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**Terrorist and
counterterrorist operations**

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[Eds]

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Introduction

Maarten Rothman

Everyone is a terrorism specialist. Since 9/11 terrorism studies have not merely been a cottage industry anymore, they are a booming business for scholars of all stripes¹. The interest is understandable, due to the willingness of publics and governments to spend on terrorism studies, on the one hand, and an eagerness of academics to contribute to the societal effort to prevent another terrorist catastrophe, on the other. This motive is especially pronounced among academics employed in educating soldiers and other primary terrorism fighters. At the Netherlands Defence Academy (NLDA), where the contributors to this volume work or, in two cases, have recently worked, we are daily asked questions on terrorism by the young aspirant-officers we educate. Our charges will shortly accept assignments within the framework known as the *War on Terror*. Our work is to prepare them, and so each of us has in recent years turned her/ himself into something of a terrorism expert.

Yet, with so many terrorism studies published each day, why add another one? What can we add that has not been said many times already? What sets this collection apart is a focus specifically on military counterterrorism. We do not pretend a radically new perspective on terrorism. Our intent is to shed some light on the problems encountered by soldiers who are engaged in fighting terrorism or are fighting in the War on Terror.

This collection specifically includes the War on Terror with terrorism and counterterrorism. The conduct of that war, especially the invasion of Iraq, has been controversial, to say the least. Our decision to include articles that deal with stabilization operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq does not imply support for the policy. It does, however, reflect the experience that insurgency tactics closely resemble, or perhaps are identical to, terrorist tactics. Two of the articles in this collection (Hilderink and Van Hees) detail the experiences of the authors with situations in which these tactics were used. Whether these tactics are properly classified as terrorist or as insurgent, is a secondary consideration in the opinion of the editors. Moreover, it is in the conduct of this war that European approaches best complement the American approach. Thus, by including the War on Terror we also include a domain in which we can draw on the experience of the Dutch military.

The articles collected here cover widely divergent topics, ranging from terrorist grand strategy to terrorist finances, from the air force's capacity to intercept an aerial assault, to the experiences of a young lieutenant during a suicide attack in Afghanistan. They also draw on a wide range of disciplinary knowledge. From philosophy to aeronautics, by way of economics, management science, organizational sociology, psychology and political science. This range reflects the expertise of the authors. Their coming together around

a single theme reflects the set-up of the NLDA, which by design is a multidisciplinary academy with a single focus. The two articles drawing on personal experience are a valuable contribution to the academic literature, a first attempt to organize and analyze the material. On top of that, they demonstrate the focus.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part focuses on terrorist and counter-terrorist operations, by which are meant the actions or action sequences through which either party attempts to reach the outcomes they desires. The second part addresses the social and psychological processes at work in, or on, the participants in terrorism and counterterrorism. The final part consists of personal reflections by two authors personally engaged in the War on Terror. The first two parts are preceded by articles that summarize the crucial issues and questions in their fields, by Rothman and Vogelaar, respectively.

The collection as a whole is preceded by an essay on transatlantic cooperation in the War on Terror by Tom Mockaitis, who held the Eisenhower Chair at the Netherlands Defence Academy in the fall of 2004. Mockaitis explains the different worldviews of Americans and Europeans and argues for a happy medium between American paranoia and European nonchalance.

The next article is Maarten Rothman's analysis of three strategies of political violence. This article also introduces the first section, on terrorist and counterterrorist operations. The three strategies are terrorism, which works by way of fear; propaganda by deed, which works by way of inspiration; and provocation by violence, which combines elements of both. Rothman argues that terrorism specialists focus on the first to the detriment of the others. The other strategies have, however, been practiced in the past, and there is reason to believe that they provide a better way to understand the current wave of political violence, al-Qaeda and its affiliates, in particular. The question of motive, which enters the discussion at this point, may seem far removed from the practice of terrorist and counterterrorist strategies, but it has practical implications. (Incidentally, motive also ties in to the discussions by Vogelaar and Olsthoorn in the next section.) The differences between the three strategies, and particularly between terrorism and the other two, affect terrorist target selection as well as counterterrorist strategies. Perpetrators variously identify a friendly or an enemy audience as crucial to the success of their campaign and conduct operations accordingly, while counter terrorists, aware of their opponents' choice of audience, should also adapt.

The second article in this section is an answer to the question: 'Can airpower be used effectively against terrorism and insurgency?' Herman Koolstra demonstrates

the capacities and limitations of airpower, particularly from the technological point of view. He concludes that 'airpower is limited in fighting unconventional wars' due to the brief exposure of the enemy, both to direct air attack and to the intelligence apparatuses which could provide guidance to the air force. Only an airplane already airborne could react in time to the threat of an aerial assault such as happened on 9/11.

Organization is also the topic of the next article by Maarten Rothman & Erik de Waard. They make a comparison between al-Qaeda and the virtual organization as described in management literature. They find many similarities, from Osama bin Laden's leadership style to problems of communication and control. A virtual network is flexible, and so resistant to attack, but it also places constraints on the power and influence exerted by its central command. In the case of al-Qaeda, its appeal to the Muslim population of the Middle East, its core constituency, and to Muslims elsewhere, may be compromised by ineffectual or brutal attacks conducted by groups associated with, but not actually commanded, by Bin Laden.

In the final article in this section, Robert Beeres & Myriame Bollen discuss the mechanism through which terrorist organizations acquire the funds they need to conduct their operations. They focus on *levers of control*, advocating the identification of practices that may be disrupted and context that may be changed so that financing terrorism becomes progressively harder. They also discuss the problems of worldwide inter-organization cooperation between police organizations, armed forces, international politics, business corporations, and financial institutions, all of which play a part in financial counterterrorism. Here, the keys are consensus on the domains of cooperation and the division of responsibilities and trust. While trust needs to be shared widely, Beeres & Bollen conclude that partners in counterterrorism need only an average level of trust to cooperate effectively.

