

[H.A.S.C. No. 110-174]

**LESSONS FOR COUNTERING AL QA'IDA
AND THE WAY AHEAD**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND
CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD
SEPTEMBER 18, 2008



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

53-568

WASHINGTON : 2010

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[There were no Documents submitted.]

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING:

[There were no Questions submitted during the hearing.]

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[There were no Questions submitted post hearing.]

LESSONS FOR COUNTERING AL QA'IDA AND THE WAY AHEAD

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES
SUBCOMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, Thursday, September 18, 2008.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Adam Smith (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ADAM SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM WASHINGTON, CHAIRMAN, TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. SMITH. Good morning. We will call the subcommittee meeting to order. I thank Members and witnesses for being here today. I will start with an opening statement and turn it over to Mr. Thornberry for any opening remarks and then go directly to our witnesses.

Thank you all for joining us this morning. I really look forward to the testimony this morning. We have a very distinguished and thoughtful panel on the issues around counterterrorism and how the struggle against al Qa'ida and violent extremists is going, the various component pieces of that struggle, certainly within the military, how we are doing, what is going on with the various pieces that the military is responsible for. And I think there are several issues that are going to be very interesting to hear about.

We have really become very focused on a counterinsurgency counterterrorism strategy. Are we building a military to accommodate that strategy in terms of the training, in terms of the hardware, in terms of the very way the military is structured? How can we do a better job of that to respond to what is clearly going to be the fight we face now and for the foreseeable future?

Those are some very significant issues that I think our witnesses can help us address. I do think there is a lot that we are doing right. I myself and many on the subcommittee have had the opportunity to go around the world and tour some of our special operators to see what Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) has been doing in Iraq and Afghanistan, and I think on the direct action piece we have made a lot of correct decisions. The fusion cells that have been developed to bring together all the various elements, both of the military and of the intelligence community and elsewhere, to make sure that everybody has the best information possible to find, fix and finish on the targets that we are trying to find, the high-value targets, has been very successful. Certainly it

has been very successful in Iraq and other parts of the world as well. And I really applaud our special operators and the military for the job they are doing there.

The areas where this subcommittee thinks we can do better and do more work on is on the indirect piece and also on strategic communications, the indirect piece being more classic counterinsurgency, stopping insurgencies before they take hold. Right now the best model for that, in terms of what we are doing here in the U.S., I believe, is in the southern Philippines where we have successfully worked with the Philippine Government, with the locals in the southern islands to build up their capabilities by, through and with working with them, not having the U.S. take the lead but in training the local folks to counter the insurgency and also providing the proper development in those communities to stop the insurgency before it takes hold, to basically make the local citizens happy with their environments so they are less willing to follow an insurgency. I think that model needs to be replicated and used across the broader spectrum of the theaters that we face insurgencies in.

And lastly is on the strategic communications piece. Because at the end of the day, this is an ideological struggle as much, if not more, than it is a military struggle. We can do a very effective job of direct action of identifying the top violent extremists, the top leaders and al Qaeda in the Taliban, in the insurgencies in Iraq, in capturing or killing them and thereby destabilizing their efforts. But if more continue to be created, if more terrorists, if more insurgents are generated, then we will simply be fighting on a treadmill that is going faster and faster and we won't get there.

We have to win the broader ideological war, to stop radicalization before it occurs, and I believe we need to do a better job of figuring out precisely what our message needs to be and who to work with our various partners in the world to make sure that that message gets out consistently and effectively.

I know Mr. Thornberry has done a lot of work in this area, has been very focused on it, and I appreciate his efforts on that.

Those are some of the issues. Certainly there are more. Our witnesses will touch on those. To give us an idea going forward, you know, as we look to a new Administration, to a new Congress, what is our best and wisest counterterrorism strategy and what do we need to do to get there. I am very much looking forward to the testimony of our witnesses. And with that, I will turn it over to Mr. Thornberry for any opening remarks he has.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith can be found in the Appendix on page 37.]

STATEMENT OF HON. MAC THORNBERRY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM TEXAS, RANKING MEMBER, TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And first I would like to say I appreciate the subject of this hearing. Too often in Congress we review and criticize what has been done in the past rather than try to learn lessons from the past to help light the way for what should be done in the future. And that is what this hearing, and I hope others, is all about. Because however you feel about how we got here, we are where we are. And the question is, now

what? And that, as you said, is for a new Administration and new Congress to help navigate.

Now we have a very different situation in Iraq than we have had in some time. As somebody said on television recently, the strategy has been wildly successful beyond what anybody expected. And yet we have al Qa'ida regrouping in an area of the world that is not really governed by any sovereign nation. Yesterday we got reminders again that al Qa'ida or related groups are still intent on attacking U.S. interests and embassies throughout the world. So the situation is changing, and yet I do believe there are lessons to be learned that help light the way ahead.

You have assembled a group of diverse and interesting witnesses. I have read their testimony, and I have read books from each of them in the past. I am not sure I fully agree with what any of them say completely, but that is what makes for an interesting hearing. I know they will have interesting and provocative things to say. So I look forward to the exchange and their testimony.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much. I will introduce the panel first. Then we will go left to right, starting with Dr. Jones. First on the panel is Dr. Seth Jones, who has done a number of things but most recently with the RAND study on counterterrorism, how terrorist groups end, basically doing an exhaustive analysis of, I think, well over 600 terrorist groups that have been around since the late 1960's and examining how you defeat them, how you ultimately win. Very much looking forward to the testimony. I have read the study. I think it raises some very, very interesting issues and look forward to hearing what you have to say on that.

Then we have Dr. Michael Scheuer, who spent 22 years in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and has also written extensively on radical Islam, how we are combating it and where we are not succeeding and some ideas for how to go about doing that. I look forward to his testimony.

And then Dr. Arquilla, who has also written extensively on military transformation, and most recently in "Worst Enemy: The Reluctant Transformation of the American Military," a book which I am actually reading right now and find fascinating. It is a great history, and I think lays out well some of the battles, whenever you are trying to make change within any military but specifically within the United States military to accommodate, to basically recognize emerging threats and change to meet them.

I look forward to all your testimony, and we will start with Dr. Jones.

**STATEMENT OF DR. SETH G. JONES, POLITICAL SCIENTIST,
RAND CORPORATION, AUTHOR OF "HOW TERRORIST
GROUPS END" AND "COUNTERINSURGENCY IN AFGHANISTAN"**

Dr. JONES. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much, members of the subcommittee. I will keep my comments very brief and lay out in general the results of the study we looked at.

What was particularly interesting for us in doing this work was seven years after the September 11 attacks we found it striking that neither in the policy community nor in the government com-

munity there has been very little work on how groups historically have ended. We found that a little troubling in trying to design an effective counterterrorism strategy without having any sense of historically, for example, how groups have ended in the past.

So what we did is then we compiled a list of about 648 groups since 1968. We looked at a range of factors that could have contributed to the end of those groups that ended. And what we found was there are two major reasons how terrorist groups have historically ended.

One is what we call groups deciding to adopt nonviolent tactics and join the political process. There are a range of groups, the Farabundo Martí Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador, which have reached a negotiated settlement with the government. Second, we found slightly less from a percentage standpoint but quite significant what you might call clandestine operations, local police and intelligence agencies, in some cases Special Forces arresting or killing key members of the group. We found other instruments less useful as the primary instrument in the defeat of terrorist organizations, whether it was large numbers of military forces, economic instruments, in some cases the victory of terrorist groups.

And again, in any counterterrorist strategy, what is clear is there are a number of instruments that will be used. What we looked at was which of these—in any counterterrorism campaign, one has to prioritize. What we found again is a couple of things. One is the maximization of what we call clandestine operations, use of intelligence assets and special operations assets, leveraging local actors; that is, minimizing large U.S. military footprint on the ground and maximizing local efforts. What we found when we looked at some of the data was, when we looked at some of the early successes against al Qa'ida in Pakistan, we found the most successful efforts tended to be clandestine operations with CIA, in some cases the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) or U.S. military working with local Pakistani police and intelligence agencies in capturing or killing key members of the organization. Even when we looked pretty carefully at the Iraqi case most recently in places like Anbar, we found the most successful efforts not maximizing U.S. boots on the ground but, in the Anbar case, taking advantage of animosity against al Qa'ida in Iraq, supporting Sunnis, massing in the Ramadi police force, for example, and then providing support, placing tanks around the house of sheikhs, maximizing CIA assistance to some of the troops on the ground. And again the Anbar success, I think, was primarily one that you would call unconventional or surrogate warfare, not in maximizing U.S. forces on the ground.

So just to conclude, again in the cases that we looked at, what we found was both in the U.S. experience and in the experience of how terrorist groups have ended, we found two major reasons. First was a political settlement that we found that was most likely to be successful when a group has very minimal aims. With the current situation against al Qa'ida, they do not have minimal aims. They are searching to overthrow multiple regimes. Therefore, a political settlement in our view is simply not possible, especially with key members of the group.

That pushes us then towards much more clandestine operations rather than the overt use of military force, and we argue that that

strategy has actually—when it has been used, has been more successful in places like Anbar or even in the Pakistani or Afghan case in 2001 and 2002.

I would be pleased to take additional questions and answers on this. But I am going to conclude my remarks. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Jones can be found in the Appendix on page 38.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much.

Dr. Scheuer.

STATEMENT OF DR. MICHAEL F. SCHEUER, SENIOR FELLOW, JAMESTOWN FOUNDATION, AUTHOR OF “THROUGH OUR ENEMIES’ EYES,” “IMPERIAL HUBRIS” AND “MARCHING TOWARD HELL”

Dr. SCHEUER. Good morning, gentlemen. Mr. Chairman, thank you for asking me today. I will just briefly read my statement.

There is no better way to summarize the current position of al Qa’ida and its allies than to quote the words President Lincoln wrote in 1864. “Distrust the union’s growing strength even after three years of increasingly bloody war with the confederacy.” In his annual message to Congress of 6 December, 1864, Mr. Lincoln, in words that Osama bin Laden could use today, told the Congress that “The most important fact remains demonstrated, that we have more men now than we had when the war began, that we are not exhausted, nor in the process of exhaustion, that we are gaining strength and may, if need be, maintain this contest indefinitely.”

As America enters the eighth autumn of the war, the reality of a vital and undefeated Islamist enemy is apparent, and the reason for this fact likewise lies in plain sight. The government of the United States continues to fight an Islamist terrorist enemy in al Qa’ida and its allies that does not exist in the form Washington portrays, is not motivated by the factors Washington ascribes to it, and it will not be defeated by the military forces and political tools Washington has deployed against it.

Neither al Qa’ida nor its main allies, for example, are terrorist groups. They are insurgent organizations modeled on the Islamist groups that defeated the Red Army in Afghanistan in 1989. In comparison to their forbearers, al Qa’ida and its allies are larger, more sophisticated, better led and funded, more geographically dispersed, and more technologically proficient. All of these attributes make them radically different from any violent group that the United States Government has previously crammed into its definition of terrorist organizations.

Perhaps the clearest but largely ignored sign that America is not confronting a terrorist group like the Japanese Red Army or geriatric Palestinian group like the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command (PFLP—GC), lies in the area of leadership succession. Since 2001, Americans have been able to flip on the radio almost any morning and learn that another al Qa’ida number two, number three or number four leader has been killed or captured in Afghanistan, Iraq or some other place. In addition, the CIA’s tremendously successful rendition program has removed a sizable number of al Qa’ida leaders from the battlefield. And yet despite these successes, Admiral McConnell and General Hayden

have accurately said that al Qa'ida is as lethal and cohesive as ever and pose as a clear and present danger to the continental United States.

How can this be so? Well, there are several reasons. But a major one is that al Qa'ida is an insurgent group that because it always faces a far more powerful enemy puts enormous time and resources into succession planning. When a senior al Qa'ida leader is captured or killed, a trained understudy takes his place and the organization proceeds. The new leader may not be as good as his predecessor but neither is he green and he soon gets fully up to mark with on-the-job experience.

No terrorist organization could have absorbed the punishment the United States has inflicted on al Qa'ida since 1996 and survived. Indeed, this amount of punishment would have destroyed any organization the U.S. Government has accurately defined as a terrorist group.

It is best to think of al Qa'ida as we often think of Lebanese Hezbollah and the Tamil Tigers. It and they are powerful insurgent groups which are able to absorb enormous punishment from nation-state militaries and continue to thrive and attack. And al Qa'ida is more powerful and dangerous than either. Because unlike Hezbollah and the Tamils, bin Laden's organization has no return address against which the United States can deliver a devastating blow. And if I may say parenthetically, recent statements from the State Department, the White House, and some congressional offices claiming that Hezbollah is more of a threat to America than al Qa'ida are inaccurate. Perhaps deliberately so. Such remarks are made by those who want to have a war with Iran, those who slavishly make Israel's agenda their own or those who have both attributes.

Hezbollah is not an imminent threat to the United States unless Washington and/or Israel launch an attack on Iran. Then, however, it would pose a substantial domestic threat because our open borders have made it impossible for law enforcement agencies at any level of government to know the number and location of Hezbollah operatives in this country at any given time.

To go on, long before 9/11 and certainly since, the U.S. Government under both parties has refused to accept that the main motivation of al Qa'ida and its allies and the main source of their appeal among Muslims is their perception that U.S. foreign policy is a deliberate attack on their faith and on its followers. From our enemies' perspective, therefore, this is preeminently a religious war, notwithstanding the blather to the contrary by Western politicians, academics, policymakers and pundits. And sadly for Americans, the Islamist leaders, Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri and the others have left U.S. officials with no excuse for failing to understand the Mujahideen's motivation. Not since General Giap and Ho Chi Minh has America had an enemy that has so fully, frankly and consistently explained his motivation for waging war against the United States. And yet the U.S. Government has been and is led by men and women from both parties who ignore the Islamists' words and in essence tell Americans to ignore what they say and listen only to us. It might well be suggested that for a group of powerful individuals who have been reliably unable to differentiate

between Shias and Sunnis that this is a lot to ask Americans to accept on trust.

What factors then are not among the main motivations of our Islamist enemies? First, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and the lack of positive future prospects are not major drivers of Islamist violence against the United States and its allies. The resurrection of Harry Hopkins and Harold Ickes to conduct a contemporary and endlessly expensive new deal in the Islamic world would at best produced Mujahideen with better teeth and excellent postwar employment prospects.

Hatred for America's liberties, freedoms, elections, women in the workplace and after work pitchers of Budweiser do not motivate our Islamist enemies. They would have none of these things in their country, but they likewise would be unable to attract fighters ready to die in a campaign to destroy Anheuser-Busch or to terminate the practice of early presidential primaries in Iowa.

A universal desire to establish a worldwide caliphate governed by what many Republican and Democratic leaders, as well as the many U.S. citizens more interested in Israel's survival than America's, like to call Islamofascism also is not a main motivator of our Islamist enemies. The caliphate is indeed a goal of bin Laden and most Islamist leaders because God has said the world will eventually be entirely Muslim. But they know that its attainment will not occur in their or their great-great-grandson's lifetime, just as Christians know that a world in which all would love thy neighbor and turn the other cheek is light-years over the horizon.

This said, it is correct to say that the world is rife with Islamofascists, but they are almost all the allies of the United States and ruling such countries as Egypt, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and as we soon shall see in Iraq.

To return to where we began, the main motivation of our Islamist enemies is U.S. foreign policy and its impact in the Muslim world. And the strongest such motivators are the following: U.S. and Western exploitation of Muslim energy resources, the U.S. and Western military and civilian presence on the Arabian Peninsula, unqualified U.S. support for Israel, U.S. support for other powers that oppress Muslims, especially China, India and Russia, the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other Muslim countries, and U.S. support for the police states that govern much of the Arab and Islamic world.

Because Washington applies an inappropriate definition to America's Islamist enemies, terrorists versus insurgents, and deliberately misrepresents their motivation, freedom-haters vice policy-haters, it is not surprising that the military and political tools with which Washington is waging war are failing.

In the starkest terms, U.S. policymakers mistakenly believe that the war they are fighting is something of a super law enforcement struggle in which, as we have heard from all Presidents over two decades, America will prevail by bringing our enemies to justice one man at a time. This is both lunacy and self-defeating. There are far too many of the enemy, and their numbers are growing, to capture or kill one at a time.

As effective as U.S. Special Forces operations and the CIA's rendition program have been and will be, neither is a war winner.

Both entities are being worn out by overuse, both are being weakened to steady losses to higher paying and less dangerous jobs in private sector companies and neither can kill the enemy at anything approaching adequate numbers.

Which leads us to what probably is the U.S. Government's number one military problem: A steady stubborn refusal to accept that war has not changed since Alexander and Caesar and that it will not change; that the surest route to victory lies in quickly and efficiently killing enough enemy fighters and their supporters and destroying enough of the infrastructure of both to make them see that the wages of attacking America approach annihilation; and that U.S. Armed Forces are enlisted, trained and armed to kill America's enemies and to secure our country, not to bring democracy to foreigners who do not want it, secularism to people who believe it is the road to hell, and protection to both sides in an Arab-Israeli religious war where the United States has no genuine interest at stake.

To define at this time the way ahead for the structure and composition of U.S. forces in our current war against al Qa'ida and its allies, therefore, is a very hard, if not nearly impossible, task. But because Washington is fighting an enemy whose motivation it willfully ignores, whose numbers it grossly underestimates and whose ability to defeat or evade the tools of war it has chosen to halfheartedly use, we should not be too quick to decide that the current mix of U.S. forces is inappropriate. We clearly are going to need conventional, nuclear and Special Forces for this foreseeable future. China, Russia and other nation states still potentially threaten the United States in scenarios that would require large U.S. conventional and nuclear capabilities for purposes of deterrence or actual warfare.

In addition, our dependence on foreign oil suppliers means that there are places in the world, such as Saudi Arabia's eastern province or the Gulf of Guinea-Niger Delta region, where interventions requiring the use of large conventional forces could quickly and unexpectedly arise. At this point in our history, it would be most unwise not to maintain the bulk of the U.S. military in conventional form.

We should also learn from the military experiences of the Clinton and Bush Administrations. These have proven that Special Forces operations and CIA covert action programs cannot win wars, conventional or irregular. Those entities remain today what they historically have been, powerful and indispensable adjuncts to overall U.S. war-making capabilities.

As noted, the Clinton and Bush Administrations have ignored history and are wearing out both the Special Forces and the CIA in wars in which America is barely holding its own. In Afghanistan and, as General Petraeus and General Odierno reminded us this week in Iraq, a move to expand the size and use of Special Forces and the CIA special covert action forces will simply give us more excellently trained, extraordinarily capable and wonderfully lethal units that still will be unable to win wars for America.

The wars in America's future will require conventional forces, Special Forces, and a strong and covert action-capable CIA. The appropriate precise and affordable mix of those forces is beyond my

skill and knowledge base to determine. There does, however, seem to be an increasing danger that too many resources will be put into building forces designed to fight irregular wars which are conflicts where even successful Special Forces and CIA operations have already proven insufficient to deliver a definitive victory, which of course must be the sole goal America pursues when it goes to war.

