, Africa, and the former Soviet Union, where crime and terrorism—often the two are difficult to distinguish—have become leading challenges for foreign businesses and investors. Yet this privatization of security also raises the prospect of growing security information and expertise on the international market and thus potentially at the service of terrorist networks.

The interaction between transnational criminal organizations and political terrorism raises special concerns. This interaction is in no

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[46]See "Cross-Border Terror," *The Economist*, May 24, 1997, p. 70.

[47]Department of State Regional Terrorism Overview, 1995–1996.

[48]See Clifford Krauss, "Pentagon to Help Peru Stop Drug-Base Shipping on Rivers," *New York Times,* February 3, 1997.

sense new, and terrorist organizations as diverse as Shining Path in Peru and the PKK in Turkey derive substantial revenue from drug-related commerce. But the enormous sums of money involved, as well as numerous points of contact between leading mafias and legitimate institutions, can facilitate acts that would be difficult for politically motivated terrorist groups to undertake—and pay for—on their own. This is a particular risk in relation to nuclear terrorism. Although details remain murky, Russian mafias are already reported to be involved in obtaining and smuggling nuclear materials, and in the most extreme case, perhaps even small nuclear weapons.[49] Further turmoil in Russia could worsen the outlook for control of nuclear materials and technology. As the conflict between transnational mafias and concerned states becomes more direct, it raises the possibility that mafias themselves will threaten nuclear or other forms of unconventional terrorism.

As the experience with Osama bin Laden, a rogue Saudi businessman with extreme Islamist and anti-American views, suggests, the future environment may see more international terrorism financed by private means. Private sponsors of terrorist movements, not necessarily limited to Islamic radicalism and with full access to information technologies and techniques, may find it convenient to operate against regimes, rival movements, or the United States from far-flung bases. And as the bin Laden experience shows, targets will include the relatively "hard" U.S. overseas military presence as well as softer diplomatic and civilian targets.[50] Bin Laden established himself in Afghanistan, along with other Arab Afghans, and Sudan offers another congenial environment. In the future, bases for privately sponsored terrorism might as easily be found in unstable regions elsewhere—in the Balkans or the Caucasus, or where wealthy elites exist against a background of strong anti-Western resentment, such as Malaysia. Arguably, the decline in overt state sponsorship may

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[49]Douglas Farah, "Freeh Says Russian Mafias Pose Growing Threat to U.S.: FBI Chief Also Warns of Nuclear Banditry," *Washington Post*, October 2, 1997.

[50]After the Khobar Towers bombing, bin Laden issued explicit calls for a holy war against U.S. forces in the Gulf. Robert Fisk, "Saudi Calls for Jihad Against U.S. 'Crusader'," *The Independent*, September 2, 1996; and report interview with bin Laden in Afghanistan, *The Independent*, July 10, 1996. The full text of the declaration was published in *Al-Islah* (London), FBIS-NES-96-173, September 2, 1996.

stimulate the rise of privately sponsored terrorism—the dark side of global philanthropy.

Losers in Confrontations with the United States and the West. Losers in confrontations with the United States may turn to terrorism as a means of expressing their frustration or carrying on their armed struggle. Such attacks may be launched against targets within the United States, or aimed at U.S. citizens or interests abroad. They may be carried out by aggrieved states, or conducted by networks of sympathetic individuals, including diaspora groups, with or without the knowledge and backing of state actors. In the wake of the Gulf War, Baghdad apparently sanctioned a failed attempt to assassinate former President Bush, and some analysts have alleged an Iraqi hand in both the World Trade Center bombing and the 1995–1996 bombing against U.S. military targets in Saudi Arabia.[51] Given the scale of the military defeat and subsequent economic devastation inflicted on Iraq, it would be surprising if the United States did not continue to confront a risk of Iraqi-supported terrorism motivated largely by revenge and the desire to burnish Iraq's image in radical circles. Similarly, Iranian support for terrorism against U.S. targets in the Gulf and elsewhere may be aimed, in part, at keeping the United States off balance. A good deal of the impetus, however, may come from a less rational desire for revenge against the U.S. policy of isolation and containment.

There will be other, future candidates for sponsorship of revenge-based terrorist campaigns against the United States and its allies, including radical Serb nationalists angered at NATO's role in Bosnia or Mexican drug lords enraged by aggressive U.S. antidrug efforts. Moreover, terrorist campaigns based in deep-rooted anger over defeat or abuses, real or perceived, can be very long-lived, as the almost hundred-year history of Armenian revenge attacks on Turkish officials demonstrates.

It is worth asking why this form of terrorism looms as a serious risk in today's environment, when it did not follow the defeat of major powers in two world wars. The difference may lie in the fact that the Gulf War, the U.S. engagement in Bosnia, and the cold war with Iran all

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[51]See Laurie Mylroie, "The World Trade Center Bomb: Who is Ramzi Yousef? And Why It Matters," *The National Interest*, Winter 1995–1996.

involve disproportionate power relationships. In addition, the propensity for terrorism on the part of the defeated or "contained" may be influenced by the extent of their isolation from the international community. Under certain conditions, as in the case of Iraq, there may be strategic reasons for maintaining a policy of post-defeat containment, even if the risk of revenge-based terrorism is increased. Another possible explanation is that the rules of the game have changed, with states now more willing to engage in terrorism as an expression of frustration in their relations with stronger powers (would a defeated France have engaged in state-sponsored terrorism against Germany in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War?). Yet another useful distinction may be made between status quo and revolutionary states, with the former generally reluctant to use terrorism as an instrument of revenge, even in defeat or political frustration.

Anarchy and Rage. Western views of terrorism have been shaped by the period of nationalist and ideological terrorism, and more recently by the challenge of religious and "postmodern" terrorism. As a result, analysts and policymakers are attuned to the question of terrorist agendas, whether political or transcendental. Yet a considerable amount of global terrorism defies this sort of explanation. The horrific violence in Algeria springs from a political crisis, but is increasingly divorced from any coherent political explanation. What began as a struggle between the military government and extremists bent on the establishment of an Islamic state has deteriorated into a shadowy war of all against all, in which personal and clan vendettas, factional struggles, and criminal infighting probably account for much of the "terrorist" violence. Despite the government's claims to have contained the terrorism, the country hovers on the verge of anarchy. The most clearly discernible impetus behind the violence is the profound alienation—rage is perhaps the more accurate term—of younger Algerians with no economic or social prospects.

Terrorism in Algeria is a striking case of a phenomenon also seen elsewhere. Arguably, Rwanda, Haiti, and Somalia provide other examples where political crises have given way to terrorist behavior and popular rage, often divorced from any clear political agenda.[52]

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[52]The violence accompanying the partition of India and Pakistan after independence had some of the same hallmarks.

The net result is a dissolution of society and normal constraints on violence. In the worst case, this is the future foreseen by some observers for the 21st century's failed states. Populations are terrorized, and this terror may spill over to affect adjacent or involved states (as in the case of Algeria and France), but much of the original motivation for terrorism and counterterrorism has evaporated. Levels of underdevelopment and social stress in Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia suggest that there is a reservoir of terrorism flowing from anarchy and rage. Much of this violence may not resemble terrorism in the classical sense, but the challenges it poses for Western policymakers and security establishments may be very similar, especially where foreigners emerge as favored targets.

Implications for the Future

Our discussion of future sources of terrorism contains implications for counterterrorism strategy and planning, most notably:

- The United States will need to look beyond traditional agendas and traditional regions in anticipating terrorist risks. Over the next decade, the Balkans, the Caucasus, and other centers of ethnic conflict could well emerge as leading producers and exporters of terrorism affecting U.S. interests.

- To a far greater extent than in the past, both terrorists and their victims may have little to do with states and much more to do with nonstate—even private or criminal—concerns.

- The revolution in military affairs may drive less-capable powers (i.e., most of the actors in the international system) toward asymmetric strategies when in conflict with the United States and its allies, and these strategies may well include conventional and unconventional terrorism.

- New ideological struggles may emerge to fuel terrorism aimed at the security of individuals, states, and the international system itself.

- Successful U.S. engagement in the management or shaping of the security environment in key regions may produce residual risks in the form of terrorism carried out by the defeated or contained.

- Finally, there may be a growing tendency toward terrorism divorced from any coherent political agenda, motivated instead by transcendental or nihilist objectives, or simply rage at the failure of some societies and the success of others.

To the extent that most terrorism, worldwide, will remain within the borders of affected societies and will not have the United States as an explicit target, the phenomenon will have highly variable consequences for U.S. security. We must recognize that U.S. exposure goes beyond the direct vulnerability of citizens, property, and territory. Terrorism also has the potential to affect U.S. interests indirectly but significantly—through attacks on allies, corrosive effects on the stability of key states and regions, as well as broader, systemic consequences for the international security environment.

