

Canadian
Forces
College

Collège
des
Forces
Canadiennes



GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM AS GLOBAL COUNTER-INSURGENCY

LCdr Wade Carter

JCSP 34

Master of Defence Studies

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed remain those of the author and do not represent Department of National Defence or Canadian Forces policy. This paper may not be used without written permission.

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of National Defence, 2008.

PCEMI N° 34

Maîtrise en études de la défense

Avertissement

Les opinions exprimées n'engagent que leurs auteurs et ne reflètent aucunement des politiques du Ministère de la Défense nationale ou des Forces canadiennes. Ce papier ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation écrite.

© Sa Majesté la Reine du Chef du Canada, représentée par le ministre de la Défense nationale, 2008.

CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
JCSP 34 - PCEMI N° 34

MASTER OF DEFENCE STUDIES

**GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM AS
GLOBAL COUNTER-INSURGENCY**

LCdr Wade Carter

This paper was written by a student attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfilment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is a scholastic document, and thus contains facts and opinions which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada and the Canadian Department of National Defence. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defence.

La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale.

ABSTRACT

It is the contention of this paper that the Global War on Terror can more precisely be understood as a global counter-insurgency than a war on terrorism *per se*. It contends that the goals of transnational Islamic extremist organizations, such as Al Qaeda, include re-establishment of the Caliphate and ultimately the destruction of Western secular society. It argues that the principal strategy of such extremist organizations is centered upon leveraging the notion of a unified Islamic identity (reminiscent of the Golden Age of Islam) in an attempt to unite disparate Islamic extremist movements and the Islamic community generally, against a common enemy – the West; which it regards as impeding its aims. It argues that strategies employed by the West to combat the extremist strategy have erroneously focused on a strategy of aggregation. It contends that this approach is fundamentally flawed as it tends to corroborate and legitimize the extremist claim to unity in the eyes of the Islamic community. In its place, this paper argues that a strategy of dis-aggregation (divide and conquer) is a superior approach to defeating transnational Islamic extremism.

This paper also argues that the survival of the extremist movement depends upon its ability to recruit new members to the jihad. As such, it argues that attacking and discrediting the extremist narrative that underwrites its recruitment program is imperative to successful prosecution of the Global War on Terror. While secondary to discrediting the extremist narrative, elimination or capture of the leadership of extremist organizations is also an important aspect of the campaign. Finally, this paper argues that due to the ‘long war’ nature of the conflict, that defence of the homeland will require considerable

and ongoing resources to achieve. As such, this paper will conclude with an examination of the security enhancements made by the Government of Canada for the defence of the homeland since 9/11.

INTRODUCTION.....	1
GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR AS GLOBAL COUNTER-INSURGENCY	4
Defeating the Insurgent Strategy.....	7
Dis-aggregation	8
Countering the Extremist Narrative	10
Context and History.....	10
Understanding the Extremist Narrative	13
Origin of the Extremist Narrative.....	15
Operationalizing the Extremist Narrative.....	17
War of Ideas	21
How the Extremist Narrative is Delivered.....	22
Delivering an Alternative Narrative.....	25
Disassociating from the Extremist Narrative	27
Psychological Processing of the Extremist Narrative	28
Impediments to Western Legitimacy in Defining an Alternative Narrative	33
The Recruitment Process	37
Countering the Recruitment Process	40
Influence of Globalization	44
Targeting Extremist Leaders	47
GWOT as Counter-Insurgency Summary.....	49
DEFENCE OF THE HOMELAND	52
Historical Context of Terrorism in Canada	53
Operationalizing an Integrated Security System.....	58
Legal Instruments	59
Infrastructure and Security Initiatives	61
Measures of Effectiveness.....	64
Defence of the Homeland Summary.....	68
CONCLUSION	70

INTRODUCTION

Since the United States declared a global ‘War on Terrorism’ following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, some analysts have argued that terrorism is merely a tactic, thus a war on terrorism makes little sense. Francis Fukuyama’s comment, ‘the war on terror is a misnomer...terrorism is only a means to an end; in this regard, a war on terrorism makes no more sense than a war on submarines’ is typical. This view is irrelevant in a policy sense (the term ‘War on Terrorism’ is political, not analytical) but nonetheless accurate.¹

As illustrated by Kilcullen’s remarks (above), the terrorist attacks of 9/11 did more than simply physical damage; they wreaked havoc in the intellectual domain as well. Within weeks of the attacks a virtual cottage industry of experts in Islamic affairs sprung up; expressing a multiplicity of theories, recommending counter strategies and publishing bestsellers. The attacks had shaken the snow globe of Western perspective so thoroughly that it would take months, if not years, for the dust to settle and stable perspective to return. In the interim, hastily prepared political statements and corresponding analysts’ misunderstanding clouded the issue yet further; effectively adding to the confusion and compounding the difficulties involved in developing a coherent strategy to deal with the conflict.

Prompted by intense political impetus to respond, the United States embarked upon a self-declared Global War on Terror (GWOT) and hastily dispatched troops to Afghanistan to seek those responsible and “bring them to justice.”² Despite rapid military successes in Afghanistan, it would take several more years of “squeezing the balloon” before the US and

¹ David J. Kilcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," *Small Wars Journal* (2004), <http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/kilcullen.pdf>.

² White House Press Release, "Statement by the President in Address to the Nation," United States, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-16.html>; Internet; accessed 16 March 2008.

its Western allies would come to realize the truly fluid nature of the conflict that had been joined.³

It is the contention of this paper that the Global War on Terror (GWOT) is not a conventional war.⁴ As such, it cannot be won in a conventional sense. Nor should it be regarded simply as an anti-terrorist campaign.⁵ But rather, it is the contention of this paper that the GWOT is more precisely understood as a “campaign to counter a global Islamist insurgency.”⁶ In this sense, it should be regarded more as a clash of ideas than a clash of arms.

The key to winning the GWOT, if indeed winning is possible, lay in understanding its true character.⁷ In order to develop such an understanding, this paper

³ Anthony Cordesman, "Defending America: Redefining the Conceptual Borders of Homeland Defence," Centre for Strategic and International Studies, <http://www.csis.org/homeland/reports/overprininvestnmd.pdf>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

⁴ The Global War on Terror was a campaign initiated by the US Bush Administration ostensibly to curb the spread of trans-national Islamic extremism following the attacks of 9/11. President Bush declared the commencement of the campaign in a speech on the 20th of September 2001: White House Press Release, "President Declares "Freedom at War with Fear", United States, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>; Internet; accessed 15 April 2008.

⁵ A precise definition of the term terrorist is widely disputed. For the purposes of this paper a terrorist is considered to be any person who undertakes to commit an act of terrorism as defined in the Canadian Anti-Terrorism Act, Section 83.01 (1) (b): Department of Justice, "The Anti-Terrorism Act - Definition of Terrorist Activity," Canada, http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/antiter/sheet-fiche/def_ter/index.html; Internet; accessed 9 April 2008.

⁶ Kilcullen, *Countering Global Insurgency*, 7; David C. Gompert and John Gordon IV, *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency* (Santa Monica, Ca: RAND Corporation,[2008]), http://rand.org/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG595.2.pdf (accessed February 5, 2008).

⁷ "...regardless of the number of victories won in the current 'war,' history has teaches us that terrorism is endemic to the human condition and cannot be eliminated by diligent application of the 'right' strategies." Pamela L. Griset and Sue G. Mahan, *Terrorism in Perspective* (Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications, 2003), xiii.

will examine the development of the extremist Islamist ideology - which this paper argues leverages an historical focus on a distinctive Islamic identity to promote its aims which include the restoration of the Caliphate and the destruction of Western secular society.⁸ It is the contention of this paper that defeating the extremist strategy is the central component to the successful prosecution of the GWOT. To this end, three strategic imperatives will be discussed: adoption of a strategy of dis-aggregation; countering the extremist narrative; and targeting the extremist leadership.

While it is recognized that defeating the extremist strategy is the principal line of operation to be pursued in the GWOT, it is also understood that due to the “long war” nature of the conflict, that defence of the homeland is also an important constituent of the conflict. Therefore the last part of this paper will explore national organizational constructs and best practices adopted since 9/11 aimed at performing these vital functions.

⁸ A precise definition of the term extremist is widely disputed. For the purposes of this paper extremism is defined as a school of thought that underpins the actions or ideologies of individuals or groups; it serves to radicalize adherents and advocates the use of violence to achieve its aims.

GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR AS GLOBAL COUNTER-INSURGENCY

The first, the grandest, and most decisive act of judgment which the Statesman and General exercises is rightly to understand ...the War in which he engages, not to take it for something, or wish to make of it something, which by the nature of its relations it is impossible for it to be..⁹

It has been argued, and it is the contention of this paper, that the Global War on Terror (GWOT) can more precisely be understood as a global counter-insurgency than a war on terrorism per-se.¹⁰ It contends that the goals of Islamic extremists, such as Al Qaeda, include the destruction of Western secular society and the re-establishment of the Caliphate.¹¹ It argues that a core methodology of these extremists focuses on attempting to unite disparate (local) Islamic extremist movements, wherever they can be found or instigated, against a common enemy – the West. And although it employs terrorism as a tactic in the pursuit of its goal, it does so under specific conditions: in contrast to the

⁹ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Anatol Rapoport (London: Penguin Books, 1982), 121.

¹⁰ “It is not only valid to treat the challenge of Islamic violence as insurgency but also *essential* to do so if we expect to respond effectively. The surge in debate, research, education and policy utterances about insurgency and COIN within the ... national-security community could not be more welcome and timely. A swelling body of literature and discourse argues that the ideas associated with insurgency and COIN are more reflective of reality, more illuminating of the hard choices that must be made, and more likely to produce effective ... capabilities and responses than is the narrower concept they are replacing.” Gompert and Gordon IV, *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency*, 6. See also: Kilcullen, *Countering Global Insurgency* and "Country Reports on Terrorism 2006 (Html Format)," <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2006/>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.

¹¹ Al Qaeda is an extremist Islamic organization originally founded in 1988 by Abdullah Yusuf Azzam to fight the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan. Following the death of Azzam in 1989, Osama Bin Laden assumed the leadership of the organization and evolved its objectives to include re-establishment of the Caliphate and the removal of foreign, particularly western, influence in Islamic lands; effectively transforming the aims of the organization from local to trans-national in scope.

The Caliphate was a form of government specific to the Islamic world that represented unity of the political and religious Islamic community. Geographically located in Istanbul, Turkey, it was constitutionally abolished by the secularizing reforms of Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1924.

previously recognized patterns of extremist organizations (that employed terrorism as a means of setting favourable negotiating conditions) contemporary transnational extremist organizations employ terrorism as a recruiting mechanism in order to expand their influence.¹² Moreover, given the self-declared defensive nature of the struggle in which they are engaged, contemporary Islamic extremists regard the use of terrorism and violence, most notably in the form of suicide bombers, as a legitimate means of pursuing these aims.¹³

Key to the successful prosecution of such a conflict, as Clausewitz suggests, lay in understanding its true nature. Regarding the GWOT as described above through the lens of counter-insurgency theory, versus the early counter-terrorism perspective of the GWOT, provides several subtle but important distinctions relative to its conduct. Principal among those distinctions is the idea that the GWOT is more a conflict of ideas than a conflict of arms. This distinction, which aligns well with the primacy of the counter-insurgent strategy of “winning hearts and minds,” was largely lost on US policy makers at the outset of the GWOT.¹⁴ As a recent Rand study suggests:

¹² Speaking at a conference at Dalhousie University in 2003, a former Dean of Arts at WestPoint Military Academy remarked: “...where in the past, terrorists wanted a seat at the table in order to air their grievances, today’s terrorists want to blow up the table and everyone seated at it.” Russ Howard, “Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Understanding the New Security Environment” (Dalhousie University, 2003, 2002).

¹³ Practitioners of jihad do not regard the employment of suicide bombers as suicide in the traditional sense but rather as martyrs who die while prosecuting the jihad. In this way, they avoid the Koranic condemnation of suicide. Gompert and Gordon IV, *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency*, 64

¹⁴ “The idea of competing for the population’s support has been central since the conception of COIN in the middle of the 20th century.” *ibid.* . See also Bard E. O’Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2005), 93.

Since it was launched in the wake of 9/11, the military offensive at the heart of the GWOT has mostly ignored the fact that these Muslim populations are largely unsympathetic to the United States and regard the GWOT as aggression. The existence of a “global Muslim community that has a personality in the world arena challenges the U.S. strategic concept of a war on terror that narrowly seeks military outcomes” while ignoring the hostility it may engender in the larger community. Lost in the fog of GWOT is whether using armies to fight terrorists hidden among the Muslim population is spawning more hostility and resistance. The data suggests that it is...¹⁵

More recently, advocates of the GWOT as global counter-insurgency perspective, such as Australian Lieutenant Colonel David Kilcullen, have enjoyed increasing influence. Kilcullen, an anthropologist and a member of the Australian Defence Force, is on semi-permanent loan to the US State Department as a senior advisor on the War on Terror. In this capacity, Kilcullen was one of the first to recognize that the War on Terror more precisely resembled a global counter-insurgency. Kilcullen summarizes some important distinctions between the two schools of thought in table 1 below. Of particular note for the purposes of this paper is the idea that *defeating the insurgent’s strategy* is the preferred line of operation to be pursued. While important, “catching [insurgents] is [nevertheless] secondary,” according to Kilcullen.¹⁶

Table 1 – Terrorism and Insurgency: Competing Paradigms

<u>Terrorism</u>	<u>Insurgency</u>
Terrorist is seen as an unrepresentative aberration	Insurgent represents deeper issues in society
No negotiation with terrorists	Winning hearts and minds is critical

¹⁵ Gompert and Gordon IV, *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency*, 8

¹⁶ Kilcullen, *Countering Global Insurgency*, 13

Methods and objectives are both unacceptable	Methods are unacceptable; objectives are not necessarily so
Terrorists are psychologically and morally flawed, with personal (psychopathic) tendencies toward violence	Insurgents use violence within an integrated politico-military strategy – violence is instrumental not central to their approach
Terrorism is a law-enforcement problem	Insurgency is a whole of government problem
Counterterrorism adopts a case-based approach focused on catching the perpetrators of terrorist actions.	Counterinsurgency uses a strategy-based approach focused on defeating insurgents' strategy – catching them is secondary.