Introducing the second section on the social and psychological processes behind terrorism and counterterrorism, Ad Vogelaar reviews the psychological literature on terrorism. He demonstrates that psychology sheds light on three aspects of terrorism: recruitment, impact, and counterterrorism. On the basis of his literature review, Vogelaar concludes that terrorists act rationally but that emotional motives determine whether they become terrorists. With regard to the impact of terrorism, Vogelaar finds that victims of terrorist attacks run a considerable risk of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Finally, he cautions against indiscriminate or disproportionate forms of counterterrorism, especially when the authorities react in anger and frustration. While the third aspect, counterterrorism received considerable attention in the previous section, the next two articles further explore the aspects of recruitment and impact.

Peter Olsthoorn approaches terrorists' motives from the perspective of political

philosophy. He seeks to explain the notions of humiliation, dignity and honor, which occur frequently in discussions of terrorism. He argues that Western cultures have in the process of individualization replaced shame, the obverse of honor, with guilt. The Islamic world, on the other hand, has not only retained a sense of honor along with a more collectivist culture, notions of honor and shame seem only to have gained in importance. Olsthoorn concludes, however, that there are multiple objections to offering humiliation as an explanation of terrorism and that, in any case, such an explanation does not amount to justification.

Coen van de Berg, Joseph Soeters & Mark Dechesne research the efficacy of Terror Management Theory. Their starting point is the disruption caused by the existential threat of death on military operations, particularly on international stabilization operations that are complicated by problems of coordination and communication between participating national armed forces and by uncertainty regarding the occurrence of attacks. On the basis of quantitative data gathered by the researchers among Dutch soldiers participating in international stabilization operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, they make a number of recommendations. Units in threatening circumstances should increase identification with the army or with the military profession, increase motivation by explaining the purpose of the mission, and increase the soldier's faith in his own capabilities.

The final section consists of two articles. The first, by Carel Hilderink, formerly the Commandant of the NLDA, describes the author's experiences as head of the international effort to reconstitute officer training after the regime change in Iraq. Hilderink distinguishes between three roles: individual, team member, and commander. He describes how awareness of the threat suddenly becomes acute when circumstances, such as the breakdown of his car, remind him of his vulnerability. He also describes the importance of a widely shared sense of responsibility that involves all team members, as opposed to hierarchical responsibility, and that also allows for discussing unpleasant experiences among team members. Finally, Hilderink stresses the importance of personal communication in his role as commander.

The last article in this collection is also the most gripping. The author is a young officer, recently graduated from the NLDA, whose convoy was struck by a suicide attack in Afghanistan. Jessica van Hees describes the attack and its aftermath, her reactions and the emotions that overcame her during and particularly after the events. She describes the formalist reaction of her (mostly German) superiors and the deterioration of communication within the international unit she was working with. She concludes that staying on, and facing other threats, allowed her to give the attack its place while still being over there, before learning to cope at home.

Synergy between research and education is a fundamental principle of modern academia. Research benefits education and vice versa. This collection embodies that synergy. The articles collected here represent the expertise and current research interests of the NLDA faculty. However, they are also our answers to questions posed by our students, in the context of coursework or thesis projects. We would do our students an injustice if we did not acknowledge the inspiration they provided.

Notes

1. Joseph L. Soeters (2005) *Ethnic Conflict and Terrorism. The Origins and Dynamics of Civil Wars*. Abingdon: Routledge.



The Euro-Atlantic Partnership and the Global War on Terrorism

Tom Mockaitis

Introduction

In the days immediately following 9/11, America's European allies rallied around the United States as never before. At Buckingham Palace the band played the *Star Spangled Banner*, French President Jacques Chirac proclaimed, 'We are all Americans', and offers of help and support poured in from European capitals. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization invoked Article 5, which declares an attack upon one to be an attack upon all, in support of a US decision to invade Afghanistan. Within six months, most of this good will had evaporated; within a year, Euro-Atlantic relations had degenerated to perhaps their lowest point since World War II. When the Bush administration went to war with Iraq, only Britain contributed a sizable troop contingent. The new allies in Eastern Europe, several of them awaiting the US Senate's ratification of their accession treaties, grudgingly sent small contingents. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld called Western Europeans ingrates for not repaying their liberation sixty years ago, deepening resentment of the United States.

What had happened to produce such a complete reversal of attitudes? The explanation lies in part in a series of questionable decisions in Washington, but deeper forces have also been at work. The American response to 9/11 has its roots in entrenched values and historical experience. The European response to the *Global War on Terrorism* also has its origins in the past, as does America's anger at that response.

American Values, National Security and 9/11

The near simultaneous attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon shocked Americans as nothing had since Pearl Harbor. Even that attack occurred far from the shores of the US mainland. Not since the British burned the White House during the War of 1812. Occurring as it did long before the television age, this incident lacks the immediacy of the terrorist attacks and never reached anything like the nearly one billion people who witnessed 9/11 worldwide. The attacks took almost 3,000 lives and did a staggering trillion dollars' worth of economic damage. These factors alone, however, do not explain the psychological impact of the blow. In any given year, more people die violent deaths on American highways. The annual murder rate for New York City often tops the 3,000 mark. The shock came not only from the magnitude and scope of the attack, made larger and more immediate by television, but by its audacity. This audacity

broke through an insularity and sense of security developed over centuries and exaggerated by recent history.

Americans have long harbored a sense of insularity and particularism. Thousands of miles of ocean separated us from our European neighbors, and for the first century and half of our existence no other nation in the Western hemisphere challenged our sense of supremacy on the continent. The Louisiana Purchase extended the Western border to the Mississippi, and brief, successful wars with Mexico opened California and the southwest. Nothing stood in the way of the manifest destiny to expand civilization “from sea to shining sea”. By the end of the nineteenth century that civilization had acquired a distinctly American flavor. Led by Frederick Jackson Turner, historians had rejected the notion of the US being an extension of Europe expanding into the vacant space of the American wilderness. They replaced it with the image of a unique civilization blending the best of the old world and the new. This blend contained a healthy bit of scepticism about Europe first articulated in George Washington’s farewell address to the New Republic. This commitment to isolationism persisted well into the middle of the 19th century and has never completely disappeared.