THE LESSONS AND RELEVANCE OF COUNTERTERRORISM EXPERIENCE

U.S. Experience: A Mixed Legacy

The U.S. counterterrorism experience yields ambiguous lessons for analysts, policymakers, and military planners. Unlike many of our allies, we have not until recently faced a real domestic terrorist threat. Over the past decades, the United States has been a prominent target internationally while enjoying virtual sanctuary within its borders. U.S. security interests have been threatened by terrorism, both directly and indirectly, but the stability and survival of the U.S. as a society has never been seriously threatened by terrorism—and is unlikely to be. In these respects, the U.S. experience is sharply differentiated from that of other key states where international terrorism has been a prominent, even existential concern.

A full survey of the evolution of U.S. counterterrorism policy is beyond the scope of this discussion, but it is worth touching on some of the key, enduring facets.[53] The most visible and controversial elements of U.S. counterterrorism policy have involved the use of force,

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[53]A good recent survey of the role of various U.S. agencies in implementing counterterrorism policy can be found in *Combating Terrorism: Federal Agencies' Efforts to Implement National Policy and Strategy,* General Accounting Office, GAO/NSIAD-97-254, Washington, DC, September 1997.

including air power in various forms—a pattern already evident in the global debate over the U.S. cruise missile strikes against terrorism-related targets in Afghanistan and Sudan. Indeed, there is a long experience along these lines. Apart from the ordeal of the U.S. embassy hostage crisis in Tehran and the failed attempt at intervention, the leading image of U.S. counterterrorism policy is the 1986 Operation El Dorado Canyon against Libya, ordered in response to Libyan involvement in the bombing of a Berlin disco frequented by U.S. military personnel. The air strike and its effects have been heavily debated. With the exception of Britain, allied support for the operation was poor, and many observers interpreted the operation as an unsuccessful effort to assassinate Colonel Qaddafi. Arguably, the operation was designed to send a broad political signal, reduce Libyan enthusiasm for the sponsorship of international terrorism, and demonstrate a U.S. willingness to act. The last motivation, while more vague in intent, should not be underestimated. Indeed, the desire for strategic catharsis is arguably an important component of counterterrorism policy generally.

The Libyan case yields ambiguous lessons. On the one hand, the widespread perception that Operation El Dorado Canyon dissuaded the Libyan regime from further acts of terror does not withstand close scrutiny. After a brief respite, Libya appears to have resumed, even increased, its involvement in international terrorism. At least 15 incidents in 1987 and eight in 1988 have been linked to Libya. The 1988 bombing of Pan Am 103 in which 278 died is the most dramatic example of terrorism with a Libyan connection in the wake of the 1986 confrontation. Libyan-sponsored terrorism aimed at Britain (including new support for the IRA) also gathered pace after 1986.[54]

On the other hand, it is difficult to measure the deterrent effect on Libyan behavior in net terms. Even more ambitious terrorist campaigns may have been planned and interrupted. The need for more covert sponsorship may well have reduced the scope of support and the scale of incidents in the years following Operation El Dorado Canyon. The deterrent effect of the air strike on other state sponsors

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[54]Libya's terror campaign in this period included attempts at operations within the United States itself (e.g., the recruitment of a Japanese Red Army terrorist, Yu Kikumura, for a planned bombing in the Wall Street area). See the RAND-St. Andrews Chronology of International Terrorism and the discussion in Chapter Two.

of terrorism is similarly difficult to measure. Overall, narrow measures of the utility of military responses to international terrorism (How many incidents prior? How many incidents after?) may not be the most appropriate for a global power with systemic interests in the containment of terrorism and the maintenance of credibility in security terms. Having established Libyan culpability, especially against the background of a broader U.S.-Libyan confrontation, some direct response was inevitable and required.

Before the events of August 1998, less attention had been devoted to U.S. operations aimed at individuals implicated in terrorist acts against U.S. citizens. Examples include the 1987 capture of Fawaz Younis, a Lebanese terrorist aboard a yacht near Cyprus and his subsequent trial and imprisonment in the United States; the interception of an Egyptian aircraft carrying terrorists involved in the *Achille Lauro* hijacking and their seizure at Sigonella; and the capture in Pakistan of Mir Aimal Kansi, responsible for the 1993 shooting outside the CIA headquarters in Virginia. The strikes against the bin Laden infrastructure in Afghanistan provide a more recent example. Indeed, these more personalized applications of surveillance and the use of limited force may become prominent features of future policy to counter the new terrorism.

The thrust of U.S. counterterrorism policy has been the application of economic sanctions against state sponsors, multilaterally where possible, and domestic legislation.[55] The Omnibus Terrorism Act of 1986 made terrorist attacks on U.S. citizens abroad a federal crime and authorized extraterritorial arrest and trial in U.S. courts. Counterterrorism legislation developed under the Clinton Administration reflects the changing nature of terrorism and focuses on transnational threats, weapons of mass destruction, and terrorist funding sources. Like many of its allies, the United States has been committed in principle to the policy of "no negotiations" with terrorists, but this policy has been overwhelmed on numerous occasions by the pressure for resolution. Negotiations were integral to the release of the hostages in Teheran, and the United States has negoti-

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[55]The current list of state sponsors subject to varying sanctions includes Libya, Iran, Iraq, Cuba, North Korea, Syria, and Sudan.

ated officially and unofficially for the release of hostages in Lebanon, including the notorious arms-for-hostages deal with Iran.[56]

In the post–Cold War period, there has been a refocus of intelligence collection and analysis on terrorist risks, among other unconventional security challenges. Finally, there is a tradition of hardening in response to terrorist risks. The first wave of hardening came as a response to the hijackings of international airliners in 1970s and 1980s, often with loss of American lives. The current worldwide system of airport security has its origins in this era, and the United States remains a strong advocate for further hardening of air travel. Most analysts would judge efforts in this area to have been quite successful in reducing the incidence of hijackings and attacks on commercial aircraft.[57] A second period of hardening is now under way as a result of the Khobar Towers bombing, the embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya, and the perception of a growing terrorist threat to the U.S. military and civilian presence overseas.

Just as terrorism is becoming an overtly transnational problem, the international dimension of counterterrorism policy is acquiring greater importance, both in terms of cooperative efforts and of comparative lessons to be learned. With this in mind, it is useful to explore perceptions and lessons from the experience of three key allies—Britain, France, and Israel.[58] Although each has faced quite different terrorism risks, and the exposure of all three differs in important respects from that of the United States, aspects of their experience and counterterrorism strategies are relevant to the U.S. debate. In particular, these countries have their own understanding of national vulnerability, force protection problems, and the changing nature of terrorism. They also have distinct views about American exposure and policy with regard to international terrorism. Like the

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[56]On the evolution of U.S. policy through the late early 1990s, see J. Brent Wilson, "The United States' Response to International Terrorism," in David A. Charters (ed.), *The Deadly Sin of Terrorism: Its Effect on Democracy and Civil Liberty in Six Countries,* Greenwood, Westport, Connecticut, 1994.

[57]See Paul Wilkinson, "Airline Security," unpublished paper, University of St. Andrews, Scotland, 1997.

[58]A good comparative and analytical survey of a wider set of counterterrorism experiences can be found in Bruce Hoffman and Jennifer Morrison Taw, *A Strategic Framework for Countering Terrorism and Insurgency,* RAND, N-3506-DOS, 1992.

United States, Britain, France, and, to a lesser extent, Israel are robust societies, politically and economically. With the exception of Israel, the terrorist threat to these states is less existential than environmental.

The United Kingdom Experience[59]

Terrorism has historically been more of an internal problem for Britain than an international one. But internal in this context exceeds simply *domestic*, since much of Britain's experience of terrorism and counterterrorism has involved the struggle against nationalist revolutionaries in the heyday of the British Empire as well as in the intense period of decolonization after 1945. Only with the revival of political violence in Northern Ireland after 1969 has Britain faced a serious domestic terrorist challenge. Another and related aspect of the British experience has been the primacy of internal over military instruments in the fight against terrorism. Elements such as the Special Air Service (SAS) have taken part in counterterrorism operations, but the lead organizations have been and remain internal— Scotland Yard (especially the Special Branch and Specialist Operations Division), the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and above all the Security Service (MI-5).

Contemporary British thinking on counterterrorism tends to reflect the internal dimension that is most relevant to the United Kingdom (UK). Not surprisingly, British military thinking also focuses on internal risks, especially in the context of Northern Ireland and the spillover of Provisional IRA violence in Britain and against UK forces in Germany. A secondary, residual influence on British military doctrine flows from the colonial and postcolonial counterinsurgency experience. In general, there is a strong preference at all levels to give the police forces the central role in countering terrorism (this was true even in relation to counterinsurgency campaigns). With respect to counterterrorism, the military is always seen—in the British military vernacular—to be "acting in support of the civil authority." It is noteworthy that Royal Air Force (RAF) basic doctrine makes no men-

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[59]I am grateful to Bruce Hoffman for his contribution to this discussion, much of which reflects his research and analysis.

tion whatsoever of counterterrorism as a role for air power.[60] British Army doctrine does refer to it, but almost exclusively in the context of counterinsurgency operations (i.e., countering terrorism as a tactic employed by insurgents).[61]   This is in marked contrast to the doctrinal approach within the U.S. military, which tends to identify terrorism as a separate and specific type of low-intensity conflict.

