

Blessings of liberty



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In striking at the 'domestic Tranquility,' 'common defense' and 'Blessings of Liberty' that the US Constitution was established to secure, the terrorist attacks of September 11 not only extinguished thousands of lives but also heralded a dangerous and unprecedented chapter in the 'American experiment. ' 9/11 represented the end of what remained of America's post-1991 innocence about the severity of global threats and confirmed the many prior warnings that the question of mainland terror was one of when, not whether, it would occur.

To some observers, the attacks triggered the most sudden and dramatic change in the history of American foreign policy, bringing an abrupt and decisive end to the post-Cold War era. (Stephen, 2001) But while many declarations proclaimed a permanently transformed world, American responses instead suggested a remarkable continuity. Rather than initiating a transformation, 9/11 accelerated trends, policies and approaches that were well established.

If the attacks' most immediate political effects were certainly dramatic - the Bush administration's approval ratings soared and public confidence in the federal government attained levels unseen since the early 1960s - the dominant features of recent American politics (not least partisan polarization) remained essentially unchanged. Analogical reasoning in international affairs is as hazardous in theory as it is ubiquitous in practice; hence the question of whether 9/11 will ultimately prove as strategically significant for America as Pearl Harbor, the Cold War or the implosion of the USSR is best left for another day.

(Richard, 2001) 9/11 nonetheless proved both that America remains as vulnerable to conventional and unconventional attacks as other nations and that its singular influence renders it an especially inviting target. It also demonstrated, however, that America remains exceptional in its capacity to deploy vast resources and destructive assets on a global scale. The rapid removal of the Taliban regime revealed a hegemonic power with neither peer nor precedent, prompting commentators to compete for adjectival correctness: 'hyper-power,' 'mega-power,' 'behemoth.

' (Tim, 2002) Confronted by such dominance, critics are surely right to caution about the dangers accompanying such unprecedented and (relatively) unfettered power. But commentary on America frequently remains empirically poorly anchored, wrongly conflating official policies with public preferences and embracing stereo-types about (for example) mass aversion to military casualties that resisted close scrutiny long prior to 2001.

The reasons why factual accuracy infrequently intrudes on familiar 'truisms' about the USA has received compelling analysis elsewhere (Clive, 2002) but it is in the light of such infrequency that this chapter reviews in turn American perceptions of the terrorist attacks, the responses of the Bush administration and Congress and 9/11's broader significance for American domestic politics and foreign policy. Terrorism used to be seen by the world's militaries as " low intensity conflict" and many commanders such as you were not often preoccupied with it.

For us, exceptionally hot years such as 1983 or 1985 were just that-- exceptions. Now it's war. It is a war that the al Qaeda enemy formally declared in 1996, and again in 1998. It's a war made by a long series of

attacks upon free peoples. The U. S. only accepted this as " war" at the end of 2001, but it is now affixed to the horizon. To call this war is not to say that it is a wholly military contest. If US government has a grand strategy, then this contest is political, ideological, legal, economic, and moral. It is profoundly moral.

President Bush made the accurate parallel between terrorist and pirates or slave-traders. All three categories are natural enemies of humanity--an ancient concept of international law, and a good one. On Saturday, the new Pope described terrorism as " perverse," a " cruel decision that shows contempt for the sacred right to life," and " a new barbarism. " The global nations, collectively, hold the upper hand in this contest because Allies is a moral cause, and they must not ignore or abandon that moral advantage. (Gray, 2005)

Two recent and ugly innovations by terror groups underscore terrorism's profound inhumanity. You may have noticed the new pattern of terror attacks on aid personnel and nongovernmental organizations. What had been rare is now appallingly common. NGOs" are studying the challenge, but have only begun. For now they often close down relief operations and withdraw in the face of terror--a prudent response, but one that negates their whole purpose, and satisfies the attackers. Until now, NGOs have tended to want nothing from you as commanders except logistical support for their own work.

The less contact the better, it seemed. Now, they may begin asking you to help with their security, which is a most complicated job. A second reminder of the character of terrorism is a new pattern of double-bombings. The first

explosive is laid to wound and kill; this damage draws in dozens of medical professionals and "first responders;" (Wolf, 2003) when enough ambulances have arrived, the second timed charge detonates, redoubling the carnage. I first noticed the old Irish Republican Army do this. Then, a right-wing terrorist did it in Atlanta Georgia.