Source: Kilcullen, “Countering Global insurgency: A Strategy for the War on Terrorism,” 13

Defeating the Insurgent Strategy

From the characterization of the GWOT as counter-insurgency, three overarching imperatives for combating its roots logically suggest themselves.

- Dis-aggregation: Adoption of a strategy of Dis-aggregation whereby distinctions are made between extremist Islamic groups with different agendas is essential. Extremist groups of local character demand different counter-strategies than those such as Al Qaeda, which purport to global aspirations;
- Attack the extremist narrative: The extremist narrative underwrites its recruitment strategy. Given the insurgent nature of the conflict, “winning the hearts and minds” of the Islamic communities within the contested regions is central to the successful outcome of the conflict.¹⁷ To do so will require attacking and discrediting extremist messages and rhetoric. To accomplish this, a thorough understanding of the elements of the extremist narrative, and how these elements might be perceived by target audiences, is paramount;¹⁸ and

¹⁷ O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, 93

¹⁸ It is important to make a distinction between the actual resonance of a message within a foreign target audience and what westerners may expect will resonate within a foreign target audience. It is partially for this reason that an increasing number of western analysts strongly advocate the countering of extremist messages by local Islamic authorities, rather than by external producers. Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, *The Internet: A Portal to Violent Islamist Extremism*, 2007, , http://www.gwumc.edu/hspi/congress/may3_07.htm; Internet; accessed 16 March 2008.

- Eliminate extremist leadership: While of lesser import that attacking the extremist narrative, targeting the leadership of extremist Islamic groups is nevertheless an essential component of the GWOT.¹⁹

Taken together, these imperatives represent a policy of attacking the enemy's strategy and will be discussed in this section.

Dis-aggregation

For the purposes of this paper dis-aggregation means distinguishing between, and shaping strategies to impede, extremist Islamic groups of local and those of global character. The issue is an important one as it relates directly to the appeal of the extremist message or narrative (to be discussed later). Political statements, such as President Bush's infamous "...you are either with us or you are [against us]..." speech, have proven counterproductive in this regard.²⁰ While it is understood that the aim of President Bush's remarks may have been intended to shore up political support of uncommitted political allies (Pakistan) immediately following 9/11, it must equally be recognized that such remarks are easily misappropriated by extremist organizations to their benefit.²¹ In this sense they generate potentially negative second and third order effects. In the case of President Bush's remarks, the second order effect was to reinforce

¹⁹ "The existence of intellectual leadership is necessary for an insurgency's success because it provides a strategic vision, organizational know-how, and technical competence. Conversely, insurgent movements without leadership by intellectuals, such as peasant uprisings, are, in the words of David A. Wilson, 'notoriously ineffective.'" O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, 97

²⁰ White House Press Release, *President Declares "Freedom at War with Fear"*

²¹ "ill-chosen words and expressions by governments and institutions are used in extremist propaganda to further radicalize potential adherents..." Cilluffo. "The Internet: A Portal to Violent Islamist Extremism," http://www.gwumc.edu/hspi/congress/may3_07.htm; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.

Al Qaeda's claim to communal legitimacy in the eyes of other radical organizations and the Islamic community generally. This in turn generated the third order effect of enhancing the extremist organizations image as a legitimate defender of Islam - thereby reinforcing its recruitment efforts.

According to Kilcullen, such a perspective, which represents a defacto policy of aggregation, tends to undermine the legitimacy of the GWOT as "...it links obviously disparate conflicts, [which could be perceived by some as though] the [West] is using the war as an excuse to settle old scores."²² Additionally, and perhaps more significantly, aggregation strategies tends to build the aura surrounding the extremist menace to unmanageable heights: reinforcing the unifying extremist narrative while simultaneously "exhausting the popular will" of the West.²³

In its place, a strategy of dis-aggregation is suggested wherein each local extremist threat is considered according to local conditions and circumstances.²⁴ Every attempt should be made to divorce and isolate the issues of local Islamic extremists from

²² Kilcullen, *Countering Global Insurgency*

²³ Kilcullen argued that the typical US political response to terrorist attacks that attributes all such activities to Al Qaeda or Al Qaeda affiliates, while potentially solidifying political support for the War on Terror in the US, was actually generating the concurrent effect of reaffirming the legitimacy of Al Qaeda internationally. In the eyes of potential extremist recruits, such a strategy could potentially increase the lure to join or support the insurgency. Al Qaeda's identity was being reinforced and Al Qaeda recruitment messaging readily leveraged such affiliations to its benefit. In the globalized village of mass media, Kilcullen identified this type of strategy as deeply flawed and counterproductive. In its place he proposed a communications strategy aimed at diminishing Al Qaeda's reputation. No longer would US policy makers attribute terrorist success to Al Qaeda but rather to distinctive regional and isolated criminal elements. *ibid.*

²⁴ A recent Rand study makes a similar suggestion, except that the recommended policy is stipulated as one of de-globalization rather than dis-aggregation. Gompert and Gordon IV, *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency*, 51

those of the global jihad.²⁵ By pursuing such a course of action, the odds of resolving local grievances while simultaneously discrediting the global Islamic extremist narrative are enhanced.

Countering the Extremist Narrative

The classic aim of counter-insurgency strategy remains to seek and retain the support of the contested local populace. In this respect, combating Islamic extremism is no different. In order to do this, a comprehensive understanding of precisely what the extremist narrative is, and how it is perceived by the Islamic community or *ummah* (not how it is perceived by Western authorities) is crucial.²⁶ To this end, the following section will briefly examine the context and historical development of the extremist Islamic ideology.

Context and History

Of all the non-Western religions, Islam stands closest to the West – closest geographically and also closest ideologically; for religiously it stands in the Abrahamic family of religions, while philosophically it builds on the Greeks. Yet despite this mental and spatial proximity, Islam is the most difficult religion for the West to understand. “No part of the world,” an American columnist has written, “is more hopelessly and systematically and stubbornly misunderstood by us than that complex of religion, culture and geography known as Islam.”²⁷

²⁵ Jihad is an Arabic term for struggle. It has two possible connotations: the greater jihad which is the term used to describe the spiritual struggle of each man, against vice, passion and ignorance; and the lesser jihad, a term often used by Islamic extremists to refer to holy war against infidels and infidel countries. Kilcullen, *Countering Global Insurgency*

²⁶ Ummah is an Arabic word that means community or nation. In the Islamic sense it refers to the community of believers or the whole of the Islamic world.

²⁷ Huston Smith, *The World's Religions* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 221.

While it may be true that North Americans have traditionally regarded Islam from an ambiguous standpoint, this vague perspective of otherness is at least partially understandable: as with politics, religious issues are principally local in character. The further one gets from the epicenter of any essentially human enterprise, be it political, ideological or otherwise, the less one can expect its immediate pressures to bear upon the day to day thought process of the layman. And so, an ocean and a continent away, the arms length perspectives with which North Americans have historically regarded Islam is at least conceptually understandable. But such a viewpoint does little to solve the grievances, real or perceived, that Islamic extremists are voicing with self proclaimed authority, on behalf of the Islamic community. What is required is understanding.

Such an understanding can be gained through the lens of cultural and religious identity. The generally accepted historical script paints a picture of an ascendant Islamic culture and empire, born of the divinely inspired revelations and leadership of the prophet Mohammed in the seventh century.²⁸ Following Mohammed's death, the flourishing empire was ruled by a series of successors or Caliphs. By the middle of the 13th century, the empire stretched from the Middle East to southern Spain. During this period, Baghdad was regarded as one of the greatest cultural centers of the world. It is from this period, known as the Golden Age of Islam, that Islam draws its distinctive historical identity.

An invasion led by the Mongol leader Hulugu Khan in 1257 overturned the Islamic Empire and unseated its leadership. The Caliph and his family (except for one

²⁸ Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong?* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002), 151-159.

son and daughter who were sold into slavery) were killed. Baghdad was sacked and tens of thousands of its citizens killed.

The shock of Mongol conquest was shattering to Muslim confidence. Until then, the expansion of Islam had been unstoppable – within a century and a half of Mohammed’s death Muslim conquerors had expanded the Dar al-Islam around the Mediterranean and into Asia Minor to the coast of the Roman Empire, had absorbed the Persian Empire, moved into central Asia and edged into India²⁹ ... To its believers, Islam gave wealth and power in this world and promised paradise in the next. The destruction of Baghdad... *was not something that was supposed to happen.*³⁰

The Mongol invasion interrupted what had been to that point in Islamic history a rapid (and divinely endorsed) growth of the Muslim, predominantly Arab led, civilization. So disturbing were these events that it was at this point, according to Patrick Armstrong, that the world of Islam may have lost its competitive edge with respect to rival civilizations:

... when a culture is overthrown or fatally threatened by outsiders who show no respect for it there are typically two reactions: the threatened culture can adapt some of the invaders’ technology or behaviour so as to be able to withstand its power, or it can decide that it has failed because it was not true to itself and resolve to perfect itself [or turn inward]...³¹

The later eclipsing of the Islamic culture by Western accomplishments, culminating in the abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924 has been trumpeted by Islamic philosophers and subsequently by extremists as further evidence that Islam had lost its

²⁹ Dar al Islam is the Arabic term for those lands which are ruled by Islam. Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 191.

³⁰ G. P. Armstrong, *The Ideology of Jihadism: Three Theorists* (Ottawa, Canada: Department of National Defence, 2007).

³¹ *Ibid.*

way.³² The practical result of the decline has, in the words of Bernard Lewis, translated into a deep sense of humiliation for the ummah: “Compared with its millennial rival, Christendom, the world of Islam had become poor, weak, and ignorant.”³³ Despite repeated attempts at reform, the Islamic world has been relatively unsuccessful at modernizing its military, economic and political structures. As Lewis goes on to point out, the results continue to be “disappointing... [worse yet, from a political standpoint] the long quest for freedom has left a string of shabby new-style dictatorships, modern only in their apparatus of repression and indoctrination.”³⁴ Such conditions represent fertile soil for insurgencies.

Understanding the Extremist Narrative

The core of the modern Islamic extremist narrative can be understood to stem from of a revivalist religious movement within Islam that seeks to restore the splendor of the Golden Age of Islam.

...it preaches the restoration of authentic Islam, and advocates a strategy of violent jihad [employing terrorism as a means of] wiping out local political heresy. The global version of this movement advocates the defeat of the Western powers that prevent the establishment of a true Islamist state...Al Qaeda is the vanguard of this movement...³⁵

³² *Ibid*; See also Paul Berman, *Terror and Liberalism* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), 60-76.

³³ Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 151-159

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 151

³⁵ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 1

As earlier suggested by Armstrong, the core of the narrative itself is based upon the notion that:

Islam [has] become decadent because it strayed from the righteous path. The strength of the original and righteous ummah flowed from its faith and practices, for they were pleasing to God. Recapturing the glory and grandeur of the Golden Age requires a return to the authentic faith and practices of the ancient ones, namely the prophet Mohammed and his companions.³⁶

From a secular Western viewpoint, the narrative would seem to suggest the centrality of a political motive – the re-establishment of the Islamic Caliphate – endorsed of course by the divine will of God.³⁷ A powerful idea, and one around which Islamic support could be expected to coalesce. But it remains nevertheless a Western interpretation of the narrative.³⁸ It must be borne in mind that Islam does not theologically separate religion from state in the way that Christendom traditionally has; and so interpretations of this nature run the risk of generating erroneous conclusions where the perspectives of Muslims are concerned.³⁹ It is the contention of this paper that

³⁶ *Ibid*, 4.

³⁷ O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, 15

³⁸ “Al Qaeda is not only a terrorist political organization; it is also a revivalist religious social movement” Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 126

³⁹ The Koran was revealed to Mohammed during a time period of not only great religious, but also great political turmoil. As a consequence, the Koran is considered by many Muslims to constitute both religious and political authority. From the standpoint of Islamic tradition therefore, distinctions between religion and state authority are ambiguous. By contrast, under threat of persecution by the ruling political authorities of the day, early Christian practitioners learned to separate matters of religious from affairs of the state matters. This sentiment is most precisely captured in Matthew 22:21 when Jesus counseled “...Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s and unto God the things that are God’s.” *Holy Bible*, London: Collins Clear Type Press.

the narrative transcends the issue of politics or religion; it represents rather a unifying call to a greater Islamic identity.⁴⁰

Origin of the Extremist Narrative

To better understand how to discredit the extremist narrative, it is useful to understand its origins. In the eyes of extremists, the narrative is founded upon serious Islamic scholarship, drawn from several important Muslim thinkers in Islamic history.

The first of these influences was Ibn Taymiyya. Born in Turkey in 1263, Taymiyya was witness to the aftermath of the Mongol invasion. Taymiyya became an influential thinker in Islam and is credited with the introduction of the idea that the “new Mongol rulers – who had come to adopt Islam – were not true Muslims and therefore not deserving of political obedience.”⁴¹ Taymiyya went so far as to issue a fatwa against the Mongol rulers, insisting that jihad upon them was not only permissible, but in fact obligatory.⁴²

The second influential figure in the development of modern extremist Islamic thought was Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab.⁴³ Born in Arabia in 1703, Wahhab held viewpoints very similar to Taymiyya. Wahhab was particularly concerned that the

⁴⁰ This perspective of unity or “totality” is reflected in Sayyid Qutb’s writings; a concept that according to Qutb, “distinguished Islam from all other world views” Berman, *Terror and Liberalism*, 67

⁴¹ Armstrong, *The Ideology of Jihadism: Three Theorists*, 5

⁴² According to Islamic tradition a fatwa is considered to be a religious edict or proclamation issued by a religious authority.

⁴³ Later descendants of Wahhab established the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932 and not surprisingly declared Wahhabism as the only acceptable version of Islam in the country.

practice of Islam had become contaminated and he was therefore "...alert to find signs of bidah (unwarranted innovation of practice and belief) in" [Islam] ..."⁴⁴ Descendants of Wahhab later unified the Arabian Peninsula and founded the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Not surprisingly, the ruling elite in that country have developed and enforce a rigid interpretation of Koranic law known as Wahhabism that tolerates no dissent to its oligarchic authority.