This is in no way meant to denigrate the men and women who lead and staff those forces. It is simply to say that despite their courageous and frequently successful efforts, al Qa'ida is fully meeting the constituent goals of its strategy for driving the United States as far as possible out of the Muslim world. Those are to help lead the United States to bankruptcy, to force the spread of U.S. military and intelligence forces to the point where they lack flexibility and reserves, and to cause a deterioration in domestic political cohesion, as did the North Vietnamese.

And no matter what the mix of U.S. military and intelligence forces is ultimately decided upon, their ability to bring victory will depend on U.S. politicians mustering the moral courage to tell Americans that their Armed Forces are built for the annihilating America's enemies. The very fact that we are meeting here today on the eve of the eighth autumn of this war is largely the result of the lack of political will in both parties to unleash the historically unprecedented military power American taxpayers have sacrificed to pay for over many decades.

Finally, it is worth considering whether it might be smarter, cheaper and less bloody to change the failed foreign policies that have brought war with al Qa'ida and its Islamist enemies. Rather than maintaining those war-motivating policies as divine writ and building an ever-larger military to fight the ever-expanding wars that writ produces, energy self-sufficiency, a fixed and even obdurate determination to stay out of other people's religious wars and a much more narrowly defined set of genuine U.S. national interests would require far less frequent resort to war and would be much more consonant with the timelessly wise foreign policy goals of our country's Founding Fathers.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Scheuer can be found in the Appendix on page 56.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much.

Dr. ARQUILLA.

STATEMENT OF DR. JOHN ARQUILLA, PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ANALYSIS, NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL, AUTHOR OF "WORST ENEMY: THE RELUCTANT TRANSFORMATION OF THE AMERICAN MILITARY"

Dr. ARQUILLA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, committee members. I am grateful for your invitation to be with you today, and I am honored to serve on this panel with these two remarkable scholars whose work proves once again that writing is fundamentally an act of courage.

I am going to try to convince you in a few moments here to take networks seriously. I think that is one of the words we have used a lot since 9/11, and I don't think we have acted enough on our understanding of the rise of networks. In fact, I would put it this way: The war we are in now is the first great armed conflict between

nations and networks. And the fundamental dynamic of our time, unlike the Cold War where it was an arms race, the fundamental dynamic is now an organizational race to build networks.

We haven't defeated our enemy because they have continued to build their networks. They have made them looser, more distributed, more cleverly designed. We, in turn, have at the organizational level been creating great new institutions. The Department of Homeland Security, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence would be two examples of organizational change on our part. I would say we are behind in the organizational race. There are some important points that I will get to in a few moments that we have shown an interest in organizational redesign, but not very often. I think Mr. Smith has already pointed out some of the Special Operations and intelligence assets that are bringing together people.

The classic network concept is small pieces loosely joined. Lots and lots of little units of action, not a lot of central control, and a great deal of coordination. That is why we are having such a hard time against the terrorists. It is their form of organization. I am here to suggest that we get in that organizational race.

If there were any other reason to consider this seriously, I think all of them would pale next to the simple fact that our war on terror has become terror's war on us over the past seven years. How many acts of significant terror were there in 2007, in 2006? According to our own State Department statistics, in excess of 10,000. How many were there in 2001, even counting the events of September until the end of the year? A few hundred. And any way you slice this, there has been a staggering increase. And the curious irony of course is that most of the acts of terror in the world are in the places where we have deployed most of our Armed Forces, which suggests also that maybe we need to be thinking about getting into the organizational race as a military as well. Maybe we could be using these forces differently.

And so my few remarks here, I am going to suggest to you that the networks have proven their ability to stay on their feet, to absorb our heavy and traditional blows. And I think the problem here is actually something Mr. Smith raised earlier. We are actually taking an indirect approach in this war, not in terms of the tactics. Tactics can be indirect, working with Green Berets or direct with columns or tanks. But they can be strategically indirect. We have tried to go after networks by attacking other nations. That means the networks get to slip our punches. We can invade in Iraq or another member of an axis of evil, and that won't even muss the hair of the networks.

So in that respect I would suggest we need to move back to more direct means; that is, go straight after the network. How would you do this? How would you do this with an American military whose fundamental problem is one of scaling? We are a military of a few large units. We have a few divisions. A handful of brigades. And even with the changes made today to the brigade combat team or the brigade unit of action, we are talking about going in the last 7 years from about 33 of these 7 years ago to around 50 today to maybe 100 in the next few years.

What is the real power of a network? It is the small pieces loosely joined. Look what 19 attackers did on 9/11. And later that same autumn, that first autumn of war that Mike speaks of, just 11 Special Forces, A-teams drove the Taliban and al Qaeda out of power. Two thousand and one was a remarkable year for networks. Our enemy has taken lessons from that. I think we run the risk of forgetting even our recent history, much less our earlier history.

And so I am going to suggest that there is a pressing need for us to take networks seriously, particularly in the areas of organization and doctrine. How would you move the military we have away from the few and the large to the many and the small? The simple way would be to take the brigade word out. Just combat teams, units of action. Don't put "brigade" in front of it. We are fundamentally brigadist in future, and that guarantees that we are always going to have small numbers of units of action.

What are we doing in Iraq, where I do think it has been recognized things are indeed much better than they were? That is fundamentally a network story. We created lots of small pieces loosely joined in these more than 100 outposts in the country. And how many are there? Is it a brigade? No. It is usually a platoon, about 40 to 50 soldiers. And they make the Iraqis they are with fight a lot better, and they make the people living nearby more willing to provide intelligence. This is the way ahead. The outpost.

And also the other part of networking is social, the outreach. All 23 tribes in Anbar Province signed up to work with us when this offered was made. And what this says of course is that war is not just a numbers game. We didn't need five additional brigades to do that. Even today with all these outposts and all this outreach going on, only five percent of the troops in country are in those outposts. We always had plenty enough to do this.

And this is true in Afghanistan as well, by the way, where I think things went off the rails when we became more centralized. Why, for example is, is there a Burger King in Bagram? I want to know that. I just had a nephew come back from there. He is a Marine colonel at Central Command (CENTCOM), a strategic planner for Afghanistan. He said, there is a lot of kit in Bagram. I said, well, how about the Seventh Special Forces group with which I work? And he said, where are they? Do you mean the Seventh Marines? I said no. See, that is the organizational problem, small pieces loosely joined. We have an organizational problem in Afghanistan where the conventional forces don't even talk with the Special Forces, much less the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces, overlapping, interlocking, all the words you associate with traditional bureaucratic gridlock. It is out in the field.

Okay. So my story is, if you take networks seriously, you are going to reorganize. You are going to use tactics that are more similar to the opponent's. That is, you are going to strike here, there, everywhere from every direction by surprise, yes. We can still engage in surprise attacks if we operate in this fashion. And the hunter networks that I began to lobby for—I guess "lobby" is not the right word to use here—that I began to advocate four years ago. I guess Bob Woodward has said publicly—

Mr. SMITH. I think, Dr. Arquilla, I think actually “lobby” and “advocate” kind of mean the same thing. It is just that “lobby” has a bad connotation, but “lobby” is okay.

Dr. ARQUILLA. Thank you, sir. I feel better.

Four years ago I said we need to build these small teams and set them loose. And actually I am meeting with some of those team members a little later today and I am so proud of what they have done. They show we can wage network warfare. We can have these small pieces loosely joined. And they can win.

And I think the lesson for this time, this Information Age is the opposite one of the lesson for military affairs from the Industrial Age. In the age of mass production, you wanted big, big units. You wanted lots of numbers, you were going to have a lot of attrition. So you needed to have things replaced and keep a steady flow. You wanted the liberty ship to come off the flow, off the waves every 36 hours. In the Information Age, it is all about connectivity. That is where the power comes from.

So I would move our military to a much more networked structure, have this doctrine of the hunter networks that are out there doing so much good. And what is the big objection to it that I face when I take the Metro a few stops the other way? The big objection is, well, wait a minute, there might be another World War II come along. Maybe it will be World War III. And this fear of the return of conventional war I think is the central obstruction to the way ahead here.

And all I will say is I think there are two ways of dealing with this problem that make sense. There is one that doesn't, which is just to grow the Special Forces. I think that is a bad idea because it will have quality assurance problems for the Special Forces, and it will drain off good troops from the rest of the military. You need to think about the military elite as a laboratory for the whole Armed Forces. That is, they are doing something that is very cutting edge. We don't want everybody to be Special Forces, but we want people increasingly to be able to do special things. And that is what is going on in Iraq. It is what can go on in Afghanistan. It can be done without putting more masses, more numbers in play.

So how do you deal with the World War II threat? Two sensible ways. One is rebalancing, if I can—is that a word? If it is not, I will make it up. How would you rebalance this force? Right now most of the active force is full of people who do conventional things, tanks, artillery, et cetera. The reserves on the other hand are full of lots of people who have the irregular sorts of skills needed in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism, including a lot of special operations, psychological operations specialists, civil affairs folks. At one time in Iraq, about half our troops were reservists. Let's move the people with their specialties into a smaller active force and move the traditional fighters into a reserve where, by the way, we are going to save all sorts of money doing that, and we will make ourselves more able to fight the wars that are actually out there.

There are over two dozen wars going on in the world today. How many of them are conventional wars? None. Except when we do

conventional things. So we would be prepared with rebalancing if World War II ever came back.

The second solution is this: Bet that the network will make mincemeat of a traditional massed force. The million man North Korean Army. I would much rather have 100 small units of action backed by American air power taking them down, channelizing their movements in the mountain passes and destroying them rather than having a repeat of the Korean War fought 57, 58 years ago, which is a bloody stalemate. I don't think you need to respond to a conventional threat in a conventional way; that is, if you take networks seriously.

I want to beg your indulgence for just one little moment here to read from something about our forces 250 years ago just to prove that we can do military transformation. We began that great struggle against the French empire in North America, losing a lot of conventional battles. By the end of the war, the British hierarchy was convinced, you know, these bush fighters have something going for them. We need to do irregular things. And so they marched to Montreal in the last campaigns, the year after the fall of Quebec.

Fred Anderson writes in the *Crucible of War*: "This was no conventional army. Its tactics had undergone a transformation in America. For three years the redcoats had been firing at marks and were now accustomed to aiming rather than merely leveling their muskets at the enemy. Forces included fewer grenadiers, many more light infantry, whole battalions of little wiry men able to move quickly through the woods and ranger companies to make the raids and reconnaissance patrols."

Now we need the little wiry men and women who will traverse the world and tear apart these terror networks node by node, cell by cell.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Arquilla can be found in the Appendix on page 61.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much. I really appreciate that testimony. Very interesting. Not all in agreement, which makes for an interesting discussion. We are going to stick to the five-minute rule on questions. I will start. And even as I announce that rule, it is going to be difficult to get the question out and much less the answer.

But Dr. Scheuer, I was interested in your comments. At first blush, I didn't agree with a fair number of them. But I know you know far more about this than I do. So I wanted to explore some of those aspects of it.

First, as far as the conventional aspect of the warfare, you seem to be arguing that the enemy is out there. We know what they want. They basically think that we are waging war on Islam and they are fighting back. So we need basically to go out, find them and kill them. And it is going to take a conventional structure to do that. I guess a couple things that I am puzzled about in that analysis is, number one, al Qa'ida and the various groups who were affiliated with them don't mass in a conventional way. Where do we go in the world to have a conventional war with al Qa'ida? They seem to fit a model more closely to my mind with what Dr. Arquilla is saying. So I don't see where we send a couple of brigades to go

up against them. It doesn't seem to work that way. It does seem like much more of an irregular battle.

And as far as our foreign policy is concerned, as you mentioned, they have both political and religious goals. I think, you know, it is not just that they think we are waging a war on Islam. They want to establish a specific type of government and society. And they think we are getting in the way of them establishing that. And the specific type of state society that they are establishing I think is a profound threat to us in and of itself. The Taliban-style government. I don't think we can simply pull back and say, as long as they are not messing with us and simply forming these states it is okay. It is not.

And I guess the last question is, on ideology, as you mentioned, you know, we killed the two, three, and four. And I totally agree with what you said on them not being a terrorist network, that they are an insurgent group. But it seems to me that we do have to focus a little bit on what makes people follow this ideology. Certainly there are the hard core, the hard core. They are there. They have developed it, but why are they finding suicide bombers? Why are they able to just go through northwest Pakistan? And I read an article, basically they got people who have got no prospects, no hopes and say hey, strap this on. We will take care of your family. You will go to heaven.

It seems to me that defeating the ideology does require some of this more, if you will, muddle-headed thinking about poverty and ideology and why do they follow them. That is three areas. I took half the time. We will hopefully come back to it. I want to make sure I give you time to touch on those three questions.

Dr. SCHEUER. Conventional forces certainly can't be used in every occasion. But we unnecessarily were not prepared for 9/11, were unable to move any amount of forces that would make any difference to Afghanistan in time to keep the enemy from going to Iran, going to Pakistan, going further into the Gulf. You have to use the military forces you have when you have them. The absurdity of sending a few hundred Special Forces and a few hundred CIA officers to conquer and hold someplace that is bigger than Texas is a piece of madness.

Mr. SMITH. But that wasn't because we didn't have the conventional forces. It was because we couldn't move them fast enough.

Dr. SCHEUER. Sir?

Mr. SMITH. It wasn't because we didn't have the conventional forces. It was because we couldn't move them fast enough.

Dr. SCHEUER. It was because the Pentagon had failed immeasurably in not preparing for a war that had been declared on us in 1996 and repeated again in 1998. But that does not in itself prove that conventional force won't be of tremendous use. We seem tremendously border challenged. The only way to control Afghanistan and build the democracy that people think can be built there is to close the border with Pakistan. It is the only way to do it. And you are not going to do that with Special Forces and CIA people.

What we are talking about here is this return to law enforcement, Special Forces and CIA, which is exactly what we did under the Clinton Administration. And by 1997 it was very clear that

that combination of forces could not cope with what al Qa'ida was producing.

On the point of ideology, sir, the way to gut the ideology of the enemy is to disengage from the Middle East as far as we can and let them kill each other, because that is where the problem is, within Islamic civilization and not against us. It sort of hurts our ego to realize that we are not the main enemy here. We are the people that are in the way of letting the enemy get at his main enemy, the Saudis, the Mubaraks, the Israelis.

Mr. SMITH. I don't think that is an ego issue. I think that is a legitimate concern about, you know, how do we interact—forget the oil for the moment. If you have a Taliban-style state, as you do to some degree in Iran, in Saudi Arabia, in Jordan, in Iraq, if basically the Middle East is taken over by that, then I think the concern is, number one, they won't be satisfied with that. And I think there is every reason to believe that is the case. If you read what they write.

Dr. SCHEUER. Well, that basically, sir, is a racist kind of an approach to things. Because to assume that they are going to become a caliphate of 1.4 billion Muslim automatons is to just simply ignore the fact that Islamic culture is as fractured, as diverse as we are.

Mr. SMITH. But I don't think al Qa'ida represents Islamic culture. But I am talking about if they actually controlled those governments.

Dr. SCHEUER. Well, first of all, sir, Afghanistan was much more stable under the Taliban. And the second point I would make is who cares what happens in Afghanistan once we take care of the terrorist problem? And you say, move the question away from oil. And the fact is, we can't. We have no possibility to change or have options in the Middle East as long as we are dependent on oil. We are going to be continuing to support the Saudi tyranny.

Mr. SMITH. On that point, I agree with you completely and certainly the policy needs to change.

Dr. SCHEUER. And regarding Iran, sir, Iran of course is more democratic and more participatory in any sense than any of our allies are in the Middle East. So the common wisdom is sometimes not quite cogent.

Mr. SMITH. I see the ideology that Iran houses, or Iran has, is more of a threat broadly than that, just personally. But I will yield to Mr. Thornberry, and I will try to come back when we are done.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dr. Jones, I was interested in a lot of things in your study. One of the factors—one of the things that you found which I don't recall being in your written testimony was that after studying 648 groups, there are 244 of them still going and another 136 that splintered and are still conducting terrorism. So if you take the whole universe of the terrorist groups you studied, 59 percent are still terrorists. And so then what you narrow down to is the roughly 40 percent that have gone away. Why did they go away? And that is where you get the policing and intelligence and other factors. Have I got that about right?

Dr. JONES. That is correct, yes.

Mr. THORNBERRY. So maybe I might read that and think, well, the terrorist groups that went away maybe were the easiest to get

rid of. The tougher ones are in the 60 percent that are still conducting terrorist operations.

Dr. JONES. Well, that would I think be incorrect in one sense because we did actually look separately at all the groups together. And actually we found in most cases when groups continued to exist it was the wrong strategy that was used. So with some of the smaller groups we found that have continued to exist, they have often been targeted by large military forces. We found in general groups that continue to exist, in looking at why they continue to exist, there are a range of factors. One of the biggest actually is wrong strategy.

Mr. THORNBERRY. You said—I acknowledged I think in your testimony—that a political settlement with al Qaeda is not happening. Policing troubles me when I think about al Qaeda Central in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), which is essentially ungoverned by any country, including Pakistan. Would you agree that the policing and intelligence is something you know that takes some time, particularly when you are in a tribal setting? It is a particularly difficult area with which to use these factors that you identified as the most successful.

Dr. JONES. I would say after—I have spent three different periods in 2008 on the border, on the Afghan-Pakistani border with U.S. forces. I would say the biggest problem is not the capacity of local police and intelligence forces on the ground on the Pakistani side because there have been efforts to build up the—through coalition support funds, for example, Frontier Corps, which is the paramilitary force on the ground. The biggest challenge of this strategy in general is the will of these agencies because they view al Qaeda and many of the militant groups—their objectives are very different from ours.

So I think the problem we find is not that there are insufficient groups on the ground, intelligence and police forces, like the Frontier Corps and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The problem ends up being they may not want in some cases to target many of the groups we do, including the Taliban. I think that is actually the bigger challenge.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Sure. The groups on the ground are sympathetic to them, yeah, which is why they are there.

Dr. Arquilla, let me—number one, thanks to you, I have taken networks seriously for some time, and I appreciate your work in that area. But one statement that you make troubles me a little bit. You talk about the problematic notion of waging a war of ideas. Dr. Jones talks about counterterrorism as much about hearts and minds as it is about policing and intelligence. It seems to me you are saying that this war of ideas stuff doesn't really matter. He has a different view. Can you explain your opinion and then maybe he will have a chance to briefly answer?

Dr. ARQUILLA. Thanks. That is a good question. I think the context of my use of this is that instead of a war of ideas about Islam, we need to have a war of ideas about the idea of war. And I have got at least one of you to take networks seriously, that war is underway.

My concern is this about the so-called war of ideas. War is a very bad metaphor in the ideological area. You want to convince people,

you want to persuade. War conjures up notions of coercion or the hard sell. We had someone at public diplomacy who was trying to sell democracy the same way that you would sell dog food, which I guess is what she did at some point in her career. And I think the war of ideas is problematic in terms of trying to deal with zealots and at least as I see statistics, about five percent of the Muslim world takes the al Qa'ida message pretty seriously. Those folks you are not going to get at with a hearts and minds campaign. You are going to get at them with a hunter network.