Where Britain has employed military power for counterterrorist, or more broadly counterinsurgency, purposes, the consistent keynote has been the use of "minimum force" and close integration of intelligence and operations with civil authorities. This approach has been assessed by some observers as making a virtue of necessity, given the increasingly serious constraints on British defense manpower and resources in the postwar period. The close integration and use of local resources has been another key feature of the British approach in various counterterrorism settings.

British forces, including the RAF, have had to address serious force protection risks arising from the Provisional IRA's campaign of attacks on military facilities in the UK and Germany. The Ministry of Defense and the services have invested heavily in countering IRA bombing tactics. The principal lesson of this experience has been that it is very difficult, even for sophisticated and highly motivated security establishments, to keep ahead of incremental evolutions in terrorist tactics and technology.[62]

In the European context, Britain has been relatively well-disposed toward multilateral action against international terrorism, and on numerous occasions has severed relations with state sponsors, including Libya, Syria, and Iran. London has also been broadly supportive of U.S.-led diplomatic, economic, and military initiatives in the counterterrorism arena, most notably in providing logistic support for the 1986 Operation El Dorado Canyon.[63] The UK has not,

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[60]Royal Air Force, *AP300—Air Operations,* London (undated).

[61]See DGD&D, 18/34/56, Army Code 71596, *Army Field Manual*, Vol. V, *Operations Other than War (Counter Insurgency Operations)*, p. 3–4.

[62]For a detailed discussion of IRA measures and British countermeasures, see Chapter Two.

[63]See David Bonner, "The United Kingdom Response to Terrorism" in Paul Wilkinson (ed.), *Terrorism: British Perspectives*, Aldershot, Dartmouth, UK, 1993.

with a few specialized exceptions, deployed its military forces in direct counterterrorist missions. Elite units such as the SAS have reportedly advised local forces on hostage rescue operations, notably in Mogadishu (1977) and in Lima (1996–1997).

To date, neither IRA terrorism nor spillovers of Middle Eastern terrorism on British territory have posed an existential threat to British security. Britain's counterterrorism efforts may be judged as successful if the containment of casualties and economic disruption are taken as measures of success. The latter objective has come under pressure in recent years as IRA attacks on the mainland have come to focus on economic targets, including the disruption of rail, road, and air transport, bomb attacks in the City of London, and plans to sabotage electric power facilities.[64] The attractiveness of London as a target for economic terrorism, even for far-flung groups with agendas unrelated to British policy, may be a defining feature of future terrorist risks facing Britain.

The French Experience

Like Britain, France has long dealt with terrorism in both its internal and international dimensions as a consequence of colonialism and a stressful process of decolonization. France has had to address terrorist risks emanating from the Algerian revolution (both Algerian nationalists and French "ultras"), as well as more generalized spillovers of political violence from Middle Eastern conflicts. In the 1970s, France, in common with other West European states, faced a low-key threat from leftist terrorist groups such as Action Direct. More recently, France has felt the spillover effects of a new wave of Islamist violence, reaction, and anarchy in Algeria. Less prominent, but of considerable importance in relation to force protection for the French military, has been the ongoing campaign of terrorism by Corsican separatists.

French counterterrorism strategy has been guided by two basic principles. First, domestic terrorism is treated as subversion, with a

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[64]Warren Hoge, "Britain Convicts Six in Plot to Black Out London," *New York Times,* July 3, 1997.

heavy emphasis on judicial investigation.[65]   Arguably, the leading actors in French counterterrorism efforts are not politicians or generals but magistrates.[66]   Intelligence for counterterrorism has received high priority and much attention is paid to the social roots of extremism and political violence, attention encouraged by the large pool of disaffected North Africans in French suburbs and their potential radicalization. In general, these fears have not materialized, although young North Africans have been implicated in terrorist attacks linked to the Algerian crisis.[67]   The focus on roots of terrorism has helped shape French attitudes toward international initiatives, including the U.S.-organized March 1996 terrorism summit in Sharm al-Shayk, which French officials felt paid too little attention to underlying stresses in the region.[68]

Second, and more significantly, France has pursued a "sanctuary doctrine" aimed at isolating the country from international terrorism through neutrality and promotion of the idea that terrorists have "nothing to achieve and nothing to fear" in France.[69]   This doctrine, applied with considerable vigor and with some success through the 1970s, has been difficult to sustain since the 1980s. On the one hand, the movement toward deeper European cooperation in the fight against terrorism has compelled France to adopt a multilateral approach, through the Trevi Group and other fora, in which France's exposure to terrorism is more difficult to control. On the other hand, the doctrine of sanctuary cannot function when France is the target of choice. The latest experience of Algerian-related terrorism is a clear example. Activists connected with Algeria's GIA (Armed Islamic Group) have engaged in a bombing campaign in the Paris Metro and

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[65]Michel Wieviorka, "French Politics and Strategy on Terrorism," in Barry Rubin (ed.), *The Politics of Counter-Terrorism: The Ordeal of Democratic States*, School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, DC, 1990, p. 68.

[66]See Jean-Louis Bruguiere, "La Menace Terroriste," *Defense Nationale*, April 1996; and Craig R. Whitney, "France's 'Cowboy' Judge: A Relentless Tracker of International Terrorists," *International Herald Tribune*, December 5, 1996.

[67]With the large numbers of disaffected Algerians in French cities, some experts have expressed surprise that France has not seen many more extremist attacks.

[68]Jose Garcon and Jean-Pierre Perrin, "Terrorism: Serious French-U.S. Disagreement," *Liberation*, FBIS, March 27, 1996; and "Sharm al-Shayk Summit Reaction," FBIS, March 15, 1996.

[69]Wieviorka, 1990, p. 68.

elsewhere not out of convenience, but out of well-calculated symbolism and a desire to affect French perceptions.

French observers stress the manpower-intensive nature of counterterrorist operations, in terms of both surveillance and presence, and tend to be skeptical of technology as a solution. French policy, especially in the wake of terrorist bombings in Paris, places considerable emphasis on public reassurance, which has led to a large-scale presence of police, gendarmerie, and regular military forces on French streets. This last dimension has touched off an active debate within the country on the implications for civil-military relations. The memory of a near coup organized by right-wing officers angered at the perceived abandonment of Algeria under de Gaulle still haunts the intellectual debate on this issue in France.

In some respects, France comes closest to the United States in its exposure and concern about force protection. France has a long experience in countering terrorist threats to its military forces abroad, from its colonial days to losses in Lebanon and elsewhere. French NGOs such as Medecins Sans Frontieres have also confronted this problem directly in Somalia and other crisis zones, and this experience has been examined with interest by military planners. French force protection efforts have developed alongside a doctrine of expeditionary warfare, with similarities to the way in which American strategy is evolving. Within France, the principal force protection challenge arises from the activity of Corsican separatists.[70] This has been a special concern for the French Air Force at Solenzara air base (built by the United States in 1944). Both the base and the local electric power infrastructure have been targeted by terrorists. The Algerian bombings in Paris, while not aimed at the military, have also compelled the armed forces to take the force protection mission seriously.

French analysts see Algerian extremists, in Algeria, in France, and elsewhere in Europe, as exemplars of the "new" terrorism. The ex-

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[70]Some dozen factions of Corsican extremists have been responsible for roughly 100 deaths over the past two decades. Most of the incidents have been on the island of Corsica, although several recent incidents on the mainland are regarded by French officials as a disturbing development. "Government Determined to Combat Corsican Terrorism," FBIS, October 8, 1996; and Craig R. Whitney, "Corsicans Say They Set Weekend Bomb on French Mainland," *New York Times*, October 8, 1996.

tremists are characterized by loose networks rather than hierarchical structures, with many acts seemingly the work of freelance individuals or small units—although often tied to the resources and expertise of more professional activists, with many cut-outs. Although the bulk of Algerian-inspired terrorism on both sides of the Mediterranean has been carried out through conventional, even primitive means, at least one incident involved radiological material in Paris.

To the extent that France has historically been able to manage, if not really to insulate itself from, terrorist risks to its territory and its forces abroad, its counterterrorism policy has been largely successful. Terrorism has not posed an existential threat to French society since the Algerian conflict in the 1950s and early 1960s. Nonetheless, France faces difficult adjustments to its policy, arising from a continuing decline in the viability of the "sanctuary" doctrine and growing exposure to spillovers of political violence emanating from across the Mediterranean and, potentially, from France's own immigrant population. French strategists are also increasingly concerned about the potential for "superterrorism" involving WMD. Here too, France's proximity to North Africa and its history of political involvement in the region raises the specter of terrorism being used as a WMD delivery system against the background of confrontation with a rogue regime.

With regard to force protection, France's willingness to employ limited force for political management on a global basis suggests an exposure not unlike that of the United States. Indeed, the presence of French and U.S. forces in regions of shared interest (e.g., the Balkans and the Gulf), with increasingly similar expeditionary strategies, suggests considerable potential for future cooperation.