The remaining two theorists were Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966) and Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj (1954-1982). Qutb's main contribution to the philosophical development of modern Islamic extremism lay in the fact that he extended and reinforced Taymiyya's interpretations by effectively arguing that Muslims had a "duty to wage jihad against [all] apostates" *including* bad Muslim leaders.⁴⁵ Qutb published his views in a manifesto entitled *Milestones* in 1964. As pointed out by Sageman:

By declaring present Muslim societies jahiliyya, Sayyid Qutb provided the rationale for rejection of and violent revolt (*jihad bis sayf*) against nominally Muslim regimes⁴⁶ ... The righteous Muslims were not fighting other Muslims, but idolaters. Shortly after publication of *Milestones*, [the Egyptian] government rearrested Qutb for sedition and he was executed on August 29, 1966. Qutb's martyrdom bestowed instant credibility upon his ideas.⁴⁷

Following Qutb's death, Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj, a devoted student of Qutb, quickly built upon his legacy. In a pamphlet entitled *The Neglected Duty*, Faraj

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 6

⁴⁵ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 9

⁴⁶ Jahiliyya is an Arabic term that transliterates as "the state of barbarism and ignorance that prevailed in the Arabic Peninsula before Muhammad's revelations": *ibid.*, 191

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 13-14

effectively laid the groundwork for operationalizing Qutb's views. In so doing, Faraj introduced the idea of focusing on the "near enemy" versus the more distant imperial power.⁴⁸ In *Neglected Duty*, Faraj argued that:

...the basis of the existence of Imperialism in the Lands of Islam are (precisely) these rulers. To begin by putting an end to imperialism is not a laudatory and useful act. It is only a waste of time. We must concentrate on our own Islamic situation: we have to establish the Rule of God's Religion in our own country first, and to make the Word of God supreme... There is no doubt that the first battlefield for Jihad is the extermination of these infidel leaders and to replace them by a complete Islamic Order. From here we should start.⁴⁹

Operationalizing the Extremist Narrative

While modern transnational Islamic extremism may have been founded upon the ideological principles outlined above, it was operationalized through the collaboration of a wealthy Saudi Arabian business man, Osama Bin Laden, and a radical Egyptian ideologue, Ayman al-Zawahiri. The war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan offered Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri an opportunity to merge a fledgling militant force with this new Islamic doctrine. The Afghanistan experience was so important that it can effectively be regarded as a watershed in the development of transnational Islamic extremism:

Militants from all over the Muslim world met and interacted for lengthy periods of time [in Afghanistan]. The common fight forged strong bonds between them. After the Soviets withdrew, the militants started to analyze their common problems with a more global perspective.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 17

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 16

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 18

Following victory in Afghanistan the Jihadist movement may well have fizzled out had it not been for the appearance of US forces in Saudi Arabia in 1990, and later in Somalia in 1992. The renewed US presence in the region reinvigorated the movement and with it Al Qaeda slowly began to shift back to the notion of concentrating on the far enemy. This shift became evident when Bin Laden announced his intention to declare “war against the Americans occupying the land of the Two Holy Places” in August 1996.⁵¹ Despite this apparent shift in tactics, Bin Laden’s objectives remained primarily defensive in character: aimed at “expel[ing] the infidels from the Arab Peninsula.”⁵² A year and a half later, however, Bin Laden broadened his campaign to include “Jews and Crusaders.”⁵³ The Jihad would henceforth represent a truly global campaign to eradicate non-Muslim influence.

Shedding its near enemy focus had the temporary side effect of confusing Al Qaeda’s motives in the minds of Western analysts, prompting some to claim that their actions simply constituted a form of *blowback* from US funding of resistance groups in the Soviet Afghan war.⁵⁴ In order to appreciate how the west could view the Jihadist

⁵¹ Online News Hour, "Bin Laden's Fatwa," http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html; Internet; accessed 10 April 2008.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 19

⁵⁴ Blowback is a metaphor that implies unintended consequences to US foreign policy initiatives including the funding of Afghan resistance fighters, many of whom later became Al Qaeda members or affiliates, during the Soviet occupation of that country.

movement as irrational in character following 9/11, it is useful to examine the words that Bin Laden employed in his February 1998 fatwa:

The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies – civilians and military – is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it... We – with Allah's help – call on every Muslim who believes in Allah and wishes to be rewarded to comply with Allah's order to kill the Americans and plunder their money wherever and whenever they find it. We also call on the Muslim ulema leaders, youths, and soldiers to launch the raid on Satan's US troops and the devil's supporters allying with them, and to displace those who are behind them so that they may learn a lesson.⁵⁵

Bin Laden's message was in effect a call to arms for disenchanted Muslims everywhere. It was simultaneously, albeit it less so, a warning to the West and Western sympathetic leaders in Muslim countries.⁵⁶ To secular Western eyes, however, the extremist rhetoric, which effectively linked the political agenda of Bin Laden with that of Allah, appeared conceited and irrational. Average Americans, unable to detect the implications of Bin Laden's message and largely unaware of Al Qaeda's prior motives, dismissed the commentary as the musings of a madman of little apparent relevance.

In contrast to Bin Laden, Al-Zawahiri's words betray a much more robust and intelligent organization than that perceived by early Western analysts.⁵⁷ Al Zawahiri

⁵⁵ Online News Hour, "Al Qaeda's 1998 Fatwa," http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1998.html; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

⁵⁶ Despite previous attacks abroad on US interests, Al Qaeda had not yet been perceived by the majority of the American public as an ominous threat. This changed with the World Trade centre attacks on September 11, 2001 when the threat posed by Al Qaeda coalesced in the minds of most Americans as the United States' most lethal enemy.

⁵⁷ A 2002 appraisal of Al Qaeda's motives by Russ Howard painted a picture of an irrational terrorist network motivated by extreme religious convictions alone; virtually incomprehensible to western rationalism; and bent on the destruction of the West at all costs. Howard, *Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Understanding the New Security Environment*

understood that mobilization of mass support would be necessary for success.

Documents captured from terrorist training camps in Afghanistan reveal intellectual rigour beyond the scope of simple reliance on faith alone:

The jihad movement must dedicate one of its wings to work with the masses, preach, provide services for Muslim people, and share their concerns through all available avenues for charity and educational work. We must not leave a single area unoccupied. We must win the people's confidence, respect and affection. The people will not love us unless they feel that we love them, care about them, and are ready to defend them...⁵⁸

It seems clear from such statements that Al Zawahiri understood the nature of insurgency and was well accomplished in its instruction. Having established the principal imperative as the garnering of the good will and trust of fellow Muslims, he exposes the methodology of the extremist narrative by attempting to segue that support into a message of militancy versus Israel, and ultimately the United States:

The one slogan that has been well understood by the nation and to which it has been responding for the past 50 years is the call for the jihad against Israel. In addition to this slogan, the nation in this decade is geared against the US presence. It has responded favourably to the call for jihad against the Americans...the issue of Palestine is the cause that has been firing up the feelings of the Muslim nation from Morocco to Indonesia for the past 50 years...It is a rallying point for all Arabs, be they believers or non-believers, good or evil.⁵⁹

Effectively dispelling the myth that Al Qaeda's modus operandi is irrational and therefore seemingly incomprehensible, Al-Zawahiri's remarks depict an intelligent, goal oriented

⁵⁸ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 20

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 21

organization; focused on uniting the global Islamic community in revolutionary struggle to transform the international order.

War of Ideas

Crucial to Al Qaeda's strategy, like all insurgent enterprises, is the perception of success. And crucial to that success is an effective recruitment strategy. As Michael Jenkins noted in a recent Rand study entitled *Building an Army of Believers*, the global jihad

...is more than a military contest, the jihadist struggle is above all a missionary enterprise. Jihadist terrorist operations are intended to attract attention, demonstrate capability, and harm jihadists' enemies, but they are also aimed at galvanizing the Muslim community and, above all, inciting and attracting recruits to the cause. Recruiting is not merely meant to fill operational needs. It is an end in itself: it aims at creating a new mindset.⁶⁰

The aim of terrorist attacks from the modern extremist viewpoint is therefore twofold: inflicting of casualties; but more importantly, demonstrating to the world that casualties were inflicted in the hope that by so doing, others will be encouraged to join the jihad. Since it takes only infrequent, yet highly successful attacks to seize the media spotlight and thereby provide Al Qaeda with a stage from which to broadcast its extremist message, focusing the preponderance of GWOT resources on physical interdiction methods appears misguided. Rather, the most effective tactic to defeat the extremist strategy is to discredit the extremist messages that inevitably accompany such attacks –

⁶⁰ Jenkins, Brian, *Building an Army of Believers: Jihadist Radicalization and Recruitment*, 2, <http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT278-1/>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

and by so doing impede the attractiveness of their recruitment strategy. In order to achieve this, the recruitment process, and factors related to it, must be closely examined in order to expose the factors that establish an affinity for the jihad within the Muslim community.

How the Extremist Narrative is Delivered⁶¹

How can he [the Muslim] possibly [accept humiliation and inferiority] when he knows that his nation was created to stand at the centre of leadership, at the centre of hegemony and rule, at the centre of ability and sacrifice? How can [he] possibly [accept humiliation and inferiority] when he knows that the [divine] rule is that the entire earth must be subject to the religion of Allah – not to the East, not to the West – to no ideology and to no path except the path of Allah?⁶²

Al Qaeda employs simple, yet carefully crafted media releases as a means of communicating its narrative. Its aim is not simply to thumb its nose at the West, but rather to influence members of the ummah. It does this by delivering messages designed to generate favourable emotive responses within the Islamic community. The aim of the emotive response is to generate an affinity for the extremist cause by employing language that centers on the idea of an Islamic identity under siege and attack by Western influences. The messages employ various techniques to influence potential recruits to the jihad, themes typically include: “honour, dignity, and duty versus humiliation, shame

⁶¹ It may actually be more useful to think in terms of how the narrative is received rather than how it is delivered; as it is the reception, processing and acceptance or conversely the rejection of the extremist message that is of relevance.

⁶² Al Qaeda spokesman Suleiman Abu Gheith: The Middle East Media Research Institute. Middle East Media Research Institute, "Special Dispatch Series - no. 388," <http://www.memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?ID=sp38802>; Internet; accessed 9 April 2008.

and guilt.”⁶³ A close examination of the Al Qaeda fatwa’s of 1996 and 1998, for example, reveals the use of the word ‘humiliate’ no fewer than 22 times.⁶⁴

The sophistication of the construction of the messages is particularly noteworthy. Both the 1996 and 1998 fatwas commence with a Koranic reference to establish their authority. This is immediately followed by an alarming situational assessment that highlights issues that Al Qaeda suggests are of grave concern to all Muslims, namely the invasion of the holy lands by “crusader armies spreading in like locusts, eating its riches and wiping out its plantations...”⁶⁵ The emotive response that could be expected would be alarm, concern and anxiety. This is immediately followed by a somewhat disarming plea to the ummah to consider the extremist message “...in light of the grave situation and the lack of support, we and you are obliged to discuss current events, and we should all agree on how to settle the matter...”⁶⁶ Such a technique is designed to elicit a sense of fellowship and common cause.

Next, the messages offer a series of indictments of increasing ferocity aimed at the Western powers, typically culminating in a unimpeachable assertion that the West is a Godless society that has declared a war of aggression against the Islamic peoples of the world.⁶⁷ This part of the message effectively builds the extremist argument against the

⁶³ Jenkins, *Building an Army of Believers: Jihadist Radicalization and Recruitment*, 4

⁶⁴ Bin Laden fatwas, Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places, 1996: Online News Hour, *Bin Laden's Fatwa*; Online News Hour, *Al Qaeda's 1998 Fatwa*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Principally the United States and Israel.

West by means of a process that sequentially pairs disparate issues into a consolidated whole. In the case of the 1998 fatwa, these indictments are enumerated:

First, for seven years the [West] has been occupying the lands of Islam ... plundering its riches...dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbours...

...Second, despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the crusader-Zionist alliance...the [West] are once again trying to repeat the horrific massacres...

...Third, if the [Western] aims behind these wars are religious and economic, the aim is also to serve the Jews' petty state... [they] endeavour to fragment all the [Islamic] states of the region such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan into paper statelets through their disunion and weakness...all these crimes and sins committed by the [West] are a clear declaration of war on God, his messenger, and Muslims. And ulema have throughout history unanimously agreed that the jihad is an individual duty if the enemy destroys the Muslim countries...⁶⁸

Finally, having built its case against the West, the extremist script attempts to consolidate Muslim support through a series of emotive techniques: commencing with an appeal to defend the Islamic identity; followed by the suggestion of a divine reward for services so rendered; a command to fulfill God's plans; and finally a hard sell (guilt laden) technique is employed to apprehend any potential recruits who may remain unconvinced bundles separate strands (or messages) into a single, tightly bound narrative.

To counter such a strategy is simply to reverse it. Each of the strands of the message must be unraveled and countered with an alternative message. Where Al Qaeda accuses the West of dictating to its rulers, the West must counter with a message of

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

support for the idea of law, order and good governance; where the West is accused of humiliating the Islamic people, it must counter with a message of tolerance and respect for religious freedoms; where it leverages religious authority to underwrite jihadist activities, it is countered with a depiction of Al Qaeda as a “death cult that purposefully distorts religious teachings to advance a revolutionary agenda...[an agenda that] is unrealistic [and] imposes intolerable costs on Muslims.”⁶⁹ In essence, the same strategy of dis-aggregation that applies to the GWOT (that effectively lumps all forms of Islamic extremism into one bin) applies to the messages with which they achieve their recruitment effects.

Delivering an Alternative Narrative

The term delivering an alternative narrative is not meant to suggest delivering a *Western* narrative. Nor is it the same as countering erroneous extremist rhetoric designed to paint the West in a bad light. But rather, the idea centers on the notion of reinforcing a more moderate Islamic narrative to repel and/or replace the extremist version. The West cannot deliver such a narrative. It would be perceived as illegitimate by the ummah. As Armstrong suggests, any alternative narrative, to be deemed legitimate, “must come from within Islam.”⁷⁰ This is due to the legitimacy that is inherently associated with identity.⁷¹

⁶⁹ James Phillips. House Armed Services Committee: *The Evolving Al-Qaeda Threat*, 2006, , <http://www.heritage.org/research/features/nationalsecurity/tst021606a.cfm>; Internet, accessed 08 April 2008.