But I think there is another problem with our war of ideas. We want to support democracy and yet as Dr. Scheuer has noted, we support all kinds of authoritarianism very comfortably in the Muslim world. So consistency is a very, very big problem for us.

Another problem with strategic communications is the whole idea that your actions communicate, not just what you say, and Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib and again the support for authoritarian regimes, those are actions that the enemy reads very closely and the general public reads very closely.

Finally, on this point, taking it away from the war metaphor to something more communicative in nature, listening is a huge part of communications, and I fear that we have done far too little of this, and I know that you have had a long interest in David Ronfeldt's and my work in this area of information strategy. And so respectfully I suggest that the war metaphor—I do believe that the war against al Qa'ida is a real war. They believe it. We had better believe it. I am also worried that the notion of a long war is—that is the wrong war. If we let them stand on their feet long enough, they will get weapons of mass destruction. So let's build networks, hunt them down.

Many of the things Dr. Jones suggests can work, probably would with some elements. That is the other thing. People say, well, you can't negotiate with networks. Sure you can. They have all kinds of small pieces loosely joined. You can use salami tactics against them. But please, in this ideological area let's stop talking about a war against these folks. Let's have a discussion, a debate. Let's be consistent. Let's conform our actions to our beliefs and our declaratory statements. And above all, let's listen because sometimes there is a guide to good policy change in what others are saying.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, gentlemen, for being here. It is a fascinating hearing. You have probably—I assume you have all watched this body over the last couple of years, the votes we have taken fund goals to get out of Iraq, Afghanistan. I would be curious. If you switched chairs with us, where would you go from here? What would you—as briefly as you can sum it up, all three of you, your recommendations to the Congress on how—if you were the decider, and I hate to use that term, how would you forge forward with our conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan? Dr. Arquilla, if you want to start, we will go the other way.

Dr. ARQUILLA. I would be happy to. There is a third way in Iraq, if one can still use terms like a third way. Don't just leave. Don't do what we have just done, which is basically stay the course. Right, 8,000 troops out is not the answer.

If I am on your side of the table, what I say is, is you can make dramatic reductions. As I said, only a tiny proportion of the forces in country are actually in those outposts. That is what made things work overnight. Another colleague of mine, a Marine major in the audience here, was telling me about his two tours in Iraq. First time in 2006, helicopter pilot evacuating the wounded. People with their legs blown off every day. Second time through after the Awakening started, the outpost and outreach, he was bringing in German businessmen with briefcases to meet with sheikhs. So an overnight change. That is not the result of five more brigades. It is a result of the Awakening. You don't need war as a numbers game.

It is true in Iraq and it is true in Afghanistan. Build more outposts, do more outreach. Play offense, too. Not just the defensive laydown of the outposts and working with the local forces who are a lot better with even small groups of our forces. Build more of these hunter networks that are out there. They are making a huge, huge difference in Iraq, around the world. And despite all the news you hear from Afghanistan, I am a little closer to this. We are doing some very remarkable things, particularly in the western part of Afghanistan.

So that is my idea. Draw down, but I wouldn't—you know there is a red and blue story here. To get the red side of the house to buy into this, I think what you have to acknowledge is that you don't simply announce a date when you leave. The enemy will declare victory. If there is one terrorist left, he will hold up his AK-47 and say, we won. That is strategic communications. So keep some forces there for an indefinite period with no timeline. That is the political compromise.

I don't know why you all don't see it as a perfect storm. We all want troops out as much as we all can possibly have them out. But we don't want chaos in the wake of our departure. So let's not leave. Let's not take everybody out. Let's keep some force, and I think the network gives us that possibility.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Dr. Scheuer, would you like to—

Dr. SCHEUER. I am kind of a bear of simple brain or bear of small brain. I think the truth is the place to start if you wanted to do anything. And the truth is that, with respect, our political leaders have been less than frank with the American people for 20 or more years. If this war was about our freedoms and our democracies and women in the workplace and all those things, this would be a minor nuisance. Lethal nuisance but a minor one. This is about exactly what we do in the Muslim world. And none of that said means that what we do is wrong. It is simply standing back and saying, what is motivating, what is going on? Even someone who is I think as misleading as John Esposito on the nature and threat from jihad has published, I think, a very useful book that shows in the Muslim community around the world maybe 5 percent would pick up guns in support of al Qa'ida, but 80 percent of the Muslim world, Arab and the rest, believe that our foreign policy is an attack on Islam. And with that kind of support base, we are not in for a long war. We are in for an eternal war.

And so I think that what I would try to do is just simply lay out for the American people, you know, here is the cause. If we want

to maintain those policies, that is fine, that is our prerogative. But at least if there was a discussion, sir, we would be on the same page. Right now we have stuffed a very busy, very worried electorate with nonsense. They say, oh, they hate the fact my daughter goes to university. She is going to go. We are going to fight. That is not the way to proceed in this war.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Thank you very much. Do we have time, Mr. Chairman, for—

Mr. SMITH. Sorry. Dr. Jones has 15 seconds. But I will give him a little more. Go ahead.

Dr. JONES. I will try to be really brief. One needs to ask the question, what has been effective so far? There have been pockets of effectiveness. I think the answer, going back to my testimony, is what has been most effective I think is the leveraging of local forces on the ground. This discussion sometimes—we have done it already in this testimony—of small numbers of U.S. forces or large numbers of U.S. forces, there is a second part of the equation which is a local element on the ground which is fundamental. I would say we learned successfully in the 2001 period which force took Kabul on the ground with local Northern Alliance forces, which forces on the ground took Anbar? It was local Sunni forces. I think the steps forward are to increasingly ask questions like, with the brigade and battalion going into Afghanistan, are they going to be doing direct operations or embedding and partnering with local forces on the ground? This is a fundamental question.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Mr. Saxton.

Mr. SAXTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have a question for Dr. Jones and Dr. Arquilla. And, actually, Dr. Jones's last answer is a great segue into this question.

As we have heard today, to change the military is a tough job. There have been some changes made on the fringe. Dr. Arquilla may be able to remind me of the fellow's name who wrote the book, "Transition Under Fire." I can't remember his name. It was a retired colonel. And he was basically talking about the brigade combat team change, which has been effected to a large degree, but that was like pulling teeth to get that done. And we haven't, obviously, gone far enough.

So based on what you have seen, Dr. Jones and Dr. Arquilla, of the changes that we have made to date and what you think the future looks like in terms of changes that we need to make, how would we go forward on a step-by-step basis to create a more effective counterinsurgency organization?

Dr. JONES. I think, quite simply, probably the best illustration is to look at the Marine operations in Fallujah in 2004 and Marine operations in Anbar province in 2006, 2007, and 2008. The issue is some of the training—which, in my view, was not sufficient enough—training that went into incoming Marine forces into Iraq to think and work with local actors was fundamental in the shift in approach from direct combat operations in Fallujah against an enemy, to embedding and working with local forces in Anbar in the 2006, 2007, and 2008 period.

So I would say what becomes fundamental is during the training process, the education process, including in places like Carlisle,

how much of the training and education is going into understanding working with local actors on the ground. There is a mindset that is fundamentally different. The mindset of a counter-insurgency operation is different from combat.

So when units prepare to deploy to places like Afghanistan, when Marine units or Army units, 82nd Airborne, 101st Airborne, how much are they being trained to go into an unconventional environment and to work and embed with locals? I think we have gone in some direction, in this sense, but clearly not enough.

Dr. ARQUILLA. The U.S. military has a long relationship with irregular warfare. I mentioned the French and Indian War. We won the Revolution because of an ability to engage in insurgent operations that exhausted the British. We fought Native Americans for most of the 19th century, a lot of irregular warfare, a lot of lessons there. The best soldiers in the Civil War were irregulars.

Then we became a great industrial power, and all this irregular capacity began to fall into the background. We had a little harder time in the Philippines. We had a hard time, scratching our heads as to what to do in a number of Central American interventions, in Haiti as well. And by the time Vietnam came along, we decided to try to solve the problem with, quote, "big units" rather than the small special approach that we used that had been working.

This is a long debate in the U.S. military. It is an important debate. Militaries are—my book has "reluctant transformation" in there because they are reluctant to change. They have to be. They fight for the highest stakes: their own lives, their country's honor, and maybe it is survival and the quality of the life in the world system. So I respect this reluctance.

But I do think we need to have this war of ideas about the idea of war. We live in a time in which all the wars are irregular. If you look back 60 years, you will find that conventional wars are less than one in 20 of all the wars that are fought. We have to have a capacity for this.

I would suggest we reach back to our own traditions, light interesting units, the wiry little men traversing the wildernesses of the world. That is something we have done before, we can do again. The bonus here is I think creating this new, this nimble, this networked force is also going to allow us to wage the rare conventional war in an entirely new manner that takes, truly, the military profession into an information age. That is where we are on the cusp.

So I think the beginning is what we are seeing with these small units, these outposts, these task forces, these hunter networks. It is starting. And I think if we had a hearing on this a few years from now, we would see that the progress is even farther down the road. So I, sir, am something of an optimistic on this subject.

Mr. SAXTON. Dr. Arquilla, you said I think in your testimony, and I may not have these words exactly right, you said in your testimony that we don't need to grow the Special Forces, but we need more special—

Dr. ARQUILLA. Everyone has to do more special things.

And the Special Forces are a laboratory. They have shown that there are things you can do. Most of the hunter networks come out of the Special Forces. But the best guy I know who was in Samara

in Iraq, who worked with the locals, had a small unit, a company under his command and pacified an entire area, reached out—I don't think I can say this without being detained—but he reached out to some of the insurgent elements, got them working with him. This is a tank officer with a degree in animal husbandry from Texas A&M.

I work with these officers every day and have for a couple decades now. They have the capacity to do this.

So I repeat, sir: I am an optimist. I want to see the whole force able to do special things, not just try to wall irregular warfare off into something that represents only three or four percent of the total force.

Thank you, sir.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Mr. Cooper.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for holding this hearing.

And thanks for each of the witnesses for your remarkable expertise. I find discussions like this very helpful. I wish it could be in a little more informal setting, perhaps around a seminar table instead of this hierarchical approach.

Each of you has very interesting advice, but each of you has now formally left government structure. So my main question, I know Mr. Scheuer has had, particularly, difficulties with his prior agencies. I loved it when "Imperial Hubris" came out and you were anonymous. But I am interested in the ability of a government bureaucracy to accommodate free-thinkers.

It seems to me that the number-one rule of war is to understand the nature of the enemy, and yet that has been a remarkably difficult and controversial role for some of our previous government workers, without handicapping your career, in some cases forcing you to leave government.

So if you would care to comment on that, I would appreciate it.

Dr. SCHEUER. Yes, sir. In my experience, at least at CIA, it was a tremendously lively, intellectual place. And being able to express your views was always one of the things that I enjoyed about being there. I think the real problem is getting the views above, say, the level of what would be a lieutenant colonel or a colonel in the military.

I don't think there is a lack of brain power in the agency. It is more or less an unwillingness to carry bad news to the policymaker. And of course it just so happens that in the Middle East there are so many sacrosanct things in the United States Government that even facts are unacceptable, in some ways. In my experience under both Administrations, Democrat and Republican, the White House does not want to hear anything negative about the Saudis or the Israelis. And so two major players are off the board at any kind of an analysis you try to do.

So, you know, I don't know exactly what the answer is. My experience is limited to CIA. I found it a very challenging place to work. I resigned not because of CIA, but because I thought the 9/11 Commission had been a disaster for America by not finding anyone responsible for anything. I regret every day—or, at least I miss every day working there.

But I really think that the problem is that kind of mid-level, upper-mid-level, and upper-level people who actually carry the message to the President or to the Cabinet. You have to have a very tough, thick skin, and you have to not want to be the friend. You have to carry the bad news and say, "Whatever you think, Mr. President, and ultimately it is up to you. But whatever you think, your support for, say, Mr. Mubarak's government is one of the main causes that rally people to whatever negative anti-American force there is." And until you get that through, the senior level of the government is not even going to entertain that idea.

Mr. COOPER. Would either of you two gentlemen care to comment?

Dr. ARQUILLA. I would just remind Mr. Cooper that I work for the Navy. I am—

Mr. COOPER. Yeah, but you are in the Postgraduate School. If there is a free-thinking part, presumably that would be it.

Dr. ARQUILLA. Well, look, I enjoy the protections of civil service and tenure, but I have never felt the need to invoke any of them. It is a very lively environment. As I said, I spent a lot of time with a lot of our units in many places, and I have to tell you, there is a great deal of ferment. What boils down, when they come out at the end of the day and say, okay, we can only pull 8,000 out, there is a lively debate behind that. There is a big debate.

I used to work a little bit with General Wayne Downing, who was a senior adviser to the President on counterterrorism. Before the invasion of Iraq, there were huge debates about whether to do it at all. If so, could we do it small and special, Afghanistan-plus instead of Desert Storm-minus. These are huge debates, and you never get to hear about them.

And I think it is an organizational problem. What does the hierarchy do? It boils everything down to, here is this little output at the end of the day: 8,000 troops. A network approach—and I think this would be something that Congress and both parties should support and the American people should demand—is a sort of open airing of the ideas. In a network, all the ideas are out there.

And I think, if there is one thing a National Security Advisor could do, it would be, instead of boiling away all the other options, to present them. There are a lot of fine thinkers in the military; we call them today the iron majors, the people in mid-career who, 10 years from now, are going to have stars. One of the iron majors is in the audience here listening this morning. Ten years from now, just where they are going, there aren't any roads. This is going to get very, very interesting.

And so I would just suggest that even in the official world there is a lot of interesting debate. It is our organizational structures that prevent that from bubbling up to the top.

Mr. COOPER. Dr. Arquilla, would you have a similar freedom of speech if you were a line officer?

Dr. ARQUILLA. There are rules that are slightly more restrictive but not entirely so. And I have had serving officers working with me who have written articles. In fact, one of them, he did a seminar with me last summer, wrote a paper for it that was extremely challenging of the existing structure of things. And that paper he

submitted to one of the leading strategic journals, *Comparative Strategy*, and it appeared in the latest issue.

There is a lot of reluctance to do this, but there are officers who stand up increasingly. The iron majors are intimidated by nobody.

Mr. COOPER. Dr. Jones, do you have a comment?

Dr. JONES. I will just be very brief.

I still believe that in a war, in a counterterrorism effort that is being fought, in most cases, in areas outside of the United States there continues to be a fundamental ignorance of the other cultures, including at top levels of the United States Government. And that certainly is reflected in two ways: Its efforts to counter this war of ideas by putting people on places like Al-Jazeera that don't even speak Arabic for the U.S. Government. I mean, what message are you sending to the locals who are listening? It has to be translated because you can't find a U.S. Government representative that can go on Al-Jazeera that can speak Arabic. It also sometimes gets reflected in trying to do everything ourselves rather than, in some cases, working locally.

So I think there is a fundamental, and continues to be a fundamental, ignorance of many of the countries that we operate in among our government, whether it is speaking the languages, understanding tribal networks, that in some cases has hampered our response.

Mr. COOPER. Would RAND lose business if you pointed out how backward and counterproductive many senior U.S. officials' efforts are?

Dr. JONES. We have done this on institutions and generals. So I think the answer is no.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. I think that actually concludes the first round of questioning.

I want to ask Dr. Arquilla and probably Dr. Scheuer, as well, you talked about the structure of the military. What I am curious about, in terms of our budgetary choices, is the systems that we have to pay for. And you seem to have a slightly different take than Dr. Scheuer, who seems to see a greater need for a conventional force. But a big-ticket part of where we are spending a lot of our money and how we sort of choose where to put our resources has to do with those systems.

And could both of you comment a little bit on, as you see the structure of the military, what we need to buy, you know, airplanes, ships, submarines, tanks, Strykers, you know, where you think we should be putting our money; and, perhaps more importantly, where we shouldn't be putting our money?

Dr. ARQUILLA. Well, I think we are a military of the few and the large, right? We are planning on having 11 aircraft carriers in perpetuity—Ford's, no less. Let's make sure we associate it with the President and not the vehicle.

In any event, it seems to me that we are at a point now where we, when including war spending, are going at it at about \$2 billion a day on defense. And from my own cursory review of this, about 90 cents on every dollar goes for industrial-age systems that just don't protect us anymore. So we are spending more and more to get less and less security. And my concern is that, as we look

out upon the world, the investments others are making are very intriguing and very troubling.

If I can stay with the naval example for a moment. We are continuing to build super carriers, a handful of them. And, by the way, their throughput, their capacity for flying planes is about the same as it was 60 years ago. What is our possible opponent in the future, a Chinese navy, doing? I guess they call it the People's Liberation Army Navy, which is a curious thing in its own right. They are not building carriers. They say they are going to build one one day, but there is no sign they are doing it. What are they building instead? Supersonic antiship missiles, smart mines that can position themselves right below the keel of a big ship and break its back. And something called a supercavitation torpedo that creates a bubble of air in front of it so that it can travel at hundreds of knot. What is our defense against that? Nothing. We hope it has poor guidance.

So we have a fundamental problem here where other smart militaries that don't have the resources to burn that we do are investing extremely skillfully in advanced technology. So we keep investing in big conventional ticket items, which keeps us in the conventional warfare world in a time of irregular war. But the kicker to all this is that, if this big war comes along, we are going to face others who have invested more wisely in advanced technology.

So I think we need—and, again, if I am on your side of the table, I would call for a moratorium on these legacy systems.

Mr. SMITH. And I am very much with you on that general focus. The one counterargument that I have heard is, if we go up in a big conventional war with China or Russia—which, by the way, I think we should studiously work to avoid in terms of our foreign policy. That, I think, the diplomacy there, make partners, not enemies, out of the large powers, is absolutely critical. If we do that, yes, the ships are not going to be helpful for the reasons you just stated.

But the counterargument is, in the small world we live in, when we need to get a force to Afghanistan, when we need to get a force to Iraq, the carrier groups, you bring the carrier over there, you bring the battleships over there, they can launch cruise missiles, they can launch albeit a small numbers of planes. How do you counter that argument?

Dr. ARQUILLA. Well, certainly you don't need aircraft carriers to send Special Forces over. I know they did that in Operation Enduring Freedom, which was like the biggest public relations (PR) story ever. You don't need to send 11 A-teams by an aircraft carrier. That is the world's most expensive taxi service.

In terms of firing cruise missiles, any platform can do that. It doesn't have to be an aircraft carrier. In terms of aircraft, you have all kinds of other vessels that can launch short takeoff or vertical takeoff and landing. You don't need a super carrier to do that.

But also, the Air Force knows how to find these places. In Operation Enduring Freedom, according to the Combined Air Operations Center, they dropped three-fourths of all the ordnance on the enemy. That is the right statistic.

So we don't have trouble doing aerial bombardment, missile bombardment, or moving forces for the little side of things. So I don't think the argument about the carriers needed in irregular warfare

is persuasive. And nor is it persuasive, really, in the next big war against whomever it may be.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Dr. Scheuer, if you could take a stab at it.

