

The long war



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The Long War In the face of difficult situations, powerful nations often use their power to ensure that their intentions are carried through, no matter what any other entity desires. This is exactly what the case with the efforts of the United States with al-Qaeda. The video of a discussion on “ The Long War: The US and al-Qaeda” aired on Aljazeera in October 2009 gives an insight into how power plays out between the United States and the al-Qaeda. After the 9/11 terrorist attack on the United States, the level of monitoring terrorist organisations got from the United States increased. However, there may never have been any need for such surveillance in the first place if the US had never underestimated al-Qaeda and other terrorist organisations. The line of thought of the United States is that since there were not many al-Qaeda members, they constituted little or no threats, so shouldn't be monitored so much. This held until al-Qaeda, through the September 11 attack, proved what they were capable of. There were many options that could have been explored by the United States but they explored hard power more than they explored soft power. The application of coercion has not led to a reduction in the number of terrorist organisations and their members; it has, on the other hand increased their number. Rather than continually use coercion, Mark Sageman, one of the panellists, thinks the US could have relied more on negotiation, law enforcement and some political mechanisms. It must also be mentioned that the US seems not to be well informed to know that the Taliban is very much different from al-Qaeda. Sometimes, rather than wage war on al-Qaeda, war is waged on the Taliban. Actually, in the opinion of Lawrence Wright of the Centre for Law and Security, al-Qaeda is not the enemy, Taliban is. The US indirectly encourages the merging of the two. Also, the United States also seems to over emphasis

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of the Afghanistan, forgetting that the September 11 terrorist attack was planned in Hamburg, Germany. Al-Qaeda may be winning the war because they are able to exploit the loopholes in American foreign policies. Work Cited The Long War: The US and al-Qaeda. Doha, Qatar. Aljazeera. 28 Oct. 2009. Television.