Rob de Wijk

The Limits of Military Power

Defense planning had only fleetingly dealt with the threat of apocalyptic terrorism prior to September 11. If the hastily revised U.S. quadrennial defense guidelines give any insight, the basis of defense planning will now shift from a threat-based model, analyzing whom the adversary might be, to capability-based planning, which focuses more on how an adversary might fight. Adopting this model is a great step forward, but the review itself offers little insight into the question of how an adversary might actually fight and what forces are needed to fight and win future wars.[1] The events of September 11 clarified the urgent need to refocus and restructure the way the United States and its allies think about and plan for a military campaign.

- The West's armed forces are fundamentally flawed. Conceptually, the focus is still on conventional warfare, but the new wars will be unconventional.
- Contemporary concepts, such as limited collateral damage and proportionality, have little value when preparing for the new wars.

Rob de Wijk is professor of international relations and strategic studies at the Clingendael Institute for International Relations, Royal Military Academy, and Leiden University.

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- How concepts such as coercive diplomacy and coercion can be used effectively is unclear.

In sum, the United States and its allies face significant practical as well as conceptual challenges. The September 11 attacks demonstrated that terrorism no longer can be considered a tactical or local challenge, requiring cooperation between the national intelligence services and the police. The new terrorism is a strategic or international challenge, requiring international cooperation between intelligence services and armed forces. Meeting the challenge requires a new approach as well as new assets.

'Savage Warfare'

Western armed forces demonstrated their superiority clearly during the Persian Gulf War in 1991 when, after the extensive use of airpower, U.S. ground forces gained a decisive victory over Iraq within 100 hours. In contrast to conventional warfare, which relies on technological capabilities—manned arms and standoff weaponry—to engage the enemy, terrorists fight unconventionally. Technology plays a supporting role at best, for personal protection, communications, and targeting. In the final analysis, however, successes depend on old-fashioned fighting skills and the use of knives or small-caliber arms in search-and-destroy operations.

In conventional warfare, armies take and hold ground, air forces conduct strategic bombing operations and engage the enemy, and navies support land forces by conducting offshore attacks and cutting off lines of supply. This method of operation is the Western way of waging war. The new wars on terrorism, however, will have to deal with irregular forces that practice guerrilla tactics, instill panic, and retaliate asymmetrically—when, where, and how they choose.

Actually, referring to the military campaign now under way as the "new" war demonstrates little understanding of the history of warfare. In 1898, in *Lockhart's Advance through Tirah,* Capt. L. J. Shadwell wrote

about "savage warfare" (that is, non-European warfare) "that differs from that of civilized people." Some areas in the world have not changed much since Shadwell's time.

> A frontier tribesman can live for days on the grain he carries with him, and other savages on a few dates; consequently no necessity exists for them to cover a line of communications. So nimble of foot, too, are they in their grass shoes, and so conversant with every goat-track in their mountains that they can retreat in any direction. This extraordinary mobility enables them to attack from any direction quite unexpectedly, and to disperse and disappear as rapidly as they came. For this reason, the rear of a European force is as much exposed to attack as its front or flanks.[2]

In Afghanistan today, the biggest change is that army boots or Nikes have replaced grass shoes. Furthermore, local fighters possess limited numbers of modern weapons systems, such as Stinger antiaircraft missiles, which were acquired during the 1980s when the United States considered Afghans to be freedom fighters who needed support in their struggle against Soviet occupation. The basic Afghani weapons platform is the pickup truck, which carries fighters armed with guns; in mountainous regions, the mule is still the most important mode of transportation.

In most Western countries, irregular warfare has always been considered "savage warfare," for which there is no preparation. Historically, the British and the Dutch, in particular, fought insurgents quite successfully in their colonies. With the loss of Indonesia in the 1950s, the Dutch lost not only all their experience in waging this kind of war but also their mental preparedness for such action.

The Dutch army is now preparing a new field manual on counterinsurgency and counterterrorism. In drafting the manual, the army's staff utilized the old manuals that General Johannes van Heutsz used during the early twentieth century when he was combating insurgents and terrorists in what is now the Republic of Indonesia. Van Heutsz also reorganized his conventional ground forces to confront the insurgents, creating small units of a dozen armed men to carry out search-and-destroy missions. This military

action led to an episode that the Dutch do not want to repeat. Today, that army's counterinsurgency operations could be perceived as war crimes. Because no distinction could be made between combatants and noncombatants, the Dutch burnt down entire villages in order to eliminate fighters' bases. For this reason, U.S. secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld argued that direct attacks on terrorists are useless; forces are required to "drain the swamp they live in."[3]

In addition to consulting Van Heutsz's tactics, the Dutch used the British counterinsurgency manual, which is still considered the most detailed manual for this type of warfare. Of the former colonial powers, only the British have not given up their military skills; at the same time, British forces have maintained the mental preparedness needed to carry out counterinsurgency operations.