Dr. SCHEUER. Sir, thank you.

It is not really—I think probably Dr. Arquilla is exactly right in the way we need to go, but the problem is there is a great gap in the time from where we are to where we need to be. And one of the legacy systems we have, in a sense, is a Cold War mentality, that somehow the enemy is going to sit there and wait for us to get there to kill them. And we will get our act together after eight or nine years, and they will be there waiting for us to do them in. And that is not the case.

So, to me, the big problem in what we buy and what we do is not only that we buy systems that perhaps aren't useful—I can't imagine, for example, buying the Raptor instead of a ground support aircraft to help those people that are fighting our wars elsewhere—but the whole idea that the enemy isn't adaptable, doesn't have a timetable of his own, sir.

Whatever we are going to do to change, do it. Stop talking about it, and do it. Because this is an enemy that is not like—there is no stand-off between us and the Soviets anymore. The bad guys are out there conniving and finding ways to get at us. And so, to me, whatever we are going to do for structure, get your best brains together and then move, because we can't wait.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much.

Mr. Thornberry.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Fascinating discussion which would be worthy of us pursuing. I want to go back to terrorism for just a second.

Dr. Scheuer, you make a big deal that this is not terrorism, this is insurgency. But Dr. Jones, in his study, says that terrorism is the use of politically motivated violence against noncombatants to cause intimidation or fear among a target audience.

I am not sure I—I mean, it seems to me that applies. But, secondly, I am not sure I understand why it matters, the difference. Please explain why you think that distinction is so important for us.

Dr. SCHEUER. I think it matters because we have underestimated the strength, durability and the resiliency of the enemy. We still have Presidents or potential Presidents telling us we are going to bring these people to justice one at a time. Clearly, to my own particular instance, we leveled more destruction on al Qa'ida between 1995 and 2001 than almost any other group that I can think of, and yet 9/11 happened.

"Terrorism" is a term that blinkers our ability to perceive the enemy, because terrorists are by definition evil, small in number, on the lunatic fringe, maybe the lunatic fringe of the lunatic fringe, and somehow they are not a credible threat; they are something that is like a bug, you need to stamp it out. We have certainly failed to do that, because they are not terrorists. You know, your definition you just read of political violence could very well be applied to the bombing of Tokyo, to which I have no objections; we won the war.

But terrorism is just something that, to me anyway, was dreamed up by U.S. policy and Western policymakers who didn't want to respond to an act of war with our military but rather wanted to goof around. You know, blowing up the United airliner over Scotland wasn't a terrorist activity, it was an act of war, and it should have been handled in that manner.

Mr. THORNBERRY. It seemed to me terrorism is a tactic rather—

Dr. SCHEUER. Sir, what I would say is one of the detrimental things for the United States is the very smallest number percentage of al Qa'ida are what we would call "terrorists." They would call them their special forces. The next biggest group are either their insurgents or their insurgent trainers.

The biggest part of al Qa'ida is the logistics, finance, safe haven part, and media part these days. So what we are doing by focusing on the terrorist side of it is we are attacking maybe one-twelfth of the organization, sir.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Dr. Arquilla, you gave specific recommendations for how the military needs to be restructured in small groups. One of the things that we have talked about a lot over the last two years in this subcommittee is the need to not just bring the military to this struggle but the whole government.

Talk to me a little bit, if you can, about a government-wide network, not just a military network, on these problems.

Dr. ARQUILLA. It is a brilliant idea. I think a government networked approach to dealing with terrorism, irregular warfare, the security questions of our time, would be one in which the collective intelligence of all our soldiers and civil servants and interested folks out in the country and commerce, education, civil society, the best ideas would come forward. One of the biggest insights about networks is when you bring a collective intelligence together—that is, everyone is allowed to weigh in their opinion—great ideas come forward.

If I can give you a little example, I don't know if any of you play chess. I will be very brief about this. Go to chessgames.com, and what you will find is a great player, usually a former world champion, challenges the world, and about 8,000 people sign up. They are a little network; they have their own little page where they discuss and debate what to do next. And the collective intelligence so far has beaten every former world champion it has played.

And there are other experiments. In Japan, they had a virtual manager for a minor league team for a while. Anybody in the stands or watching or listening to the game could vote on: send the runner to steal second, bunt here, do this or that. The year they did that—it was a tech company that owned the minor league team. The year they did that, they won their division.

Now, I am not saying we do all of that, but my guess is this: If we took a problem like Afghanistan, and instead of the planning cell that my nephew commands, we took 100 officers and we put them into 25 small teams and we paired them up with State Department, intelligence, law enforcement, and maybe even had a liaison officer from another country on it, just say, okay, come up with some good ideas for how to deal with this, my experience has

always been that collective intelligence will drive you to the best answer and it will do so most quickly.

I had a doctoral student at my school who just graduated, another iron major, Major Todd Lewelling, who is now teaching at the Air Force Academy, studied terrorist problems of detecting a terrorist attack. We ran a controlled experiment with dozens of teams; half were organized as hierarchies, half as networks. The hierarchies had a commander, information flowed up channels; the networks, everyone shared all the information. Not only did the networks get to the right answer about 30 percent more of the time, but they got to the right answer more than 50 percent faster.

So I think there are structures. It is not a commission, it is not a task force, there is no czars. At best, it is a network administrator. But, please, let's start doing this.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Cooper, did you have anything else you wanted to add?

Mr. COOPER. There are many types of unconventional warfare—electronic, take your pick. Would financial warfare also be part of someone's arsenal?

For example, you take something like a sovereign wealth fund of another nation or a more shadowy form of capital, even short stocks, bet against America, alone or in groups, to take down significant financial institutions by having such massive—

Mr. SMITH. I think we are capable of doing that all on our own, apparently, so I think they probably don't want to get in our way.

Mr. COOPER. But the traditional financial model is people live in this country and they don't want to bet against it too much. If they don't live here and in fact have deep hatred for everything we stand for and they have got plenty of petrodollars or other dollars, what keeps them, especially with anonymous trading, from taking what would be ordinarily an irrationally negative position but one that could be a self-fulfilling prophecy if you have enough tens of billions of dollars backing up that attack?

And one challenge we face in such an open society is everything is transparent here. And sometimes we don't realize the terrific leverage that, for example, a digital camera had at Abu Ghraib.

So, you know, if we are going to be smarter and faster than the enemy, don't we need to anticipate and at least be able to react in a timely fashion to things that could well make sense?

And it is double destruction, because not only are they able to do irreparable harm here, but they profit at the same time.

So, I know you all are defense specialists, you are not financial specialists. And the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) yesterday put back in the rule against naked short-selling. But still, that is just a requirement that, within three days, you show that you had at least temporary possession of the stock or the bond. But that is about like telling a murderer, "Oh, yeah, show up with the bloody shirt or the underwear." You know, this is three days later. This is, for nonfinance people, this is a different area. But we are such an open, vulnerable society in so many ways. We didn't expect that airplanes could be gasoline bombs.

So, where is our red team to really outthink the enemy, whether it is supercavitation or whether it is other things? What group in

the Pentagon or related to the Pentagon or in our country is really giving hard, urgent thought to these questions?

Dr. SCHEUER. Mr. Cooper, I am certainly not capable, in terms of answering the financial question. But I think the one thing that we very often do is to ignore the expertise within our own government. It is not a question of not having the smart people. We have an extraordinary array of talented people in the United States Government across the board. And not only that, but in my experience now, since having resigned, you asked earlier about freedom of speech and ideas that are acceptable or unacceptable, I would say that within the U.S. Government and military, the discussion is much more independent and pointed than anything that goes on in the Academy. I have taught now at university, and it is a much more restricted degree of acceptability at the university than it was at the CIA.

So, again, I think you have, in terms of brain power, you have an enormous, wonderful mass of that within the United States Government. It is just a matter of getting the solution to the place and having it acceptable. Because some aspects of a solution will not be maintaining the status quo.

Mr. COOPER. But, Dr. Scheuer, as you pointed out, there are a couple problems. One, you have a bureaucratic master who is reluctant to deliver bad news. Number two, some folks don't want to deal with reality. They prefer a different view of the world.

Dr. SCHEUER. Yes, sir.

Mr. COOPER. Facts are not popular things with some political leaders. We, sadly, have an informal rule on this committee; we don't hear testimony from folks below the rank of general, unless it is a Marine colonel. You know, the iron majors are seldom, if ever, called to testify. That is crazy. We need to correct that.

So how do we tap in—and I know networking is a great way to do it, and I am all for that. But—

Dr. SCHEUER. Sir, within my own personal experience, there is nothing that the Agency worries more about than you guys asking for someone to come up who has not got nine stars on his shoulder. And, ultimately, the power of the Congress to get whatever information it wants from whatever level, at least within the CIA, was certainly within your purview, sir. If you wanted to hear a General Schedule (GS-9) talk about what was going on in Nigeria, you would get him. But you have to ask for him.

Mr. COOPER. We haven't been able to be briefed on Sy Hersh's article five weeks ago in *The New Yorker* on ground troops in Iran. And that is already in *The New Yorker* magazine.

Dr. SCHEUER. I don't know what the answer is then, sir. But I know, you know, the brain power is there. How you get it—I am afraid what is going to be needed to be done, frankly, on all these things, whether it is a decision of the structure about the military about getting the brains of the U.S. Government up to talk to the leaders of the U.S. Government, is going to be a disastrous attack within the United States. Thousands and thousands of dead Americans will generate, at last, some kind of frank debate about what we are doing and why we are doing it.

Mr. SMITH. I want to get to Mr. Saxton, but I think you seek those people out, I mean, also. I guess I don't agree that all of our

leaders are blissfully and completely ignorant of any thought, other than the generals. I just don't buy into that. I personally go out, if I want to talk to lieutenants, corporals, whatever, I go out to Fort Lewis and I talk to them, I go to Iraq and I talk to them. We seek them out; we sit down in our office in a variety of different ways. I guess we are not all quite as dumb as it might be portrayed. We do get out and seek out a diverse set of opinions.

Hearings are different, because there is a bunch of control that comes down from the military and different places. But I, for one, don't—as brilliant as I think the three of you are, I don't rely solely on what you are talking to us about in this hour and a half to form my opinions, and I don't think most Members of Congress do either.

Mr. Saxton, do you have anything to add?

Mr. SAXTON. I would just like to ask Dr. Arquilla one final question.

I don't know how I have missed your book, Dr. Arquilla. It is a fascinating title, "Worst Enemy: The Reluctant Transformation of the American Military." I will read it. But it prompts me, the title prompts me to ask you a question about the U.S. military.

You must have spent a fair amount of time thinking about and having discussions about what makes it so hard to change the military. I would just like to ask you, are there some characteristics in the structure of the military and in the practices of the military that make it difficult to change?

Dr. ARQUILLA. Yes, sir. And thanks for reading the book.

The title comes from a speech Donald Rumsfeld gave on September 10, 2001, in the Pentagon in which he said that our worst enemy is ourselves, and not the people but the processes, I think was the phrasing he used. And I guess his memoir will come out in one of these years. He very much is a network guy, and he tried to break down a lot of the hierarchies to enforce some kind of change.

And, you know, here is a steely Secretary of Defense who had the full support for six years of a very bold Commander in Chief, and yet, between the two of them, they couldn't move that rock very far. And my experience over the past couple decades suggests they tried to do it from the top down, and the only way to make this kind of change happen is from within.

And I would say, so there is the institutional problem; that is, I don't think a lot of people have taken networking seriously. That is the real organizational insight of the time we live in. And some folks are starting to get there. I know a lot of mid-level officers, I know everybody who was in Anbar during the Awakening is a believer in networks now, and the Special Forces in the 7th group in Afghanistan believe that now. And so that is going to spread.

But there is a larger cultural point about militaries that—and I respect this very much, even though I am suggesting that this is the time for change. And that is, think of the stakes in what they do. How many professions are as physically demanding, intellectually demanding, ethically and morally demanding? And the consequences of wrong action are so great. So I understand the risk-averse point of view.

My only point and the reason I entered this debate is to suggest that sometimes it is the failure to change that can engender even greater risks. Think about the militaries of 1914, the first years of World War I. They were afraid to make changes that might lose a war. Well, what they did is they sent millions of soldiers off, shoulder to shoulder, marching against artillery and machine guns, and millions died needlessly. The risk of not changing was greater than the risk of change, which they ultimately got to by 1917, 1918.

Well, that is where we are in this terror war that we find ourselves in, this first struggle between nations and networks. We are slowly ramping up. But I understand this reluctance. It grows out of our institutions. But it also grows out of the culture of a profession that is a very dangerous and demanding one and for whom the stakes could not be possibly higher.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

I have one final question, getting back to the policy issues that Dr. Scheuer raised and some others mentioned that I think are perfectly legitimate when you look at what we are fighting against in terms of violent extremists in the Muslim world. I think the 5 percent, 80 percent figures probably are right on. It is about 5 percent that sign up for al Qa'ida and all they are talking about, but there is at least 80 percent that are sympathetic to the notion that the West is hostile to Islam and that our policies move that forward, and that is why they find sympathy.

Just sort of imagining what the policy would be if we were trying to address that, and my thinking about it is a touch more complicated. Certainly Israel, Kashmir, our support for oppressive regimes like Egypt and Saudi Arabia are factors. But when we put sanctions on Saddam Hussein, when we didn't support that oppressive regime, that, too, had a major backlash against us.

In Afghanistan, where I know you were very involved, the rap after the Soviets were driven out was that we left, was that we didn't stay. And I imagine if we had stayed, the rap would have been we stayed and we are trying to manipulate. It seems like we sort of get it both ways.

And I do think, at least most of the policymakers that I talk to, are aware of the fact that that drives a good portion of al Qa'ida's support and of the violent extremist support. I guess what we struggle with is, what is the right policy?

You mentioned the Taliban, and how Afghanistan was more stable under them. Very true. You know, we left it alone, and al Qa'ida found a safe haven and launched 9/11 against us. So just sort of staying away, in that instance, didn't seem to work out too well.

So I guess the question isn't a lack of recognition that our policies does drive some of this. The question is, at this point, given 100 years of very questionable history, the overthrow of the democratically elected government of Iran back in the 1950's, the post World War I, all of that, how do we begin to repair that relationship with that portion of the Muslim world that isn't buying into al Qa'ida but is looking for some reason to believe that we don't mean harm to them?

Dr. SCHEUER. You know, sir, I think the organizing concept of the United States Government should be to protect the United States and decide where we need to be at any particular time.

The idea that we abandoned Afghanistan is very popular urban legend, but the exact opposite is the truth. We assembled basically the same team, Mr. Khalilzad and the Brits and the U.N., and tried to go in there in 1992 and put in the exactly the same kind of government that is in there today. Mr. Karzai's father was part of it.

Had we left the Afghans alone, more than likely they would have found their own water. But we didn't. As soon as the Soviets were gone and the communist regime was defeated, we wanted—as Mr. Rumsfeld said in Iraq, any kind of government is okay as long as it is not Islamic. So what we tried to do is to put in a government that didn't include anyone who carried a rifle.

So the idea that we abandoned Afghanistan, Lord wishes it was true, but it wasn't. We tried to do what we are trying to do there now. And it failed then; it will fail now.

I think there are places in the world where the United States simply does not need to care what goes on if we arrange our policy preferences.

Mr. SMITH. Do you think Iraq and Afghanistan are two of those places right now?

Dr. SCHEUER. I think we don't have a single—

Mr. SMITH. I don't mean that challenging. I am sincerely interested.

Dr. SCHEUER. In Afghanistan, if we had gone there and destroyed what we could have of the Taliban and al Qa'ida and let them escape, absolutely, we would have no more interest there. We have as much chance of building a democracy there as we have of building national socialism in Texas. It is never going to happen. It is just foolishness, sir.

Mr. SMITH. What should our role be, then, in those two countries?

Dr. SCHEUER. Certainly in Iraq, we should pray for somebody to come back that is much like Saddam Hussein. Saddam was our single most important ally in the war against al Qa'ida and its networks. As long as he was in Kabul, that bottle was corked—or in Baghdad, that bottle was corked. Those boys were staying in southwest Asia.

Mr. SMITH. But I thought our support for brutal dictators in the Arab world was a big part of our problem.

Dr. SCHEUER. Oh, it is a problem, sir. But this is not win or lose. We have a bunch of lose-lose situations. But the enemy who could attack us in the United States happened to be al Qa'ida, not Saddam. And Saddam was hell on wheels when it came to Islamists, except for the Palestinians, who weren't attacking us.

Mr. SMITH. I guess a simple question is, should we support dictatorships in that part of the world or shouldn't we?

Dr. SCHEUER. If we have that choice, sir, we have to decide what is in America's interest. But right now we don't have that choice. Because we have done nothing about oil in 35 years, we have to support the tyrannies that run the Arab peninsula. Because we

have to have somebody who pretends they don't hate the Israelis, we have to continue to bribe Mubarak and keep him in power.

It is not an option of whether we are or not. That is where we want to go; we want to have the option. But the problem we have is we have no option, and we refuse to recognize that our support for those governments drives much of what al Qa'ida is about.

Mr. SMITH. I have nothing further.

Mac, do you have anything?

Thank you very much. It was a fascinating, fascinating discussion. I certainly want to stay in touch with all of you, myself and on this committee. Thank you for spending time with us this morning.

[Whereupon, at 11:35 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

SEPTEMBER 18, 2008

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

SEPTEMBER 18, 2008

**Statement of Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities
Subcommittee Chairman Adam Smith
Hearing on Lessons for Countering Al Qaeda and the Way Ahead**

September 18, 2008

"Good morning. Today the Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee will take a closer look at what we've done right and wrong and what we might do to restructure our efforts to combat Al Qaeda and violent extremism.

"The U.S. has been forced to learn difficult lessons about fighting terrorism in the last seven years, with both successes and some failures along the way. With al Qaeda and affiliated groups still presenting a major threat, the U.S. must apply those lessons learned more comprehensively – and be open to the advice of our allies fighting the same struggle – if we are to effectively counter this persistent threat.

"I believe the key is to fight 'smarter' – not necessarily 'harder' – by more effectively utilizing a broader range of tools beyond just the military-led, kinetic approaches to counterterrorism. That means we must more aggressively pursue strategic communications strategies, intelligence and policing work, targeted development assistance, and a range of other counterinsurgency and irregular warfare tools.

"Along the way we have had some successes and we must continue to pursue these strategies, but we also have had some short comings and we must reevaluate our strategies and refocus our efforts. We have had significant success in tracking, capturing, and killing high-value targets. Our special operations forces and intelligence community have become experts at these 'direct action' missions.

"But I am concerned that we haven't made nearly as much progress in developing and employing the other 'tools' we have at our disposal in combating Al Qaeda and violent extremism. We may be capturing and killing some top high-value targets, but the core Al Qaeda leadership remains in Pakistan and radicalization continues throughout the Muslim world.

"We must make better use of our non-kinetic tools, such as: intelligence and policing work; strategic communication and public diplomacy; building host-governments' own counterterrorism capacity; and providing assistance to help stabilize failing and weak states in order to prevent terrorist safe havens and other conditions that lead to terrorism.