The Israeli Experience

For Israel, terrorism is an extension of war, and counterterrorism is often and naturally discussed as part of a "war paradigm." Israel's exposure to terrorism is long-standing and intensive, and perhaps as a result various myths have arisen with regard to Israeli counterterrorism policy. These myths include the notion of "no negotiation" and the doctrine of preemption and prompt retaliation. Both doctrines have frayed to the point of being unrecognizable. Israel has, in fact, negotiated in detail with a variety of Palestinian and Shi'ite

groups over prisoner exchanges and other matters. More broadly, Israel is engaged in a more or less continuous process of signaling and bargaining in the cycle of terrorism and response. Not all terrorist attacks on Israel provoke a response, and much of Israel's counterterrorism activity is aimed at preemption, prevention, and disruption rather than simple retaliation. It has been suggested that the essential difference between Israeli and American approaches to counterterrorism is that the former is definably "offensive" while the latter has had the luxury of being "defensive" or reactive in character.[71] Developments over the past decade suggest that this distinction has lost much of its validity (if indeed it was ever valid), as Israeli policy becomes more complex and U.S. policy becomes more aggressive.

Israeli observers stress that because of the compact size of the society and the classification of terrorism as a first-order threat to the security of the state, the Israeli public, even more than Americans or Europeans, see any successful terrorist incident by definition as a failure of counterterrorism policy. At the same time, the ongoing nature of terrorism compels Israeli policymakers to spend enormous energy on reassurance and the management of terrorism as a public relations problem as well as a physical threat.

According to senior Israeli officials, current counterterrorism priorities are (in this order): intelligence, operational capabilities for counterterrorism, and protection. There is a strong intelligence emphasis on humint over technical means. Operational capabilities include, above all, the capacity for preventive action, both covert and military. Protection implies measures for close-in defense and the mitigation of damage and casualties. Like their French counterparts, Israeli officials and analysts stress the manpower-intensive nature of the counterterrorism mission, although Israel has devoted considerable energy to the application of sensor technology to surveillance and interdiction.[72]

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[71]This distinction is made in Charles Wise and Stephen Sloan, "Countering Terrorism: The U.S. and Israeli Approach," *Middle East Review*, Spring 1977.

[72]Including the visible use of sensors (and dummy sensors) for deterrence and canalization.

Israeli officials and analysts are among the most sensitive to the potential for unconventional terrorism (the term is understood in Israel to include suicide bombings), including the use of WMD. Factors such as Israeli geography, the intermixture of Arab and Israeli populations, and the capacity of regional terrorist networks and their supporters lead Israeli experts to worry, foremost, about chemical agents, and only secondarily about biological and nuclear terrorism.[73] It is widely assumed that regional adversaries bent on developing a nuclear capability will wish to hold this card as a component of national power, rather than covertly transfer it to a terrorist organization. That said, it might be possible for adversaries to use terrorists as a primitive delivery system for nuclear weapons, in which case there would be the potential for WMD terrorism to trigger a state-to-state exchange.

The notion of a "new" terrorism, characterized by diffuse networks and unclear sponsorship, is actively debated in Israel. However, Israeli strategy, like that of other Western states—but perhaps particularly the United States—faces a difficult adjustment in this context. Like the United States, Israel has traditionally viewed the application of sanctions and, ultimately, the use of force against state sponsors and terrorist leaderships as a central component of counterterrorism strategy.[74] This made sense in relation to the bureaucratic and hierarchical terrorist organizations Israel has confronted in previous decades. The Israeli air attack on the PLO headquarters at Hamman-Lif near Tunis in October 1985 was aimed at disrupting the routine workings of an organization with payrolls, file cabinets, and conference rooms—as well as sending a strong signal of resolve. Few if any of the terrorist networks Israel confronts today present such targets. The Tunis raid, and the 1982 intervention in Lebanon, were exemplars of an increasingly anachronistic strategy aimed at forms of terrorist organization and behavior that have largely disappeared. With the exception of the situation in southern Lebanon (which has less to do with terrorism and more to do with an insur-

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[73]For a discussion of the general problem, see Gerald M. Steinberg, "Israeli Responses to the Threat of Chemical Warfare," *Armed Forces and Society*, Fall 1993.

[74]See Boaz Ganor, *Countering State-Sponsored Terrorism,* International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, Herzaliya, Israel, 1997.

gency), Israel's counterterrorism strategy is increasingly a struggle against individuals and networks.

Despite the images derived from the Tunis attack, Israeli air power has rarely been employed in a true counterterrorism mode.[75] The Israeli military speaks of operations in southern Lebanon as "counterterrorism," but again, the environment is shaped by an insurgency against well-armed and organized irregular forces, with political constraints on the use of force. As in many other cases of low-intensity conflict, terrorist tactics make an appearance alongside other conventional and unconventional modes of war.[76] It also appears that Hizbullah has responded to Israel's air superiority, and military superiority in general, with a horizontal terror strategy, retaliating for Israeli air strikes through terrorist attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets elsewhere, often far afield. The devastating 1994 bombing of the Jewish center in Buenos Aires, for example, is seen by some analysts as a horizontal response to a previous series of Israeli strikes against Hizbullah targets. Some also view it as successful in deterring more extensive Israeli strikes against the Hizbullah leadership.

Has Israeli counterterrorism policy been successful in strategic terms? Not surprisingly, Israeli observers are divided on this question. Terrorism has not eliminated the state of Israel, so the most extreme terrorist objective has clearly been thwarted. But most terrorism aimed at Israel has had more limited goals. It is true that Israel has outlasted most of the terrorist groups with which it has been engaged over the last decades, but terrorist groups have their

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[75]Israel has reportedly used airborne electronic countermeasures to interfere with Hizbullah radio-controlled bombs, with declining success as Hizbullah developed sophisticated "just in time" arming. These bombings reportedly achieved effectiveness rates as high as 50 percent against Israeli military traffic. Douglas Jehl, "With Iran's Aid, Guerrillas Gain Against Israelis," *New York Times*, February 26, 1997. See also David Eshel, "Counterguerrilla Warfare in South Lebanon," *Marine Corps Gazette*, July 1997.

[76]It is noteworthy that even in this setting, Israel has found it difficult to capitalize on its dominance of the air. The introduction of Stinger-type munitions has complicated the picture. Israel has made extensive use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in conjunction with air and artillery operations in southern Lebanon, with mixed success. There is a perception that UAVs have performed well but cannot offset many of the fundamental constraints on air power in the south Lebanon environment, where guerrilla attacks are often launched from populated areas.

own life cycles and the systemic threat remains. Realistic strategists have characterized the true Israeli objective as living with terrorism, not eliminating it.[77] By this measure, Israeli success is mixed. Existential threats to the state have been avoided, but the future of the society and the overall quality of Israeli security are still driven to a great extent by the effects of terrorism in Israel and its surrounding region.[78] Even by the narrow measure of "maintaining political freedom of action," the judgment is increasingly gloomy. The death of Prime Minister Rabin through terrorism and the ongoing campaign of suicide bombings has had profound consequences for the peace process and has set the limits on political change. Arguably, Israeli counterterrorism policy is now driven more by tactical considerations of personal security than by strategic objectives.

Allied Perspectives on Terrorist Challenges Facing the United States

The U.S. position vis-à-vis terrorism and force protection risks is followed closely and widely discussed in Britain, France, and Israel. Several perspectives stand out. First, experts and officials in all three countries believe that the terrorist threat to U.S. forces and other targets in the Gulf region is bound to deepen. For the most part, the United States is seen as a secondary but symbolic target of regime opponents. In some cases, as with bin Laden, the expulsion of Western forces from the Gulf region, and especially Saudi Arabia, has emerged as an objective in its own right. For Iraq and Iran, any large-scale presence of U.S. forces will present a lucrative target for terrorism, aimed at keeping Washington off balance and perhaps satisfying less-rational needs for revenge. Under these conditions, a reduction in presence and movement toward an expeditionary model for rapid deployment in crises is seen as appropriate. For both British and

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[77]This point was made forcefully in Hanan Alon, *Countering Palestinian Terrorism in Israel: Toward a Policy Analysis of Countermeasures,* RAND, N-1567-FF, 1980. The study concludes that terrorism cannot be eradicated by countermeasures, and therefore policy should be directed toward limiting casualties.

[78]Terrorism can have disproportionately destabilizing effects in fundamentally unstable regions such as the Middle East. See Yehezkel Dror, "Terrorism in Meta-Stable Environments: The Middle East," paper prepared for Begin-Sadaf Center for Strategic Studies, Bar-Ilan University, Conference on Middle East Terrorism, Israel, May 26, 1997.

French observers, the U.S. experience in the Gulf suggests parallels with their own past as security managers in the Middle East (e.g., the Mahdist attacks on British forces in Sudan at the turn of the century). Notably, Israeli officials and observers do not speak in terms of "force protection" as a distinctive problem or mission. Israel's small size and pervasive military reserve system encourage a seamless view of the Israeli Defense Forces and civilian society as potential terrorist targets. Again, south Lebanon is perhaps an exception, but here the problem is in the nature of an insurgency. The terrorist risk facing U.S. forces deployed overseas has no real parallel in Israeli experience.