The West needs special forces to confront irregular fighters such as terrorists, and these forces are not available in large quantities. A distinction should be made between special operations forces (SOF), which are used for covert or clandestine action, and specialized forces, which carry out specialized overt missions. The most famous of all SOF, Great Britain's Special Air Service (SAS), conceived by Captain David Stirling, has existed since 1941. Most SOF—such as Australia's Special Air Service Regiment; Holland's Bijzondere Bijstands Eenheid (BBE); France's new joint Commandement des Operation Speciale (COS) units; Germany's Grenzschutsgruppe (GSG)-9; Israel's Sayeret Matkal/Unit 269; and the U.S. Army 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment, Delta Force, and Naval Special Warfare Development Group—were established in the 1970s as a direct response to terrorist incidents.

When radical supporters of Iran's revolution captured 53 staff members and guards at the U.S. embassy in Tehran in November 1979, however, the United States still had no standing counterterrorist task force. As a result, a rescue team had to be assembled from scratch, and it took six months of preparation before the rescue operation could be launched. Charged with rescuing the hostages was the newly created Delta Force, with the support of U.S. Navy and Air Force airlifts. The tragic end of this attempt is well known. Technical problems and tacti-

cal failures caused the operation's abortion, and it ended in disaster in April 1980. Nevertheless, after this failed rescue operation, U.S. SOF received more funding and better equipment and training. Consequently, SOF became an important foreign policy tool for U.S. policymakers.[4]

SOF specialize in clandestinely rescuing hostages. SOF's military tasks focus on infiltrations into enemy territory to carry out sabotage as well as search-and-destroy and rescue missions and forward air control. Western militaries have extremely limited true SOF capabilities, probably no more than 3,000–5,000 troops for all of NATO.

In addition, Western governments have specialized forces that carry out overt actions. The United States has approximately 45,000 such troops; its NATO allies have 20,000–30,000. The U.S. Army Rangers battalions, which specialize in seizing airfields, are among the better known of these units; another is the 82nd Airborne Division, the world's largest parachute force. These forces seize key targets and prepare the ground for the general-purpose forces that follow.

Even though NATO countries have more than three million individuals in their collective armed services, only a very small portion of them are SOF or specialized armed forces—too few to engage in sustained combat operations. Clearly, it is too late to increase this capability for the campaign in Afghanistan and other countries hosting terrorists. Even if a decision were made to create more of these units, only a small number of young people would be willing or able to join these forces; according to some estimates, less than 10 percent make it through the grueling selection process.

The status of the West's human intelligence (HUMINT) capabilities is similar. For data collection, the intelligence communities of the United States and its NATO allies focus primarily on satellite imagery, signals intelligence, and electronic intelligence. Satellite imagery guides both SOF and HUMINT to targets. Although satellite imagery obtains important strategic information, SOF and HUMINT are the best way to obtain tactical information on the ground, especially because terrorist groups make only limited use

of cellular telephones and satellite communications. Since the U.S. cruise missile attacks on his training camps in August 1998, Osama bin Laden no longer uses his satellite telephone, which had made him easy to detect. Instead, he issues "mission orders," instructing his lieutenants orally, in writing, or on videotape that television stations broadcast widely. Consequently, the United States and its allies have no choice but to infiltrate his network.

Tapping into this network is an enormous task, however, because the al Qaeda organization has bases and cells in 50–60 countries, including the United States and most European nations, where so-called sleeper agents live. The individuals who carried out the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon had been ordinary residents in the United States and other Western countries. Therefore, agents from Islamic states' intelligence communities must infiltrate networks and cells both inside and outside the Islamic world, while Western governments must at the same time recruit agents in the Islamic communities in their own countries. Consequently, effective use of HUMINT requires intensive cooperation among intelligence services worldwide.

Without sufficient HUMINT capabilities, as well as SOF and specialized forces that can effectively address unexpected threats and unconventional warfare—the only option open to the West's opponents—the United States and its allies will find the campaign on terrorism almost impossible. In its most basic form, asymmetrical warfare utilizes one side's comparative advantage against its enemy's relative weakness. Successful asymmetrical warfare exploits vulnerabilities—which are easy to determine—by using weapons and tactics in ways that are unplanned or unexpected. The weakness of Western societies is perceived as their desire to reduce collateral damage by emphasizing technological solutions, the need to maintain coalitions, and the need to adhere to the international rule of law. Moreover, Western industrialized societies are economically and socially vulnerable. Thus, dealing with these new threats requires groups of well-trained, well-equipped, and highly motivated individuals who can infiltrate and destroy terrorist networks.

At the tactical level, the opponent conducting asymmetrical warfare tries to change the course of action in order to prevent the achievement of political objectives. These tactics—including guerrilla warfare, hit-and-run attacks, sabotage, terrorism, and the capture of soldiers who are then shown on television—will confront allied ground forces in Afghanistan and other places that harbor terrorist training camps and headquarters.

At the strategic level, the opponent using asymmetrical tactics exploits the fears of the civilian population, thereby undermining the government, compromising its alliances, and affecting its economy. The September 11 attacks were only partly successful on this score. The fear of further attacks has led to uncertainty about the future among the populations of most Western nations and as a result their economies have fallen into recession. On the other hand, the attackers very likely miscalculated not only the resolve of the leadership and population of the United States but also most of the world's willingness to form and maintain coalitions to fight terrorism.