"We must work harder to 'know the enemy' and apply that knowledge in our counterterrorism efforts. Our mistakes in Iraq and to some extent Afghanistan and Pakistan have shown us that we need a deeper, more sophisticated understanding of the contexts in which terrorism emerges.

"In order to win in this struggle against violent extremism we must develop a more comprehensive and preventive approach. I look forward to hearing the witnesses' views on how we might undertake that effort."

Seth G. Jones¹
The RAND Corporation
Georgetown University

*Defeating Terrorist Groups*²

Before the Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Terrorism and Unconventional Threats and Capabilities
United States House of Representatives

September 18, 2008

There has been a great deal of work on why individuals or groups resort to terrorism. There has also been a growing literature on whether terrorism “works.” But there has been virtually no systematic analysis by policymakers or academics on how terrorism *ends*. This gap is troubling. Seven years after the September 11, 2001 attacks, the United States cannot continue conducting an effective counter-terrorism campaign against al Qa’ida without understanding how terrorist groups end.

I. How Terrorist Groups End

To help fill this gap, Martin Libicki and I examined 648 terrorist groups that existed between 1968 and 2006. We found that they ended for two major reasons: members decided to adopt non-violent tactics and join the political process (43 percent of the time), or local police and intelligence agencies arrested or killed key members of the group (40 percent). Military force has rarely been the primary reason how terrorist groups have ended (10 percent), and few groups have ever achieved victory (7 percent). The results are also revealing for religious groups, as shown in Figure 2. Only 16 percent have ended because of military force, and another 11 percent have ended because they joined the political process. By far the most effective strategy against religious groups has been the use of local police and intelligence services, which were responsible for the end of 73 percent of groups since 1968.

¹ The opinions and conclusions expressed in this testimony are the author’s alone and should not be interpreted as representing those of RAND or any of the sponsors of its research. This product is part of the RAND Corporation testimony series. RAND testimonies record testimony presented by RAND associates to federal, state, or local legislative committees; government-appointed commissions and panels; and private review and oversight bodies. The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world. RAND’s publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.

² This testimony is available for free download at <http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT314/>.

Figure 1: How Terrorist Groups End

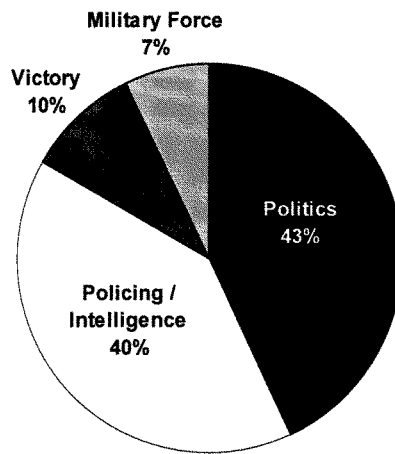
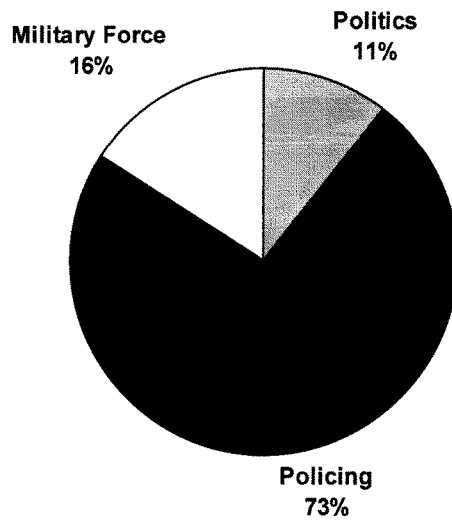


Figure 2: How Religious Groups End



Other key findings included:

- Religious terrorist groups take longer to eliminate than other groups. Approximately 62 percent of all terrorist groups have ended since 1968, but only 32 percent of religious groups have ended.
- Religious groups rarely achieve their objectives. No religious group has achieved victory since 1968.
- Size is a significant determinant of a group's fate. Big groups of more than 10,000 members have been victorious more than 25 percent of the time, while victory is rare when groups are smaller than 1,000 members.
- There is no statistical correlation between the duration of a terrorist group and ideological motivation, economic conditions, regime type, or the breadth of terrorist goals. But there appears to be some correlation between the size of a terrorist group and duration: Larger groups tend to last longer than smaller groups.
- When a terrorist group becomes involved in an insurgency, it does not end easily. Nearly 50 percent of the time, groups ended by negotiating a settlement with the government; 25 percent of the time, they achieved victory; and 19 percent of the time, military forces defeated them.
- Terrorist groups from upper-income countries are much more likely to be left-wing or nationalist and much less likely to be motivated by religion.

II. Lessons from Pakistan

While United States and local efforts have been mixed against al Qa'ida in Pakistan and Iraq, there have been some bright spots. These successes were often because the United States worked by, with, and through local police and intelligence services. These efforts provide some insight into what has worked – and what might work – against al Qa'ida in the future.

In Pakistan, several examples since 2001 illustrate the point. One is the capture of Abu Zubeida, a Palestinian who became al Qa'ida's operational commander after Muhammad Atef's death in 2001. After September 11, 2001, Abu Zubeida fled to Pakistan but remained elusive. Through patient intelligence and police work, Pakistan government officials learned about his movements by capturing lower-level operatives. The CIA assisted in the location of the sites through technical intelligence, such as monitoring and tracing his cell phone calls. He moved among 13 major sites in three cities: nine in Faisalbad, one in Karachi, and three in Lahore. On March 27, 2002, Pakistan intelligence and law enforcement agents raided all 13 sites simultaneously. The mission was successful: Zubeida was captured along with 27 of his al Qa'ida associates.

Pakistani intelligence and police officials were also critical in the capture of Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, mastermind of the September 11, 2001 attacks. Working with Pakistani intelligence agents, the CIA tracked Khalid Sheikh Mohammed using a series of informants in Pakistan. Pakistani intelligence agents spotted an associate of Khalid Sheikh Mohammad at Islamabad International Airport on the morning of February 28, 2003. He was scheduled to meet Khalid Sheikh Mohammad that evening. A well-placed informant told Pakistan intelligence that he would be using two houses on Peshawar Road in Rawalpindi, Pakistan and U.S. officials drew up plans to arrest them alive. At 1:45 a.m. the next morning, Pakistan intelligence agents and law enforcement officials – with the assistance of the CIA – broke the doors of the houses down, rushed in, and arrested Khalid Sheikh Mohammad and other associates such as Mustafa al-Hawsawi. As CIA Director George Tenet later recalled, the relationship between the CIA and Pakistani police and intelligence officials was critical: “Just after [Khalid Sheikh Mohammad's] capture, I left on a trip to a half-dozen Middle Eastern countries. Among my stops was Islamabad. I wanted to personally thank the courageous Pakistani security officials who had captured KSM, and indeed I gave several of them CIA medals.”

The capture of Abu Faraj al-Libbi, one of al Qa'ida's top leaders, also illustrates the effectiveness of this model. He came to Afghanistan in the early 1990s after Soviet forces had departed, and became a pioneer member of al Qa'ida. Following the arrest of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed on March 1, 2003, Libbi took his place in the al Qa'ida hierarchy. In 2005, Pakistani intelligence agents managed to “turn” one of Libbi's colleagues and use him as an informant. The CIA was also involved in tracking Libbi. Pakistani agents had the informant arrange a meeting with Libbi. After repeated failures, Libbi agreed to a meeting in Mardan in the North West Frontier Province in May 2005. Pakistan intelligence planned the operation. The meeting place was a dark graveyard that had a shrine visited by numerous worshipers. Three Pakistani intelligence agents put on burqas. Libbi arrived and got off his bike at a notable distance from the meeting point. For some reason, he broke with his usual pattern of sending in a decoy first, and started walking toward the informant. The moment Libbi came close to one of the burka-clad agents, “she” jumped up and grabbed Libbi.

In sum, the most effective operations in Pakistan since 2001 have been ones where U.S. intelligence and Special Operations Forces have worked by, with, and through local police and intelligence agencies. The same has been true in Iraq.

III. Turning the Tide in Iraq

U.S. operations in Anbar Province provide another useful illustration of this model of working with local police and intelligence. In October 2004, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, leader of al Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) who was killed by U.S. forces in June 2006, pledged loyalty to Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden returned the favor by anointing Zarqawi his representative in Iraq. AQI's thrust for leadership of the Sunni insurgent movement was first made evident in the January 2006 formation of the Mujahedeen Shura Council. The council included AQI as its de facto core, plus the Victorious Sect brigade and four lesser-known allied groups. In October 2006, AQI formed yet another front group, merging the Mujahedeen Shura Council with several other groups. The result was the creation of the Islamic State of Iraq, which took the first step toward al Qa'ida's goal of establishing a caliphate in the region.

The creation of the Islamic State of Iraq had several putative motivations. It was an attempt to encourage other Sunni insurgent groups to pledge alliance to al Qa'ida and co-opt the Sunni jihadist movement. By claiming to be a state, AQI sought to gain legitimacy. To accomplish its goals, the Islamic State of Iraq utilized brutal tactics. Sheikh Hareth Zaher al-Dhari, son of the head of al-Zouba' tribe, was assassinated, an act attributed to his organization's refusal to join the Islamic State of Iraq. AQI's use of murder and intimidation extended beyond Sunni insurgent groups and extended to the various tribes of Anbar. Many were initially opposed to the U.S. intervention, but wary of a theocratic ideology that left little room for tribal authority. Although some tribal sheiks allied themselves with al Qa'ida, others decamped to Jordan and Syria. The few that remained saw their ranks decimated by repeated attacks. One such sheik, Abdul Sattar Buzaigh al-Rishahwi of the influential Rishawi tribe of Ramadi, lost his father and several brothers to AQI. In the summer of 2006, AQI refused to relinquish his body for burial until days had passed, contravening Islamic tradition.

Aided by the recoil of sheiks to this act, Sheik Sattar, organized 25 of the 31 tribes in Anbar to join the Anbar Salvation Council in September 2006. The sheiks set themselves up as public enemies of AQI. Their primary strategy was to persuade young tribal men to join the police forces of Ramadi and other Anbar towns to help take back the province, in return for protection by U.S. forces. It took several months for the alliance to build its critical strength. As promised, the sheiks persuaded tribal members to join the local police in large numbers.

By December 2006, the Ramadi police force had doubled in size from 4,000 to a plateau of 8,000. In western Anbar, the number of police went from nearly zero to 3,000. The police force in the province grew to 24,000 in mid-2007, with a goal of leveling off at 30,000. U.S. forces, whose policy

was to place their officers within newly formed police units, could not staff up as fast as police units were growing. Perhaps the most significant change was that the new police, in contrast to their predecessors, were willing to fight. As recently as August 2006, half of the police officers in Fallujah stayed home in the face of AQI threats. By January, they were standing their ground. A simultaneous alienation of other insurgent groups also became visible. Competing insurgent groups had seen their ranks depleted by defections, and their leadership attacked and assassinated. AQI's growing dominance of organized crime cut into the revenues that competing groups counted on. Furthermore, whereas all the major insurgent groups employed the Salafi discourse, none but AQI made the restoration of the caliphate their primary or even preferred objective.

A large share of the new policemen were formerly members of insurgent groups. One sheik, Abu Azam, said the 2,300 men in his movement included members of fierce Sunni groups like the 1920s Revolutionary Brigade and the Mujahedeen Army, which had fought U.S. forces. For several months, the Anbar Salvation Council battled with AQI, primarily in the Ramadi area. In the absence of set-piece battles – the new police forces lacked heavy weaponry of their own – conflict was conducted through constant attrition. The police rounded up those who were AQI members. And AQI extended its intimidation campaign against police, their families, and the tribal sheiks who had turned against them. The results of this shift were dramatic. By March 2007, al Qa'ida had largely been expelled from Ramadi, a city that had been a no-man's land for U.S. and Iraqi forces. Except for Fallujah, the number of attacks in Anbar fell dramatically. U.S. deaths, which were running roughly 30 a month in the entire province, fell to three in June 2007.

Sunni groups did the bulk of the work, not U.S. military forces. The U.S. part of the bargain was to provide intelligence to Sunni groups and protection to the sheiks and their entourage, most visibly by parking a tank outside their compounds. The sheiks, in turn, promised to persuade tribal members to join the police forces of Ramadi and other Anbar towns. Some reports credited the U.S. military for having convinced the Anbar sheiks to cooperate. They certainly pushed the project forward, but the U.S. role was more as a catalyst. The sheiks had reasons of their own to oppose AQI, which had killed many family members, cut into their operations (such as smuggling), and whose concept of governance was antithetical to tribal authorities.

IV. Ending the 'War' on Terrorism

The U.S. strategy after September 2001 was not effective in significantly weakening al Qa'ida by 2008. Some have argued that an effective strategy against al Qa'ida should include a broad range of tools that target the demand and supply side of the organization. As Rohan Gunaratna argued, for example, this strategy includes sanctions against state sponsors; the use of military and police

forces against al Qa'ida's leaders, members, collaborators, and supporters; the resolution of regional conflicts in such locations as Kashmir and Palestinian territory; redressing grievances and meeting the legitimate aspirations of Muslims; and countering al Qa'ida's ideology.³ Similarly, Daniel Byman noted that "there is no single strategy that can successfully defeat the jihadists. All heads of the hydra of terrorism must be attacked."⁴

A comprehensive strategy should indeed include a range of tools. The problem, however, is that a "kitchen sink" approach doesn't prioritize a finite amount of resources and attention. Nor does it provide an assessment of what is most likely to be effective (and what is not). For example, economic sanctions are rarely effective in changing the behavior of other states, including issues related to terrorism.⁵ In addition, the resolution of conflicts in such places as Kashmir and Palestinian territory may take generations, and are not primary reasons for al Qa'ida's existence or support. We must therefore look elsewhere for an effective strategy that helps prioritize resources and attention. While numerous terrorist groups have ended because of a political solution, al Qa'ida's broad goals make this unlikely. Since its goal remains the establishment of a pan-Islamic caliphate, there is little reason to expect that a negotiated settlement with governments in the Middle East is possible.

Based on our analysis of how terrorist groups end, a more effective approach would be adopting a two-front strategy. First, policing and intelligence should be the backbone of U.S. efforts. In Europe, North America, North Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, al Qa'ida consists of an amorphous network of individuals that need to be tracked down and arrested. In Pakistan, for example, the most successful efforts to capture or kill al Qa'ida leaders after the September 2001 attacks – such as Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, Ramzi Binalshibh, Abu Faraj al-Libbi, and Abu Zubeida – occurred because of careful police and intelligence work, not military force. This strategy should include careful work abroad from such organizations as the Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigations, as well as their cooperation with local police and intelligence agencies.

Second, military force is a necessary component when al Qa'ida is directly involved in an insurgency, but not necessarily American military force. Even in these cases, local military forces

³ Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qa'ida: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Berkley Books, 2002), pp308-322. Also see Gunaratna, "Combating Al-Qa'ida and Associated Groups," in Doron Zimmermann and Andreas Wenger, eds, *How States Fight Terrorism: Policy Dynamics in the West* (New York: Lynne Rienner, 2007), pp. 175-202.

⁴ Daniel Byman, *The Five Front War: The Better Way to Fight Global Jihad* (New York: Wiley, 2008), p. 44.

⁵ See, for example, Robert Pape, "Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2, Fall 1997, pp. 90-136; Pape, "Why Economic Sanctions Still Do Not Work," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1, Summer 1998, pp. 66-77; T. Clifton Morgan and Valerie L. Schwebach, "Fools Suffer Gladly: The Use of Economic Sanctions in International Crises," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1, March 1997, pp. 27-50; David Cortright and George A. Lopez, *The Sanctions Decade: Assessing UN Strategies in the 1990s* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

frequently have more legitimacy to operate than the United States and a better understanding of the operating environment. This means a light U.S. footprint or none at all. The U.S. military can play a critical role in building indigenous capacity, but should generally resist being drawn into combat operations in Muslim countries where its presence is likely to increase terrorist recruitment.

The backbone of this two-front strategy should include focusing on careful police and intelligence work at home and abroad. This would include ending the notion of a “war” on terrorism and replacing it with phrases such as “counter-terrorism,” which are used by most governments with a significant terrorism problem. This change might seem pedantic, but would have significant symbolic importance. Moving away from military references would indicate that there was no battlefield solution to countering terrorism. Individuals such as Ayman al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden should be viewed and described as criminals, not as holy warriors.

In Britain, for example, the government shunned the phrase “war on terror” despite a long history of dealing with such terrorist groups as the IRA. Hilary Benn, Britain’s international development secretary, argued that the phrase suggests that only military measures could be a useful response. “In the UK,” he noted, “we do not use the phrase ‘war on terror’ because we can’t win by military means alone and because this isn’t one organized enemy with a clear identity and a coherent set of objectives.”⁶ The phrase raises public expectations – both in the United States and abroad – that there was a battlefield solution to the problem of terrorism. Similarly, the French government refused to refer to counterterrorism efforts as a war, arguing that the phrase legitimized the terrorists.⁷ Even in Australia, government officials eschewed the use of the term “war on terror.”

V. Policing and Intelligence

This strategy should include rebalancing U.S. resources and attention on police and intelligence work. It also means increasing budgets at the CIA, Department of Justice, and State Department, and scaling back the Department of Defense’s focus and resources on counter-terrorism. U.S. Special Operations Forces will remain critical, as will U.S. military operations to counter terrorist groups involved in insurgencies.

This also requires the development of a strategy with police and intelligence as its backbone. Unlike the military, local police and intelligence agencies usually have a permanent presence in cities and towns, a better understanding of local groups, and human sources. As Bruce Hoffman argued, a critical step in countering terrorist groups is for law enforcement officials to “develop

⁶ Jane Perlez, “Briton Criticizes U.S.’s Use of ‘War on Terror,’” *New York Times*, April 17, 2007, p. 10.

⁷ Seth Jones interview with members of France’s Anti-Terrorism Coordination Unit, or UCLAT (l’unité de coordination de la lutte anti-terroriste), January 22, 2008.

strong confidence-building ties with the communities from which terrorists are most likely to come or hide in ... The most effective and useful intelligence comes from places where terrorists conceal themselves and seek to establish and hide their infrastructure."⁸ Some have argued that history has little to offer, since al Qa'ida's global breadth and decentralized organizational structure make it somewhat different from many other terrorist organizations, even religious ones. As Rohan Gunaratna argued: "Because there is no historical precedent for al Qa'ida, the past offers very little guidance."⁹ But this is not true. While al Qa'ida is different from many other terrorist organizations because of its global reach, its *modus operandi* is not atypical. Like other groups, its members need to communicate with each other, raise funds, build a support network, plan and execute attacks, and establish a base (or bases) of operations. Most of these nodes are vulnerable to penetration by police and intelligence agencies. The downside of this development is that eliminating key nodes in multiple places is more difficult than doing it in one country.