Isolationism has also bred two other distinctive American characteristics: pursuit of absolute security from foreign attack and a willingness to act unilaterally to achieve it¹. By implication, refusal to participate in Europe’s precarious balance of power politics necessitated that the US develop the strength to guarantee its security alone. This approach led first to defense of ever-longer frontiers, then to aggressive wars to expand those borders, and finally to projection of American power overseas. Given its commitment to democracy, the US could never embrace colonialism. Even blatantly imperialist moves like the annexation of Hawaii and the seizure of the Philippines had to be justified as promoting national security².

The peace and prosperity of the last half century have transformed insularity into an incredible sense of entitlement. A generation of Americans who have experienced neither war nor serious hardship have very high expectations of what life owes them. These expectations include everything from life expectancy to standard of living. Despite having the highest murder rate in the developed world, middle class Americans are wealthier, healthier, and safer than ever before. Gun violence occurs primarily in poor urban neighborhoods that most people can easily avoid. Even the high murder rate pales before the annual traffic fatality statistics. Statistically, the 9/11 attacks made little impact on morbidity and mortality figures. Then, too, most Americans could still remember living under the threat of nuclear annihilation. Why then did 9/11 produce such a psychological impact and lead to a response that has blended careful planning with incredible impulsivity?

The simple answer is that the attack came from outside, that it was perpetrated by an enemy easily portrayed in racial terms, and that it was profoundly personal.

Nuclear weapons seek to kill *us* while terrorists aim to kill *me*. The attacks deepened an already strong sense of xenophobia. The sheer size of the US has made it possible for Americans to live, work and travel entirely within their own country, speaking their own language and associating almost entirely with other Americans. Language education in US lags far behind that of other Western Nations; one can even earn a doctorate in many fields without speaking or reading knowledge of another language. US military personnel can remain comfortably within an English language bubble even on extended overseas tours. Business executives and their families and even tourists find that most of the world accommodates American “uni-lingualism”. Such insularity makes it difficult for Americans to understand other nations and cultures and the impact of US policy on people around the world. Such isolation leads to shock and disbelief when the country comes under attack. *Why are people so mad at us?* is a question I heard frequently during speaking engagements after 9/11.

Insularity also helps explain the tension between the US and some of its closest European allies. The distrust of “entangling alliances”, which dates to the Washington administration and manifested itself in rejection of the League of Nations, still lingers. Although the US recognizes the desirability of the UN, albeit at times reluctantly, and the necessity of NATO, it tends to expect both organizations to comply with its wishes and would never entrust its national security to either. Americans can be particularly possessive of NATO, an alliance they believe the US founded and has funded for more than half century (over-looking the fact that Europe has provided the majority of the troops since the late 1950s). This attitude explains two American responses that Europeans may find puzzling. First, Washington showed no particular gratitude for NATO support in Afghanistan and anger that the alliance would dare say no on Iraq. Charges of “ingratitude” for the liberation of Europe in 1944-45 flew across the board, and some ultra-patriots demanded restaurants change the name of a favorite side dish from *French* to *freedom fries*.

In addition to their historic isolationism Americans have a marked tendency for seeing the world in black and white. This tendency contrasts markedly with the European appreciation of varying shades of grey. Fifty years of Cold War, in which Americans saw themselves in a titanic struggle between good and evil, shaped the consciousness of generations of bureaucrats and policy makers, some of whom, like Vice-president Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, hold high office. International terrorism in the guise of al-Qaeda has filled a psychological void created by the collapse of Communism. President Bush’s reference to an “axis of evil” (encompassing North Korea, Iran and Iraq) resonates with President Reagan’s depiction of the Soviet Union as an evil empire. Europeans, on the other hand, take a more nuanced approach to understanding the phenomenon of terrorism.

European Perceptions of Freedom and Security

Like the American reaction to terrorism, the European response to both 9/11 and subsequent American demands for unconditional support has its roots in history. Even those allies who continually back the US raise serious objections to the idea of a “global war on terrorism”. Many European nations have had direct experience of terrorist attacks over the past fifty years. Italy, Spain, Germany and especially Britain have faced sustained terrorist campaigns for decades. This experience has led to a sober realization that although terrorist activity can be reduced to an acceptable level, it can never be defeated. Calling the struggle with al-Qaeda a “war” seems both inaccurate and unhelpful. While Europeans generally support the US in its current struggle with al-Qaeda, they temper their sympathy with a conclusion: *Welcome to the club. We have been dealing with terrorism for a very long time.*

This conflict of perceptions had very real and unfortunate consequences. In 2002 German authorities apprehended members of what they believed to be a terrorist cell in Hamburg. Lawyers for the defendants called witnesses in American custody, claiming that testimony from these individuals would exonerate their clients. The US government asserted that since the individuals in question were prisoners of war, it would not allow them to testify. Since Germany was not at war, the court insisted that the right of the accused to a fair trial was paramount.

The deep and abiding concern for civil liberties found in many European countries stems in no small measure from the experience of World War II. Elderly Germans and Italians remember the Third Reich and the Fascist regime. Many more Spaniards can recall life under Franco. Numerous European states lived under German occupation from 1939-45. Eastern European countries spent fifty years under repressive Communist regimes. Memories of this repression render many Europeans unwilling to accept even modest curtailment of civil liberties even at the price of increased vulnerability.

This insistence on a free and open society, allowing unfettered movement, can be seen throughout Europe. I walked through the courtyard of the Dutch Parliament one week after Royal Marine Commandos had rolled up a terrorist cell in The Hague. The building remained largely unguarded with cars and trucks free to park alongside of buildings. When I asked a Dutch Army officer about this situation some time later, he merely remarked, ‘I wouldn’t want to live anywhere else.’ Across the continent people enter art galleries, museums, cathedrals and public buildings carrying backpacks and brief cases with minimal or no screening. Only after the Madrid bombings of 11 March 2004 did the European Union adopt a protocol for the prevention of terrorism.