Direct military action against insurgents and terrorists requires both SOF and HUMINT gathering. Both assets are scarce, however, and not available in the quantities necessary to fight and win sustained wars. Moreover, deploying SOF is extremely risky, and effective engagement requires skills and techniques that come very close to war crimes. Therefore, the United States and its allies need to develop a new defense-planning concept.

Operation Enduring Freedom

Operation Enduring Freedom revealed the difficulties of fighting unconventional wars against irregular forces. The war in Afghanistan was largely fought by proxy with U.S. SOF, specialized forces, and air power mainly functioning as *force multipliers*. Most battles were Afghan-led and U.S.-supported. Success hinged largely on the Afghan United Front (AUF), which had endured since 1996 as a semi-regular fighting force. By September 2001 its commander Ahmadshah Massoud had built up

12,000 troops with artillery and tanks. U.S. reconnaissance, SOF with ground laser target designators, and air power enabled the AUF to win decisive victories.

Fighting by proxy, however, does not always work. The battle of Takur Ghar in southern Afghanistan on March 3–4, 2002, when U.S.-led forces tried to overrun one of the cave complexes used by the Taliban and Al Qaeda, revealed shortcomings in U.S. military coordination and communication, reminiscent of the Mogadishu battle in Somalia nine years before. Intelligence sources grossly underestimated the enemy's strength and staying power, initially identifying some 150 to 200 fighters, and then drastically revising those numbers to 600 to 700 after several days of battle. Within hours of the operation's commencement, the Charlie Company of the 10th Mountain Division faced intense resistance; eleven soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division came under fire; allied Afghan forces were also attacked and unable to achieve their objectives. Eight U.S. soldiers were killed, most of them in an ambush as they deployed from a helicopter. More than 40 U.S. soldiers were wounded. To regain the battlefield advantage the United States quickly carried out a series of air strikes with fighter jets, attack helicopters, and gunships. After a week of heavy fighting the momentum had shifted back in favor of the United States and its allies.

More than a year after the start of Operation Enduring Freedom large parts of the Afghan countryside still lay outside the central government's control. During the first few weeks of 2003, fighting between coalition forces and remnants of Taliban and Al Qaeda forces increased. Al Qaeda appeared to be enlisting and training new recruits, Taliban leader Mullah Omar and Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden had still not been arrested or killed, and warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was reported to have formed an alliance with the remaining Taliban and Al Qaeda forces. Fighters from these three groups banded together in the eastern and southern Afghan provinces, attacking coalition forces and denying them control over large parts of the country.

Despite their overwhelming combat power, high-tech coalition forces are not able to deal decisively with a loose, low-tech network of fighters

and terrorists—an enduring problem that is not rapidly solvable. A fundamental shift from platform centric warfare to network centric warfare (NCW) holds the solution.[5] NCW, which is based on the idea that information sharing is the key to success, allows the networking of a geographically dispersed force. Information technology will be used to achieve decisive military advantage by networking individual units, providing them unprecedented operational awareness, and enabling them to react better than traditionally possible under fluid conditions. Thus, NCW gives the force an asymmetric information advantage. NCW requires highly advanced Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, and Strategic Reconnaissance (C4ISR). Satellites and manned and unmanned reconnaissance planes will transfer data to "shooters," such as aircraft or individual soldiers. The result should be unprecedented battlefield awareness that might even lift the fog of war. A future military network will consist of battle space entities or nodes, such as shooters and platforms, and the links between them. Decisionmaking inputs, as well as the decisions themselves, create the information in the network. All this is subsequently passed across the network, from one node to another. Linking these nodes will greatly increase effectiveness, as the battles space entities will perform a more all-round role, information-sharing will increase, and decisionmaking will become more accurate.

NCW may retire traditional command and control processes. Thus, former U.S. Air Force colonel John Boyd's famous 'observation, orientation, decision, action' (OODA) loop will be replaced by much more integrated and parallel command and control cycles, based on superior battle space awareness and knowledge. These will require a different mindset since, unlike traditional command-structures, hierarchy is diminished and combined arms operations are less emphasized. Junior commanders will take decisions, potentially with strategic implications.

Although much remains uncertain, concepts such as NCW are clearly likely to dominate future wars. They would restore the offensive as the dominant form of war, with speed and movement as key elements. Speed will allow forces to shift quickly around the battlefield to check, block, and strike almost contiguously. The objective of such concepts is not to

kill as much of the opposing forces as possible, but to paralyze and to wear him down and to eventually crush his will. The increased ability to know the battlefield as well as to comprehend the enemy will fundamentally change the dynamics of fire and maneuver.

Operation Enduring Freedom provided a glimpse of this future. One lesson from the war in Afghanistan was that the military has already learned to exploit networked information to conduct real-time and coordinated precision operations against a dispersed enemy. In Afghanistan, the time lag between sensor and shooter was sharply reduced. Information technology linked sensors to military capabilities, from the most advanced such as B-2 bombers, to aging systems such as forty-year old B-52 bombers, and even to soldiers on horsebacks. Junior commanders called in air strikes.