Indeed, its organizational structure makes it vulnerable to a policing and intelligence strategy. This structure includes a "bottom up" approach (encouraging independent thought and action from low-level operatives) and a "top down" one (issuing orders and still coordinating a far-flung terrorist enterprise with both highly synchronized and autonomous moving parts). Al Qa'ida is a broad network. Successfully targeting this network requires a painstaking process of collecting intelligence on al Qa'ida, penetrating cells, and eventually arresting or killing its key members. As Mark Sageman argued, the most effective tools to defeating al Qa'ida and the global Salafi jihad "simply amount to good police work."¹⁰ Unlike a hierarchical organization that can be eliminated through decapitation of its leadership, a network resists fragmentation because of its dense interconnectivity. A significant fraction of nodes can be randomly removed without much impact on its integrity. A network is vulnerable, however, at its hubs. If enough hubs are destroyed, the network breaks down into isolated, non-communicating islands of nodes.¹¹ Hubs in a social network are vulnerable because most communications go through them. With good intelligence, law enforcement authorities should be able to identify and arrest these hubs. This includes intercepting and monitoring terrorist communications through telephone, landline phone, e-mail, facsimiles, and Internet chat rooms, as well as tracking couriers used by al Qa'ida officials in places such as Pakistan.

⁸ Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Second Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 169.

⁹ Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qa'ida: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Berkley Books, 2002), p. 296.

¹⁰ Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), p. 175.

¹¹ On networks and terrorism, see Seth G. Jones, "Fighting Networked Terror Groups: Lessons from Israel," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 30, No. 4, 2007, pp. 281-302; Brian A. Jackson, "Groups, Networks, or Movements: A Command-and-Control-Driven Approach to Classifying Terrorist Organizations and Its Application to Al Qa'ida," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 29, No. 3, April-May 2006, pp. 241-162.

Police and intelligence services are best placed to implement these activities. This approach can include a range of steps: intelligence collection and analysis; capture of key leaders; and legal and other measures.

Intelligence collection and analysis: The first is intelligence collection and analysis. Intelligence is the principal source of information on terrorists. The police and intelligence agencies have a variety of ways to identify terrorists, including signals intelligence (such as monitoring cell phone calls) and human intelligence (such as using informants to penetrate cells). Human intelligence can provide some of the most useful actionable intelligence. But it requires painstaking work in recruiting informants who are already in terrorist organizations, or placing informants not yet in them.

This means monitoring key individuals within al Qa'ida central, as well as such key hubs in places like Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Algeria, and the United Kingdom. The head of United Kingdom's Security Service, MI-5, noted in late 2007 that his organization identified at least 2,000 individuals "who we believed posed a direct threat to national security and public safety, because of their support for terrorism." Most were al Qa'ida inspired or assisted.¹² The greatest priority should be extensive penetration of terrorist networks. Recruitment of agents in place is sometimes difficult because of the strong emotional bonds among members of terrorist networks, making them reluctant to betray their friends and their faith. Local police and intelligence services are often better placed to recruit informants in al Qa'ida cells. In 2008, MI-5 estimated that it took roughly 18 months on average for an individual to become radicalized enough to conduct an attack. That period is fundamental for police and intelligence services to identify suspects, collect information, and arrest them.

The best avenue for penetration often lies in recruiting from the pool of those who went through training but decided not to join the jihad, or others who might associate with jihadists in places like mosques. In the 2007 plot to target John F. Kennedy International Airport, for example, New York law enforcement officials recruited an informant who attended the same Brooklyn mosque as Russell Defreitas, one of the suspects. Defreitas said he met the informant from attending services at the mosque, took him into his confidence, and slowly disclosed his plan to attack Kennedy.¹³ Imams of conservative or fundamentalist mosques who reject terrorism could be excellent sources of information on their congregations. They would be valuable allies to recruit because they often

¹² Jonathan Evans, "Address to the Society of Editors' 'A Matter of Trust' Conference" (London: Security Service, November 5, 2007).

¹³ See United States of America Against Russel Defreitas (also known as "Mohammed"), Kareem Ibrahim (also known as "Amir Kareem"), Abdul Kadir, and Abdel Nur, Under Seal Complaint, United States District Court, Eastern District of New York; U.S. Department of Justice, *Four Individuals Charged in Plot to Bomb John F. Kennedy International Airport* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 2007); New York Police Department, *Threat Analysis: JFK Airport / Pipeline Plot* (New York: New York Police Department, June 2, 2007).

know which member of their congregations are relatives or former friends of suspected terrorists. However, this radicalization doesn't always occur at mosques, since jihadists have become adept at evading detection. Mohammed Siddique Khan radicalized his group in the back of a van. Others may become radicalized in bookshops, on camping trips, or in other venues.

In Afghanistan, for example, police and intelligence officials focused on working with imams at mosques to counter Taliban and al Qa'ida recruitment efforts. As an Afghan intelligence report concluded: "The ease which the Taliban use the mullahs against us [needs to] be challenged." Consequently, the report concluded that "this requires establishment of [a] relationship with every significant mullah in the country ... We should put our weight behind the nationalist ones and not allow the militant or fanatic ones to take over. This is only possible if we keep the nationalist ones on our pay-rolls."¹⁴

Since social bonds play a critical role in al Qa'ida's network, friends and relatives of identified terrorists need to be pursued and investigated wherever they reside. Especially important are those who were friends of a terrorist just before he or she started jihad, such as traveling to Pakistan for training. These friends may have helped transform him or her from an alienated Muslim into a dedicated terrorist. Arresting key individuals would degrade the network into isolated units or cliques. They would be less capable of mounting complex, large-scale operations because they lacked expertise, logistical support, and financial support. Small-scale terrorist operations are difficult to end. But without spectacular successes to sustain their motivation, isolated operators would lose their enthusiasm. And it would reduce terrorism to simple criminality. Winning the media war to label terrorists as criminals is especially important, and virtually impossible to do in the face of a strategy based on military force.¹⁵

Working with local police and intelligence agencies is critical. They generally have better training and information to penetrate and disrupt terrorist organizations. They are the primary arm of the government focused on internal security matters.¹⁶ Their mission should be to penetrate and seize terrorists and other criminals – their command structure, members, logistics support, and financial and political support – from the midst of the population. Local police and intelligence know the language, people, culture, and terrain better than U.S. agencies do. To paraphrase a U.S. Special Forces mantra, this strategy requires working "by, with, and through" local security forces.

¹⁴ Amrullah Saleh, *Strategy of Insurgents and Terrorists in Afghanistan* (Kabul: National Directorate for Security, 2006), p. 16.

¹⁵ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, pp. 175-184.

¹⁶ Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency*, trans. Daniel Lee (New York: Praeger, 1964), p. 43; David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (St. Petersburg, Fla.: Hailer Publishing, 2005), p. 31.

Human intelligence is preferable since there are limitations to using technological means to monitor al Qa'ida movements. One good example is al Qa'ida's courier system. Al Qa'ida adopted a four-tiered courier system to communicate among key member of the group and minimize detectability. Many al Qa'ida leaders have become more cautious in using cell phones, satellite phones, e-mail, and other forms of communication that could easily be tracked by foreign intelligence services. The administrative courier network dealt with communication pertaining to the movement of al Qa'ida members' families and other administrative activities. The operational courier network dealt with operational instructions. Where possible, unwitting couriers were substituted for knowledgeable people to minimize detection. The media courier network was used for propaganda. Messages were sent in the form of CDs, videos, and leaflets to television networks such as al Jazeera. The final courier network was used only by al Qa'ida's top leadership, who usually did not pass written messages to each other to maximize secrecy. Normally, their most trusted couriers memorized messages and conveyed them verbatim.¹⁷ The use of a sophisticated courier network places a premium on recruiting informants already in these organizations, or placing informants in them.

For the United States, this approach requires providing foreign assistance to police and intelligence services abroad to improve their counterterrorism capacity. This means relying on the efforts of law enforcement and internal security forces of states where al Qa'ida is operating. The U.S. can help bolster the police and intelligence capabilities of foreign police and intelligence services abroad, as well as share intelligence information. Key locations where al Qa'ida has a foothold include Europe (such as Britain and the Netherlands), Algeria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The effort against al Qa'ida will hinge on the competence of local police and intelligence services in these countries to collect information, penetrate al Qa'ida cells, arrest or kill its members, and counter its propaganda machine. Working with locals is sometimes easier said than done, since not all states may cooperate. As Harvard law professor Philip Heymann argued: "Some states will lack the competence to really help, and states that do not believe in the cause will make efforts too half-hearted to be effective but real enough to be indistinguishable from sanctionable incompetence."¹⁸ This is where other strategies, such as diplomacy and economic sanctions, can be useful in coercing states to support U.S. interests. In some cases, limited direct action may be inevitable.

Capture of key leaders: Next is the capture of key leaders and their support network. In democratic countries, this involves capturing key members and presenting the evidence in court. Terrorism involves the commission of violent crimes such as murder and assault. The investigation,

¹⁷ Pervez Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir* (New York: Free Press, 2006), p. 221.

¹⁸ Philip B. Heymann, "Dealing with Terrorism," *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 3, Winter 2001/02, p. 34.

trial, and punishment of perpetrators should be a matter for the wider criminal justice system.¹⁹ The barriers can sometimes be significant. Finding evidence that can be presented in court, but that doesn't reveal sensitive information about sources and methods, can be challenging. This is especially true if a terrorist hasn't perpetrated an attack yet. In many cases, it may be easier and more effective to arrest and punish terrorists for other offenses, such as drug-trafficking, that have little direct connection to their terrorist activity. As one member of the French government's Anti-Terrorism Coordination Unit told us: "We have frequently detained possible terrorists for a number of crimes – such as criminal activity – that have little or nothing to do with terrorism. We can often build stronger legal cases against individuals by focusing on other crimes they have committed. The problem, of course, is that the punishment may be less severe."²⁰ In non-democratic countries, the policing approach is often drastically different because laws and norms of behavior may be different. Consequently, Pakistani and Saudi police and intelligence agencies have frequently used repressive measures to target al Qa'ida terrorists operating in their countries.²¹

The capture of terrorists – both low-level and high-level – is often a good source of information on leaders. Diaries, cell phones, and lap tops can provide crucial information on code names of other terrorists, real names, addresses, phone numbers, and plans. For example, the 2004 capture of Abu Talha al-Pakistani (also known as Muhammad Naeem Noor Khan) led to a gold mine of information on al Qa'ida terrorist plots for the Pakistan government, United States, and other countries. He was a Pakistani national who was born in Karachi and earned a bachelor's degree in computer engineering in 2002. In March 2002, he was recruited by Khalid Sheik Mohammad. After two top al Qa'ida leaders – Ammar al-Balochi and Khallad bin Attash – were captured, Abu Talha became a key al Qa'ida official in Karachi. He was involved in training al Qa'ida operatives in Shakai, Pakistan. During this time he remained closely associated with such al Qa'ida leaders as Abd al-Hadi al-Iraqi, Hamza al-Jawfi, Faraj al-Libbi, and Abu Musaab al-Balochi. With help from the CIA, who had been tracking him, Pakistani intelligence arrested him on July 13, 2004. He – and his laptop – were a gold mine of information, and gave Pakistan, the United States, and other countries vital information on al Qa'ida operations. His laptop contained the plans of Issa al-Hindi (also known as Dhiren Barot), a senior member of al Qa'ida who was arrested by British authorities for plotting attacks in the United States and UK. Khalid Sheik Mohammad acknowledged under interrogation that he told Abu Talha to carry out reconnaissance of, and prepare a plan to attack, Heathrow Airport. After initial planning, Abu Talha also suggested Canary Wharf and London's

¹⁹ See, for example, Lindsay Clutterbuck, "Law Enforcement," in Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes, eds., *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004), pp. 142-144.

²⁰ Seth Jones interview with member of France's Anti-Terrorism Coordination Unit, or UCLAT (l'unité de coordination de la lutte anti-terroriste), June 27, 2007.

²¹ On the dilemmas of U.S. assistance to the police of non-democratic countries, see Seth G. Jones et al, *Securing Tyrants or Fostering Reform? U.S. Internal Security Assistance to Repressive and Transitioning Regimes* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2007).

subway system as additional targets. Access to Abu Talha's computer after his capture showed that their well-advanced plans included attacks on the headquarters of Citigroup and the Prudential Insurance Group in New York, the United Nations headquarters in New York, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank buildings in Washington.²²

Legal and other measures: The third step is the development and passage of legal measures. This can involve criminalizing activities that are necessary for terrorist groups to function, such as raising money or recruiting members. It can also involve passing laws that make it easier for the intelligence and police services to conduct searches, engage in electronic surveillance, interrogate suspects, and monitor groups that pose a terrorist threat. It can include efforts to protect witnesses, juries, and judges from threats and intimidation. In democratic states, this inevitably leads to tension between civil liberties and security. As one scholar argued, "a democratic nation wants life, liberty, and unity as the products of its policies for dealing with terrorism, not just physical security. Focusing exclusively on a very popular desire for revenge ... is likely to provide too little liberty and unity to be a sensible policy."²³ Since terrorist groups need to move money to multiple cells to help sustain their operations, attacking their finances or following financial leads once terrorists are captured has provided effective results. But there are challenges. The financial system known in the Islamic world as *hawala* exists outside the regulated international financial system. Individuals in Islamic communities around the world serve as middle men and facilitate the transfer of cash that is not taxed, recorded, or registered by banks. These informal *hawala* networks remain largely outside government control, and monitoring them presents a significant challenge to closing terrorist financial exchanges.

Countering ideology: Counter-terrorism is just as much about "hearts and minds" as it is about policing and intelligence. It requires taking calculated actions that don't alienate Muslims. And it also requires effectively countering the ideology and messages of terrorist groups through what is often referred to as "information operations." This includes the use of a variety of strategies and tools to counter, influence, or disrupt the message and operation of terrorist groups.²⁴ Local groups are almost always better placed to conduct information operations than the United States. In addition to building local police and intelligence capacity, dealing with al Qa'ida also requires countering its ideological appeal. This includes countering the continued resonance of their message, their ability to attract recruits and replenish their ranks, and their capacity for continual regeneration and renewal. To do so, the U.S. needs to better understand the mindset and minutia

²² Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire*, p. 241-242.

²³ Philip B. Heymann, *Terrorism and America: A Commonsense Strategy for a Democratic Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), p. 153.

²⁴ On the use of "information operations" in a military context see, for example, U.S. Department of Defense, *Information Operations*, Joint Publication 3-13 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 2006).

of the al Qaeda movement, the animosity and arguments that underpin it, and indeed the regions of the world from which its struggle emanated.

Local groups are more likely to be effective in influencing locals and countering terrorist ideology than the U.S. military or other international actors. It is critical to understand who holds power, who the local population trusts, and where locals get their information—and then to target these forums. In some cases, such as in Afghanistan and Pakistan's tribal areas, religious leaders and tribal elders wield most of the power. This means providing assistance to credible indigenous groups, such as Muslim clerics or tribal elders, that can effectively counter jihadist propaganda. These groups do not necessarily have to be supportive of the United States, but they do need to oppose insurgents and have credible influence among the population. Much of this funding may have to be indirect and covert to protect their credibility. Assistance could be directed to indigenous media, political parties, student and youth organizations, labor unions, and religious figures and organizations that meet at least two criteria: (1) they have a notable support base in the local population; and (2) they oppose insurgent groups and insurgent ideology. This approach has some parallels with U.S. efforts during the Cold War to balance the Soviet Union by funding existing political, cultural, social, and media organizations in areas like Central and Eastern Europe.²⁵

In Afghanistan, for instance, mosques have historically served as a tipping point for major political upheavals. This led to a major effort by Afghan intelligence officials to focus on mosque leaders. As one Afghan intelligence report in 2006 concluded: "There are 107 mosques in the city of Kandahar out of which 11 are preaching anti-government themes. Our approach is to have all the pro-government mosques incorporated with the process and work on the eleven anti-government ones to change their attitude or else stop their propaganda and leave the area."²⁶ In addition, in July 2005 the Ulema Council of Afghanistan called on the Taliban to abandon violence and support the Afghan government in the name of Islam. They also called on the religious scholars of neighboring countries – including Pakistan – to help counter the activities and ideology of the Taliban and other insurgent organizations.²⁷ A number of Afghan Islamic clerics publicly supported the Afghan government and called the jihad un-Islamic.²⁸ Moreover, the Ulema Council and some Afghan ulema issued fatwas, or religious decrees, that unambiguously oppose suicide bombing. They argued that suicide bombing did not lead to an eternal life in paradise, did not permit martyrs to see the face of Allah, and did not allow martyrs to have the company of 72 maidens in paradise. These efforts were more effective than U.S.-led information operations, such as dropping leaflets.

²⁵ See, for example, Angel Rabasa, Cheryl Benard, Lowell H. Schwartz, and Peter Sicking, *Building Moderate Muslim Networks* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2007).

²⁶ Saleh, *Strategy of Insurgents and Terrorists in Afghanistan*, p. 8.

²⁷ "Religious Scholars Call on Taliban to Abandon Violence," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, July 28, 2005.

²⁸ "Taliban Claim Killing of Pro-Government Religious Scholars in Helmand," *Afghan Islamic Press*, July 13, 2005.

This strategy was accomplished successfully during the Cold War when applied appropriately. During the Cold War, the United States believed that internal security assistance was critical to prevent certain countries from falling under Soviet influence.²⁹ The Office of Public Safety, which was established in 1962 in the U.S. Agency for International Development, trained over a million foreign police over its 13-year tenure.³⁰ President John F. Kennedy, for example, believed that Moscow sought to strengthen its international position by pursuing a strategy of subversion, indirect warfare, and agitation designed to install communist regimes in the developing world. In March 1961, President Kennedy told the U.S. Congress that the West was being "nibbled away at the periphery" by a Soviet strategy of "subversion, infiltration, intimidation, indirect or non-overt aggression, internal revolution, diplomatic blackmail, guerilla warfare or a series of limited wars."³¹ He concluded that providing assistance to police and other internal security forces was critical to combat Soviet aggression, since they were the first line of defense against subversive forces. Robert Komer, President Kennedy's key National Security Council staff member on overseas internal security assistance, argued that viable foreign police in vulnerable countries were the necessary "preventive medicine" to thwart Soviet inroads.³² Komer argued that the police were in regular contact with the population, could serve as an early warning against potential subversion, and could be used to control riots, demonstrations, and subversives before they became serious threats.

VI. Military Force

Military force is sometimes necessary to end terrorist groups, especially when they are engaged in insurgencies. In most cases, however, local forces have been most effective in taking the lead. Local forces – with assistance from intelligence units and Special Operations Forces – can contest areas to regain government presence and control, and then conduct military and civil-military

²⁹ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Reappraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); H.W. Brands, *The Devil We Know: Americans and the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

³⁰ Charles T. Call, "Institutional Learning Within ICITAP," in Robert B. Oakley, Michael J. Dziedzic, and Eliot M. Goldberg, eds., *Policing the New World Disorder: Peace Operations and Public Security* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1998), p. 317. Also see Martha K. Huggins, *Political Policing: the United States and Latin America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), p. 111.

³¹ "Special Message to the Congress on the Defense Budget," March 28, 1961, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1961* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 236.