A Happy Medium

Somewhere between American paranoia and European nonchalance lies a happy medium. Terrorism will remain a permanent feature of the international security environment for the foreseeable future. People on both sides of the Atlantic need to engage in the kind of sobering cost-benefit analysis conducted on a daily basis by every successful business. The crucial questions remain, *What level of risk am I willing to accept*, and *What will it cost to get to that level?* In a climate of fear deliberately manipulated for political gain, Americans have spent a fortune on expensive placebos – highly visible measures that create the illusion of security without making the country any safer. Europeans, on the other hand, seem oblivious to the existence of any threat at all.

This divergence of views underscores the value of the Euro-Atlantic partnership. Maintaining the alliance, however, requires new adjustments and sacrifices not addressed since the end of the Cold War. On the one hand, the US needs to abandon its policy of unilateralism and begin to treat Europe more as a partner and less as a client. On the other hand, Europe needs to assume more of NATO's military costs. Only by strengthening the European pillar within the alliance will it be able to balance and in some cases restrain American actions. A Cold-War political adage held that *Europe's job is to remind America that the world is complicated*, while *America's job is to remind Europe that the world is dangerous*. Never in the history of this invaluable partnership has the need for such mutual advice been greater.

Notes

1. James Chace and Caleb Carr (1988) *America Invulnerable: The Quest for Absolute Security from 1812 to Star Wars*. New York: Summit Books. Written almost twenty years ago, the book seems ominously prophetic in the light of US actions since 9/11.
2. Ibid.



Terrorists and their audiences: Three strategies of political violence¹

Maarten Rothman

Introduction

On 11 September 2001, terrorists hit “the temple of free enterprise” and “the cathedral of American military might” (Barber 2001: xi). The attacks shook the confidence of security among Americans, even among Westerners in general. They also raised the fighting spirit of those in the Middle East who felt oppressed by the forces symbolized by the WTC and the Pentagon. A third effect only became manifest some years later when American invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, part of a *War on Terror* in response to the attacks, roused the anger of large numbers of Muslims both in the Middle East and among immigrants in Western Europe. Each of these three effects benefits the perpetrator and/or his cause in a different way.

The purpose of this article is to make the distinction between these three effects explicit. While they are not mutually exclusive, and the perpetrator does not always have to choose between them, they have different implications, which a shrewd terrorist may exploit and which pose different obstacles to antiterrorist policies. Although the academic literature recognizes all three effects, it does not clearly distinguish between them and does not draw out their implications. In this article, I use a comprehensive and widely accepted definition (Schmid & Jongman 1988) as a starting point for discussion. I argue that it denotes not one but three uses of political violence, as indicated in the opening paragraph, which are commonly thrown together. I proceed to describe briefly the strategic method and historical antecedents of each. This leads to a reflection on political grand strategies. I conclude with a discussion of two practical implications, first, terrorist target selection, and, finally, counterterrorist strategies tailored to the terrorists’ strategy.

One definition, three strategies

One of the most widely accepted definitions of terrorism and certainly, the most comprehensive is given by Schmid & Jongman (1988: 28):

Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-)clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby – in contrast to assassination – the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly

(targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat- and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperiled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought.

Schmid & Jongman compiled their definition from responses to questionnaires sent out to a large number of scholars in the field. It includes elements named by most or many of the respondents as characteristic of terrorism. The central elements are violence and communication. Schmid & Jongman first identify terrorism as a method, i.e. as a means rather than an end and are mindful that particular terrorist incidents are part of a campaign, which may only achieve its desired ends after multiple violent actions. They specify that the means include violence directed against a direct target, which is not the main target. The latter, instead, is an audience, or more than one audience, which the perpetrators reach indirectly through the communication of their violence. Hence, the importance of the media to terrorists. In order to reach their goals, perpetrators rely on the reaction of their main target audience(s). It is this reaction that they seek to manipulate.

However, this definition is so broad as to include quite a few apparent, and perhaps some real, contradictions. First, according to Schmid & Jongman, target selection is either random or selective. When random, when selective, is an open question. Also unanswered is whether that makes a difference to the message generated. Second, while intimidation and coercion can go together at least to some extent, propaganda (if propaganda is to mean more than agenda setting) implies a wholly different attitude on the part of the main target audience. Third, the target of propaganda can hardly be the same audience in whom the perpetrators' violence inspires anxiety. It is possible to remove the latter two contradictions by limiting the meaning of propaganda to agenda setting, thus asserting that terrorists are content to put their issue on the table, while its resolution is a matter not of persuasion but of coercion. However, the history of terrorism contains many examples where the terrorists strove actively to convince others of the justice of their cause. Since Schmid & Jongman, as well as most other students of terrorism, consider such cases part of the same phenomenon, the limitation is not useful.

The contradiction can also be resolved if there are in fact two or more target audiences. One audience can be the target of intimidation and coercion, another the target of propaganda. However, Schmid & Jongman's definition provides little guidance for determining the relations between multiple audiences, and between the perpetrators

and their various audiences. While it is not necessarily the case that more than one audience is involved in every terrorist campaign, various campaigns (that all fit the definition) feature target audiences that vary according to their type, involving at least one and sometimes more than one different audience.

This article views Schmid & Jongman's definition as a compound in which elements from three different strategies are brought together. The three effects of 9/11 mentioned in the opening paragraph all fit. However, they cannot be made to fit together as a single instance without stretching the definition. For a start, they have different main target audiences. These target audiences naturally receive different messages. To the extent that the perpetrator of the attacks consciously chooses or emphasizes a particular target audience and a particular message, he selects a strategy. The word strategy is chosen to indicate both method and (as Schmid & Jongman phrase it) repetition. It is also intended to reflect conscious planning, similar to conventional military planning.