⁷⁰ G. P. Armstrong, *From Local Wars to International Jihad* (Ottawa, Canada: Department of National Defence, 2007).

The rationale for such an approach is directly related to the perception of identity and humiliation that are repeatedly emphasized in the extremist narrative. To understand the emotive power of these themes, it is useful to consider a metaphorical example from the biblical account of the killing of Abel by his brother Cain:

The transformation of the two brothers into enemies has puzzled the human imagination at least since Genesis. For Genesis begins with a story of mankind not with a murder between strangers, but between brothers. It is precisely because the difference between them is so slight that the roots of the crime are so mysterious. One brother is a keeper of sheep; the other a tiller of the ground. Both make sacrifices to the Lord: one finds favor, the other does not. We are not told why God's blessing should be so partial. God merely informs the disappointed brother that he must be content with his lot and not contest the inscrutable partiality of Providence.⁷²

Human self-esteem does not contend well with inscrutable partiality. The result of the biblical account of the divine slight is well known. In a fit of rage, Cain kills his brother Abel; an act prompted by the deep sense of humiliation that Cain feels God's partiality has unjustly bestowed upon him. If instead of the brothers Cain and Abel, the religious siblings Christianity and Islam are substituted into the metaphor, a sense of the humiliation and anger that Islamic extremists encourage – given Christendom's recent accomplishments, and the Islam's setbacks – can more easily be perceived.

In his book *The End of History and the Last Man*, Francis Fukuyama explores this issue in greater depth. Fukuyama attributes the great struggle between peers to the

⁷¹ That is not to suggest that western authorities cannot aid in the development of such a narrative, but rather that it must be delivered, and be perceived as having been constructed, exclusively from within the Islamic community.

⁷² Michael Ignatieff, *Warriors Honour* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 1998), 39.

Platonic notion of ‘thymos’ which he defines as a fundamental human psychological “need for recognition.” Fukuyama explains that:

...thymos is something like an innate human sense of justice: people believe that they have a certain worth, and when other people act as though they are worth less – when they do not recognize their worth at its correct value – then they become angry. This intimate relationship between self-evaluation and anger can be seen in the English word synonymous with anger, ‘indignation.’ ‘Dignity’ refers to a person’s sense of self worth; ‘in-dignation’ arises when something happens to offend that sense of worth. Conversely, when other people see that we are not living up to our own sense of self-esteem, we feel shame; and when we are evaluated justly (i.e., in proportion to our true worth), we feel pride.⁷³

Such sentiments can be seen to very closely resemble those expressed in extremist messages; messages that consistently highlight the humiliation that has accompanied the decline of the Islamic civilization, and one that lays the blame for the decline (in part at least) at the doorstep of Western influence.⁷⁴ The power of such a technique is obvious. As O’Neill suggests where “perceived deprivations” of frustrated people can be focused on a particular villain – in this case the Western powers; such people are more easily militated to violence.⁷⁵ This is especially the case where a metaphysical belief system lends interpretation of historical events the stamp of divine veracity and authority.

Disassociating from the Extremist Narrative

⁷³ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 165.

⁷⁴ From a realist perspective it could be argued that Al Qaeda is simply employing the West as a whipping boy in an effort to unite the various factions of the ummah against a common foe. While this may be the case, it does little to defeat, in fact it seems to reinforce the notion that Al Qaeda is employing an identity based approach to deepen support for the extremist cause.

⁷⁵ O’Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, 100

From this perspective wars of nationalism, ideology or religion can be regarded as manifestations of identity conflicts. Otherwise stated, nationalistic, ideological and religious wars simply wear the robes of deep seated identity conflicts. These robes have the capacity to unite individuals in a common garb of pride or shame, alliance or indignation, depending upon the thymotic moment.⁷⁶ Drawing from his experiences in the recent Balkans Conflict, Michael Ignatieff reflected on the sad irony that resolution of such conflicts is at once psychologically conceivable, yet difficult to achieve:

Nationalism [like religion] is a fiction: it requires the willing suspension of disbelief. To believe in nationalist fictions is to forget certain realities. In the ... soldier's case, it means forgetting that he was once a neighbor, brother, and friend to the people in the next trench.⁷⁷

From an Information Operations (IO) point of view, the lesson to be learned from this example is simply that in order for a soldier (or anyone) to fully embrace an alien narrative, he must (in part at least) set aside or suspend an aspect of his former beliefs. This suggests a cognitive process whereby new messages or narratives conflict with and eventually alter or overwrite existing beliefs that had been previously defined through personal experience. In order to expose the extremist narrative as fraudulent, it is necessary to understand how such cognitive processes work.

Psychological Processing of the Extremist Narrative

⁷⁶ of or relating to the word thymos, as defined above.

⁷⁷ Ignatieff, *Warriors Honour*, 31

The process of accepting or rejecting newly received information can be understood in basic psychological terms. The mind employs a cognitive framework which social psychologists refer to as a schema to organize and interpret information.⁷⁸ A simple example of a schema would be the mental image cast in an individual's mind (through repeated observation) related to the interior layout of furniture in their home. The furniture could include an assortment of items: television, coffee table, sofas, pictures on the walls, etc. Although the individual sees the items separately as they scan the room, in their mind the room is established as a singular vision or mental image. The composite would be considered in psychological terms to represent a schema. On a daily basis the individual may perhaps enter and leave a room on many occasions without a second thought regarding its contents; but, add a single item, remove or alter an existing one – and the attention is suddenly drawn to the change in setting. The changes are what get noticed; the remainder of the room is more or less taken for granted.

Typically these changes are minor and therefore quickly accepted and assimilated by the mind; the mental image, or schema, is updated and the individual cognitively moves on. Occasionally however, the (cognitive) furniture may be completely re-arranged (by an outside influence or message). Such an event requires the individual to study the changes in greater detail, generating anxiety by forcing the individual to reconcile the new information with the previously understood cognitive setting. Where

⁷⁸ “The notion of a ‘schema’ ... has been adopted by many in psychology and anthropology as a way to study how people move through the world by drawing on categories. Schemas are sets of representations that process information and guide action. They contain both relatively fixed ideas and ideas that depend on contextual cues...People often construct schemas in the form of narratives...Sharing these narratives can then be said to constitute a community of narration, within which people can tell each other stories and expect to have their narratives ratified. Together, actors reinforce each other's sense that they have a good grasp on the world.” John R. Bowen, "Anti-Americanism as Schemas and Diacritics Across Indonesia and France" In *Anti-Americanisms in World Politics*, eds. Peter Katzenstein and Robert Keohane (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 230-232.

the delta between old and new information is small, little anxiety results and the information is more readily accepted; where the delta is large, a great deal more scrutiny of the information ensues, anxiety is heightened, and the likelihood of rejection is increased. The process is depicted at figure 1 below. Receipt of new information that conforms closely to previously held beliefs triggers cognitive processing along the lines of extant schemata (the bold arrow pathways); while information that departs substantively from extant schemata requires considerably more cognitive more effort to process, and in some cases may require the development of a markedly different schema altogether to accommodate (the alternative non-schema pathway).

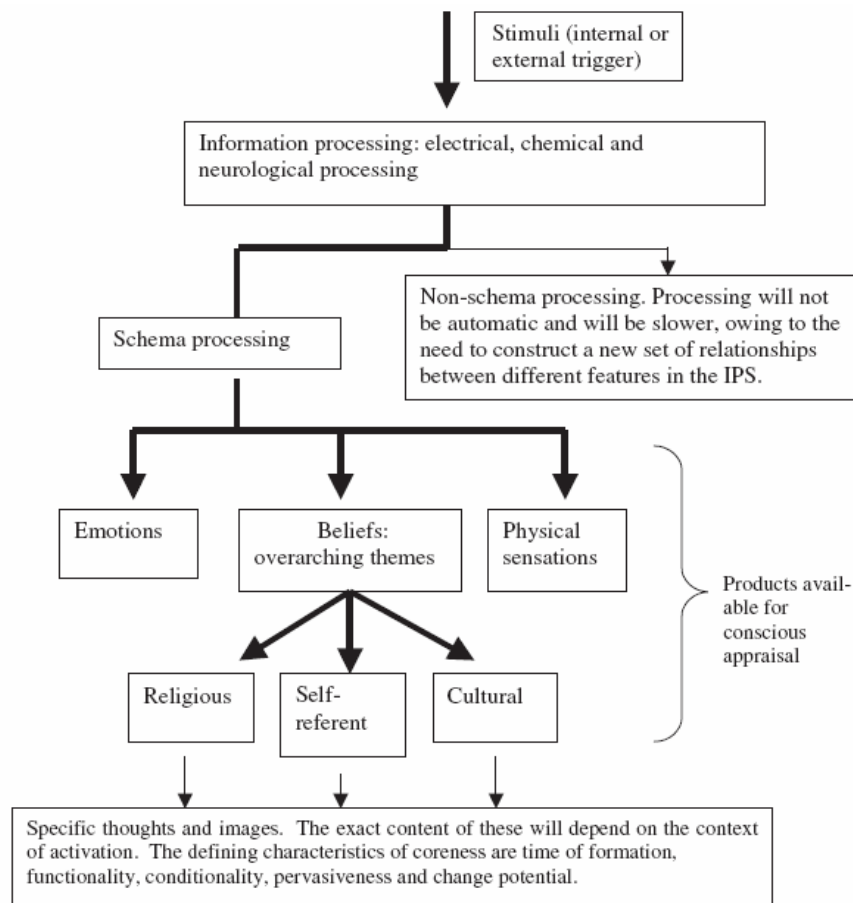


Figure 1 – Schema activation within the information processing system, and its relation to cognitions

Source: James, Southam and Blackburn, *Schemas Revisited*, 372

In psychological terms, the anxiety that is generated when newly received information conflicts substantively from previously held belief is known as cognitive dissonance. Knowing how to reduce cognitive dissonance is a key component to gaining recipient acceptance of a new message:

Cognitive dissonance is a psychological phenomenon which refers to the discomfort felt at a discrepancy between what [is] already know[n] or believe[d], and new information or interpretation. It therefore occurs when there is a need to accommodate new ideas, and it may be necessary for it to develop so that we become 'open' to them.⁷⁹

There are several potential responses to cognitive dissonance. As a general rule, human beings tend to try to reduce anxiety. Therefore, when confronted with new information that contradicts strongly held beliefs, recipients are likely to reject the new information (or message) altogether.⁸⁰ Such a response poses considerable challenges to those attempting to deliver alternative narratives. Unless the new information can be understood as roughly corresponding to previously understood concepts, acceptance would require considerable conscious effort and mental discomfort – in extreme cases this may be tantamount to a personality crisis. This suggests that rearranging a

⁷⁹ "Cognitive Dissonance and Learning," <http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/dissonance.htm>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.

⁸⁰ "A narrative will only appeal if it resonates with an individual's personal experience..." Cilluffo, *The Internet: A Portal to Violent Islamist Extremism*, 3

recipient's (cognitive) furniture is likely to be exceedingly difficult; a process not likely to be achieved overnight.

Equally troubling is a second potential response to the phenomenon of cognitive dissonance which suggests that when acceptance of a new schema has been difficult "especially if [the transition] has been uncomfortable or humiliating," it will magnify the recipient's resistance to attempts to undo what has been done.⁸¹ To do otherwise would confront the individual with the unpleasant experience of having to admit to himself that "what had been learned would be useless, pointless or valueless [- worse yet, that they may have been] conned."⁸² Such a process may explain why radicalized individuals tend toward fanaticism in their belief systems.

Although difficult, reversing the effects of extremist messaging is theoretically possible. To do so would involve introducing a counter messaging strategy in a graduated fashion in order to reduce the level of dissonance (and therefore resistance) that a recipient would experience at any particular stage in the process.⁸³ In effect individuals would be encouraged to take a step down the ladder of radicalization. By approaching the process in this manner, the recipient is not forced to make large scale, rapid change to extant belief systems (forcing choices that are likely to be too stressful to be successfully accomplished). This permits the individual or group of individuals to

⁸¹ "Classics in the History of Psychology -- Festinger & Carlsmith (1959)," <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Festinger/>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

⁸² *Cognitive Dissonance and Learning*

⁸³ Alternative (or complimentary) strategies include repetitive messaging, a technique often employed in advertising campaigns.

reduce their level of dissonance and anxiety by spreading it out over a longer period of time.

There is risk to adopting this sort of approach however; related not only to the possibility that an alternative narrative may fail to resonate with a target population, but moreover that it may be perceived as a deliberate effort to deceive. Given the repressiveness of some of the core Arab nations' nations, this may be easier said than done:

...defusing Islamic insurgencies requires, above all, persuading Muslim populations to choose progress and dignity and to reject religious tyranny and violence. This seemingly easy choice is complicated by the view of many Muslims, not entirely unfounded, that they have fared poorly in a Western-dominated system that espouses progress and dignity, not to mention the fact that few states in the Muslim world actually offer their citizens either progress or dignity.⁸⁴

Whether fault is appropriately assigned or not is irrelevant, overcoming this historical perspective (schemata) with simple messages will ring hollow to most Muslims who have been disappointed with lack of real improvement in their lives (as earlier pointed out by Lewis). For such people, viable, tangible alternatives that hold the promise of real improvement in their lives must accompany any alternative messages.⁸⁵

Impediments to Western Legitimacy in Defining an Alternative Narrative

⁸⁴ Gompert and Gordon IV, *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency*, 5

⁸⁵ Such initiatives, which logically include political reforms within core Arab states for example, is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss however.