³² Quoted in William Rosenau, "The Kennedy Administration, U.S. Foreign Internal Security Assistance and the Challenge of 'Subterranean War,' 1961-63," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 14, No. 3, Autumn 2003, pp. 80. Also see Maxwell D. Taylor, "Address at International Police Academy Graduation," December 17, 1965, USAID Press Release.

programs to expand the control and edge out terrorists.³³ The focus should be on consolidating and holding ground that is clearly pro-government; deploying forces to conduct offensive operations; and holding territory once it is cleared. Holding territory has often been the most difficult facet of “clear and hold” strategies used against al Qa’ida and other groups in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq. Sufficient numbers of forces are needed to hold territory once it is cleared, or insurgents can retake it. Local forces may not always be government forces, as the United States discovered in Afghanistan and Iraq. This suggests that the most vulnerable hubs of al Qa’ida may sometimes be local sub-state actors.

When insurgent groups have ended, nearly half of the time they negotiated a settlement with the government. One quarter of the time the group achieved victory, and just under a quarter of the time insurgent groups were defeated by military forces. A negotiated settlement with al Qa’ida is unlikely, since governments in North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia would never agree to this outcome. This means that in cases where al Qa’ida is involved in an insurgency, limited military force may be necessary. Force was necessary in Afghanistan in 2001, for example, to target al Qa’ida’s base of operations. But U.S. military and intelligence forces acted primarily in support of the Northern Alliance, who conducted most of the ground fighting.³⁴ In the majority of cases, the United States should avoid direct, large-scale military force in the Muslim world to target al Qa’ida, or it risks increasing local resentment and creating new terrorist recruits.

The U.S. focus outside of its borders should be to work by, with, and through indigenous forces. As some jihadists have argued, direct military engagement with the United States has been good for the jihadi movement. It rallies the locals behind the movement and pits the fight between Islam and the West. One of al Qa’ida’s primary objectives, then, is “to put America’s armies, which occupy the region and set up military bases in it without resistance, in a state of war with the masses in the region. It is obvious at this very moment that it stirs up movements that increase the jihadi expansion and create legions among the youth who contemplate and plan for resistance.”³⁵

In addition, outside forces can rarely win insurgencies for local forces. First, outside military forces are unlikely to remain for the duration of any counterterrorist effort, at least as a major combatant

³³ The clear, hold, and build section draws extensively from Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency*, FM 3-24 (Washington, DC Headquarters, Department of the Army, December 2006); Joseph D. Celeski, *Operationalizing COIN*, JSOU Report 05-2 (Hurlburt Field, Fla.: Joint Special Operations University, 2005).

³⁴ On the overthrow of the Taliban regime see Gary Schroen, *First In: An Insider’s Account of How the CIA Spearheaded the War on Terror in Afghanistan* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2005); Stephen Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, November 2002); Gary Berntsen and Ralph Pezzullo, *Jawbreaker: The Attack on Bin Laden and Al Qa’ida* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2005); Bob Woodward, *Bush At War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002).

³⁵ Abu Bakr Naji, *The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through Which the Umma Will Pass*, p. 20.

force. This is especially true where terrorist groups are involved in an insurgency. Insurgencies are usually of short duration only if the indigenous government collapses at an early stage. An analysis of all insurgencies since 1945 shows that successful counterinsurgency campaigns last for an average of 14 years, and unsuccessful ones last for an average of 11 years. Many also end in a draw, with neither side winning. Insurgencies can also have long tails: approximately 25 percent of insurgencies won by the government and 11 percent won by insurgents last more than 20 years.³⁶ Since indigenous forces eventually have to win the war on their own, they must develop the capacity to do so. If they don't develop this capacity, indigenous forces are likely to lose the war once international assistance ends. Second, local forces usually know the population and terrain better than external actors, and are better able to gather and exploit intelligence. Third, a lead outside role may be interpreted by the population as an occupation, eliciting nationalist reactions that impede success.³⁷ Fourth, a lead indigenous role can provide a focus for national aspirations and show the population that they – and not foreign forces – control their destiny. Competent governments that can provide services to their population in a timely manner can best prevent and overcome terrorist groups.

VII. Conclusion

The good news about countering al Qa'ida is that its probability of success in actually overthrowing any governments is close to zero. While bin Laden enjoys some popular support in much of the Muslim world, this support does not translate into the mass support that organizations such as Hezbollah enjoy in Lebanon. But the bad news is that U.S. efforts against al Qa'ida have not been successful. They have now lasted longer than America's involvement in World War II. Despite some successes against al Qa'ida, the U.S. has not significantly undermined its capabilities. Al Qa'ida has been involved in more attacks in a wider geographical area since September 11, 2001, including in such European capitals as London and Madrid. Its organizational structure has also evolved, making it a dangerous enemy. This means that the U.S. strategy in dealing with al Qa'ida must change. A strategy based on military force has not been effective. Based on al Qa'ida's organizational structure and modus operandi, only a strategy based on careful police and intelligence work is likely to be effective.

³⁶ See Appendix A in David C. Gompert and John Gordon IV, *War By Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency* (Santa Monica, RAND, 2008). On time, also see Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, p. 10.

³⁷ David M. Edelstein, "Occupational Hazards: Why Military Occupations Succeed or Fail," *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Summer 2004), p. 51.

STATEMENT BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED
SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM,
UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Presented September 18, 2008

M.F. Scheuer
Falls Church, Virginia
16 September 2008

There is no better way to summarize the current position of al-Qaeda and its allies than to quote the words President Lincoln wrote in 1864 to underscore the Union's growing strength even after three years of increasingly bloody war with the Confederacy. In his annual message of 6 December 1864, Mr. Lincoln, in words that Osama bin Laden could use today, told the Congress that,

The important fact remains demonstrated, that we have *more* men *now* than we had when the war *began*; that we are not exhausted, nor in the process of exhaustion; that we are *gaining* strength, and may, if need be, maintain the contest indefinitely.

As America enters the eighth autumn of the war, the reality of a vital and undefeated Islamist enemy is apparent. And the reason for this fact likewise lies in plain sight: The government of the United States continues to fight an Islamist terrorist enemy – in al-Qaeda and its allies – that does not exist in the form Washington sees it; is not motivated by the factors Washington ascribes to it; and will not be defeated by the military forces and political tools Washington is deploying against it.

--Neither al-Qaeda nor its main allies, for example, are terrorist groups; they are insurgent organizations modeled on the Islamist insurgent organizations that defeated the Red Army in Afghanistan in 1989. These groups are larger, more sophisticated, better led and funded, more geographically dispersed, and more technologically proficient than any group the U.S. government has previously stuffed and crammed into its definition of "terrorist" organization.

--Perhaps the most obvious sign, but one mostly ignored, that America is not confronting a terrorist group like the Japanese Red Army or a geriatric Palestinian group like the PFLP-GC lies in the area of leadership succession.

--Since 2001, Americans have been able to flip on the radio almost any morning and learn that another Al-Qaeda No. 2, No. 3, or No. 4 leader has been killed in Afghanistan, Iraq, or some other place. In addition, the CIA's tremendously successful rendition program has removed a sizeable number of senior al-Qaeda leaders from the battlefield.

--And yet despite these successes, Admiral McConnell and General Hayden have accurately said al-Qaeda is as dangerous as ever and poses a "clear and present danger" to the continental United States. How can this be so?

--Well, there are several reasons, but a major one is that al-Qaeda is an insurgent group that – because it always faces a far more powerful foe – puts enormous time and resources into succession planning. When a senior al-Qaeda leader is captured or killed, a trained understudy takes his place and the organization proceeds. The new leader may not be as good as his predecessor, but he is not green and soon gets fully up to mark with on-the-job experience.

--No terrorist organization could have absorbed the punishment the United States has inflicted on al-Qaeda since 1996 and survived; indeed, that amount of punishment would have destroyed any organization the U.S. government has accurately defined as a terrorist group. It is best to think of al-Qaeda as we ought to think of Lebanese Hizballah and the Tamil Tigers; it and they are powerful insurgent groups which able to absorb enormous punishment from nation-state militaries and continue to thrive and attack. And al-Qaeda is more powerful and dangerous than either because, unlike Hizballah and the Tamils, bin Laden's organization has no return address against which the U.S. military can deliver a devastating strike.

--And if I may say, parenthetically, recent statements from the State Department, the White House, and some Congressional offices claiming that Hizballah is more of a threat to America than al-Qaeda are inaccurate, perhaps deliberately so. Such remarks are made by those who want war with Iran, those who slavishly make Israel's agenda their own, or those who have both attributes. Hizballah is not a threat to the United States unless Washington and/or Israel launch an attack Iran. Then, however, it would pose a substantial domestic threat because our open borders have made it impossible for law-enforcement agencies at any level of government to know the number and location of Hizballah operatives in this country at any given time.

To go on. Long before 9/11 and certainly since, the U.S. government under both parties has refused to accept that the main motivation of al-Qaeda and its allies – and the main source of their appeal to Muslims – is their perception that U.S. foreign policy is a deliberate attack on Islam and Muslims. From our enemies' perspective, therefore, this is preeminently a religious war, notwithstanding the blather to the contrary of Western politicians, academics, policymakers, and pundits. And sadly, the Islamists' leaders – Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and others – have left U.S. officials no excuse for failing to understand the mujahedin's motivation. Not since General Giap and Ho Chi Minh has America had an enemy that has so fully, frankly, and consistently explained its motivation to wage war against the United States, and yet the U.S. government has been and is led by men and women from both parties who ignore the Islamists words and, in essence, tell Americans to "ignore what they say and listen only to us." It might well be

suggested that, for a group of powerful individuals who have been reliably unable to differentiate Shias from Sunnis, this is asking Americans to accept an awful lot on trust.

What factors, then, are not among the main motivations of our Islamist enemies?

--Poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and lack of positive future prospects are not major drivers of Islamist violence against the United States and its allies. The resurrection of Harry Hopkins and Harold Ickes to conduct a contemporary and endlessly expensive New Deal in the Islamic world would at best produce mujahedin with better teeth and excellent postwar employment prospects.

--Hatred for America's liberties, freedoms, elections, women in the workplace, malls, and after-work pitchers of Budweiser do not motivate our Islamist enemies. They would have none of those things in their countries, but they likewise would be unable to attract fighters ready to die in a campaign to destroy Anheiser-Busch or to terminate the practice of early presidential primaries in Iowa.

--A universal desire to establish a worldwide Caliphate governed by what many Republican and Democratic leaders, as well as the many U.S. citizens more interested in Israel's survival than in America's, like to call Islamo-fascism also is not a main motivator of our Islamist enemies. The Caliphate is indeed a goal of bin Laden and most Islamist leaders -- because God has said the world will eventually be entirely Muslim -- but they know that its attainment will not occur during their or their great-great grandsons' lifetimes, just as Christians know that a world in which all would love-thy-neighbor and turn-the-other-cheek is light years over the horizon. This said, it is correct to say that the world is rife with Islamo-fascists, but they are almost all allies of the United States, and ruling such countries as Egypt, Kuwait, the UAE, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and -- as we will shall soon see -- Iraq.

To return to where we began, the main motivation of our Islamist enemies is U.S. foreign policy and its impact in the Muslim world. And the strongest such motivators are the following:

--U.S. and Western exploitation of Muslim energy resources.

--U.S. and Western civilian and military presence on the Arabian Peninsula.

--Unqualified U.S. support for Israel.

--U.S. support for other powers that oppress Muslims, especially China, India, and Russia.

--U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other Muslim countries.

--U.S. support for the police states that govern much of the Arab and Muslim world.

Because Washington applies an inappropriate definition to America's Islamist enemies – terrorist vice insurgents -- and deliberately ignores their motivations, it is not surprising that the military and political tools with which Washington is waging war are failing.

--In the starkest of terms, U.S. policymakers mistakenly believe that the war they are fighting is something of a super-law-enforcement struggle in which – as we have heard from all presidents for two-plus decades – America will prevail by bringing our enemies to justice one man at a time. This is both lunacy and self-defeating. There are far too many of the enemy – and their numbers are growing – to capture or kill one at a time. As effective as U.S. Special Forces operations and the CIA's Rendition Program have been and will be, neither is a war winner; both entities are being worn out by overuse; both are being weakened by steady losses to higher-paying, less dangerous jobs in private-sector companies; and neither can kill the enemy in anything approaching adequate numbers.

--Which leads us to what probably is the U.S. government's number one military problem: A steady, stubborn refusal to accept that war has not changed since Alexander and Caesar and will not change; that the surest route to victory lies in quickly and efficiently killing enough enemy fighters and their supporters, and destroying enough of the infrastructure of both, to make them see that the wages of attacking America approach annihilation; and that U.S. armed forces are enlisted, trained, and armed to kill America's enemies until they are beaten and our country is secure, not to bring democracy to foreigners who do not want it; secularism to people who believe it is the road to hell; and protection to both sides in an Arab-Israeli religious war where the United States has no genuine national interest at stake.

To define the "way ahead" for the structure and composition of U.S. forces in our current war against al-Qaeda and its allies is at this time, therefore, a nearly impossible task. But because Washington is fighting an enemy whose motivation it willfully ignores; whose numbers it grossly underestimates; and whose ability to defeat or evade the tools of war it has chosen to half-heartedly use is apparent, we should not be too quick to decide that the current mix of U.S. forces is inappropriate.

--We clearly are going to need conventional, nuclear, and Special Forces for the foreseeable future. China, Russia, and other nation-states still potentially threaten the United States in scenarios that would require large U.S. conventional and nuclear capabilities for purposes of deterrence or actual warfare. In addition, our dependence on foreign oil suppliers means that there are places in the world – such as Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province of the Gulf of Guinea/Niger Delta – where interventions requiring the use of conventional forces could quickly and unexpectedly arise. It would be most unwise not to maintain the bulk of the U.S. military in a conventional form.

--We should learn from the military experiences of the Clinton and Bush administrations. These have proven that Special Forces operations and CIA covert-action programs cannot win wars, conventional or irregular. Those entities remain today what they historically have been: powerful and indispensable adjuncts to overall U.S. war-making capabilities. As noted, the Clinton and Bush administrations have ignored history and are wearing out both the Special Forces and the CIA in wars in which America is barely holding its own, in Afghanistan and – Generals Petraus and Odierno reminded us this week – in Iraq. A move to expand the size and use of Special Forces and CIA covert-action forces will simply give us more excellently trained, extraordinarily capable, and wonderfully lethal units that still will be unable to win wars for America.

--The wars in America's future will require conventional forces, Special Forces, and a strong and covert-action-capable CIA. The appropriate, precise, and affordable mix of those forces is beyond my skill and knowledge-base to determine. There does, however, seem to be an increasing danger that too many resources will be put into building forces designed to fight irregular wars, which are conflicts where even successful Special Forces and CIA operations have already proven insufficient to deliver a definitive victory, which of course must be the sole goal America pursues when it goes to war. This is in no way meant to denigrate the men and women who lead and staff those forces. It is simply to say that despite their courageous and frequently successful efforts, al-Qaeda is fully meeting the constituent goals of its strategy for driving the United States as far as possible out of the Muslim world; those are: to help bleed the United States to bankruptcy; to force the spread of U.S. military and intelligence forces to the point where they lack flexibility and reserves; and to cause a deterioration in domestic political cohesion as did the North Vietnamese.

--And no matter what mix of U.S. military and intelligence forces is ultimately decided upon, their ability to bring victory will depend on U.S. politicians mustering the moral courage to tell Americans that their armed forces are built for the purpose of annihilating America's enemies. The very fact that we are meeting here today, on the eve of the eighth autumn of this war, is largely the result of the lack of political will in both parties to unleash the historically unprecedented military power American taxpayers have sacrificed to pay for over many decades.

Finally, it is worth considering whether it might be smarter, cheaper, and less bloody to change the failed foreign policies that brought war with al-Qaeda and its Islamist allies, rather than maintaining those war-motivating policies as divine writ and building an ever-larger military to fight the ever-expanding wars that writ produces. Energy self-sufficiency, a fixed and even obdurate determination to stay out of other peoples' religious wars, and a much more narrowly defined set of genuine U.S. national interests would require far less frequent resort to war and would be much more consonant with timelessly wise foreign-policy goals of our country's Founding Fathers.

**It Takes a Network: On Countering Terrorism
While Reforming the Military**

Testimony of Dr. John Arquilla before the House Armed Services
Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities,
presented 18 September 2008

The cold war's governing dynamic was an arms race in nuclear weapons; the age of terror is driven instead by an "organizational race" to build networks. Al Qaeda and its affiliates have been in this race for two decades; America and its allies entered the race just seven years ago – and since then have "competed" only in fits and starts. The terrorists remain on their feet and fighting, in large part because their nimble, networked structures have been given the opportunity to keep developing, their hallmarks being the decentralization of authority, the proliferation of small cells throughout the world, and an abundance of lateral links – many in cyberspace – among and between their many nodes. They have developed a highly evolved, battle-tested variant of the classic network concept of operations: "small pieces, loosely joined."¹ For our part, there has been some realization of the need for networking; but there has also been a dogged devotion to slow, balky decision making structures and, especially in the realm of military action, a focus on attacking hostile hierarchies – principally other nations – with the large formations and massive firepower associated with the Powell Doctrine of "overwhelming force."

It should hardly be surprising, then, that in this first great war between nations and networks, the networks have slipped most of our heavy punches and continued to land new blows of their own. Not in the United States again, since 9/11, but with greater frequency around the world, as significant terrorist acts that totaled just a few hundred

¹ David Weinberg, *Small Pieces, Loosely Joined* (New York: Perseus Books, 2002).

worldwide in 2001 rose to more than 10,000 by 2006, according to our own State Department statistics. Thanks to the turn-around in Iraq, the number should fall significantly this year – but to an amount that will still reflect a staggering increase from 2001. These numbers also indicate that our war on terror has, in a very real sense, morphed into terror’s war on us. By “us” I mean the international community that opposes terrorism, a portion of which has been beset by terrorist acts perpetrated across a swath of territory running from Morocco to Mindanao. Iraq and Afghanistan are the hottest spots along this belt of violence – a curious point, given that these are the two countries where American military presence is strongest. This paradox suggests that new ideas about organizational forms and concepts of operations are urgently needed.

Indeed, it might serve us best if we completely reconsidered the very problematic notion of waging a war of ideas against an enemy whose core constituency of zealots – numbering in the several tens of millions, if opinion polls across the Muslim world are to be believed – will never be talked down by even the slickest rhetoric. So instead, with the goal in mind of improving our ability to detect, disrupt and destroy terror networks, we should recast our intellectual efforts in favor of conducting “a war of ideas about the idea of war.” If such a debate were fostered and undertaken, there would be a good chance that our military might be able to make the shift, in a more supple manner, from industrial-age interstate warfare – characterized by mass-on-mass maneuvers – to the new age of conflict in which the fundamental dynamic is that of “hider/finder,” and whose key tactical formation is a “swarm” capable of simultaneous, omni-directional attack.²

² This concept was introduced in John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *Swarming and the Future of Conflict* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000).