Second, there is a widespread perception that U.S. technology and organizational innovation are driving the "revolution in military affairs," with an ever-increasing gap between the U.S. military and all other defense establishments in the capacity for conventional war fighting. British, French, and Israeli militaries also exhibit characteristics of this revolution, but the United States is likely to remain the exemplar. As the United States (and the West generally) become more capable than their regional adversaries, terrorism and other forms of unconventional warfare as an asymmetric strategy will become more attractive. Because of the logistical and coalition dimensions of U.S. power projection activities, there is some concern that terrorism in the "war paradigm" aimed at the United States will inevitably affect U.S. allies in Europe and the Middle East. Closer cooperation on counterterrorism strategies may be a key feature of coalition strategy in this environment and may indeed be necessary to prevent terrorist risks from complicating arrangements for access and overflight in crises. Few European or Israeli analysts view Saddam Hussein's failure to mobilize a terrorist front in the Gulf War with complacency, and the continued prospect of Iraqi involvement in terrorist activities is cited as a key question for the future.

A third theme in British, French, and Israeli perception is a degree of skepticism about the ability of technology to counter terrorist threats. Without dismissing the utility of technical means for intelligence gathering, surveillance, and preventive action, analysts in all three countries emphasize the inherently manpower-intensive nature of the antiterrorist mission, especially in civilian settings. Even in force protection, where technology can contribute substantially to the defense of fixed installations, Israeli interlocutors especially insist

that "beyond the perimeter" approaches are critical. One high-ranking Israeli policymaker expressed the view that the best force protection investment for the United States in the Gulf (or elsewhere) would be the assiduous cultivation of influential elites at the local level, building a constituency with a stake in a continued and secure U.S. presence.

Lessons of the Allied Experience

Despite many differences of exposure and perspective, we can identify a few key lessons of the allied experience that are relevant to U.S. and USAF strategy and planning:

- Terrorist risks cannot be eliminated, only contained and managed.

- Effective counterterrorism strategies must address the problem of networks and individuals, not just state sponsors.

- Terrorists tend to innovate in an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary manner in their attacks on military forces and other targets, staying just ahead of countermeasures.

- There is an imperative of close coordination among intelligence, civilian, and military agencies.

- More expeditionary approaches to force protection are needed to accompany expeditionary approaches to power projection.

CONCEPTUALIZING NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY

Discussions about counterterrorism and its strategies are generally conducted in isolation. Perhaps because terrorism is often treated in emotive terms and tends to strike directly at society's sense of security, the struggle against terrorism is frequently seen as an objective in its own right, divorced from broader national security concerns. A more comprehensive approach would place terrorist risks in the context of other risks to national security and would place counterterrorism in the context of other international security—or even "grand strategic"—aims. In short, we should approach U.S. counterterrorism strategy with an eye on the broader security environment,

as well as the full range of instruments—diplomatic, economic, military, and covert—at the disposal of policymakers. Above all, counterterrorism strategy must address the challenges posed by the "new" terrorism—more lethal; increasingly networked; more diverse in terms of motivations, sponsorship, and security consequences; and more global in reach.

One suitable framework, developed at RAND for conceptualizing national counterterrorism strategy, treats the problem in three dimensions: "core" strategy, or furthering the most critical objectives over the longer term; "environment shaping," or fostering the conditions for day-to-day counterterrorism success; and "hedging," or reducing exposure and mitigating the consequences in anticipation of counterterrorism failures.[79] In some areas, air and space power can make a significant contribution to a national counterterrorism strategy. In other areas, its contribution will be limited. As the nature of terrorism has changed, the utility of air and space power is also changing in ways that may render some of the stock images of deterrence and compulsion increasingly anachronistic.

Core Strategy

National counterterrorism strategy should include four core elements: reducing the systemic causes, deterring terrorists and their sponsors, reducing the risk of "superterrorism," and retaliating where deterrence fails. These elements address the longer-term terrorist risk to broader U.S. security interests (e.g., regional stability and freedom of action) as well as special, sharper threats to national security (e.g., terrorist use of WMD).

• *First, political violence, including terrorism, has systemic origins that can be ameliorated.* Social and economic pressures, frustrated political aspirations, and in a more proximate sense, the personal experiences of terrorists and their relations, all contribute to the terrorist reservoir. As one strategist has noted, "terrorism is not ubiquitous and neither is it uncontainable, but the potential for its

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[79]This tripartite framework for strategic planning is developed in several RAND analyses by Paul Davis, Paul Bracken, Zalmay Khalilzad, and others. See Paul K. Davis, *National Security in an Era of Uncertainty,* RAND, P-7605, 1989.

occurrence is virtually as widespread as is the manifestation of bitter political antagonisms . . . reduce the latter and you will reduce, though not eliminate, the former."[80]   That said, policies aimed at reducing the systemic causes for terrorism are by their very nature longer-term instruments.   The failure of regimes to provide for peaceful political change and the phenomenon of economies unable to keep pace with population growth and demands for more evenly distributed benefits can provide fertile ground for extremism and political violence affecting U.S. interests.   For this reason, the United States has a stake in promoting political and economic reform as a means of reducing the potential for terrorism, some of which, as in Latin America, the Middle East, and the Gulf, may be directed at us.

Similarly, unresolved ethnic and nationalist conflicts have traditionally been a leading source of terrorism.   Diplomacy and the use of force can contribute both to the containment and the eventual resolution of such conflicts, whether in the context of the Palestinian issue, nationalist confrontations in the Balkans or the Caucasus, or ethnic frictions in Africa.   Left unresolved, these confrontations will persist as flashpoints for local and international terrorism.   Incorporating policies aimed at reducing the body of grievances behind terrorism does not imply any reduction in the taboo against terrorism as a tactic or sympathy for terrorists.   It simply treats terrorism as we would other sources of conflict and threats to security, by giving first priority to prevention.

It is unlikely that air and space power can contribute significantly to national strategy in this area, which is largely the province of diplomacy and economic policy, and has more to do with the reform of societies than threat or use of force.   Indirectly, however, air power can bolster the security of societies against external threats (as with our Gulf allies or Israel) and permit greater attention to domestic problems—if governments choose to do so intelligently.   Where strategies for forestalling domestic and regional conflict fail, as in "pre-Dayton" Bosnia, air power can support peacekeeping, peacemaking, and humanitarian assistance and perhaps reduce the longer-term scope for terrorism and political violence.

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[80]Colin S. Gray, "Combating Terrorism," *Parameters*, Autumn 1993, p. 20.

• *A second core objective of counterterrorism strategy should be to strengthen and deepen deterrence.* This is a less and less straightforward challenge as terrorists and their sponsors become more diverse and diffuse. Against state sponsors, where these still exist in the traditional sense and can be identified, the most effective approach may be to find targets of value to the regime in the most direct sense, the loss of which would threaten the leadership's hold on power. More generalized diplomatic, economic, or military initiatives aimed at isolation or inflicting pain and embarrassment face many obstacles when the sponsor is a totalitarian or rogue regime. With the most extreme rogues, such as Libya or Iraq, there is the deeper question of whether their behavior, including the sponsorship of terrorism, can be deterred at all—a dilemma that takes on greater significance if we consider terrorism with weapons of mass destruction. Many analyses have addressed the difficulty of applying rational and ethnocentric strategic concepts to "crazy" states.[81] In this setting, deterrence probably cannot be subtle. To be effective, the threat posed may need to be massive and "personal" to the leadership. Qaddafi's Libya is perhaps the best example of this. As noted earlier, the El Dorado Canyon raid may not have deterred Qaddafi from further involvement in international terrorism, but it probably did deter him from the open activity characteristic before 1986.

In contrast, Syrian and Iranian support for terrorism does not follow the "crazy" state model. In both cases, and most clearly for Syria, sponsorship of terrorism continues to serve national and regime interests. Damascus views its ties to terrorist groups as a means of leverage in relations with Israel, Turkey, other Arab states, and the West. It is a card to be kept, used, or traded away as circumstances dictate. As with Iraq, the propensity to become involved with terrorist movements may also flow from the oppressive security culture within the country or the natural link between "state terrorism" and the use of terrorism as an instrument beyond the state's borders. For Iran, international terrorism involvement might best be seen as a product of a "violent and unstable political history" (true of many states in the region) and the dictates of internal politics in the wake

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[81]See most notably, Yehezkel Dror, *Crazy States: A Counterconventional Strategic Problem*, Kraus, Milwood, New York, 1980. See also Steven Metz, "Deterring Conflict Short of War," *Strategic Review*, Fall 1994.

of the revolution—"an instrument of neither first nor last resort."[82] Support for terrorism in this case has rational, if unacceptable, underpinnings, so a more diverse range of tactics can be useful to deter it, including embarrassment, isolation, and denial of key political and economic goals. Indeed, it is arguable that Iraqi, Iranian, and Syrian support for terrorism is a product of perceived strategic weakness and relative weakness in conventional military terms vis-à-vis the United States, Israel, and the West—a sort of ongoing asymmetric strategy. To the extent that Iraq, Iran, and Syria develop stronger conventional and unconventional military capabilities, they may actually find the terrorist instrument less attractive—and turn to different, perhaps more serious challenges for the United States.