In addition to the psychological elements related to identity, there are also practical reasons why an alternative narrative should be perceived as originating from within the Islamic community. These include genuine differences in political and religious perspective. The first of these considerations stems from the notion that the Koran is regarded by “most Muslims [to be] quite literally the word of God ... preserved without change to this day.”⁸⁶ This contrasts sharply with the Islamic viewpoint of the Christian bible, which as Armstrong points out:

...[is not a] homologue [of the Koran]...as many casual observers might think[; but rather it is] a selection, put together by custom and Church councils, after much argument and discussion...selected from a large number of histories, collections of laws, stories, devotional poems, visions and letters written, in the case of the New Testament over a couple of centuries, and in the case of the Old Testament over about a millennium from material preserved by oral tradition over many more centuries.⁸⁷

Paired with this viewpoint is the fact that the Koran is itself considered authoritative only in its native Arabic form.⁸⁸ “The fact that many Muslims – including many native Arab-speakers – cannot read the Koran in Arabic

⁸⁶ G. P. Armstrong, *The Ideology of Jihadism: The Koran* (Ottawa, Canada: Department of National Defence, 2007).; See also the Saudi Arabia information resource “The Holy Qur’an is the word of God revealed to the prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, by the Angel Gabriel. It is for Muslims the uncreated work of God and, in its original form, is preserved beside the throne of God in heaven. The utterances of God was vouchsafed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who committed the words to memory and later dictated the word of God to his companions and to the secretaries who wrote them down.” “Holy Qur’an (1) - Saudi Arabia Information,” <http://www.saudinf.com/main/b64.htm>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

⁸⁷ Armstrong, *The Ideology of Jihadism: The Koran*

⁸⁸ “The Koran cannot be translated... This book is here rendered almost literally and every effort has been made to choose befitting language. But the result is not the Glorious Koran, that inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy. It is only an attempt to present the meaning of the Koran – and peradventure something of its charm - in English. It can never take the place of the Koran in Arabic, nor is it meant to do so.” *The Koran* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), xxvii.

[therefore]...gives the jihadists great power as they select a verse and repeat it as justification.”⁸⁹

Two other aspects of Islamic belief that lend credibility to the identity perspective are the rejection of the Christian notion of the Trinity and separation of religion and state. From a traditional Islamic viewpoint, both aspects diminish the rightful authority of God. These aspects are not introduced here to open a wider theological debate on the religious practices of the majority of Muslims. It is understood that Islam, like many religions, is highly interpretable. They are raised rather, to highlight to those who may embark upon the development of alternative narratives of the importance of deep cultural awareness in so doing. As such, these two aspects will be briefly discussed.

Generally speaking, Muslims consider the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity, introduced into that faith in the fourth century CE, as an essentially diluting influence to the monotheistic core of the religion. Whereas Judaism introduced monotheism into Western theology, Muslim’s believe that the introduction of the Trinitarian doctrine effectively splits the Godhead into three, consisting of: the Jewish God Yahweh; his son Jesus Christ; and the Holy Spirit. While Christians seem to have been able to effectively overcome this apparent contradiction in terms whereby “God is fully one, and is also three,” Muslims are dumbfounded by this abstraction of the faith. This significance (from a Western political standpoint) is this: Islamic religious doctrine represents a singular, unified vision. It naturally follows therefore that “...if God is that to which one gives oneself unreservedly, to have more than one God is to live a life of divided

⁸⁹ Armstrong, *The Ideology of Jihadism: The Koran*

loyalties.”⁹⁰ Muslim tradition rejects this idea. There is but one God, and to him all roads lead, both political and theological. This idea is leveraged explicitly (and implicitly) in extremist messages, serving as a beacon around which the insurgency is urged, indeed commanded, to coalesce.⁹¹

With respect to the idea that Islam recognizes no separation of religion authority from state authority, it is recognized that the idea is by no means uniform and highly contested.⁹² It is nevertheless a factor that must be considered when attempting to appreciate what aspects of the extremist narrative will resonate with potential recruits. As such it would be naïve to overlook this aspect of Islamic thought. In short, Islam was revealed to Mohammed in a time period of not only great religious, but also great political turmoil in the Arabian Peninsula. Upon its founding, therefore, Mohammed was compelled not only to deliver a message from God, but also to govern and administer a state. As Lewis makes this point rather succinctly:

Since the state was Islamic, and was indeed created as an instrument of Islam by its founder, there was no need for a separate religious institution. The state was the church [(mosque)] and the church [(mosque)] was the state, and God was the ruler of both.⁹³

⁹⁰ Smith, *The World's Religions*, 275

⁹¹ Online News Hour, *Bin Laden's Fatwa*; Online News Hour, *Al Qaeda's 1998 Fatwa*.

⁹² There are examples of Islamic states that have adopted the principle of separating religious authority from political authority (ex. Turkey, Pakistan, etc) in a pragmatic sense; but it is equally true that many more do not (Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, etc).

⁹³ Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 101

From the standpoint of Islamic belief therefore, there really is no distinction between religious and state authority – the Koran represents both religious and political authority to the ummah. This is a difficult viewpoint for utilitarian, especially secular, societies to accept.⁹⁴ The ruling elites of many Islamic nations are frequently regarded as obvious examples of rulers claiming to be dressed in cloaks of religious authority, when in reality they are thinly veiled political disguises. But such a perspective overlooks the fact that that it is not the perspective of non-Muslims that matters in this case; rather it is the hearts and minds of the ummah that are at stake when it comes to extremist messaging.

The Recruitment Process

Less than a year after four coordinated suicide bombings targeted London's underground rail system on July 7, 2005, an eagerly awaited House of Commons report into the events of that day concluded: 'What we know of previous extremists in the UK shows us that there is not a consistent profile to help identify who may be vulnerable to radicalization...'⁹⁵

As the House of Commons report above suggests, the difficulties involved with understanding who may be vulnerable to extremist messaging are substantial. Although the cognitive processes that facilitate reception and processing of new information as it relates to the extremist messages can be understood in relatively simple psychological terms, there does not appear to be a distinctive psychological profile that can pinpoint individual personality types that may be vulnerable to such messaging – and therefore to

⁹⁴ O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, 15

⁹⁵ John Horgan, "From Profiles to Pathways: The Road to Recruitment, Countering the Terrorist Mentality," eJournal USA, May 2007, <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0507/ijpe/horgan.htm>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

potential recruitment. Rather, the focus of successive studies and deliberations on the matter has tended to suggest that “explanations at the level of individual psychology [are] insufficient.”⁹⁶ Rather, conclusions seem to suggest that the issue of extremist behaviour is better understood through the lens of “group, organizational, and social psychology, with a particular emphasis on ‘collective identity.’”⁹⁷ Indeed research suggests that the strength of the collective identity is such that, given the right circumstances, recruits will readily “subordinate their individual identit[ies]” to it.⁹⁸

Understanding how this collective identity appeal lures potential recruits to the jihad is the key to developing interdiction strategies. Conventional wisdom has suggested that recruitment to collectivist organizations has been facilitated principally by means of attraction to a mass ideological appeal.⁹⁹ Recent studies have, however, suggested otherwise. Testifying before the committee on Homeland Security, Brian Jenkins argued that “Jihadists recruit one person at a time. The message from the global jihad is aimed directly at the individual...”¹⁰⁰ This view is corroborated by social psychologist Mark Sageman, whose empirically based studies explored many of these

⁹⁶ Consensus opinion from the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism and Security held in Madrid, Spain in March 2005: Jerrold Post, "Collective Identity: Hatred Bred in the Bone," eJournal USA, May 2007, <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0507/ijpe/post.htm>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 126

¹⁰⁰ Jenkins, *Building an Army of Believers: Jihadist Radicalization and Recruitment*, 3

elements, including evaluating social, psychological and situation influences on 155 known members of the Jihad.¹⁰¹

Although background conditions and situational factors related to the subjects of the studies varied, the results of Sageman's work revealed some useful common elements. These common elements included an animating conditional factor consisting of a deep sense of alienation that subjects felt from the communities in which they resided (due to a real or perceived sense of grievance and humiliation).¹⁰² Such sentiments inevitably led subjects to seek "emotional relief, social community, and spiritual comfort" where it could be found; typically within local mosques or prayer groups.¹⁰³

The Al Qaeda recruitment strategy capitalizes on the sense of alienation by insinuating itself into local mosques that provide unfettered access to its message; a message which adds an additional dimension to the spiritual comfort of the community: "a cause for self-sacrifice."¹⁰⁴ Through this analysis, the Al Qaeda recruitment process has been revealed to be a largely bottom up process, centered on the idea of slow,

¹⁰¹ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 93

¹⁰² The causes for these sentiments vary, ranging from outright hostility and violence within core Arab countries where dissent is not well tolerated to marginalization, discrimination, underemployment in western nations.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 97

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 97

individual socialization through a methodology that Ibrahim Saad Eddin has labeled “kinship, friendship and worship.”¹⁰⁵

While the jihadist message is widely and increasingly disseminated, the actual connection with the jihadist enterprise, outside of the Middle Eastern and Asian madrassas, appears random, depending upon personal acquaintance, finding a radical mosque, or being spotted by a recruiter. That, in turn, suggests that the numbers [of potential recruits] are not driven merely by the appeal of the jihadist narrative, but also by the number of ‘retail outlets’ where recruiters can meet potential recruits.¹⁰⁶

With continued interaction, the social bonds that brought the subjects together deepen. Eventually, a slow drift toward ever more radical viewpoints develops. Acceptance of extremist messages becomes more easily accomplished as candidate’s schemata migrate ever more toward radical perspectives. At this point the process of radicalization will either become stalled or proceed to the next step.

...the process of social affiliation with potential members of the jihad and intensification of beliefs and faith are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for joining the jihad. The critical and specific element to joining the jihad is the accessibility of a link to the jihad. Without it, the group ... will undergo a process of progressive isolation. They may try to participate in the jihad, but without know-how or resources. Although lethal, their operations do not constitute a serious threat to society.¹⁰⁷

Countering the Recruitment Process

From a counter recruitment point of view this type of analysis has a great deal to offer. First, it suggests that recruits are not pushed into extremist organizations; they are

¹⁰⁵ Ibrahim, Saad Eddin, 1980. *Anatomy of Egypt’s Militant Islamic Groups*, International Journal of Middle East Studies, 12: 423-453. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 133

¹⁰⁶ Rand testimonial, Building an Army of Believers, Brian Michael Jenkins, April 5 2007

¹⁰⁷ Sageman 120

pulled in by acquaintances and social affiliations; second, the principal causes that propel potential recruits into the orbits of such organizations stem from a deep sense of disaffection from the societies within which they live; and third, the process of radicalization is not likely to proceed beyond the “bunch of guys” stage less the catalyzing effect of an extremist message and a definitive linkage to a terrorist organization.¹⁰⁸

Moreover, such analyses strongly suggest that effective counter-recruitment strategies should be oriented toward “phase – specific initiatives.”¹⁰⁹ These phases could include: the pre-radicalization phase where the emphasis is placed upon educational activities aimed at general deterrence – much like traditional anti-smoking (or more recent anti-bullying) campaigns for example; the disruption phase where the emphasis is placed upon specified or targeted groups - in this phase activities are designed to counter the influence of extremist messaging in selected groups deemed to have been more directly exposed to extremist messaging; and the intervention phase wherein the focus begins to shift away from attempting to influence already radicalized recruits; toward a greater emphasis on interdiction and public safety.

Suggested counter strategies include.

In the Pre-radicalization phase:

¹⁰⁸ “The ‘bunch of guys’ incubation goes only so far; it might be enough to make a dedicated political militant...but it will not produce a religious fanatic...this requires the religious dimension, acquired only in places of worship.” *Ibid.*, 115

¹⁰⁹ Horgan, *From Profiles to Pathways: The Road to Recruitment, Countering the Terrorist Mentality*

- Block extremist messaging. This could include development of governmental monitoring and control (within the scope of the law) to intercept extremist internet messaging where the incitation of violence is endorsed;¹¹⁰
- Deliver positive messaging. Deny the sense of importance that is associated with assuming the role within a terrorist organization. Enlist the broader Islamic community in order to discredit the extremist collective identity by discrediting its narrative;¹¹¹
- Build understanding and respect. Societal issues that tend to generate feelings of isolation or humiliation for Muslims need to be addressed. In Western nations like Canada policies should promote integration of Islamic communities within greater society. Universities and student groups need to be engaged to develop more culturally aware and inclusive programs. In Muslim nations, like the core Arab states where democratization is low, Western options are more difficult but also more urgent and necessary. Leaders of these nations should be urged to permit greater representation within their governing systems, as well as establishing and enforcing educational standards in order to c -ed to develop more culturally.0003 T9w -as esT/TT0 1 Tf0.00

- Engage law enforcement authorities to assist in the active intervention of pre-operational extremist activity. This will likely include intelligence gathering, monitoring and potential arrest;
- Offer rewards programs and develop mechanisms to alert the public to potential threatening persons.

Institution of counter recruitment strategies is essential in order to safeguard vulnerable citizens and secure public safety; however, it is not without risk. It is possible that overly aggressive anti-recruitment efforts can lead to racial profiling. This could lead to jeopardizing of civil liberties or perceptions to that effect, within minority communities – thus effectively causing more harm than good. Strict oversight of such activities is absolutely essential to prevent such occurrences. Resistance to notions of extraordinary wartime authorities must remain a staple of democratic tradition. To do otherwise risk corroborating extremists' claims to repression aimed at Islamic communities.

Where conflicts arise, clear distinctions must be drawn by authorities with regards to their actions. Authorities must take great care to ensure that measures designed to disrupt or intervene with extremist recruitment activities not be regarded by minority groups as prejudicial to their religious freedoms. In this sense, a similar policy of disaggregation that applies to GWOT must also be applied at the local community level. Radical elements within society must be carefully identified and isolated from the greater Islamic community prior to intervention phase activities being initiated. As pointed out by Brian Jenkins of Rand Corporation, while issues of cultural sensitivity and religious

tolerance must be upheld, at the end of the day, however, they cannot trump legitimate law enforcement activities aimed at maintenance of public safety:

Faith alone should cast no shadow of suspicion, but religion should provide no shield for subversion-society need not be shy about attacking hatred and exhortation to violence even when they are cloaked in religious belief. Protecting the freedom of religion may require enforced tolerance-that is, attacking exhortations to violence-in order to protect the freedom of all.¹¹⁴

Influence of Globalization

...if Bin Laden didn't have access to the global media, satellite communications, and the internet, he'd just be a cranky guy in a cave...¹¹⁵

The process of Globalization has had a substantial effect on the GWOT. And while many of these aspects lay beyond the scope of this paper, several facets are particularly germane and will be discussed. First, as pointed out in a recent Rand study, the rapid and ubiquitous nature of modern communications has facilitated the wide scale dissemination of extremist messages, particularly on the internet and via televised media broadcasts:

...Worldwide communications, Internet penetration, media access (especially satellite TV), and transportation networks permit insurgencies to connect with, learn from, and receive help from one another and from stateless extremist movements...¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Jenkins, *Building an Army of Believers: Jihadist Radicalization and Recruitment*

¹¹⁵ George Packer, "A Reporter at Large: Knowing the Enemy: The New Yorker," http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/12/18/061218fa_fact2; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

¹¹⁶ Gompert and Gordon IV, *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency*, 15

With respect to the extremist messaging of Al Qaeda, such means of communication have become the lifeblood of its command and control structure since the US led invasion of Afghanistan effectively destroyed its training facilities in that country. Having effectively lost its ability to seek relatively overt safe havens following 9/11, Al Qaeda has responded by flattening its command and control structures and adopting more of a decentralized, almost franchise like organizational structure.¹¹⁷ Indeed there is evidence to suggest that the Madrid and London bombings were in fact carried out by local Al Qaeda affiliates not directly linked to Al Qaeda command elements.