The jihadis' Bali Indonesia bombings confirmed the pattern--a preliminary bomb in a building drove people out into the street, where a far larger bomb murdered many of them. And then, at a fourth point on the globe (Iraq) came the August 17 bombing of a bus terminal in Baghdad. Police naturally rushed to the scene, and that's when a second bomb blew, in the station parking lot. There was a third layer to the plan. Ambulances rushed wounded to a nearby hospital, and there, awaiting them, was a suicide bomber, who then detonated.

When terrorism develops such techniques it rarely regresses; we'll see more. (Clutterbuck, 2004) The moral relativists who will not understand terrorism--who say, "it is nothing more than a weapon of the weak"--should ponder the planning in these double-bombings. How hard you commanders work to train your personnel to protect the Red Cross, to steer clear of ambulances, to avoid hospitals as sanctuaries of the wounded, even amidst actual battle. Compare that with what terrorists plot and do in peacetime, with this explicit targeting of medical personnel.

The over-heated religious militants led by al Qaeda have an internationalist program. That is evident from their targeting: Nairobi, Casablanca, Istanbul, Riyadh, and Madrid. Their internationalism is just as evident from their recruitment: Saudis, Moroccans, Algerians, Somalis, Yemenis, Filipinos, and

Western Europeans of all kinds. ... The enemy confirms all this in how he trains: al Qaeda's camps in the Sudan, and then Afghanistan, drew tens of thousands, to some 50 training camps, from the corners of the world.

In late 2001, in the Afghan war, The Allied coalition captured people from over forty countries! There was of course a Philippines training branch, and another in Indonesia. The array of foreign faces appearing in these camps was widely diverse. The jihadis' internationalism is just as evident in their ideology: as surely as a good man may be called into good and divine service from Madagascar or America--and they have been--so too might the jihadis' appeals touch a potential terrorist in Madagascar, or America--and they have. There are treasure troves of al Qaeda documents.

Their own words make it apparent that as a policy end, al Qaeda envisages itself as the global leader of a great coalition, and should it conquer, then the creation of a great Caliphate. Mullah Omar and Osama Bin Laden talked about that in Afghanistan--there is a written record of it. If Mullah Omar's Taliban regime is any indication of how such a Caliphate would govern, very few Muslims would ever want it...although the rulers, being totalitarians, would not much care if their regime were wanted. The terrorists' internationalist policy dictates an internationalist strategy.

That is why the celebrated fatwa of February 1998 heralded formation of "The World Islamic Front for Jihad..." ...Why Bin Laden's speeches urge Islamic unity, a seamless community of the faithful, worldwide...Why his lieutenant, and doctor, the globe-trotting Egyptian Al Zawahiri, criticizes peoples of the Islamic world when they fail to come when they are called to arms by al Qaeda. (Alexander, 2001) So US government sees al Qaeda's global reach in

its targeting, recruiting, training, ideology, and recovered documents and public pronouncements. Quite obviously, there is a world war, and war must be joined.

In the face of such global ambitions and global attacks, all decent governments should ally themselves in counterterrorism. That is the first and most apparent need from the assessment of the present enemy: And at the military level, this direction explains why Commandant Michael Hagee's strategic "Vision," as briefed to leaders of the US Marine Corps, states simply that "Deterring and defeating Irregular threats places a high priority on working with partner nations..." (Adams, 2002) For the U. S. , these ongoing efforts include training international officer students in military staff level and war colleges.

The Marine Corps alone has over five hundred such international students and trainees. Then there are the many training missions that the larger military services carry out abroad. USMC training teams were in nine countries in 2004, but this year they're in five times as many foreign countries. The State Department has an ambitious Antiterrorism Assistance Program, which mixes political, and security matters, and has operated world-wide since 1983. One part of this, conducted through the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Counter-terrorism, is the Foreign Emergency Support Team.

Over the years, these teams have accomplished liaison with over one hundred partner countries to a limited but useful end: when a crisis occurs abroad, if that country desires U. S. technical support or advice, the mechanisms for it are understood on both sides. (Bolz, 2000) Consider as

well Pakistan. Islamabad has made a remarkable and satisfying reversal of old policies. At great risk to itself, the Musharaf administration now studies, surrounds, and seizes bombers, torturers, shooters, plotters, and financiers, foreign and domestic. The Pakistani police are working even harder than the army.