When 400 Taliban rebelled at a fort near Mazar-e-Sharif in December 2001, a sergeant pinpointed positions and radioed for air support from F/A-18s carrying 2,000 pound bombs. Responsive action occurred within just 15 minutes. Almost 90 percent of the targets were preplanned, but manned and unmanned systems, such as Global Hawk and Predator unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), RC-135, U-2, E-8C, E-2A, and P-3 reconnaissance planes, satellites, SOF, and HUMINT identified them. About 60 percent of the ordnance dropped was precision guided. During Operation Desert Storm in 1991 some 7 to 8 percent of all ordnance was precision guided, while about 40 percent was during Operation Allied Force in 1999. The Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM), a conventional "dumb" bomb with a $21,000 GPS device that steers it to any target, day or night and under all weather conditions with pinpoint accuracy, was key to the operation's success.

The Limited Value of Contemporary Western Concepts

For historical and cultural reasons, the armed forces of Western countries have been disinclined to prepare for military action that was considered uncivilized. As a consequence, policymakers, the military, and the public

are psychologically ill-prepared for this war. They have become used to concepts such as limited collateral damage, proportionality of response, and the absence of body bags. The current situation, however, calls for a willingness to abandon these ideas, at least partially, a sacrifice that may be difficult for some individuals and nations to make.

During his visit to Pakistan on October 5, British prime minister Tony Blair called for "proportionate strikes ... [that should] not be directed against the Afghan people." These concepts have little value when carrying out military operations against insurgents and terrorists for a number of reasons.

- *Collateral damage.* Because asymmetrical fighters do not usually wear uniforms, combatants are indistinguishable from civilians. These fighters depend on the local civilian population for logistics and shelter in rural areas, and in urban areas the population is used as a shield. Moreover, because the Afghan population is loyal to tribes and clans, differentiating between combatants and noncombatants is almost impossible. Thus, the concept of limited collateral damage is almost useless in unconventional warfare, in which civilian casualties cannot be avoided.

- *Proportionality of response.* Proportionality refers to the response to an attack being in relation—and proportional—to the interests at stake. The events of September 11 threatened not only America's national security but also its leadership and credibility. For a superpower this is a very powerful incentive to use its full might and to take all measures necessary. In theory this could require the use of nuclear weapons if other means are insufficient, such as to destroy hardened underground bunkers of caves. However, keeping fragile coalitions together requires *less* than a proportional response. Therefore, using nuclear weapons is a non-option, despite the debate on nuclear bunker busters triggered by the Nuclear Posture Review.[6]

- *Absence of body bags.* Because vital interests of the United States and its allies are at stake, the concept of an absence of body bags carries

little value either. Both Blair and President George W. Bush have the popular political support to withstand the inevitable heavy human losses. General Joseph Ralston, NATO's supreme allied commander, warned, "We cannot be in the mindset of a zero-casualty operation."[7] Whether most European allies are also willing to pay this high price is doubtful. Initially, the Belgian and Dutch governments saw invoking Article 5 of the NATO treaty as a symbolic measure and a demonstration of transatlantic solidarity. Other governments agreed so that they would be consulted on U.S. decisions and have some influence on U.S. decisionmaking. Except for the United Kingdom, few European NATO allies acknowledged that the decision to invoke Article 5 implies sending their own troops to Southwest Asia.

Thus, combating insurgents and terrorists requires mental firmness, a quality evident in the United States and the United Kingdom today but uncertain in other allies. The traditional concepts of proportionality and limited collateral damage, however, do not have much value under the present circumstances.

Coercion and Coercive Diplomacy

Another obstacle to using military means effectively to combat the new threats that terrorism poses is the limited insight that academics, and therefore policymakers, offer into the theories of coercion and coercive diplomacy, as well as governments' lack of experience using them to achieve the desired outcome. Coercion is defined as the deliberate and purposeful use of economic and military power to influence the choices of one's adversaries; coercive diplomacy focuses on the latent use of the instruments of power to influence those choices. The studies on which these theories are based, however, do not have much relevance for policymakers today. The terrorist attacks on the United States demonstrate the need for policymakers and the military to reevaluate the concepts that underlie their approaches to balancing political ends and military means.

Most theories of coercion find their origin in the Cold War period, but preoccupation with deterrence has distorted the concept. Deterrence as a concept is useless for today's challenges because the world cannot deter individuals such as bin Laden and his lieutenants. Deterrence also does not work for failed states, many of which provide sanctuaries for insurgents and terrorists. Because negotiating with failed states and terrorists is impossible, both coercive diplomacy and coercion are meaningless. The only solution in those cases is direct action with SOF support, backed up by airpower.

The United States can only use coercive diplomacy and coercion against functioning states that actively support or shelter terrorists. For that reason, Vice President Dick Cheney's warning that the "full wrath" of the United States would be brought down against nations sheltering attackers is an indication of the administration's emerging strategy for combating terrorism.