The Madrid bombings in particular highlight a degree of sophistication that merits study. Aware of its limited scope of operations post invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, Al Qaeda shifted its means of orchestrating attacks on the West from direct to indirect coordination. Whereas in the past operatives would have been trained and dispatched by Al Qaeda, the Madrid cell by contrast operated independently; and is alleged to have received its inspiration and indeed detailed planning guidance from the World Wide Web.¹¹⁸ It is important to note that the instructions were not aimed at an extant group of pre-trained subordinates (or sleeper cell) emplaced by Al Qaeda; but rather at any radicalized group resident in Spain at the time that may have been sympathetic to the extremist message.

¹¹⁷ Kilcullen, *Countering Global Insurgency*

¹¹⁸ Brynjar Lia, *Globalization and the Future of Terrorism* (London: Routledge, 2005), 85.

Additionally, Al Qaeda planners were savvy enough to realize that Spain represented the weak link in the Western coalition in Iraq. With an election pending, the Madrid bombings were well timed to sway Spanish public opinion against the war in Iraq; the pro-American government in Spain fell and Spanish troops were subsequently withdrawn from Iraq.¹¹⁹ In effect, this modern communications adaptation by Al Qaeda has opened a new front on the GWOT that Western authorities will have to grapple with. The United States has responded by recognizing the Internet as a new battlespace and designating the US Air force as the lead agency to developing counterstrategies aimed at achieving information dominance within this medium. To date, Canada has not matched US efforts in this arena.¹²⁰

A second, and perhaps less obvious, feature of Globalization that is germane to the discussion of combating Islamic extremism relates to the issue of schema development. This aspect is related to how the Islamic world may regard Western culture generally, as it is received through the air waves of its media outlets. In its barest forms, Western marketing can often overwhelm even those accustomed to its approach. In less well adapted cultures, high tempo ad campaigns can, when first encountered, be perceived as a virtual assault on the senses. Moreover, if they come to be regarded as the character of Western society, they can be potentially leveraged by anti-Western elements to depict Western culture as shallow and lacking moral standing.

¹¹⁹ O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, 34

¹²⁰ There has been activity by the Canadian Department of National Defence along these lines; but little is promulgated in the unclassified arena.

The threatening nature of this interaction is illustrated by Benjamin Barber in his book *Jihad versus MacWorld*. Barber points out in dramatic, yet eloquently simplistic, terms the impact that television (Western media's cultural Trojan horse) is having on other parts of the world:

Television spreads a modest flood tide on a flat plain: its waters are everywhere, and though it makes a shallow-bedded sea, and though there are traditional landmarks – newspaper trees and book steeples and many a beckoning print rooftop-millions lose their way and slip under the shimmering images without anyone quite noticing, least of all they themselves. Children have been known to drown in just a few inches of water: television's shallows are more perilous still.¹²¹

Clearly the influence of Globalization has tremendously complicated the battle versus Islamic extremism, opening new domains and avenues for dissemination of the extremist narrative; but it can also be regarded as a medium of opportunity. Western industry for example has been traditionally very successful at marketing. It is a skill that Western authorities would do well to mine and with a degree of cultural and religious sensitivity, potential gains could outstrip defeats in this medium. Rand Corporation has gone so far as to suggest, for example, that the US should seize the initiative in this realm and establish “integrated counter insurgency wireless networks” that would incorporate all manner of wireless devices, from cell phones to national wiki information sharing services, to capture information dominance within contested regions.¹²²

Targeting Extremist Leadership

¹²¹ Benjamin R. Barber, *Jihad Vs McWorld* (New York: Random House, 1995), 112.

¹²² Gompert and Gordon IV, *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency*, 147

While it is recognized that the two principal strategies of the GWOT are disaggregation and attacking the extremist strategy, it is also understood that targeting of extremist leaders is necessary. The reason for this is fairly straightforward. Insurgencies cannot survive without strong “intellectual leadership...because [such leadership] provides [the requisite] strategic vision, organizational know-how, and technical competence.”¹²³

Speaking at a conference at Dalhousie University, Russ Howard, a former Dean at West Point Military Academy, spoke about what had been learned regarding the leadership and organization of Al Qaeda. Howard argued that Al-Qaeda was “no keystone cop organization,”¹²⁴ noting that the training manuals that US Special Forces recovered from Al-Qaeda training bases in Afghanistan were chillingly simplistic and lethal. It had become increasingly evident in Howard’s view that Al-Qaeda’s training regimen was well organized. Operatives were trained in trade craft as well as military operations; manufacturing credit cards and passports from scratch. Howard also noted that only an estimated 30% of trainees actually graduated to become field operatives; the remainder assumed positions as support staff and auxiliaries. Regardless of their assigned role, all worked toward a common ethos epitomized by the swearing of an oath during a graduation ceremony to “kill Westerners.”¹²⁵

¹²³ O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, 97

¹²⁴ Howard, *Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Understanding the New Security Environment*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

The logical counterargument to targeting of the leadership is simply that, as previously alluded to, the core of the GWOT is less a conventional war than a war of ideas. As such, it could be argued that killing or capturing of the leadership is less relevant – given that the ideological genie is already out of the bottle. But such an argument would overlook another more pragmatic reason for targeting the leadership, and that relates simply to their continuing ability to lead. As pointed out by a recent lecturer at the Canadian Forces College in Toronto, while it is true that leaders are replaceable, it takes time – time the insurgency doesn't have to lose “...yes, people pop up...but the commander...the commander doesn't just pop up. The commander needs to earn his spurs somewhere...”¹²⁶

While necessary, pursuing policies that advocate targeting of leadership elements within extremist Islamic groups is not without risk. Such risks include the potential for these groups to claim martyrdom status for dead or captured leaders – potentially reinforcing the notion of rightful authority and the defensive nature of the conflict in the eyes of the ummah. Such rhetoric can easily be amplified by careless political statements on the part of western leaders. This is painfully evident when Western leaders speak openly of sending troops abroad to fight insurgents in their lands of origin as such rhetoric “makes no mention of the people who live in the places being attacked.”¹²⁷

GWOT as Global Counter-Insurgency Summary

¹²⁶ Thomas Bradley, *Joint Targeting*, 2008.

¹²⁷ Gompert and Gordon IV, *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency*, 7

The GWOT is more precisely understood as a global counter-insurgency than a war against terror per-se. The consequences of this adjustment in thought have translated into a subtle but significant shift in approach to dealing with the threat posed by Islamic extremism. Understanding the nature of the threat in this way suggests three imperatives with respect to how the GWOT should be prosecuted.

First, pursuing a strategy of dis-aggregation whereby distinctions are drawn and wedges driven between elements of local Islamic extremist fractions and those of a trans-national character is essential. Early mischaracterization of the conflict for political purposes has served to reinforce the extremist Islamic narrative and thereby inadvertently aided in their recruitment process. In its place, a divide and conquer (or dis-aggregation) strategy is recommended.

Second, attacking the extremist narrative is the principal and overriding strategic imperative. The extremist narrative leverages an historical Islamic identity that harkens back to the Golden Age of Islam. This narrative and the collective identity that it inspires, underwrites the extremist recruitment process and sustains the jihad. Discrediting the extremist narrative by exposing it as a fraudulent hijacking of the true Islamic faith is the principal recommended means of impeding the recruitment process and thereby weakening the extremist network.

And finally, although of lesser importance than attacking the extremist narrative, elimination or capture of the leadership of extremist Islamic organizations is paramount.

Although considerably hobbled by the heat and light that the GWOT has brought to bear on trans-national extremist organizations in the post 9/11 era, leadership elements remain a key concern as they constitute the coalescing agent or intellectual foundation around which the insurgency is generated and sustained. Elimination or capture of such leaders seriously erodes the viability of the insurgency.

DEFENCE OF THE HOMELAND

To this point in the paper three overarching strategies have been discussed aimed at defeating transnational Islamic extremism, namely: dis-aggregation; discrediting the extremist narrative; and targeting extremist leadership. These strategies are principally offensive in character. There remains a fourth strategy to be discussed, a strategy that is largely defensive in nature: operationalizing an integrated security system for the defence of the homeland.

Whereas Canadian foreign policy is largely exercised by the Government of Canada through a limited number of ministries, including Foreign Affairs Canada, the Department of National Defence and a handful of others, within Canada many more ministries, including those at the federal, provincial and municipal levels, exercise functional and jurisdictional authority in areas germane to public safety. Coordination of these disparate ministries is absolutely essential if counter-terrorism efforts are going to be successful within Canada. Otherwise stated, unity of effort is essential, and somewhat more difficult to achieve given the greater number of jurisdictional authorities involved, within Canada.

The aim of this section of the paper therefore is to identify what instruments of government power are germane to the GWOT from a domestic security point of view, which government departments should control these instruments and how they will coordinate their activities to accomplish the goal of preventing acts of terrorism within Canada and dealing with its consequences should prevention fail. To do this, it will be

useful to briefly review the history of terrorist activity in Canada, what measures governments of the day employed to deal with the crises, determine whether these measures were effective, and if so, whether they continue to be relevant and useful today. Following this, a review of post 9/11 Government of Canada institutional realignments, as well as the adoption of legal means, security and infrastructure initiatives will be examined.

Historical Context of Terrorism in Canada

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon in Canada. Although not as prevalent as in other parts of the world perhaps, Canadians have experienced episodes of terrorist activity in, and originating from, Canadian territory. The October crisis of 1970 witnessed French Canadian nationalists from the Front de libération du Québec (FLQ) involved in various acts of terrorism including the kidnapping of a British diplomat and the murder of the Quebec Minister of Labour, Pierre Laporte; the 1985 Air India bombing which killed 329 people at the hands of Sikh extremists; and the planned bombing of Los Angeles airport by Millennium bomber, Ahmed Ressaam, are all well known examples.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ CBC News, "The October Crisis: Civil Liberties Suspended | CBC Archives," http://archives.cbc.ca/politics/civil_unrest/topics/101/ (accessed 4/9/2008, 2008).; CBC News, "Air India - Bombing of Air India Flight 182," <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/airindia/bombing>; Internet; accessed 9 April 2008. See also National Commission on the Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report* (Washington, D.C.: United States, 2004), <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/911Report.pdf>.

In the case of the October Crisis of 1970, then Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau enacted the *War Measures Act* to quell the violence and contain the terrorist threat. Invocation of the Act effectively suspended civil liberties, permitting police to arrest and detain without warrant (or right of bail) persons suspected of being associated with the FLQ. Federal troops were also called out to restore public confidence. Although Trudeau's actions were effective in dealing with the FLQ, the *War Measures Act* was criticized for conferring virtually unlimited power on government authorities. The *War Measures Act* was subsequently repealed. It was replaced by the *Emergencies Act* "which ... [dispersed] responsibilities for planning to meet the exigencies of different types of emergencies to various Ministers."¹²⁹ As a consequence many of its provisions were not reflected in the *Emergencies Act*. The effect would ultimately be to reduce the efficacy with which sitting governments could orchestrate unified, coherent responses to crises.

Reflecting this lack of a unified approach, measures taken both before to prevent, and subsequently to seek those responsible for the 1985 Air India bombing were comparatively ineffective. A subsequent public inquiry was called into the disaster concluded on the 15th of February 2008, nearly 25 years after the event. The results of the inquiry were not yet available at writing of this essay but what was known is that coordination between the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), the federal department responsible for collecting, monitoring and analyzing intelligence on threats to Canadian national security, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Canada's

¹²⁹ Government of Canada, "Emergencies Act," Canada, <http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/prb0114-e.htm>; Internet; accessed 16 March 2008.

federal policing service, and Transport Canada, the federal department responsible for development and implementation of transportation policy in Canada, was ineffectual at stopping Sikh terrorists from placing an explosive device on the Air India flight. Given testimony by government officials at the inquiry, it would appear that lack of coordination between the three departments played a key role in the failure.

Equally ineffective from a domestic counterterrorism point of view was the handling of the Ahmed Ressam case. Having illegally immigrated to Canada from Algeria in 1994 with a falsified French passport, Ressam attempted to claim political asylum in Canada. Released pending verification of his case, Ressam became involved in petty crime and was rearrested and released no fewer than four times. Worse yet, Ressam managed to obtain a legitimate Canadian passport despite having his asylum case denied, and subsequently used that passport to travel to Afghanistan in 1998 to enroll in a terrorist training facility. Returning to Canada in 1999, Ressam was arrested by US customs officials while attempting to enter the United States, an event which became known as the Millennium bombing plot. The Ahmed Ressam case is well documented in the US 9/11 Commission report.¹³⁰ Recommendations stemming from the report highlight concerns of US policy makers with respect to lax Canadian immigration policies, passport controls and border security.