The country has extradited such important terrorists as Ramzi Yousef who bombed the New York Trade Towers the first time (1993) and Ramzi Binalshibh, a Yemeni who apparently sought to join his friends in the 9-11 hijacking teams. (Crenshaw, 2001) By the spring of 2003 one of the news magazines wrote admiringly that arrests were coming "almost weekly" in Pakistan. Few things are as satisfying as a successful trial, conviction and jailing; it puts things right, and the world sees it. Some democracies created special counter-terrorist forces as an answer to the terrorist atrocities of the late 1960s.

Many states built them then. Germany's GSGN border troops taking down the airliner held by terrorists in Mogadishu in 1978, with a devastating psychological impact on the Red Army Faction...French forces boldly recapturing one of their nation's airliners in Marseilles in December 1994, snuffing out a clear precursor attack on their own capital and preventing a 9-11 in that city...Peru's commandos, quietly enduring the tensions of the four-month siege they laid for MRTA Communists holding the Japanese embassy in Lima, in 1996.

When Peru's commandos finally pounced, in April 1997, it was a magnificent performance that left the bad people stretched out on the ground and the hostages reunited with their astonished families. For specialized work like

counterterrorism there must be specialized forces. This is somewhat true even for dealing with a broader insurgency. There are still roles for conscripts and draftees, available in large numbers, to perform traditional duties of aid and occupation, amidst a population for 8 or 12 months somewhere abroad.

But the greatest need in Afghanistan today, in Nepal today, in Iraq today, is for confident well-trained professionals who will make long deployments and then consider another tour. At the very least, there must be a sophisticated way of helping capture the lessons they have learned. (Farrell, 2002) Officers do not arrive fresh upon an insurgent scene, such as Iraq, and determine by Clausewitzian coup d'oeil the essence of the problem, and solve it before breakfast tomorrow.

Instead the fellow coming in must study, and watch, and wrestle with the language and the newness of the situation, abandon a preconception or two, and think long and hard. It was T. E. Lawrence, Lawrence of Arabia, who wrote that " Guerrilla war is far more intellectual than a bayonet charge. " Neither guerrilla war nor its antidotes have changed much since his time. Pressures to have intimate human intelligence in this age of global terrorism are very high. In a localized insurgency at least there might be certain common features of the enemy mind.

But in this global struggle, the countries of origin are as diverse as the personalities arrayed against America. Policy makers have many lenses through which to study and learn, and prepare what is practical: psychology, political science, political philosophy, regional studies, sociology, and other lenses will all help us take in the character of the enemy. You may be

thinking that it is a cliché to call for better human intelligence. (Rubin, 1999) True. It is true that is a cliché, and true that we need better intelligence.

In the USA, many blue ribbon panels and careful studies have demanded that America has improved on her intelligence assets as compare to that was before 9-11. In practice, this recommendation means adjustments by more than just intelligence experts. It means education and training, in good, resident, schools. It means making every naval infantry man and woman an "intel" collector. (Netanyahu, 2004) It means close cooperation between military and police forces, for the police often know more, being locals, and long-time experts at observing the law-breaking sort of man.

Two of the great lessons of British counter-insurgency were in emphasis on intelligence by all units, and emphasis on sharing intelligence between the military and civilian sides, to include sometimes co-locating their two infrastructures. (Solan, 2000) Washington and Langley may emphasize counter-terrorism against al Qaeda but may still disappoint the close NATO partner, Berlin, with how much intelligence Americans actually share. Perhaps Turkey finds Washington's bureaucrats too busy, or too uninterested, in the problems of the reviving Kurdish insurgency.

Yet Turkish blood flows, and Kurdish killers hide just over the border in Iraq, and Americans are said to have some powers in Iraq, so Turks may demand America use influence against their Kurdish terrorists. Russia saw, so long before Americans did, the need for directly aiding the Afghan Northern Alliance led by the brilliant Ahmed Shah Massoud, against the Taliban tyranny, in the 1990s. Now, who should be surprised if Russia feels she has a

call on more political support over Chechen separatism. (Wolf, 2003) We must work to measure up to the challenges of allies as well as enemies.

As Winston Churchill used to say, 'a man must never allow himself to fall below the level of events.' References Adams, James. Secret armies: inside the American, Soviet, and European special forces. New York, N. Y. , U. S. A. : The Atlantic Monthly Press, 2002. 440-48 Alexander, Yonah. ; Browne, Marjorie Ann. ; Nanes, Allan S. [eds.]. Control of terrorism: international documents. (Foreword by Ray S. Cline; published in cooperation with the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University). New York, N. Y. , U. S. A. : Crane, Russak, 2001.

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