The problem is the West's lack of experience with this approach. Many cases of coercion and coercive diplomacy have failed. For example, the Gulf War was an unprecedented success, but attempts to coerce Saddam Hussein to comply with United Nations (UN) resolutions during the 1990s failed. The humanitarian intervention in Somalia during the early 1990s resulted in failure. The success of Operation Allied Force in the war in Kosovo was limited because it took 78 days to convince Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic to accept a diplomatic solution based on the Rambouillet agreements signed in early 1999.

Existing theories are based primarily on studies that Thomas Schelling, Alexander George, and Robert Pape conducted,[8] yet even these "classics" do not apply to the circumstances that the West faces today. Schelling distinguishes between "brute force" and "compellence." Brute force is aimed at forcing a military solution; compellence is aimed at using the threat of force to influence an actor's choice.[9] According to Schelling, armed conflict can only be averted when the opponent refrains from taking action. This situation requires a deadline because, without a clear ultimatum, threats are hollow.[10] Accordingly, the United

States gave Afghanistan's Taliban regime a deadline, which it rejected, to surrender bin Laden and his lieutenants.

For Schelling, coercive diplomacy involves not only undoing a particular action but also threatening the opponent with the use of force, which can bring about complete surrender. The crux of Schelling's approach is "risk strategy": by threatening the civilian population and presenting the prospect of terror, the actor expects the opponent's behavior to change. This notion made sense during the Cold War, when Schelling's book—in which he sought alternatives to the concept of deterrence—was published in 1966. A risk strategy is meaningless in the war against terrorism, however, because the coercers—the United States and its allies—must clearly indicate that the war is not against the Afghan people, but against terrorists and the regime supporting them. Thus there are no civilian populations (such as the Soviet people in the Cold War) to threaten in the effective use of coercion. Worse, excessive military force could split the fragile Islamic alliance that is cooperating with the United States in the war against terrorism. In other words, coercion might not only be ineffective, it might also backfire. For that reason, humanitarian aid for the civilian population accompanied the initial attacks on Afghanistan in early October 2001.

George's study of coercive diplomacy first appeared in 1971; a new edition was published in 1994, in which George tested his theory on more recent cases. George distinguishes between defensive "coercive diplomacy" and offensive "military strategy." Coercive diplomacy consists of using diplomatic means, reinforced with instruments of power. Coercion, in the form of threats or military interventions, must force an adversary to cease unacceptable activities.

George's main argument is that coercion and diplomacy go hand in hand with rewards for the opponent when complying with demands.[11] In the case of the Taliban, Bush and Blair have stated there is no room for compromise and that no rewards will be given for handing bin Laden over. Consequently, the Taliban had no incentive not to fight for its survival, forcing the United States and its allies to confront the

prospect of a prolonged struggle and also undermining the fragile coalition forged between Western and Islamic states.

Schelling's and George's theories focus primarily on the latent use of instruments of power, whereas Pape's theory concerns their actual use. Pape posits that coercion is effective when it aims at the benefit side of the cost-benefit calculation that every actor makes. To be effective, the opposing side must consider the cost of surrendering to the demands of the intervening states to be lower than the cost of resistance. Pape argues that this outcome is possible when the actor withholds military success from the opponent, while offering a reward after the demands have been met. Both the Taliban as well as the U.S. and British governments have vital interests at stake; therefore, the Taliban's will to defend and the West's will to coerce are at maximum levels. Consequently, both sides are willing to pay a high price, and neither will give up easily.

Regarding military strategy, Pape focuses on strategic bombing, which can be decisive only in long wars of attrition. The overall superiority of materiel determines the success of this approach, which was Russia's strategy in Chechnya during the strategic bombing campaign in Grozny, a strategy most Western governments severely condemned as inhuman. Nevertheless, a military coalition may have no option but to use elements of an attrition strategy. Given the unavailability of other assets, the destruction of some training camps and underground facilities may require the use of low-yield tactical nuclear weapons or fuel-air explosives. Moreover, some U.S. strategists are reportedly beginning to consider using the threat of a limited nuclear strike as a method of deterring potential adversaries that support terrorist organizations from using chemical and biological weapons or of destroying the storage site of these weapons.[12] Thus, the use of nuclear weapons might actually be militarily useful in the war against terrorism, but potentially grave consequences—such as fracturing the coalition—prevent policymakers from using them.

Pape argues that deposing political regimes is not feasible "because leaders are hard to kill, governments are harder to overthrow, and even if the target government can be overthrown, the coercer can rarely

guarantee that its replacement will be more forthcoming."[13] In other words, Blair's warning to the Taliban "to surrender terrorists or to surrender power"[14] does not have many successful historical precedents. The removal of Panama's President Manuel Noriega from power in 1989 is one of the few successful examples.

Pape concluded that the use of airpower can be successful when it denies the opponent the use of military capabilities. This approach requires a strategy of denial—that is, the destruction of key military targets, including headquarters and command and control centers, logistics, and staging areas. In the case of unconventional warfare, however, the number of high-value targets is extremely limited; therefore, there is little to bomb. Consequently, the only strategy that can be successful is a military strategy of control, which requires search-and-destroy missions using land forces such as SOF reinforced by specialized forces and airpower, but as argued earlier, the United States and its allies have very limited capabilities in these areas.