Although not perpetrated on Canadian soil, 9/11 constituted a terrorist event of serious concern to Canada, involving the loss of 24 Canadian lives and jeopardizing the

¹³⁰ National Commission on the Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 176

perception of safety of Canadians and Americans alike. Unlike the Air India bombing and the Millennium bomber case highlighted above, the sheer magnitude of the 9/11 attacks represented nothing less than a generational shock for most Canadians. Public security concerns of Canadians stemming from the events of 9/11 have not gone unnoticed by the Canadian government. Recognizing the danger to Canadian security, both in terms of its physical and economic dimensions, the Government of Canada moved quickly to reassure both Americans and Canadians of its intentions to address perceived security deficiencies. During a visit to the White House by Jean Chrétien barely two weeks after the 9/11 attacks, President Bush took the opportunity to subtly remind the Prime Minister of the potential consequences facing Canada if border security issues were not dealt with promptly:

We've got a great partner in our neighborhood who understands what I know, that we are facing a new type of war. And those of us who love freedom, like the Canadians love freedom, now understand that freedom is under attack. And we've combined together to fight -- to fight against a new enemy. And the Prime Minister understands that... We had a great discussion about a variety of issues. We discussed the need for us to continue to work peacefully along a huge border. Border relations between Canada and Mexico have never been better. And there is no doubt in my mind that the Prime Minister and the Canadian people will work hard to make sure that Canada is secure from any terrorist activity that takes place...¹³¹

The Government of Canada quickly implemented an anti-terrorism plan that focused on five principal objectives:

- to prevent terrorists from entering Canada;

¹³¹ White House Press Release, "Canadian PM: We Will be there," United States, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010924-7.html>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

- to protect Canadians from terrorist attacks;
- to bring forward tools to identify, prosecute, convict and punish terrorists;
- to keep the Canada-U.S. border secure and open to legitimate trade; and
- to work with the international community to bring terrorists to justice and address the root causes of terrorism.¹³²

Although the terrorist events of 9/11 were over within a few hours, the crisis period for Canadian government authorities lasted for several months and taxed the limits of extant defence, intelligence, police and border control agencies.¹³³ In the longer term, the Government of Canada recognized the lessons learned from 9/11, in particular the absolute necessity for informed, rapid and coordinated action in response to terrorist events. As a consequence, the GOC took steps to implement far reaching changes in realm of public security. The guidance for these changes was reflected in the government's keystone security policy document released in 2004 – the National Security Policy (NSP).

The NSP established three core national security imperatives: “protecting Canada and Canadians at home and abroad; ensuring Canada is not a base for threats to our allies;

¹³² Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, "Backgrounder - Canada's Actions Against Terrorism since September 11," Canada, <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/anti-terrorism/canadaactions-en.asp>; Internet, accessed 18 March 2008.

¹³³ This was due in part to the sheer magnitude of the 9/11 attacks and the fear of a potential second wave. This fear was reinforced by a series of Anthrax attacks within the United States; raising concerns that a potential large scale weapons of mass destruction attack could be imminent.

and contributing to international security.”¹³⁴ Additionally, the keystone document recognized the linkage between the personal security of Canadians and events occurring within the international community. Moreover, it was understood that dealing effectively with these issues would require harmonization of efforts across various levels of government. These relationships are depicted along the solid arrowheads at figure 2 below:

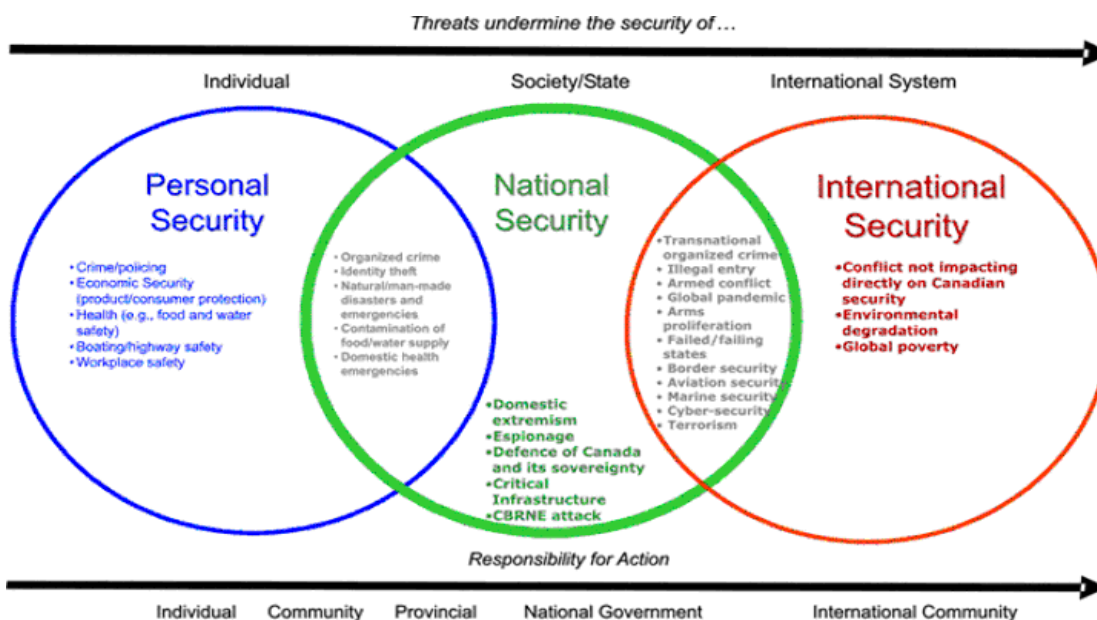


Figure 2 - Scope of the National Security Policy

Source: National Security Policy, *Securing an Open Society*

Operationalizing an Integrated Security System

Having set forth the NSP, the government took decisive steps to translate the new policy into action. Changes included the establishment of clear lanes of authority within

¹³⁴ Privy Council Office, "Securing an Open Society - Information Resources - Privy Council Office," Canada, http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca/index.asp?lang=eng&page=information&sub=publications&doc=natsec-secnat/natsec-secnat_e.htm; Internet; accessed 10 April 2008.

federal government departments and the establishment of priorities aimed at building an integrated security system. To achieve these effects a series of organizational realignments were introduced aimed at centralizing emergency response authorities (effectively reversing the dispersal of emergency response authorities that had originated with the abolishment of the *War Measures Act*), these included:

Legal measures aimed at improving national security have been introduced. These include the *Anti Terrorist Act*, the *Public Safety Act*, and the *Charities Registration Act*, as well as amendments to the *Proceeds from Crime Act*. Passing of the *Anti Terrorist Act* made it much easier for law enforcement authorities to designate activities as terror related, provided new investigative tools and introduced tougher sentences for terrorist related offences; while the *Public Safety Act* introduced more stringent regulations concerning aviation security, established tighter controls over explosives and hazardous substances and facilitated information sharing between federal government departments and international partners.¹³⁶

Changes to the *Immigration Act* facilitated termination of refugee claimant applications where reasonable suspicion of terrorist related activities were suspected, removed the provision of deportees to opt for the country of their choice on deportation in an effort to evade prosecution, and granted immigration officials greater authority to arrest foreign nations who were unable or unwilling to identify themselves satisfactorily.¹³⁷

A range of other legal instruments aimed at detecting and inhibiting terrorist related activities were also adopted, including amendments to the *Proceeds of Crime Act*

¹³⁶ Transport Canada, "Public Safety Act, 2002 Improves Legislative Framework to Fight Terrorism and Protect Public Safety - April 29, 2002," Canada, http://www.tc.gc.ca/mediaroom/releases/nat/2002/02_gc001e.htm; Internet 10 April 2008. See also Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, "Backgrounder - Canada's Actions Against Terrorism since September 11," <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/anti-terrorism/canadaactions-en.asp>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

and the *Charities Registration Act*, each of which was designed to detect suspicious financial transactions and potential fund raising activities related to terrorist organizations. The combined effects of these measures have been to shore up previously lenient law mechanisms within Canada.

Infrastructure and Security Initiatives

The post 9/11 investments in security and infrastructure in Canada have been substantial. These investments have included: 1 Billion dollars for improved screening of refugee applicants overseas; 1.6 billion dollars for critical infrastructure protection and emergency preparedness; 1.2 billion dollars for smart border initiatives; 2.2 billion dollars for new airport security equipment and police officers on Canadian aircraft; and 1.6 billion dollars for to equip, train and deploy more intelligence and marine security personnel.

These security and infrastructure investments were aimed principally at prevention of terrorist activities; and if prevention failed, at coordination of appropriate responses. Recognizing that the lynchpin to effective crisis management was rapid, informed decision making, the Government of Canada moved quickly to centralize previously disparate crisis response capabilities.

Public Security and Emergency Preparedness Canada (PSEPC) established a strategic level operations centre to act as the “hub of the national emergency management

system.”¹³⁸ Effectively an advanced communications and data fusion centre, the hub, known as the Government of Canada Operations Centre, operated around the clock and maintained network communications with a variety of other national and international surveillance and emergency response authorities including: CSIS; the RCMP; Transport Canada; the Department of National Defence; and the US Department of Homeland Defence. Its mandate included: critical infrastructure protection, cyber security, disaster mitigation, emergency preparedness, response and recovery. Its execution philosophy included pre-crisis contingency planning, crisis response and consequence management.¹³⁹

To support PSEPC and other federal government agencies, CSIS established the Integrated Threat Assessment Centre (ITAC).¹⁴⁰ The role of ITAC is to produce integrated threat assessments for the Government of Canada and facilitate information sharing aimed at detecting and defeating security threats, across the intelligence community, both domestically and internationally.

In a similar timeframe the Department of National Defence transitioned from a cold war oriented command and control structure to a more contemporary Joint Task

¹³⁸ Department of Public Safety, "Emergency Management," Canada, <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/thm/em/index-eng.aspx>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

¹³⁹ In his 2003 Book, *September 11: Consequences for Canada*, Kent Roach advocated a similar approach. Employing a planning construct known as the Haddon Matrix, originally developed for automobile accident injury mitigation, Roach suggested that the Canadian government could employ such a philosophy to guide additional “administrative measures that target places and substances vulnerable to terrorism, as opposed to terrorists [themselves].” Kent Roach, *September 11: Consequences for Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 169.

¹⁴⁰ Canadian Security Intelligence Service, "Welcome to ITAC," Canada, <http://www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/en/itac/itac.asp>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.

Force construct, establishing Canada Command as a singular authority for the command and control of Canadian Forces elements within continental North America if and when required by the Government of Canada.¹⁴¹ At its disposal lay a range of anti-terrorist capabilities including: emergency ordinance disposal capabilities; chemical biological radiological nuclear response and consequence management capabilities; and the elite anti-terrorist Joint Task Force 2. In terms of its crisis management strategy, Canada Command has developed a temporal approach to planning roughly analogous to the PSEPC model highlighted above. This process is depicted at figure 3 below.

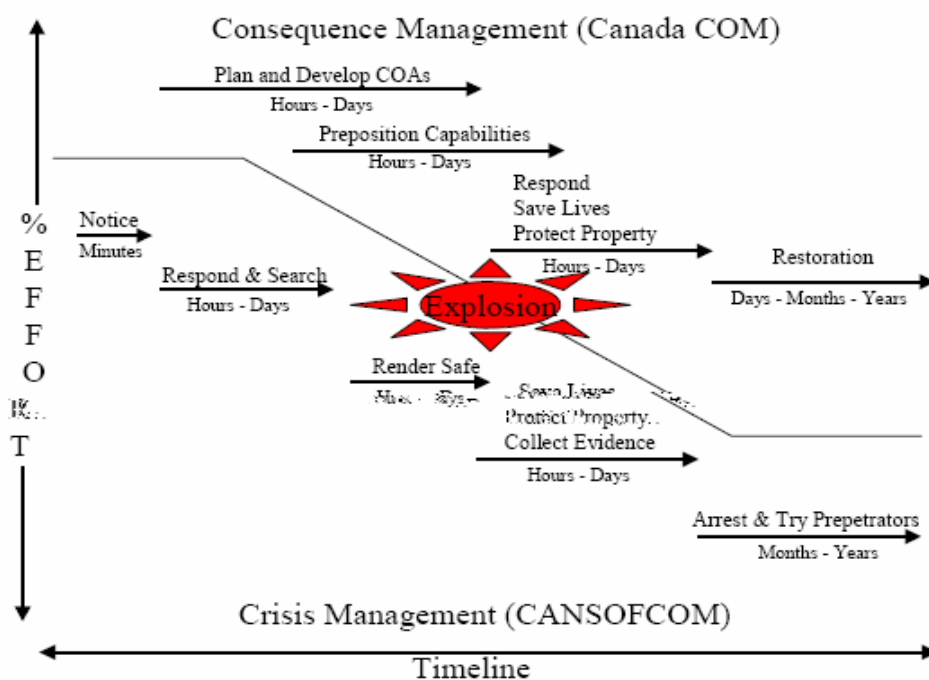


Figure 3 – Crisis and Consequence Management Strawman

Source: Canada Command Concept of Operations, 5-32

¹⁴¹ Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) was stood up concurrent with Canada Command and working relationships established. It is worth noting that Joint Task Force 2, Canada's elite anti-terrorist special operations forces, falls directly under the command of CANSOFCOM and not Canada Command. As a Joint Task Force Commander, the commander Canada Command could be, however, assigned responsibility for elements of JTF2 as the occasion demands.

Taken together, these initiatives have generated a level of emergency preparedness and unity of effort not seen in Canadian governmental organization since the Trudeau era.

Measures of Effectiveness

Measuring the effectiveness of these new initiatives is a difficult challenge owing to problems related to measuring negative quantities. How can it be stated with certainty, for example, that the absence of a high profile terrorist incident on, or originating from, Canadian soil since the Millennium bomber are attributable to newly adopted security measures? The short answer is that definitive assertions along these lines are problematic. There are, however, a number of analyses that have been conducted in other nations whose security apparatus have gone through similar transitions that could shed light on the sagacity of Canada's security regime.

One of these analyses is an essay entitled *The Architecture of Government in the Face of Terrorism* by Ashton Carter. In it, Carter examines why the US was surprised by the events of 9/11. His analysis revealed that "post -Cold War complacency, lack of infrastructure and strategy at the federal level, and the complexities of managing such a vast and institutionally diverse effort all contributed to lack of preparedness."¹⁴²

¹⁴² Arnold M. Howitt and Robyn L. Pangi, eds., *Countering Terrorism: Dimensions of Preparedness* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2003), 3.

Evaluating potential managerial approaches to address the security failures that led to 9/11, Carter examined four approaches considered by the Bush administration: “the command and control approach, the lead agency approach, the Department of Homeland Security approach; and the appointment of a White House coordinator or ‘czar’.”¹⁴³ Each of these approaches revealed some interesting institutional difficulties.