Absent this debate, the U.S. military will continue to exhaust itself in traditional, firepower-heavy campaigns against opponents who can take as much or as little of the war as they wish – popping up when and where they want, across a global battlespace, rope-a-doping our relatively few, large units of action. A hierarchy trying to grapple with a network is a sad sight; for it takes a network to fight a network with any hope of lasting success. Much as, in the era of modern maneuver warfare – which ran roughly from 1939-1991 – it was the concentration of tanks in armored divisions that made it possible to fight successfully against enemy armor. For the longest time, the best weapon against a tank was a tank. Now, the best weapon against a network is another network.

The central difficulty with the American military today is that it is fighting a 21st century kind of war with the organizational structures and conceptual strategies of the 20th century. With units that can be mostly described as “the few and the large,” we have great trouble coming to grips with an enemy comprised of the “many and the small.”³ With strategies that are essentially linear and sequential in nature – think of World War II’s island-hopping campaigns in the Pacific, or our march up Mesopotamia in 2003 – we are trying to confront a widely distributed enemy capable of striking with effect, on any given day, anywhere from Madrid to London to Bali, and beyond.

Our guiding strategic metaphor is chess, where the concentration of forces is crucial, the rules of movement are circumscribed and the sequencing of operations generally culminates in an attack on the other side’s well defined “center of gravity.” The terrorists’ governing strategic metaphor is “Go,” an Asiatic war game older than chess where – contrary to chess – the wide but interconnected dispersal of forces is

³ I paraphrase here the expression introduced by Martin Libicki in his *The Mesh and the Net: Speculations on Armed Conflict in a Time of Free Silicon* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1994).

optimal, an attack can take place almost anywhere on the board from one turn to the next, and “edges” mean far more than “centers.” In the al Qaeda War, the enemy has been playing Go. We, for the most part, are still playing chess.

On a smaller scale than the terror war, a similar situation arose in the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict of 2006, where the Israeli Defense Forces – which stand among the world’s finest militaries – mounted an energetic air-ground campaign that massed both forces and fire in a primarily linear, sequential, chess-like manner. The dispersed, networked forces of Hezbollah, however, were organized in a multitude of fire teams, often with just 4-6 fighters in each. Further, the southern portion of Lebanon was divided into some 75 self-sustaining military zones in which rockets and missiles were pre-positioned. The guiding concept of operations was for these teams to hide most of the time, retrieve the hidden weapons, then pop up, strike and go to ground again. What I have called a “shoot and scoot” doctrine. The vastly outnumbered Hezbollah fighters, distributed like Go stones all over the “board” of southern Lebanon, were nevertheless able to fire as many of their weapons at Israel on the last day of the war – about 200 – as they had launched on the first day of the fighting a month earlier. In this conflict between a nation and a network, the network had more than held its own.

Events like this prompt the question “What kind of military reforms will be needed in order to grant our forces the degree of nimbleness necessary to defeat terror networks?” I believe that change will have to come in two key areas: organization and doctrine. In each domain, the “catalytic agent” should be the simple insight that interconnectivity has greatly empowered small groups. In 2001, this was demonstrated both by al Qaeda and by the American military. First, on 9/11, the huge disruptive and

destructive power of just nineteen attackers – riding the rails of our own technology to strike at us – was convincingly demonstrated. A few months later, eleven American Special Forces A teams – under 200 soldiers in all, working with the heavily outnumbered Northern Alliance – drove the Taliban and al Qaeda from power just a few weeks after they were unleashed.⁴ At no other time in history have so few – representing both sides – achieved so much. In this respect, 2001 must be seen as a watershed year in conflict and military affairs.

In the organizational domain, the principal goal should be to create far more, and much smaller, “units of action.” At the start of the terror war, for example, the U.S. Army had 33 brigades – its basic organizational structure. Today the number of brigade combat teams (BCT) is set to be closing in on 50. The shift to brigade “units of action” may well take the number up in the range of 100 in the next few years. But all this is just incremental change. The U.S. Army remains “brigadist” in thought and outlook, posing sharp constraints on the ability to engage in transformational change. If the evidence supporting the growing power of even very small groups suggests anything, it is that, in an information age, the centuries-old brigade is no longer useful. Indeed, it is a drag on efficiency, worsening the “scaling problem” of a few-and-large military like ours.

All this said, there is some interesting evidence, coming out of Iraq, of a willingness to consider groups as small as 40-45 soldiers to be viable units of action. Over the past year-and-a-half, more than 100 platoon-sized outposts have been created in Iraq – most, but not all, in the vicinity of Baghdad. Co-located with similar-sized Iraqi units, these outposts have formed a physical network that has contributed greatly to the drop in violence there. This has happened in part because their ability to respond to

⁴ After some four weeks of strategic aerial bombardment had achieved only desultory results.

terrorist acts quickly – much more quickly than larger components coming off forward operating bases – has improved deterrence enormously.

Right now, about 5% of the total number of troops in Iraq are stationed in small outposts, none of which has ever been overrun. And so we have a powerful example of a network of the “small and the many” achieving some remarkable things; and we should also question whether a surge of five additional brigades was *ever* necessary to make this shift. In my view, it was not, particularly when one considers the powerful effects of social networking with all twenty-three of the Sunni tribes in Anbar Province. The “awakening movement” added huge numbers of nodes and links to the counterinsurgent network in Iraq.

Taking this analysis further, I hypothesize that if the appropriate unit of action is now platoon-sized, it should be noted that fifteen brigades – the current number in Iraq – have over 400 platoons, all told, among them. Which means that very steep drawdowns in U.S. forces could take place without any reduction in the size of the outpost network. Indeed, if the small-and-many approach is used to solve our scaling problem, it’s possible to see how we might even increase the number of outposts while deeply drawing down our overall numbers in country. To be sure, there would be resistance to such a notion, as the standard reaction among strategists to the current situation would no doubt be to stay on the existing course, making no changes that might disturb whatever equilibrium obtains at the moment. Clearly, this latter perspective has prevailed with the president, as his recent decision to authorize only a slight troop drawdown at year’s end indicates.

The problem with this point of view, of course, is that it was only by upsetting the equilibrium with the shift to what I have called the “outpost and outreach” approach – a

concept I first advanced four years ago – was the situation in Iraq improved. This existence proof of the concept of building a network of our own to fight the terrorist networks should impel us to exploit this idea even more vigorously – not to shy away from it, or try to keep it contained. For the reactionary path is one guaranteed to keep us on a \$10 billion per month spending trajectory in Iraq; and the failure to keep adjusting and expanding our new, networked approach virtually guarantees that we shall fall prey, over time, to a thinking enemy’s adjustments. This will happen in Iraq, and in Afghanistan, too, if a traditional “numbers game” approach is taken, absent organizational redesign and doctrinal innovation. The Taliban will not be defeated simply by our sending two or three more brigades to Afghanistan. They will be defeated, without particular regard to the total number of U.S. forces deployed, if we organize them in small units of action and employ them in a far more networked fashion,

Lest this networked small-unit approach be too closely associated with primarily defensive and deterrent measures, I must remind that our initial campaign in Afghanistan in late 2001 showed how an offensive may be conducted in this manner. Indeed, if the enemy has regrouped and issued forth anew from Waziristan, it is principally because of the American and allied shift away from operating more offensive-mindedly, in “hunter networks” there. Instead, U.S. and NATO forces have laagered in, for the most part, on larger bases and ceded the initiative to the enemy. This has not been the case in Iraq, where the outpost network has been nicely complemented by super-secret “hunter networks” that have operated highly successfully there – and elsewhere around the world.⁵ Little more can be said openly about this topic, save that I articulated and have

⁵ An interesting discussion of these units in the open literature can be found in Bob Woodward, *The War Within* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008).

been pushing for the adoption of this concept for the past four years.⁶ To the extent to which we emphasize this as our principal offensive means, we will have a serious chance of tearing apart the terrorist networks that currently bedevil us – and new ones that will inevitably rise.

The foregoing analysis implies a point about the close interconnectedness of organizational redesign and innovative doctrinal thinking, as the new, small units will only be embraced and empowered when their existence is fortified by the appropriate changes in concepts of operations. In recent decades – certainly since the latter days of the cold war, when ideas about massive tank battles against the Russians were last relevant – official U.S. military doctrine has been wandering in something of an intellectual wasteland. Indeed, in most respects, doctrine has been yoked to the service of parochial interests. For example, the network-centric warfare (NCW) concept that the late Admiral Arthur Cebrowski introduced over a decade ago is, in the main, an effort to improve the effectiveness of carrier-heavy fleets by creating more lateral links between “sensor and shooter grids.” The basic idea is to make our existing “tools” a bit better by introducing more efficient information-sharing “practices.” The system of systems approach (SOSA), first articulated by former vice chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, Admiral William Owens, is, to a great extent, simply an adjunct to the NCW concept.⁷

The other major strand of strategic thought that has, until recently, bewitched the U.S. military is the notion of “effects-based operations” (EBO). The core idea behind this concept is laudable: the belief that especially well-judged and precise targeting can allow for more disruption to be done to an enemy while reducing the overall need for

⁶ See, for example, John Arquilla, “A Better Way to Fight the War on Terror,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, March 28, 2004.

⁷ William Owens and Ed Offley, *Lifting the Fog of War* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000).

destruction.⁸ Clearly, the rise of EBO reflects an effort to shore up intellectual support for the Air Force's quixotic, century-long pursuit of victory via strategic bombardment. Were this not so, we would have seen far greater support given to such principally non-destructive means as psychological operations, deceptions – even cyberspace-based strategic attack.⁹

The Air Force recently tipped its hand, regarding its preferred “kinetic” variant of EBO, however, with the decision to shut down its own Cyber Command. Beyond this bureaucratic Freudian slip is the fundamental problem that *all* military operations are designed with “effects” in mind. What isn't an EBO? Further, there is a sad record of failure, across nearly a century of conflict, to win wars with strategic aerial bombardment.¹⁰ Whatever the merits of paying more attention to “effects,” concluding that this approach will somehow re-animate bombing is foolhardy. This is especially true in an era replete with irregular wars, where distributed networks are, for the most part, impervious to such strikes. Small wonder that officers like General James Mattis of the Joint Forces Command have come out strongly against the continuance of EBO as a viable doctrinal concept.¹¹

If network-centric warfare is not the answer, nor effects-based operations, then how is the U.S. military to proceed, in doctrinal terms? I respectfully submit that, given the rise of networks as our principal opponents, the development of a network war-fighting doctrine is most appropriate. The good news is that some thinking has been

⁸ See Paul Davis's study of this concept, *Effects-Based Operations: A Grand Challenge for the Analytic Community* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2002).

⁹ On this last point, see Gregory Rattray, *Strategic Warfare in Cyberspace* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2001).

¹⁰ Robert Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

¹¹ See General James Mattis, “Commander's Guidance for Effects-Based Operations,” Norfolk, VA: Joint Forces Command. Issued 14 August 2008.

going on in this area, starting with my colleague David Ronfeldt's and my introduction of the "netwar" concept in our work over a decade ago.¹² In the course of our joint research, we developed a range of doctrinal ideas about how to detect, track and counter insurgent, terrorist and criminal networks. Our main points, as they apply to military reform, can be easily summed up as follows: 1) Many small units of action should be created, then empowered to coordinate, rather than restricted by central controls; 2) Action against the enemy should consist of greater parts "waiting and watching" early on, as striking too quickly and destroying the few nodes located will actually *reduce* overall knowledge about the opposing network; and 3) The fundamental tactic of a network is the swarm, hitting at the enemy from all directions simultaneously when going over to the attack.

The netwar notion overturns a lot of traditional military thought – which is probably why its adoption has been resisted for so long, and why the concept has been mistakenly characterized as being applicable only to the realm of cyberspace-based operations. For when it comes to the canonical principles of war, instead of massing, netwar calls for the wide distribution of many small units of action. Instead of defeating portions of an enemy force "in detail," the goal is to illuminate as much of the opposing network as possible before striking with a swarm. Yet another traditional principle of war, "unity of command," is also undermined by netwar – which calls not for centralized control of field forces but rather what Ronfeldt and I like to call "decontrol."

¹² See John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *The Advent of Netwar* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1996). We followed up on this study in our *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001). For a specific discussion of network warfare in the context of military operations, see John Arquilla, *Worst Enemy: The Reluctant Transformation of the American Military* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2008), especially Chapter 7, "A New Course of Instruction: Netwar 101."

It is hardly surprising that this new doctrine has had a difficult time getting much traction. But its time has nevertheless come; for it is the netwar concept that affords us a clear guide to redesigning our military to be able to fight and defeat insurgent or terrorist networks. It is the right doctrine for an age in which many have problems with seeing the war on terror as an actual war. The struggle against al Qaeda and its affiliates is indeed a real war; but it is not a regular sort of war. It is a netwar, something that looks, feels and tastes different from most of our earlier experience, as a nation, with warfare. This new concept of conflict, though, may give us the handhold we need to see our way through to destroying the terror networks now arrayed against us and our allies – and to do so before they have a chance to develop weapons of mass destruction that would give them a real war-winning potential.

Perhaps the biggest stumbling block in the way of a shift in favor of network warfare is the worry that large-scale, old-style warfare will return. Even though there have been only a handful of conventional wars fought since the end of World War II in 1945, the fear of blitzkrieg – or possibly nostalgia for it – remains in the forefront of the military mind. And if such a war were to come, some argue, armed forces that had networked themselves, and so now lacked “mass,” would be run over. With this concern in mind, the best that could be hoped for would be to network a small portion of the U.S. military – allowing it to take on terror networks – while keeping the rest ready for massed operations against other armies or carrier or bomber fleets.

The problem with this plausible-sounding line of argument is that it perpetuates the terrible “scaling problem” that plagues the U.S. military, keeping costs exceedingly high and slowing response time in the face of any given crisis. For example, the initial

phase of operations in Afghanistan – where just eleven A teams engaged – occurred as it did precisely because of the American inability to do anything more than this in the near term. Had the U.S. Army been replete with small units of action in the fall of 2001, several dozens of them, easily topping 1,000 troops – not just the hundred or so special operators – could have been quickly deployed to far greater effect. And Osama bin Laden’s and Mullah Omar’s chances of escaping into Waziristan would have been very small indeed.

Similarly, in Iraq, where we still have over 140,000 troops in country, a shift to platoon-sized Marine and Army units of action would simultaneously give us greater on-the-ground coverage and yet require far fewer occupying troops, overall. It may be bureaucratically attractive to think in terms of networking just a small part of our forces while leaving the rest as they are; but such a course keeps our operating costs high, slows our response time in crisis and conflict, and crimps our ability to wage netwar-styled campaigns against terrorists and insurgents.

But what if another World War II-style conflict comes along? How would such a “net force” deal with, say, an invasion of South Korea by the million-man army of the communist regime in the North? There are two answers to this sort of problem, both of which would allow our transformation along networked lines. The first reply is that we could “rebalance” our active-reserve mix, which today has most of our traditional war-fighters on active duty, with many irregular warfare skills residing primarily in the Reserves. Rebalancing would place most of our small units of action, along with those most suited to the demands of irregular warfare – including psychological operations and civil affairs specialists – in a much-reduced active duty force. Traditional combat

soldiers – tankers, heavy artillerymen and the like – would, for the most part, populate Reserve and Guard units, and train regularly for just such contingencies as the above mentioned, and would be ready to ship out swiftly in crisis or conflict. Their deployment would be greatly aided by careful prepositioning of weapons and other war materials. In the meantime, the more irregular-warfare oriented active force would take on terrorists and insurgents.

The foregoing presupposes a belief that an old-style opponent has to be fought in an old-style manner. However, if one believes in the growing power of small combat formations, and has even a modicum of faith in American air and naval mastery, then it is possible to see how an entire force based on nimble, networked units of action would make absolute mincemeat of traditionally configured foes. Indeed, while having a netwar-styled force would undoubtedly improve our chances against insurgents and terrorists, the “net force” – backed by air and naval support – should be able to do even better against a big, balky opponent. The basic point being that, if one is willing to accept that old-style forces need not be confronted in an old-style way, a world of possibility for military transformation opens up. A world where our capacity for conducting irregular wars is vastly improved – and so is our capacity for confronting more traditional opponents.

The only question remaining is whether we will have the wit, and the grit, to make such a choice. Perhaps an example from one of our earliest wars – the struggle against the French and their Native American allies between 1756-1763 – will help to illustrate the possibilities. This war was waged across a great wilderness, against enemies who blended both conventional and irregular tactics skillfully. The British, then

our colonial overlords, had much trouble at the outset, losing one conventional battle after another, and suffering even sharper defeats against the enemy's irregular forces. But they eventually came to realize that the Americans had a special knack for "bush fighting," and began to incorporate Rangers and other irregulars into their ranks. The results were remarkable, and transformative – and led to victory. But this was not the victory of an old-style force that had simply been shored up by irregulars. No, it was completely transformed. In the words of one of the great historians of this conflict, commenting on the Anglo-American force that won the last campaign at Montreal:

This was no conventional army . . . Its tactics had undergone a transformation in America . . . For three years the redcoats had been firing at marks and were now accustomed to aiming, rather than merely leveling, their muskets at the enemy . . . Forces included fewer grenadiers, but many more light infantry . . . whole battalions of little wiry men able to move quickly through the woods and . . . ranger companies to make the raids and reconnaissance patrols . . . ¹³

Curiously, by the time that the American Revolution broke out fifteen years after the fall of Montreal, the British military had reverted completely to its old, conventional ways. The embryonic American Continental Army seemed to be following suit – and a stalemate ensued by 1780, one that was only broken when Nathanael Greene embraced and integrated irregular operations into his campaign plan in the South. There, guerrilla fighters like Marion, Pickens and Sumter gave the British fits, eventually exhausting Lord Cornwallis's forces and impelling him to fall back on Yorktown – where he was trapped, effectively ending the war. But it was only by this rekindling of a capacity for irregular warfare that the Revolutionaries came through victoriously.¹⁴

¹³ Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), pp. 410-11.

¹⁴ This argument was nicely articulated by the great historian, Forrest C. Pogue, in *The Revolutionary Transformation of the Art of War* (Washington, DC: The American Enterprise Institute, 1974).

So it seems that an aptitude for irregular warfare and an openness of mind toward innovation are in our “strategic DNA.” These traits came to the fore in the colonial conflict that first made it possible for the American national experiment to begin unfolding, and then in the revolution that gave our country life. Sometimes these traits have been submerged beneath a veneer of conventional thought, as happened in Vietnam when the strategic emphasis shifted away from irregular warfare and toward “big units.” Yet our aptitude for the unconventional and knack for innovation have remained – lying dormant for a while, perhaps, but reawakened once again by the demands of the age of terror. Now these traits will prove essential once again – as they were at the dawn of the Republic – in an era fraught with new perils, a time that will test us as severely as at any point over the past 250 years.

We have mastered the gravest past challenges. Whether we prevail yet again depends – on this occasion far more than any others – on our ability to reach back to the suppleness of our own strategic roots, and to embrace the bold organizational and doctrinal changes that are so desperately needed now. I pray that we find it in ourselves to do so.