All three strategies involve indirect targeting, where violence is brought against one target in order to influence another main target, which witnesses, but does not directly suffer, the attacks. Schmid & Jongman's distinction between immediate victims and main targets and their emphasis on communication applies. Their understanding that media coverage is crucial to success holds true. Aware of this, the perpetrators in each strategy stage their violence as a spectacle to be witnessed. In this sense, all three strategies discussed in this article are types of theatrical violence². There are nevertheless important differences between these strategies. These differences reflect the apparent contradictions in the definition. What makes the distinctions between the three different types of theatrical violence is the character of the audience or audiences and the behavior expected of them by the perpetrators. The following three sections give brief descriptions of the three strategies.

Classical terrorism

Terrorism in the narrow sense makes use of fear, hence the name. (It will become clear that fear does not play the same role in the other two strategies.) While the physical attack commonly kills or hurts persons who are usually defined by the terrorists as enemies, the larger effect consists of the generation of a psychological reaction in an audience. This effect is fear. Fear, then, does the terrorist's work, inflating his presence so as to put his causes on the political agenda or forcing the audience to change its behavior. The main target, as Schmid & Jongman write, is the audience. In this case, the audience is identified with the victim of the direct attack. It is hostile to the goals of the terrorists, and so is not convinced but defeated. The purpose of the terrorist campaign is to terrorize an enemy so that he loses the will to fight. At minimum, terrorism impresses on a

hostile audience the recognition that a given situation constitutes a problem.

Terrorism can be considered a “military strategy” that avoids a direct confrontation with enemy forces in order to strike straight at the will of the enemy. Military campaigns generally aim at disarming the opponent through a victory over his military or through occupation of his territory. However, military theorists have sometimes developed strategies directed at the enemy’s will to fight. Early airpower theorists, such as Giulio Douhet, advocated massive strategic air strikes against population centers in order to overwhelm the opponent psychologically. It should be noted that Douhet and other airpower theorists believed that strategic air strikes would so shorten the duration of wars that the net effect would be to save lives (Klinkert 2002). Perhaps because they have little chance of success in conventional warfare, terrorists also attempt to circumvent the opponent’s armaments (whether military or police) and strike directly at the locus of the opponent’s will to fight. Democracies are particularly vulnerable to this type of attack, although all regimes are susceptible to the extent that they rest on public support. This is not to say that terrorist operations resemble conventional military operations, or terrorist organizations military organizations. In these respects and particularly with regard to the laws of war, terrorists distinguish themselves unfavorably from (most) militaries. It should nevertheless be recognized that terrorism perfectly adheres to Clausewitz’ (1968: 101) dictum that ‘War is ... an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will’.

Propaganda by deed

A very different process occurs when the perpetrators of an act of political violence want to inspire the faithful. Here, the method is also indirect and theatrical, but the target audience is a public thought to be sympathetic towards the political ends of the terrorists. The will of the opponent plays no role³. Instead, the focus is on the will of the “domestic public”, i.e. of the members of what the terrorists consider their constituency. It is thought that this target audience is likely to take an active part in the struggle when roused by the example of great deeds and of the oppressor’s vulnerability. The intended psychological effect is quite the opposite of fear. In the words of Pyotr Kropotkin (1978), ‘*Action*, the continuous action, ceaselessly renewed, of minorities brings about this transformation [of the passive masses into a revolutionary army]. Courage, devotion, the spirit of sacrifice, are as contagious as cowardice, submission, and panic’.

This strategy may be referred to as propaganda by deed, a revolutionary strategy first defined by the Italian nationalist Carlo Pisacane. Bruce Hoffman (1998: 17) summarizes Pisacane’s argument: ‘Violence ... was necessary not only to draw attention to, or generate publicity for, a cause, but to inform, educate and ultimately rally the masses

behind the revolution. The didactic purpose of violence, Pisacane argued, could never be effectively replaced by pamphlets, wall posters or assemblies⁴. While Pisacane practiced open, conventional warfare, nineteenth century revolutionaries adopted unconventional tactics, i.e. the assassination of rulers (such as Alexander II, Czar of Russia, in 1881). These tactics associate propaganda by deed with (what at a later time came to be called) terrorism at the same time that they made them better suited to the requirements of small revolutionary groups. They also associate propaganda by deed with tyrannicide. Like modern terrorism, it has an important psychological component, an indirect effect on a target that is distinct from the direct target of violence; but like tyrannicide it argues that its violence is legitimate because its target is an oppressor who has broken the compact of society by his own deeds and has thereby placed himself outside of the protection of the (moral) law. Propaganda by deed thus appeals to a long tradition in (Western) thought, in which breaches of positive law and of the normal order of society were justified by the morality of the end, the removal of tyranny⁵.

The historical continuity between terrorism and propaganda by deed appears to have led to conceptual confusion. The two strategies are not actually mutually exclusive either: a demonstration of the vulnerability of the terrorists' enemy may result in a mood of fear among the enemy public, while at the same time creating a mood of enthusiasm in a friendly audience. They are nevertheless distinct strategies, aiming at different psychological effects on different audiences. Where terrorism focuses on an enemy, propaganda by deed is directed at the home constituency. The desired outcome is not a defeated enemy, but a people rising vigorously.

Provocation by violence

The third type, which I shall call provocation by violence, combines elements of the other two. Two audiences are involved in this strategy, one identified as enemy, one friendly. The main target is the friendly audience. The purpose is to motivate it to give active support, but this is achieved by way of a second, enemy audience. The intermediate goal is to incite the enemy audience to overreact. That overreaction is then expected to generate support for the perpetrators among a friendly audience outraged by the overreaction. Therefore, the objective of the physical attack is inducing anger, lust for vengeance, and like emotions in the enemy audience⁶. Provocation succeeds when the enemy lashes out against the terrorist's constituency.