The traditional command and control approach was characterized through demarcation of areas of responsibility. The US Department of Justice was assigned the lead with respect to domestic terrorist incidents, whereas the US Department of State was assigned the responsibility for dealing with terrorist incidents abroad. According to Carter, this approach largely failed because it

...reinforced a false distinction between domestic and foreign terrorism and focused on actions in progress, rather than on advance detection, prevention and protection... [Moreover] by focusing on the question of who [was] in charge, the command and control approach presumed that the government possessed the capabilities to combat catastrophic terrorism; all that was required was to marshal them effectively under a clear command system. The result was the creation of a host of unfunded mandates – responsibilities assigned with no plan for providing the means to fulfill them.¹⁴⁴

The second approach considered by US policy makers was the lead agency approach. In this approach the US Department of Defence was presumed to take the lead role owing to its technological capability, robust budget and reputation for rigorous adherence to mission accomplishment. This approach was dismissed because it was

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 23

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 24

determined that “too much of the relevant capability - for example, surveillance of potential terrorists on US territory – fell beyond DOD’s traditional [legal] purview.”¹⁴⁵

The third approach considered resulted in the establishment of the US Department of Homeland Defence in November of 2002. Designed to centralize counterterrorism coordination in a single agency, Carter argued that this approach too failed as it:

...did not eliminate the problem of interagency coordination [but] only complicated [it through] the introduction of a new agency. Aggregating functions such as customs, immigration, border patrol and coast guard into a new agency [may have been] efficient...but it can hardly be said that its creation eliminates the inherently interagency nature of responding to catastrophic terrorism.¹⁴⁶

Finally, Carter examined the appointment of a coordinator, or czar approach. Carter’s determined this approach to be the “least problematic because it recognizes the essence of the solution is the coordination of wide range of government functions behind a new priority mission.” He goes on, however, to highlight the fact that White House czars have traditionally been ineffective due to the fact that “they have no resources or agencies of their own...[and therefore] the czars instructions inevitably compete with other needs and tasks of the department.” Such competition ultimately renders the czar approach ineffective in the eyes of departmental bureaucrats who eventually learn that “they can ignore the czar’s directives.”¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 24

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 24

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 25

Ultimately Carter's analysis revealed that whatever approach is selected, the effectiveness of the approach will only be assured if the director takes a managerial versus a coordination approach. In Carter's view the director would play more the role of architect than coordinator, effectively defining a:

...multiyear, multiagency plan that [would] materially increase the capabilities of existing departments... [No longer would terrorist incident response be] a 'come as you are party,' to which each agency shows up with whatever capabilities its previous history happens to have bequeathed to it.¹⁴⁸

From a Canadian standpoint, it would appear as though federal department organizational realignment has mirrored the US department of Homeland Defence construct, with two important differences. The first difference is simply in the matter of scale. The sheer size of the US Department of Homeland Defence lends it a degree of complexity not seen in Canada. Second, the appointment of the National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister, a position responsible for oversight and management of interagency cooperation as well as coordination of integrated threat assessments and policy development, should leverage the advantages of the Czar approach advocated by Carter; effectively constituting a hybrid of the Homeland Defence and Czar models. Interestingly, however, the Auditor General's report of 2004 highlighted the fact that, despite the new organizational framework, a common management approach to guide capability investments across the disparate agencies, the very advantage that Carter suggests the Czar approach should deliver, had yet to materialize.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 25

¹⁴⁹ Auditor General of Canada, *OAG Chapter 3—National Security in Canada—The 2001 Anti-Terrorism Initiative*

Other measures could be taken to measure performance. These include emulating the Auditor General's approach in terms of performance audits by conducting contingency planning, table top exercises, and real world simulations to test new security arrangements. These could include snap critical infrastructure inspections to verify adequate security, as well as unannounced real world simulations whereby emergency response authorities were required to respond to simulated terrorist incidents.

To work, [these] mechanisms must [, however,] be systematic and institutionalized, not *ad hoc*. It must be independent of interests – airlines, for example – that stand to be inconvenienced by its findings. It must have the money to conduct experiments, tests, and inspections, not just paper studies.¹⁵⁰

Defence of the Homeland Summary

The release of the 2004 National Security Policy was a catalyst for major changes in Canada's traditional stance on terrorism. Stemming from the NSP, organizational realignments, legal measures, security and infrastructure initiatives since 9/11 have all served to generate a unity of effort in counter-terrorism capacity not previously seen in Canada. Principal among these reforms was the streamlining of the decision making process through the centralizing of the lines of authority vis-à-vis Emergency Management under the newly formed federal department of Public Security and Emergency Preparedness Canada. Concurrent with the formation of this department was the appointment of the position of National Security Advisor to the prime Minister, a key position for the oversight and coordination of interdepartmental areas of responsibility.

¹⁵⁰ Howitt and Pang, *Countering Terrorism: Dimensions of Preparedness*, 31

Recognizing the fact that deliberate and informed response to crisis events could only be achieved if information superiority could be assured, the government established a strategic level operations centre to manage contingency planning, crisis response and consequence management. To enhance intelligence gathering and analysis capability, CSIS established an Integrated Threat Advisory Centre; while the Department of National Defence realigned its command and control organization to better serve the needs of the post cold war operating environment. Complimenting these measures, legal instruments for various law enforcement agencies, as well as infrastructure initiatives such as the Smart Borders Agreement with the United States have served to bolster Canada's capabilities to detect, monitor and arrest terrorist related activities.

Yet to be incorporated into the management agenda, however, is a consolidated investments framework whereby the various federal government departments and associated agencies can collaboratively generate capability, versus the principally stove-piped methodologies currently employed. Finally, measures of effectiveness need to be incorporated into the validation process to ensure that adopted methods do not become stagnant or outdated.

CONCLUSION

This paper has argued that strategies employed by the West to wage the Global War on Terror have suffered from a mischaracterization of the conflict. It has argued that the GWOT is more precisely understood as a global counter-insurgency than a war against terror per-se. The consequences of this adjustment in thought have translated into a subtle but significant shift in approach to dealing with the threat posed by transnational Islamic extremism.

Overall, the approach suggested by this paper in prosecuting the GWOT hinges upon two strategies: Attacking the enemy's strategy; and defence of the homeland. It has been argued that attacking the enemy's strategy consists principally of three imperatives: pursuing a strategy of dis-aggregation whereby distinctions are drawn and wedges driven between elements of local Islamic extremist factions and those of a transnational character; attacking the extremist Islamist narrative that underpins its recruitment process; and elimination or capture of the leadership of transnational extremist Islamic organizations.

In addition to the strategies outlined above, this paper has argued that due to the 'long war' nature of the conflict maintenance of a strong and enduring defence of the homeland is an essential component of the overall campaign. To this end, a review of Canada's historical experience with terrorist organizations was conducted, including a brief analysis of its responses to the FLQ crisis, the Air India and the Millennium bombings. Finally, a comprehensive review of the Canadian government's policy

response and security initiatives following 9/11 was conducted. Overall, given the range of security related initiatives stemming from the release of the 2004 National Security Policy, including the consolidation of pre-crisis planning, emergency response and consequence management authorities, it was assessed that Canada is well positioned to detect, track and defend against transnational extremist threats in this regard.

Bibliography

- Armstrong, G. P. *From Local Wars to International Jihad*. Ottawa, Canada: Department of National Defence, 2007a.
- . *The Ideology of Jihadism: The Koran*. Ottawa, Canada: Department of National Defence, 2007b.
- . *The Ideology of Jihadism: Three Theorists*. Ottawa, Canada: Department of National Defence, 2007c.
- Auditor General of Canada. "OAG Chapter 3—National Security in Canada—The 2001 Anti-Terrorism Initiative." Canada. http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/aud_ch_oag_200403_3_e_14895.html; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.
- Barber, Benjamin R. *Jihad Vs McWorld*. New York: Random House, 1995.
- Berman, Paul. *Terror and Liberalism*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004.
- Bowen, John R. "Anti-Americanism as Schemas and Diacritics Across Indonesia and France." In *Anti-Americanisms in World Politics*, edited by Peter Katzenstein and Robert Keohane. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007.
- Bradley, Thomas. *Joint Targeting* 2008.
- Canadian Security Intelligence Service. "Welcome to ITAC." Canada. <http://www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/en/itac/itac.asp>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.
- CBC News. "Air India - Bombing of Air India Flight 182." <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/airindia/bombing.html>; Internet; accessed 9 April 2008.
- . "The October Crisis: Civil Liberties Suspended | CBC Archives." http://archives.cbc.ca/politics/civil_unrest/topics/101/; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.
- Cilluffo, Frank J. "Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. *The Internet: A Portal to Violent Islamist Extremism* 2007," http://www.gwumc.edu/hspi/congress/may3_07.htm; Internet; accessed 18 2008.
- "Classics in the History of Psychology -- Festinger & Carlsmith (1959)." <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Festinger/>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.
- Clausewitz, Carl Von. *On War*, edited by Anatol Rapoport. London: Penguin Books, 1982.

- "Cognitive Dissonance and Learning."
<http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/dissonance.htm>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.
- "Country Reports on Terrorism 2006 (Html Format)."
<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2006/>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.
- Cordesman, Anthony. "Defending America: Redefining the Conceptual Borders of Homeland Defence." Centre for Strategic and International Studies.
<http://www.csis.org/homeland/reports/overprininvestnmd.pdf>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.
- Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. "Backgrounder - Canada's Actions Against Terrorism since September 11." Canada. <http://www.dfaity-maeci.gc.ca/anti-terrorism/canadaactions-en.asp>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.
- Department of Justice. "The Anti-Terrorism Act - Definition of Terrorist Activity." Canada. http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/antiter/sheet-fiche/def_ter/index.html; Internet; accessed 9 April 2008.
- Department of National Defence, *Canada Command Concept of Operations*. Ottawa: Canada, 2006.
- Department of Public Safety. "Emergency Management." Canada.
<http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/thm/em/index-eng.aspx>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.
- Fukuyama, Francis. *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Free Press, 2006.
- Gompert, David C. and John Gordon IV. *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency*. Santa Monica, Ca: RAND Corporation, 2008.
- Government of Canada. "Emergencies Act." Canada. <http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/prb0114-e.htm>; Internet; accessed 16 March 2008.
- Griset, Pamela L. and Sue G. Mahan. *Terrorism in Perspective*. Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications, 2003.
- "Holy Qur'an (1) - Saudi Arabia Information." <http://www.saudinf.com/main/b64.htm>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.
- Horgan, John. "From Profiles to Pathways: The Road to Recruitment, Countering the Terrorist Mentality." eJournal USA, May 2007.
<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0507/ijpe/horgan.htm>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

- Howard, Russ. "Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Understanding the New Security Environment." Dalhousie University, 2003, 2002.
- Howitt, Arnold M. and Robyn L. Pangi, eds. *Countering Terrorism: Dimensions of Preparedness*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2003.
- Ignatieff, Michael. *Warriors Honour*. Toronto: Penguin Canada, 1998.
- James, Ian A., Southam, Lesley and Blackburn, Ivy M. "Schemas Revisited," <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=20&hid=13&sid=2536e6bf-0030-416f-826a-f1329dc7f00a@sessionmgr7>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.
- Jenkins, Brian. Committee on Homeland Security: *Building an Army of Believers: Jihadist Radicalization and Recruitment*, Rand Corporation, 2007.
- Kilcullen, David J. "Countering Global Insurgency." *Small Wars Journal* (2004).
- . "New Paradigms for 21st Century Conflict." <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2007/06/new-paradigms-for-21st-century/>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2008.
- Lewis, Bernard. *What Went Wrong?* New York: Harper Collins, 2002.
- Lia, Brynjar. *Globalization and the Future of Terrorism*. London: Routledge, 2005.
- Middle East Media Research Institute. "Special Dispatch Series - no. 388." <http://www.memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?ID=sp38802>; Internet; accessed 9 April 2008.
- Musharraf, Pervez. *Global Terrorism: Genesis, Implication, Remedial and Countermeasures*. Islamabad, Pakistan: Institute of Regional Studies, 2005.
- National Commission on the Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. *The 9/11 Commission Report*. Washington, D.C.: United States, 2004.
- O'Neill, Bard E. *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*. Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2005.
- Online News Hour. "Al Qaeda's 1998 Fatwa." http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1998.html; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.
- . "Bin Laden's Fatwa." http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html; Internet; accessed 10 April 2008.
- Packer, George. "A Reporter at Large: Knowing the Enemy: The New Yorker." http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/12/18/061218fa_fact2; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.

- Phares, Walid. *The War of Ideas*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007.
- Phillips, James. "House Armed Services Committee: *The Evolving Al-Qaeda Threat 2006*," <http://www.heritage.org/research/features/nationalsecurity/tst021606a.cfm>; Internet, accessed 08 April 2008.
- Post, Jerrold. "Collective Identity: Hatred Bred in the Bone." eJournal USA, May 2007. <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0507/ijpe/post.htm>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.
- Privy Council Office. "Securing an Open Society - Information Resources - Privy Council Office." Canada. http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca/index.asp?lang=eng&page=information&sub=publications&doc=natsec-secnat/natsec-secnat_e.htm; Internet; accessed 10 April 2008.
- Roach, Kent. *September 11: Consequences for Canada*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003.
- Sageman, Marc. *Understanding Terror Networks*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- Smith, Huston. *The World's Religions*. New York: Harper Collins, 1991.
- The Koran*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992.
- Transport Canada. "Public Safety Act, 2002 Improves Legislative Framework to Fight Terrorism and Protect Public Safety - April 29, 2002." Canada. http://www.tc.gc.ca/mediaroom/releases/nat/2002/02_gc001e.htm; Internet; accessed 10 April 2008.
- Verton, Dan. *Black Ice: The Invisible Threat of Cyber-Terrorism*. New York: McGraw Hill, 2003.
- White House Press Release. "Canadian PM: We Will is there." United States. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010924-7.html>; Internet; accessed 8 April 2008.
- . "President Declares "Freedom at War with Fear"." United States. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>; Internet; accessed 15 April 2008.
- . "Statement by the President in Address to the Nation." United States. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-16.html>; Internet; accessed 16 March 2008.