These studies are useful as a starting point for further academic research, but their work has limited utility for contemporary policymaking. Consequently, the September 11 incidents have prompted both policymakers and the military to rethink their basic concepts and to seek another approach to the old challenge of balancing political objectives and military means. For example, a mechanism of second-order change could be developed, aimed at mobilizing neighboring states against a target state. The Islamic Republic of Iran, which is strongly opposed to the Taliban regime, could play a crucial role by putting pressure on Afghanistan. Pressure from Iran would have the added advantage of involving an Islamic country and thus strengthening the coalition. Thus, reexamining old concepts and traditional approaches are essential to employing military means successfully in the campaign on terrorism.

The Battle for Hearts and Minds

A significant component of the new war—one that has been historically successful for both allies and adversaries of the United States—is

the campaign to win the support of the populace of the opponent. In other words, the United States and its allies must also wage a battle for the hearts and minds of the people, in this case, in the Islamic world. This effort—using several approaches, including humanitarian aid and propaganda—must be made along with diplomatic measures and military operations. The humanitarian aid that accompanies the bombs being dropped in Afghanistan in the current fight demonstrates that the United States recognizes the importance of this campaign.

Israel serves as an example of the difficulties that a nation confronts in a war against terrorists and of the way the battle to win the hearts and minds of the population can accompany military measures. Terror persists in Israel, despite the fact that the country has military assets that are important for waging this type of war, including defense forces and intelligence services that are among the best in the world, policymakers and a public who are willing to take risks and to accept casualties, and widespread public support for the military even if mistakes are made. Yet the country cannot prevent or deter terrorist acts or attacks with rockets from southern Lebanon. Israel's experience shows that armed forces—trained, structured, and equipped for conventional war—are incapable of dealing with insurgents. Israel had no choice but to develop new tactics, employ different weapons systems, and use small task forces to carry out small-scale operations; but even this shift in modus operandi has not guaranteed success.

Bin Laden, who is accused of being the force behind the September 11 attacks, fights a battle similar to the Intifada but on a global scale. His objective seems to be to unite the Islamic world under a political-religious figure, or caliph, by removing pro-Western regimes, the state of Israel, and the U.S. presence from the Islamic world.

Israel's experience also shows that, at best, governments can only manage the problem of terrorism. Its solution requires offensive military action, heavy security measures to prevent radical elements from carrying out their attacks, and the building of coalitions with moderate political figures.

Israel's experience with gaining the support of the civilian population is important. For example, when the security zone in southern Lebanon

still existed, Israel carried out a counterinsurgency campaign within it while providing aid to the Lebanese population therein, including projects to rebuild infrastructure and programs to provide health care. On the other side of the coin, radical movements such as Hamas use nongovernmental organizations extensively for these purposes.

Bin Laden is popular because of his "good works" in the Islamic world, especially in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Indeed, in most Islamic countries, radical groups of fundamentalists have developed a social and cultural infrastructure to build an Islamic civil society and fill a vacuum that their countries' governments have neglected. For example, during the 1990s in Egypt, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, radical movements provided health care, education, and welfare for those nations' poor. After the 1992 earthquake in Cairo, these organizations were on the streets within hours, whereas the Egyptian government's relief efforts lagged behind. In fact, Qur'an study centers have become the single most important source for recruiting new members for the radical movements.

These types of campaigns waged by radical Islamic movements have very successfully undermined the legitimacy of governments and gained the support of the local civilian population. Consequently, the diplomatic and military actions of the United States and its allies should go hand in hand with a campaign for the hearts and minds in order to win the support of the Islamic world's population. In addition to food rations, U.S. aircraft have dropped leaflets and small transistor radios to enable the Afghans to receive Washington's message. Nevertheless, even a dual strategy of humanitarian aid and military intervention does not guarantee success. Other factors must be taken into account.

Clashing Civilizations

The major obstacle to success in the campaign against terrorism is not military, political, or diplomatic, but cultural. Because of strong anti-Western sentiments in the Islamic world, a coalition to counter terror-

ism is fragile by nature but critical to the success of military measures. The geostrategic changes that occurred in the 1990s have contributed to anti-Western feelings in large parts of the world. First, the West "won" the Cold War, with the United States remaining the sole superpower; and in international relations the "hegemon" is always met with distrust. Second, in 1998 the differences between the United States and non-Western nations countries became clearer as a result of a new version of interventionism.

The year 1998 seems to be a turning point in recent history. Events that took place in 1998 and 1999 indicated that the U.S. approach had once and for all shifted to a narrower and more selective foreign and national security policy of unilateralism and preservation of the nation's dominant position in the world. A number of events contributed to this image:

- In response to the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the United States intervened unilaterally—and without a UN Security Council mandate—in Sudan and Afghanistan in August 1998. The U.S. goal was to strike a blow against bin Laden's alleged terrorist network.
- In December that same year, Operation Desert Fox took place, in which the United States and the United Kingdom carried out bombing raids against Iraq. The military action was meant as retribution for Saddam Hussein's obstruction of the UN Special Commission's inspections of Iraq's development of weapons of mass destruction. In 1999 and 2000, the bombings continued, albeit with limited intensity.
- In 1998, the U.S. government decided to increase its defense budget (which had undergone a period of decline) by 5.6 percent, a development that some nations viewed with apprehension.[15]
- In March 1999, Operation Allied Force—led by the United States and without a mandate by the UN Security Council—intervened in Kosovo to force Milosevic to end his terror against the Albanian Kosovars and to find a solution to the situation in Kosovo.