Even compared to terrorism and propaganda by deed, provocation by violence is an indirect strategy. It involves the manipulation of an enemy audience as a step on the way to achieving the desired effect on a friendly audience. The perpetrator must be certain that his enemy will react in the desired way or the strategy will fail. In the (pos-

sibly acute) perception of the 'terrorist', the enemy already fights a hidden, "dirty war". The agent needs only to provoke him to carelessness to be able to expose it. Although a revolutionary mood may not yet exist among the terrorists' constituency, the conditions justifying and enabling a revolution are already in place and in fact the struggle is already underway.

A variant of provocation by violence would translate structural but inconspicuous repression into a kind of violence more prone to discovery. Several Western European and North American terrorist groups (and some non-violent groups) were motivated by analyses of this kind during the 1960s and 1970s⁷ (Laqueur 2001). According to such self-proclaimed revolutionaries, bourgeois capitalist societies practice a kind of repressive tolerance that prevents awareness of the need for revolution. Here it is the agent's self-imposed task to unmask the enemy. His violence wants to provoke examples of the enemy's reprehensible nature and tactics. He initiates actual violence in order to provoke the authorities into committing similar acts of violence instead of their usual covert violence.

Motives behind the methods

Another weakness of Schmid & Jongman's definition, not yet discussed, is the indeterminacy of the reasons. Schmid & Jongman have it that terrorism has 'idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons.' Among Western politicians there has been a tendency since 9/11 to label as terrorist anything that is considered dangerous (illicit drug trade or "narcoterrorism") or even merely annoying (loitering teenagers or "street-terrorists"). Among terrorism scholars the issue is that 'one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter'. A solution would be to evade the problem by designating as terrorist anyone who uses the methods included in the definition. But the evasion does not work.

First, conventional military forces sometimes use the same methods, albeit by different, not usually clandestine, modes of operation and on a different, much larger scale. (Compare the World Trade Centre to Dresden, Hiroshima, or Nagasaki.) As already discussed, early airpower theorists advocated *shock and awe* in order to break the enemy's will to fight. This was also the strategy of Bomber Command according to Directive 22 of 14 February 1942 and it was the dominant factor in the success of the atomic weapon against Japan later in that war (Wijninga 2002). Propaganda by deed has a military equivalent in the form of spectacular actions which have little impact on the balance of forces but which raise the morale of the home public. An example is the Doolittle Raid on Tokyo by the American air force in early 1942, which advertised the United States' determination eventually to bring the war to the Japanese homeland. Although the raid did negligible damage to Japanese military capability and the airplanes involved in it

could not return to America, it was widely publicized in order to invigorate an American public badly shocked by the attack on Pearl Harbor⁸. Provocation has been a favorite means throughout military history to draw enemy forces into situations where they are exposed. As such, it is an element of many military stratagems.

Second, political philosophy enters into the choice of strategy. Of the three strategies discussed in this article, two adhere to a revolutionary perspective. Only terrorism in the narrow sense is not associated with revolution. Terrorists may well foresee an entirely reformed constitution, a comprehensive change in the direction of society, in its class composition and in its mores. However, if so, their focus is on the enemy as an obstacle. They aim to remove him, then perhaps afterwards to convince the public to adopt their proposals or simply to impose them. Their political strategy is not at all revolutionary; whatever the extent of the social reordering, without the belief that the people rise up *en masse*, the word is misleading. Indeed, many terrorists have no revolutionary aspirations at all: they desire freedom from foreign occupation or even freedom from domestic oppressors, while leaving the structure of society generally as it is. Once the enemy leaves or gives up, their job is done. They may go on to rule in the oppressors' stead but, aside from their own improved position, will not change the character of this rule. More importantly, these prospects have no impact on the choice of method; they are a separate matter to be decided at a separate and later point in time.

Propaganda by deed and provocation by violence, on the other hand, both aim to rouse a public to revolution. A massive uprising and a fundamental shake-up of society is precisely the point. The vanguard's job does not really end until the revolution has run its course, but its first and most important task is to inspire the people. If the conditions for a revolution are not in place (cf. Brinton 1965), the strategy fails – indeed the perpetrators will find themselves increasingly hard pressed to justify their violence. Many movements have ebbed away when sympathizers, beginning with intellectual fellow travelers, questioned first the methods, then the overall strategy and finally the goals. The decline in support for the Rote Armee Fraktion in 1970s West Germany, for example, followed this pattern⁹.

From the perspective of political philosophy, the difference between propaganda by deed and provocation by violence lies in their analyses of the pre-revolutionary situation. The propagandists are rather more optimistic about the will of the people to rise up once they have demonstrated the vulnerability of their oppressors. In the provocateurs' view, the people are not yet sufficiently aware of the necessity of revolution. Provocateurs possess knowledge not shared by their public, so they constitute an intellectual vanguard in an objective sense, by virtue of a privileged social position (cf. Gramsci 1971). Propagandists, on the other hand, assume that insight into the actual conditions of oppression is readily accessible to the audience, which, in fact, may already share their

analysis (e.g., Sorel 1941). The revolution needs only the spirit of action to proceed. This philosophical difference expresses itself most dramatically when public support for the revolution does not materialize and sympathizers drift away. The propagandist in this situation must re-evaluate his analysis, may find that it was wrong and cease his activities; or he may conclude that oppression was less obvious than he thought and adopt the perspective of the provocateur. The provocateur is likely to conclude that he has been too timid in exposing the brutality of the oppressor and so is likely to escalate the level of his violence.

If an uprising does occur, the strategic situation changes dramatically. Since whatever the revolutionaries can do to their enemies beforehand pales in comparison, damage to the enemy is a decidedly secondary consideration. In contrast to terrorism, the revolutionary strategies set very little store by their opponent's morale; provocation by violence even raises the enemy's fighting spirit (while lowering the enemy's capacity for sober judgment). It is a common hope among revolutionaries that their enemies will simply give up when faced with incontrovertible evidence of a popular uprising. Nor is this an unreasonable hope: many revolutions, particularly since the 1980s, have been remarkably bloodless.