In some cases, as in Afghanistan and Sudan, state behavior may constitute a gray area, with tolerance for terrorist activity short of outright sponsorship. Such a regime may not be a U.S. target for preemption or retaliation, but it cannot expect to enjoy immunity from counterterrorist attacks or other sanctions.

Air power has been and will likely continue to be a preferred instrument for striking state sponsors where U.S. interests are directly threatened. This capacity for preemption and retaliation, as demonstrated in Libya and Iraq, supports deterrence vis-à-vis state sponsors, especially where the calculus is more rational than "crazy."

Looking beyond state sponsors, the task of deterrence becomes more difficult but also more imperative given trends in the nature of terrorism. Most observers agree that traditional state sponsorship, while still a factor in key instances, is waning. The "new" terrorism is characterized by more diffuse groups with hazier links to sponsors, many of whom may be nonstate actors in their own right. As a result, the central problem for deterrence is likely to be dealing with individuals and networks rather than states and hierarchical terrorist organizations—as illustrated dramatically by the events of August 1998. A shorthand for this challenge might be "personalized" deterrence. Our counterterrorism policy already shows an inclination in this direction, air power will very likely support this

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[82]Jerrold D. Green, "Terrorism and Politics in Iran," in Martha Crenshaw (ed.), *Terrorism in Context*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, Pennsylvania, 1995, pp. 593–594.

dimension in the future, with consequent requirements for technological leverage in dealing with small actors, even individuals, often in urban settings. Tasks in this setting would include the extraterritorial apprehension of terrorist suspects (as in the forcing down of Achille Lauro hijacking suspects over the Mediterranean at Sigonella), or the return of terrorists caught in far-flung places, with or without the cooperation of host countries.[83] The recent capture in Pakistan of the alleged perpetrator in the lethal shooting outside CIA headquarters provides another example along these lines. More generally, things of value to terrorists and their sponsors as individuals can be identified and held at risk, through the use of force or, equally, through administrative or information means. The targets might be bank accounts, safe-houses, or the individuals themselves. Personalizing our counterterrorism strategy suggests many possible tactics other than outright assassination, which is an unattractive and legally constrained policy and is, on balance, incompatible with U.S. interests.[84]

In seeking to end state sponsorship and to tailor deterrence to the growing role of individuals and networks in international terrorism, we should also be aware of potential and unintended consequences of success. State-sponsored terrorism has historically been among the most conservative in its tactics, and state sponsors may some-times constrain the behavior of violent groups. If extremist groups shift from state sponsorship to the patronage of wealthy sympathiz-ers or nonstate actors with criminal connections, the net result may be less restraint and greater lethality. That said, this trend is already well under way and has little to do with increased pressure on

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[83]Presidential Directive PD-39, in its publicly released version, notes that "if we do not receive adequate cooperation from a state that harbors a terrorist whose extradi-tion we are seeking, we shall take appropriate measures to induce cooperation" . . . "Return of suspects by force may be effected without the cooperation of the host country." See Bryan Bender, "U.S. May Use Force to Nab Terrorists Overseas," *Defense Daily*, January 31, 1997, and "Policy on Terror Suspects Overseas," *Washington Post*, February 5, 1997. The treatment of such activities under international law is ad-dressed in Jimmy Gurule, "Terrorism, Territorial Sovereignty, and the Forcible Apprehension of International Criminals Abroad," *Hastings International and Comparative Law Review*, Vol. 17, p. 457.

[84]For a full discussion of the pros and cons of assassination, see Brian Michael Jenkins, *Should Our Arsenal Against Terrorism Include Assassination?* RAND, P-7303, 1987.

state sponsors. Similarly, in targeting network nodes and key individuals—personalizing deterrence—we may confront some undesirable consequences of such "decapitation." The experience of left-wing terrorism in Europe in the 1970s suggests that splintered and compartmentalized groups may be more violent, in part to demonstrate that they have not lost their ability to act.[85] Certainly, the current fragmented terrorism in Algeria exceeds in its violence anything committed by more coherent terrorist organizations in recent years. Yet it can be argued that the new, networked model of terrorist organization has arisen for reasons of its own and is by definition less affected by the loss of individuals. Such organizations cannot be decapitated in the traditional sense, but their effectiveness can be reduced by interfering with key nodes (people) in the infrastructure and removing key operatives from circulation.

• *A third, and increasingly important "core" objective will be to reduce the risk of "superterrorism" involving weapons of mass destruction.* This is, above all, a problem of homeland defense for the United States, and perhaps the most serious homeland defense challenge in the post–Cold War environment. Indeed, the United States as a global power has a stake in containing this risk worldwide, not just on U.S. territory, since a devastating terrorist use of WMD— especially a nuclear device—would transform security perceptions and strategic reality everywhere. The potential for WMD terrorism has emerged as a driving force behind the public debate on terrorism and counterterrorism policy, as well as recent U.S. government initiatives on the same issues.[86] Nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological attacks by terrorists, acting alone or as part of a sponsored strike against the United States, could cause mass casualties as well as immense economic and social disruption in urban areas. Military facilities, including air bases, will be vulnerable, although WMD attacks are unlikely to prove effective unless they are near or on the

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[85]See Martha Crenshaw, "The Unintended Consequences of Counter-terrorism Policies," unpublished paper prepared for the Council on Foreign Relations Roundtable on Terrorism, New York, 1997.

[86]The Defense Science Board and the National Defense Panel have focused on WMD and transnational risks in recent studies. A good general discussion of the need for national attention to this problem can be found in *Terrorism, Weapons of Mass Destruction, and U.S. Security,* 1997 Sam Nunn Policy Forum (Executive Summary), University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, 1997.

base. The global control and surveillance of WMD-related materials (and expertise) is an important objective. If state adversaries are manufacturing agents of mass destruction that could be delivered by terrorist means, preemptive action could be required, with consequent demands on air power for the attack of hardened targets. Specialized intelligence activities, in cooperation with allied states, are essential for warning, control, and intervention in this inherently global problem area.

• *Fourth, the United States must have the capacity and willingness to retaliate against terrorists and their sponsors when deterrence and preventive measures fail.* With the increasing lethality of international terrorism, the question of retaliation can be expected to loom even larger in the perceptions of policymakers and the public. A demonstrated willingness to retaliate makes an obvious contribution to deterrence, especially in relation to state sponsors with much to lose, but also serves less-tangible purposes. Retaliation, including the use of air power as in Operation El Dorado Canyon, as in Afghanistan and Sudan, can serve an important cathartic purpose, and reassures the public and international opinion that terrorism against U.S. interests does not fall below the threshold of U.S. action. As in the consideration of deterrence, the principal challenge for the future is likely to be the adaptation of our retaliatory policies and techniques to deal with individuals, nonstate actors, and terrorist networks. Again, in many cases the appropriate response may not be the physical destruction of targets, but rather strikes against information and resources.

It is worth noting here that terrorism itself can be a constraint on the use of force, including air power, by the United States in regional contingencies. Terrorist action against facilities, personnel, and equipment, either deployed or en route, is one problem. Another problem is posed by the demonstrated tendency of adversaries under threat of U.S. air strikes to take hostages as a means of deterring attacks. Saddam Hussein resorted to this tactic during Desert Shield, and Bosnian Serb commanders held UN peacekeepers for similar purposes. The likelihood that adversaries, especially weak adversaries, will employ such tactics in the future reinforces the need for accurate intelligence and surveillance, highly discrete targeting, and nonlethal technologies.

Environment Shaping

The core dimensions of counterterrorism strategy will need to be supported by a range of policies aimed at containing near-term risks and fostering the conditions for ongoing success. Several of these policies have implications for air and space power.

• *Make international terrorism more transparent.* Air and space power can contribute to the embarrassment and isolation of traditional state sponsors by making their support for terrorism more transparent to U.S. policymakers and world opinion. Examples are the use of space-based surveillance, reconnaissance aircraft, and unmanned aerial vehicles to expose terrorist camps or other forms of state or nonstate assistance. Overhead imagery helped explain the U.S. action against terrorist targets in Afghanistan. This is likely to be a key, high-leverage role for air and space power, and can have a synergistic effect with other counterterrorism instruments. Similarly, the actions of terrorist organizations and networks of individuals can be monitored from space and the information used by the United States or shared, where appropriate, to forestall terrorist attacks or to identify critical nodes in the terrorist infrastructure. While it may be argued that this is largely the province of humint, the growing reliance of terrorist networks on modern information flows introduces new possibilities for surveillance and intelligence gathering by technical means short of space-based reconnaissance. The ability to make terrorism more transparent can help to build the case for coordinated, international responses to terrorist networks or to state sponsors, where otherwise evidence is often murky and insufficient to mobilize allied policymakers (as has been the case vis-à-vis Iran).[87] Air and space power can also serve force protection in increasingly risk-prone environments such as the Gulf and Central America.