- In July 1999, the United States presented its national missile defense initiative, designed to protect the country against limited attacks by rogue states using ballistic missiles. This development demanded a review of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. With the U.S. Senate's refusal to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, a general prohibition on conducting nuclear tests was dropped.

Meanwhile, the perceived threat posed by rogue states and terrorists potentially equipped with WMD gained credence. Catastrophic terrorism had emerged as a threat during the Clinton presidency with the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, 1996 Oklahoma City bombing, 1998 bombing of U.S. embassies in Africa, and 2000 attack on the USS Cole in Aden, not to mention numerous foiled attacks, such as a plot to blow up the Lincoln Tunnel and a 1995 plot to blow up 11 U.S. commercial aircraft simultaneously over the Pacific.[16]

As a result of these events, many non-Western countries began to perceive the United States as a superpower that wants to change the status quo and create a "new world order" according to its own views. Because of the fundamental difference between Western and non-Western ideas, Russia, China, and Islamic countries distrust interventions that are based on normative principles, such as democracy and humanitarianism. According to Chinese commentators, for example, interventions by the United States indicate that the West can impose its liberal values on the rest of the world without fear of confrontation with Russia.[17]

Europeans and Muslims alike widely believe that President George W. Bush has embarked on a new unilateralist course since September 11, 2001, aimed at maintaining U.S. hegemonic power. They fear that this emerging unilateralism is based on a narrow realist vision of U.S. interests that requires selective engagement with both Europe and Asia and a domination of world politics with superior armed forces. Multilateral organizations such as NATO and the UN, they believe, are set to play a reduced role, only where they serve U.S. interests and never where they undermine the United States' freedom to act. The public debate that emerged in Europe soon after September 11 about the consequences of a U.S. unilateralist foreign policy for transatlantic rela-

tions, the future of international institutions, and international stability in general culminated in a bitter transatlantic controversy over Iraq in February-March 2003.

The Islamic world especially feared that the Bush administration would base its unilateral policies on strong normative principles. In fact, only Western governments appeal to normative principles as a reason for intervention. The notion that these principles are universal and that sovereignty is secondary to human interest won ground in the 1990s. The concepts of democracy, respect for human rights, the free-market economy, pluralism, the rule of law, and social modernization are deeply rooted in Western culture and are the product of a civilization that developed over centuries. Universal pretensions and a feeling of superiority are not alien to Western culture.

In 1860 Isaac Taylor wrote about the "ultimate civilization." He dealt with the moral supremacy of Western civilization and considered other civilizations barbaric because they held polygamy, prostitution, slavery, and torture to be legal. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, many came to the conclusion that Western values, particularly democracy, had triumphed. In 1992 Francis Fukuyama even referred to the end of history, because liberal democracies had prevailed and the collapse of dictatorships was supposedly inevitable.[18] In September 2001, Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi praised Western civilization as superior to that of the Islamic world and urged Europe to "reconstitute itself on the basis of its Christian roots." In a briefing to journalists, he talked about the "superiority of our civilization, which consists of a value system that has given people widespread prosperity in those countries that embrace it and [that] guarantees respect and religion."[19] Other Western politicians and the Islamic world did not appreciate Berlusconi's frankness.

Beginning in 1990, Western countries believed that they had the evidence for their claim to universal acceptance of their principles because a steadily growing group of countries, including Russia, claimed that they had embraced Western values. Similar declarations by non-Western governments ultimately mean little. First, these governments can pay lip ser-

vice for purely opportunistic reasons that may relate to other issues of importance to them, such as trade policy. Second, declarations of acceptance of these principles do not necessarily indicate that governments actually embrace them. Their unwillingness to accept the consequences of noncompliance with these principles at times or, in certain situations, their willingness to set aside sovereignty—for example, in the event of a humanitarian disaster—belie these claims. This notion is particularly true for countries, such as Russia and China, that have rebellious minorities, leading to internal unrest, and aspirations to remain great powers.

The British-Canadian scholar and journalist Michael Ignatieff appropriately posed the following question: Whose universal values are actually involved? He pointed out that the outlooks of Western countries, Islamic countries, and authoritarian regimes in East Asia have fundamental differences.[20] In Asia, authoritarian state and family structures dominate for the most part, and democracy and individual rights are secondary. In general, Islamic countries reject the Western concept of the separation of church and state. Apart from Ignatieff's observation, however, the claim of universal acceptance of Western values constitutes a threat in the eyes of many non-Western countries, if acceptance is accompanied by dismissal of the cornerstones of international law, such as sovereignty and noninterference in domestic affairs. These countries perceive even humanitarian interventions as a new form of imperialism that should not be endorsed without question.