Implications: Terrorist target selection

On a practical level, the distinctions discussed above express themselves in the perpetrators' choice of target. Drake (1998) describes the process by which terrorists select their targets very well. It begins with defining strategic objectives, and continues with (in order) identifying suitable targets, determining whether these are within the group's capability, whether attacking these is ideologically justifiable and justifiable to supporters and/or wider opinion, assessing the target's protection, risks and benefits, to the final decision – if the answer to all these is yes – to attack a particular target. (If the answer is no, a substitute target will be sought, or failing that, the campaign ends.) Unfortunately, Drake does not distinguish between the three strategic variants.

First, the psychological effect of an attack depends in part on the identity of the victim. The more an enemy audience identifies with the victim, the more it is frightened. In order to spread fear widely, it is useful to strike at common representatives of the enemy to give the impression that almost any enemy individual or installation could be the next target. Alternatively, in order to enrage an enemy audience, it is useful to strike at a target that stands as a symbol of its achievements or its identity. A conspicuous target is also useful for propagandistic purposes, as a demonstration of the capacity to inflict substantial damage on specific and significant symbols of oppression. Note that what is symbolic of achievement to one audience may very well be symbolic of oppres-

sion to another audience, but this is not necessarily the case. A friendly audience may applaud the assassination of the director of the secret police, but an enemy audience, accepting his assassination as a professional risk, may not be impressed at all.

Second, ideological justification means something different to the provocateur and to the propagandist than to the terrorist. If, as I assume, Drake includes the acceptability of “collateral damage” (damage to, including death of, innocent bystanders) under this heading, then the question also has profound strategic consequences. Terrorism in the narrow sense needs only to consider the effect on an enemy audience. Collateral damage does not detract from the hurt and the fear, perhaps even adds to it. However, if propaganda by deed is to be effective, it is necessary that the target is perceived by the intended audience as implicated in oppressive practices, i.e. while the target may be civilian, it cannot be innocent in the eyes of the perpetrators’ constituency. Collateral damage risks tainting the righteousness of the struggle, which may turn a revolution into a dirty war – with all the loss of public support that entails.

Implications: Counterterrorism

The distinctions made in this article also have implications for the other side. Counterterrorist policies work best when they take account of the various strategies pursued by terrorists. For example, Mark Juergensmeyer (2002: 40) warns of the risks of the American reaction to 9/11:

What the perpetrators of such acts expect – and indeed welcome, is a response as vicious as the acts themselves. By goading secular authorities into responding to terror with terror, they hope to accomplish two things. First, they want tangible evidence for their claim that the secular enemy is a monster. Second, they hope to bring to the surface the great war – a war that they have told their potential supporters was hidden, but real.

And Mark Sedgwick (2004: 800):

The primary objective of the ‘deed’ of 9/11 was not its direct impact on America but rather its indirect propaganda impact on al-Qaeda’s potential supporters. A secondary objective would have been to ‘provoke’ America into actions that would alienate al-Qaeda’s potential supporters from America, thus turning more of them into actual supporters.

Both Juergensmeyer and Sedgwick stress that the terrorists’ primary audience is domestic and sympathetic. In terms of the present article, Juergensmeyer refers to

propaganda by deed. Sedgwick refers both to propaganda by deed and to provocation by violence, indeed recognizes the distinction between the two at the same time that he stresses the distinction between both and terrorism in the narrow sense.

Juergensmeyer is primarily interested in understanding the terrorists' rationale. The mechanism in the quotation above appears almost as an afterthought in an article devoted to al-Qaeda's ideology. But it is an important afterthought, as Juergensmeyer plainly recognizes. It furnishes an explanation of al-Qaeda's appeal, or the appeal of its ideology. In addition to the ideology's roots in Muslim theology (as revised since the 19th century; cf. Lincoln 2003), the explanation seems to lie in a clever strategy that induces its enemy to produce evidence of its own claims. The analysis presented here supplements Juergensmeyer by pointing out that both strategy and ideology can be understood as revolutionary.

Sedgwick places al-Qaeda in the context of successive 'waves of terrorism' (borrowed from Rapoport 2001). He argues that the fourth wave, contemporary religious terrorism, uses methods that are associated in the history of terrorism with the first wave, rather than those of the second and third wave¹⁰. Specifically, al-Qaeda employs the propaganda of the deed developed by the socialist/anarchist, sometimes nationalist, terrorists of the 1890s. This argument refers to the primary objective in the quotation above. Additionally, the secondary objective, provocation by violence, represents a strategy that is not explicit in any of the four waves. What Sedgwick calls objectives, this article calls strategies. However, where Sedgwick seeks a historical comparison, this article argues an underlying agreement: both first wave terrorism and present Islamic fundamentalist terrorism are revolutionary in perspective; and this agreement extends both to method and to political philosophy.

Juergensmeyer and Sedgwick demonstrate an emerging interest in the complexities of terrorist and counterterrorist strategies, prompted by al-Qaeda's "Jihad against Jews and crusaders" (reprinted in Rubin and Rubin 2002) and by the United States' *War against Terror*. Both suspect that the West's reaction may be counterproductive, as mounting evidence from Iraq, the greater Middle East and from Muslim populations in Western Europe shows that al-Qaeda's appeal is growing, even after widespread condemnation of its tactics and even as active military and police searches reduce its leadership capabilities (Burke 2004). Western leaders responding to terrorism with vows not to budge and pursuing a strategy of active military engagement in the Middle East seem to be missing a point.