• *Shrink zones of chaos and terrorist sanctuary.*[88] Just as reducing the root causes of terrorism is a core objective, so should we change the conditions in areas that have offered terrorists safe havens and bases for transnational operations. Afghanistan, Sudan, Northern Iraq, and

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[87]The utility of exposing covert aggression to public view as a preparation for U.S. action against state sponsors is discussed in Stephen T. Hosmer and George K. Tanham, *Countering Covert Aggression,* RAND, N-2412-USDP, 1986, pp. 11–12.

[88]I am grateful to my RAND colleague Zalmay Khalilzad for this formulation.

Syrian-controlled areas of Lebanon are leading examples. In another setting, conditions in Colombia offer similar refuge. We must prevent the emergence of new zones of chaos and sanctuary. As noted earlier, there is significant potential for this in parts of the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Where domestic terrorism is rife, as in Algeria, there will also be a risk of cross-border activity. At the diplomatic level, we should be keenly aware of the risks inherent in allowing political vacuums to exist, with no clear-cut exercise of sovereignty. Such areas will be the natural operating environment for violent nonstate actors and terrorist networks. To the extent that notions of spreading anarchy on the periphery of the developed world prove correct, the problem of terrorist-friendly zones may become more widespread. Governments presiding over sanctuaries, whether within their own territory (as in Sudan) or across their borders (as with Syria's role in Lebanon) must understand that closing down terrorist bases and expelling known activists are essential preconditions for any form of positive relations with the United States, and that continued tolerance of terrorist activity implies a high and continuing cost. With regard to the forcible apprehension of terrorist suspects, zones of chaos and sanctuary should be fair game for the United States and the international community. Large rewards for information on suspect individuals and groups in such areas may be effective.

• *Make counterterrorism an integral part of alliance strategies.* Alliance relationships in Europe and Asia are changing to reflect post–Cold War requirements. In parallel with the geographic enlargement of NATO, the Alliance is beginning to take up new missions, including peacekeeping and crisis management. Defense relationships with Japan, Israel, and even Russia are being driven in the direction of cooperation on security challenges rather than the defense of borders. Cooperation in the realm of counterterrorism should be high on the agenda for these evolving security relationships. In the case of NATO, this may require giving the Alliance a specific mandate to work in this area, since terrorism is still treated as a national responsibility. A coordinated approach to terrorism should be part of the broader dialogue on "third pillar" issues (crime, narcotics, migration, etc.) between Washington and the EU. If U.S. counterterrorism strategy concentrates on homeland defense against WMD terrorism and features more active efforts to apprehend sus-

pects and preemptive action abroad, multilateral coordination will become essential if our policy is to avoid political frictions with allies.

• *Limit U.S. exposure worldwide, consistent with grand strategic objectives and operational requirements.* As a global power with pervasive economic and political interests, the United States will remain exposed to international terrorism. Although facilities can be hardened and tourists, businessmen, and diplomats can adjust their behavior to present less-attractive targets, the very scale and importance of the U.S. engagement overseas suggests this must be an "accepted vulnerability." With regard to the U.S. military presence, more explicit choices are possible. The movement toward an expeditionary model for presence and power projection has many sources, but must include the desire to limit terrorist risks as a constraint on U.S. freedom of action. In some instances, as in Korea, requirements for immediate forward defense make reliance on a purely expeditionary model for power projection difficult. In Europe, and perhaps elsewhere, political imperatives will drive the balance between permanent presence and power projection. In the Gulf, where terrorist risks are high and probably growing, the expeditionary model has considerable advantages. The resentments and frictions associated with a highly visible permanent presence may be reduced, limiting the incentives for terrorism directed at U.S. forces. At the same time, a more flexible and unpredictable approach to basing complicates the planning problem for terrorists bent on attacking U.S. facilities and personnel. The Air Expeditionary Force concept enjoys these and other advantages in relation to terrorist risks but also imposes new challenges for force protection, which must also become more expeditionary, adaptable, and conversant with conditions in advance of deployments to far-flung destinations.

USAF force protection efforts are part of the "hardening" task, and will contribute to U.S. counterterrorism strategy by reducing terrorism-related constraints on U.S. freedom of action. These efforts will be part of a larger global equation with regard to vulnerability and terrorists' choice of targets. Past terrorist behavior suggests a considerable degree of adaptability in tactics, with a natural preference for soft targets. If U.S. military forces deployed in the Gulf become harder, less-attractive targets, terrorists might shift their focus to U.S. diplomats and businessmen or the oil industry. This displacement effect of hardening on other targets in no sense reduces the rationale

for better force protection—it simply suggests that counterterrorism must be viewed in a comprehensive manner, with full recognition of all consequences.

• *Target terrorist funding and networks.* As traditional patterns of state sponsorship wane and are overtaken by a much more diffuse type of sponsorship, with cut-outs and a greater role for nonstate sponsors, our counterterrorism policies must adapt accordingly. "Following the money" will help to identify sponsors and the terrorists themselves in this murkier environment. Understanding and severing the funding links between international crime and drug organizations and politically motivated terrorists will interrupt a major source of support for some of the most violent terrorist movements and make the most expensive and lethal technologies more difficult to acquire (e.g., agents of mass destruction, Stinger-class missiles). More diverse funding sources, including sympathetic individuals in the United States, also imply a larger group of potentially violent operatives.[89] To some extent, this linkage has already been borne out with the progression from fund-raising to international terrorist incidents on U.S. soil.

The propensity for terrorist groups to seek "private-sector" funding, often in parallel with apparently nonviolent social and political activities (Hamas provides an example), may encourage victims of terrorist acts to seek financial compensation from terrorist movements, their fund-raisers, and donors. The recent compensation paid by the PLO to the Klinghoffer family, relatives of the victim of the 1985 Achille Lauro hijacking, sets a useful precedent.[90] If donors to causes linked with terrorism become aware that their assets can be placed in jeopardy, their enthusiasm may well be dimmed.

Similarly, the propensity of modern terrorist movements to adopt network forms of organization in preference to more traditional, hierarchical patterns is to a great extent a consequence of the informa-

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[89]Inadequate scrutiny and control of students from countries implicated in terrorism resident in the United States raises issues related to terrorist infrastructure as well as the leakage of technical expertise on weapons of mass destruction. Hillary Mann, *Open Admissions: U.S. Policy Toward Students from Terrorism-Supporting Countries in the Middle East,* Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Washington, DC, 1997.

[90]"PLO Settles with Family of Achille Lauro Victim," *Washington Post*, August 12, 1997.

tion revolution and the growing use of modern communications by terrorists. Indeed, concepts of "leaderless resistance" as espoused by anti-government militia groups in the United States or the highly compartmented cells seen in Hamas and other potent terrorist groups in the Middle East are greatly facilitated by encrypted phone communications and the Internet. This suggests that much of our counterterrorism effort in the future will be in the information warfare realm. Although networks will be more difficult to penetrate and disrupt than traditional groups, they too will have vulnerable nodes that can be targeted. Networks are likely to be required to fight networks, which argues for greater networking and coordination among counterterrorism services and agencies.[91]

Hedging Strategy

The third dimension of counterterrorism strategy accepts that however effective other aspects of our strategy may be, terrorists will continue to operate and act against our interests. The terrorist threat can never be reduced to zero, and the growing tendency toward action by small, ad hoc groups—freelance terror—holds the potential for significant numbers of incidents with only a loose motivational link. Under these conditions, U.S. and allied policy will need to hedge against continued terrorism, limiting its scale and destructiveness, as outlined below.

• *Harden key policies and strategies against terrorist interruption.* Beyond hardening key civilian and military facilities, the United States must consider ways of hardening policies to limit terrorist risks to our national interests. Key negotiations, such as the Middle East peace process, might be put on a faster track to reduce the opportunity for extremists to disrupt the process through terrorism. Various operations other than war, especially peacekeeping deployments, might be timed and configured to reduce the potential for terrorist attacks on U.S. forces (e.g., without a prolonged and uncertain exit phase that makes terrorism an attractive option for elements aiming to end a deployment).

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[91]See Chapter Three.

• *Emphasize stand-off and space-based capabilities for presence and intervention in the most chaotic and unstable regions.* In addition to moving toward an expeditionary approach to power projection as a means of shaping the strategic environment, U.S. and USAF strategy can hedge against terrorist risks stemming from anarchy and regime instability by emphasizing long-range strike and space-based surveillance as a contribution to regional security. Soldiers and aircraft on the ground, in-country and vulnerable to terrorist attacks, should not be the only measure of our security interests and commitments, although in some cases an in-theater presence will remain essential for deterrence and reassurance.