The war against terrorism is a golden opportunity for Western nations to enter a new era of cooperation with Russia and China, which are equally concerned about terrorism. Indeed, bin Laden and the Islamic insurgents in Chechnya are linked. Furthermore, the Islamic insurgency in Xinjiang in eastern China has a connection with the Taliban regime and, most probably, bin Laden as well.

The biggest challenge, however, is the resurgence of Islam, which is a mainstream movement and not at all extremist. This resurgence is a product of modernity and of Muslims' attempt to deal with it by rejecting Western culture and influence, committing to Islam as the guide to life in the modern world. Fundamentalism, commonly misperceived as

political Islam, is only one aspect of this resurgence, which began in the 1970s when Islamic symbols, beliefs, practices, and institutions won more support throughout the Islamic world. As a product of modernity, the core constituency of Islamic resurgence consists of middle-class students and intellectuals. Even the fundamentalists who carried out the September 11 attacks were well-educated, middle-class men.

Because the resurgence of Islam is fundamentally an anti-Western movement, building coalitions incorporating Islamic nations in the battle against terrorism is not easy. The coalition that was built in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks was primarily based on attitudes against bin Laden, who seeks to establish an undivided *umma* (community of believers) under a political-religious leader—thereby presenting a challenge to most regimes in the Islamic world. Nevertheless, most regimes and large parts of their populations share some of bin Laden's anti-Western sentiments. Consequently, the coalition is fragile and, at best, willing to give only passive support. Thus, many Islamic people will consider a military campaign that is carried out by Western forces as, to use bin Laden's words, "a Zionist Crusade." Unfortunately, a controversial 1996 assertion that conflicts between cultures will dominate future international relations remains germane in the new millennium.[21]

The war on terrorism could improve the West's relations with China and Russia, but, if handled unwisely, it could also lead to a confrontation with the Islamic world. The United States' nightmare scenario is that friendly regimes in the Islamic world will fall and anti-Western regimes willing to play the oil card and support terrorists will emerge. Thus, the immediate consequence of the war on terrorism could be both ineffectiveness and a struggle for energy resources so vital to the Western world.

Limiting Expectations

As the war against terrorism shifts into full gear, the United States and its allies must meet significant practical and conceptual challenges if the campaign is to be successful. A war against terrorists or insurgents can be manageable, at best, if certain approaches are adopted. In principle, the

following options, which are not all mutually exclusive, are available to the United States and its allies, depending on the target of the campaign:

- Pursue a military strategy of control in failed states that terrorists use as sanctuaries. Control involves search-and-destroy missions by SOF, supported by specialized forces and airpower. This option requires the United States and its allies to expand the number of SOF and specialized forces significantly.
- Adopt a strategy of coercive diplomacy or coercion against unfriendly regimes to pressure these regimes to end their support of terrorist movements. If they do not comply with these demands, these regimes should be removed from power, which is easier said than done. This strategy requires new thinking about the optimum way to coerce regimes.
- Use HUMINT gathering methods extensively to infiltrate the terrorists' networks in friendly countries and then destroy the terrorist bases from within. This option also requires the United States and its allies to expand their HUMINT capabilities substantially and to embark on even closer cooperation with intelligence services in other countries.
- Wage a campaign to win the hearts and minds of the Islamic people. This option would enable the United States and its allies to gain the support of the populace and thereby drive a wedge between the population and the terrorists or insurgents.

Nevertheless, even if these options are adopted and prove successful at least in the short term, an overriding issue must be addressed in order to achieve long-term success. The primary obstacle to success in the war against terrorism is a cultural one. To some degree, the battle is a clash of civilizations. Political Islam is fundamentally anti-Western, thus the prospect for success is limited. Using military means may exacerbate the potential that this campaign will be cast as a clash of civilizations, ultimately making the problem of terrorism even worse.

Notes

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3. "Rumsfeld," *International Herald Tribune*, September 19, 2001, p. 6.
4. S. L. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare: Rebuilding U.S. Special Operations Forces* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1997), p. 2.
5 U.S. Congress, *Network Centric Warfare.* Department of Defense Appropriations Bill 2001, Report of the Committee on Appropriations together with Additional Views, 106th Congress, 2nd Session.
6. Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review*, submitted to Congress on December 31, 2001.
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8. See Thomas A. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966); Alexander L. George and W. E. Simons, eds., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994); Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996). See also Lawrence Freedman, *Strategic Coercion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Richard N. Haass, *Intervention: The Use of American Military Force in the Post–Cold War World* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1994); Michael O'Hanlon, *Saving Lives with Force: Military Criteria for Humanitarian Intervention* (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution, 1997); and B. R. Pirnie and W. E. Simons, *Soldiers for Peace* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1996).
9. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pp. 2–3.
10. Ibid., pp. 69–91; see also Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1965).
11. George and Simons, *Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, p. 7.
12. "U.S. Strategists Begin to Favor Threat to Use Nuclear Weapons," *International Herald Tribune*, October 6–7, 2001, p. 4.
13. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, p. 316.
14. Prime Minister Tony Blair, speech to the Labor Party Conference, London, October 2, 2001.
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16 S. Simon and D. Benjamin, "America and the New Terrorism," *Survival* 42, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 59–75.

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