• *Prepare to mitigate the effects of conventional and unconventional terrorism.* The difficulty of eliminating the terrorist risk—regardless of national strategy—and the growing lethality of international terrorism point to a need for measures and capabilities aimed at limiting the consequences of terrorist incidents. The trend toward fewer but more spectacular attacks means that special operations forces for intervention and hostage rescue will be a vital "force in being," if infrequently employed. In fact, hostage rescue, a traditional raison d'être for antiterrorist forces, may be a declining mission as politically motivated terrorist groups with explicit agendas give way to religious, millenarian, and "asymmetric" terrorists with less finely calibrated and more destructive agendas. Special operations forces are likely to be employed in the future for forcible apprehension, or for preemptive action, especially where agents of mass destruction are involved.

The potential for highly destructive and disruptive terrorist attacks in urban areas, possibly with weapons of mass destruction, has encouraged more active efforts to prepare municipalities in the United States and elsewhere to recognize and respond to such attacks. In the wake of the Aum cult's chemical attack in the Tokyo subway and revelations about planned attacks by Islamic extremists on targets in New York, and many other minor incidents involving agents of mass destruction, this emphasis is likely to continue and deepen. Policymakers and publics may eventually come to regard this as the leading post–Cold War civil defense issue. Civilian agencies are not yet well prepared to detect and manage the consequences of a disastrous chemical, biological, or radiological attack, not to mention the detonation of a nuclear device—although they are improving.

Addressing these issues will be a fertile area for cooperation between civilian and defense agencies, as well as the military services, and a growing source of demands for operations other than war.

In the realm of information operations, the United States and the USAF must weigh carefully the implications of modernization and the growing connections between military and civilian infrastructures. In some cases, we may wish to pay a price in terms of efficiency to harden and insulate critical communications links.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall Observations

Most contemporary analyses of terrorism focus on terrorist political violence as a stand-alone phenomenon, without reference to its geopolitical and strategic context. Similarly, counterterrorism policy is rarely discussed in terms of its place in broader national security planning. Prior to the specter of "superterrorism" using weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, however horrible, never posed an existential threat to U.S. security. With the important exception of WMD, terrorism still does not pose a grave threat to America's future as it does to many other societies around the world. But many types of terrorism do pose a threat to U.S. interests, from homeland defense to regional security and the stability of the international system. As a global power, the U.S. perspective on terrorism is bound to differ in substantial ways from that of others, including allies such as Britain, France, and Israel, whose experiences provide lessons, but not necessarily direction, for U.S. counterterrorism policy. In light of the preceding analysis, and other RAND research, certain overall conclusions stand out:

- *Terrorism is becoming a more diverse and more lethal problem*. Contemporary terrorism occupies an expanded place on the conflict spectrum, from connections to drug trafficking and crime to its use as an "asymmetric strategy" by state and non-state adversaries in a war paradigm. For a variety of reasons, primarily the rise of religious and millenarian groups with transcendent agendas but also the hardening of established political groups, terrorism has become more lethal. With the potential for

catastrophic terrorism using weapons of mass destruction, lethality could increase dramatically.

- *The geopolitics of terrorism are changing.* Over the next decades, the prevailing image of terrorism affecting U.S. interests as a problem emanating largely from the Middle East is likely to be overtaken by a more diverse set of risks. The Balkans, the former Soviet Union, and Latin America are set to emerge as significant sources of terrorism aimed at or affecting U.S. civilian and military activities. Moreover, the vast bulk of global terrorism will continue to be confined within the borders of affected states. More anarchic futures in the Third World could fuel this type of terrorism, threatening America's systemic interests as a global power and placing constraints on our international engagement.

- *Much counterterrorism experience is losing its relevance in light of the "new" terrorism.* Many established images of counterterrorism policy, above all the use of force against state sponsors, are losing their relevance as traditional forms of terrorist behavior and organization—largely a product of the ideological and national liberation movements of the 1960s–1980s—give way to new patterns. The new terrorism often lacks a detailed political agenda against which the use of violence can be calibrated, and is therefore more lethal. It is less hierarchical in organization, more highly networked, more diffuse in membership and sponsorship, and may aim at disruption as well as destruction. The absence of clear-cut sponsorship, above all, will complicate the task of deterrence and response. It will also compel a reorientation of policy to target nonstate sponsors and individual suspects.

- *Foreign experts see U.S. exposure increasing but view the problem in narrower terms.* A survey of expert British, French, and Israeli perspectives yields a gloomy outlook with regard to U.S. exposure to terrorist risks, which are widely seen as deepening, particularly with regard to U.S. forces in the Gulf. Policymakers and observers in these allied countries are not surprisingly focused on specific national risks, few of which are analogous to risks facing the United States at home and abroad. With the limited exception of France, which shares a global and expeditionary outlook in strategic terms, terrorist challenges are generally viewed in narrower, but starker, terms. Notably, experts in all

three countries share a degree of skepticism about technology as a "solution" in counterterrorism.

- *A comprehensive counterterrorism strategy should have core, environment shaping, and hedging components.* Treating terrorism as one of many national security challenges suggests a multi-dimensional approach. Core, longer-term strategy must address the political, economic, and social roots of international terrorism, make deterrence relevant to nonstate actors as well as state sponsors, and reduce the risk of truly catastrophic terrorism using weapons of mass destruction. The environment shaping aspect aims to create conditions for successfully managing terrorist risks: making terrorism more transparent, shrinking "zones of chaos," harnessing key alliances to the counterterrorism effort, reducing U.S. exposure, and cutting off terrorism's resources. Finally, the United States can hedge against inevitable terrorism by hardening policies as well as targets, and preparing to mitigate the effects of increasingly lethal terrorist acts.

Implications for Military Strategy and the U.S. Air Force

In many instances, air and space power will not be the best instruments in the U.S.-counterterrorism arsenal, and air power will rarely be used independently against terrorism. However, air and space power can play a role in intelligence and covert action. There will also be instances, as in the past, where air and space power will be instruments of choice in the fight against terrorism. Moreover, terrorism and counterterrorism policy are changing in ways that will significantly affect the future contribution of air- and space-based instruments.

- *Events in Sigonella and Afghanistan as well as Operation El Dorado Canyon may be key models for the future.* Air power in the service of counterterrorism will include, but will also go beyond, the surveillance and punishment of state sponsors. Deterrence and response will likely evolve in the direction of a more "personalized" approach, emphasizing the monitoring and attack of key nodes in terrorist networks and the forcible apprehension of terrorist suspects—with or without the cooperation of local states. Future demands on air power may be driven as

much by requirements for intercepting and extracting suspects as by the need to attack terrorist training camps and strike regimes supporting the export of terrorism.

- *Air and space power will help make terrorism—an inherently amorphous phenomenon—more transparent.* The ability to identify and to target terrorist-related activity and to help expose terrorism and its sponsors for policymakers and international opinion will be key contributions of air- and space-based assets. As terrorism becomes more diffuse and its sponsorship increasingly hazy, finding the "smoking gun" will become more difficult but essential to determine strategies and build a consensus for action. Space-based sensors, surveillance by UAVs, and signals intelligence (SIGINT) will facilitate the application of air power and other instruments in the service of counterterrorism.

- *Gaining leverage in addressing the new terrorism will be a key strategic and technical challenge.* Future requirements for counterterrorism will be part of a broader need to tailor air and space power to challenges posed by nonstate actors, including networks of individuals. At the same time, policy instruments, including air and space power, will need to concentrate on detecting and preventing the use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists—whether as a stand-alone apocalyptic act or as a low-tech delivery system in the hands of adversaries.

- *Much terrorism—and counterterrorism action—will focus on urban areas, with strong political and operational constraints.* Terrorism is increasingly an urban phenomenon, worldwide. One explanation for this is that the political fate of most modern societies is determined by what happens in cities. Terrorists seeking to influence political conditions have many incentives to attack urban targets. Terrorists with transcendental objectives will, similarly, find symbolic and vulnerable targets in urban settings. The use of air power in a counterterrorist mode faces the more general problem of operating in an urban environment (the difficult Israeli experience in Beirut and south Lebanon is instructive). Terrorists and their facilities will be difficult to locate and target. Operations against them or to rescue hostages will pose severe challenges for the use of air power, not least the risk of placing uninvolved civilians in harm's way. The viability of air power as an instrument in such settings may depend on

the capacity for discriminate targeting and the use of less-than-lethal technologies.

- *Air power's pervasiveness and speed are advantages in the face of transnational and transregional terrorism.* In an era in which terrorist acts may take place across the globe and where sponsors cross national and regional lines, counterterrorism strategies will become "horizontal" in character. Where terrorists and their sponsors can be identified and attacked with purpose, the global sight and reach of air- and space-based assets will be valuable to national decisionmakers.

- *Air and space power will have a synergistic effect with other counterterrorism instruments.* Air and space power can be used in concert with covert action, diplomacy, economic instruments, and joint military operations. The notion of "parallel warfare," developed in relation to attacks on infrastructure in war, will also be relevant to counterterrorism operations. Operations using a range of instruments can be designed to act, in parallel, on terrorist supporters, terrorist infrastructure and networks, and the terrorists themselves.