Notes

1. Part of this material was presented to the 2003 Annual Conference of the

- Midwestern Political Science Association in Chicago, on April 5, 2003. I thank panel and audience for their comments.
2. This delimitation does not exclude the possibility that other forms of violence, perhaps most or all of them in this age, have important theatrical aspects (cf. Der Derian 2001).
 3. Although it may be a factor at a later stage, after the ancient regime is overthrown, when the revolutionary regime attempts to establish itself against outside opposition.
 4. Pisacane's own attempt at the practice of propaganda by deed failed miserably. Carlo Pisacane (1818-1857) gave up his birthright as Duke of San Giovanni to join Mazzini's republican forces; his invasion of the Neapolitan kingdom with only 300 men failed to inspire a general revolt, resulting instead in swift defeat and his own death.
 5. Tyrannicide contradicts revolution, although not in the original sense of the word: a restoration of an old order long corrupted. The principal distinction between propaganda by deed (applied to revolution in the classic sense) and tyrannicide lies in the awareness, exhibited in the former, that the overthrow of a political system requires more than the removal of individuals, i.e. in the recognition, in its philosophy of history, that social forces are more important than "great men": the removal of individual tyrants can help to undermine the system and it can raise the awareness and the spirits of the oppressed, but it cannot replace revolution (cf. Laqueur 1978).
 6. While fear does not equal anger, it often seems to give rise to it. On the other hand, fear can also incapacitate. When fear leads to inaction on the part of an enemy, this strategy fails. Fear is not the point; the point is anger.
 7. The Dutch *Provo* group attempted the unmasking by means of non-violent demonstrations that offended the sensibilities of the authorities. Provo achieved some success when smoking dope on the steps of the Second World War memorial led to police intervention violent enough in its turn to offend the sensibilities of the Dutch public. The result was the dismissal of the mayor and the police commissioner of Amsterdam and the eventual adoption of a policy of official tolerance of soft drugs.
 8. The movie *Pearl Harbor* (Touchstone Pictures 2001) which begins with the Japanese attack ends with the Doolittle Raid as an apparently, suitably heroic conclusion for a Hollywood blockbuster.
 9. I leave aside the question of the conditions for revolution, whether such conditions are objective (as many revolutionaries believe) or intersubjective (discursive), i.e. whether or not they are also in part the product of the revolutionaries' activities.

10. For the sake of completeness: The second wave is the anticolonial terrorism of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. The third wave is the leftist terrorism of the 1970s and 1980s. The latter, “fresh” in the memory of terrorism scholars, provides the model for most contemporary theorizing. Perhaps Sedgwick’s greatest contribution is freeing terrorism studies from that legacy and pointing it towards the earlier and now, again, more useful model.

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Can airpower be used effectively against terrorism and insurgency?

Herman Koolstra

Introduction

The last two decades have seen the maturation of airpower. After years of teething problems during which weapons and navigation were inaccurate and the capability to survive a Surface to Air Missile (SAM) belt were slim, airpower became the prime offensive weapon. Thanks to GPS it achieved an accurate navigation capability and was equipped with precise guided weapons and targeting systems. And thanks to at least some stealthy aircraft and cruise missiles the threat of enemy air defense could be mitigated. Thus, airpower advocates claimed that airpower was able to 'hit every target anywhere at any time'. A more realistic statement would probably be that the United States certainly has that airpower capability but has never been challenged by an equal opponent. This air superiority has allowed the USA to exploit its capability in conventional wars.

Due to its enormous warfare capabilities, no opponent in his right mind will try to engage the USA up front in a conventional battle. Because terrorism, insurgency and guerilla warfare are military answers where a conventional battle will not achieve political goals, we should not be surprised that we are faced with these threats at this moment.

Terrorism, insurgency and guerilla warfare may differ considerably from conventional warfare in terms of objectives, strategies, targets and weapons. They do, however, present a modern air force with similar problems. The enemy is very difficult to locate and even when he is visible, it may only be for a short period. This article will only differentiate between types of unconventional warfare if they present divergent military problems. The key question I will try to address is: can airpower adapt to counter these threats?

In approaching this problem, the adaptation potential of airpower will be considered first, after which the adaptation potential of any opponents will be looked at. This adaptation can be both in a technical area (the *machine*) as well as in the way we conduct our operations (the *man*). I will then evaluate the present use of air power in air defense, air reconnaissance, and conventional attack scenarios against non-conventional opponents. The next step is to look at the direction in which airpower theorists point and to see if and how airpower can adapt.

Airpower development

The machine

Airpower has adapted considerably over the last century. This in itself is not surprising for a new branch in the war business. On the contrary, it is a very common pattern in every new type of business, and is described by several theorists. However, after a period of rapid development, the normal pattern is that the rate of change will decrease and will eventually result in a bureaucratic and conservative organization. Presently, the perception of many air force officers is that their air force is a high-tech fast-changing organization. If this were the case, the air force might have the inherent capability to adjust rapidly to new threats. However, once air forces have reached the more bureaucratic stage, changing the organization is much harder. This is the first issue I will have to address. The second and even more difficult issue is what changes (if any) are necessary to cope with these threats.

In the last three decades, most changes in airpower capability have consisted of the incorporation of computer, communication and sensor improvements. Airframes and engines have seen only minor improvements. The B52, which first flew in 1952, is still flying and will remain in service for several more decades¹. The proposed replacement of the F-16, the F35, has about the same speed and maneuverability as its predecessor, but will differ considerably in computer, sensor and stealth capability. A careful analysis will show that the implementation of these changes is extremely slow. Just a few examples may suffice to prove the point. The development of the F15 replacement (which finally became the Raptor) started in 1985 with a small project office at Wright Patterson Air Force Base. When I visited the office in January 1985, they (a three-man office!) had just started to draw up initial requirements and were hoping to have the real aircraft flying in a decade. The Raptor is presently just starting to go into service, twenty years after the first initiative. However, in the meantime the whole political and military situation has changed. A Dutch example: the F-16 Mid-Life update project was started in the late 80s but then it took ten years to complete the design and testing. This slow process has several causes. Part of the problem might be attributed to the slow political approval process, but that is not the key issue. Aircraft (military and civilian) have become complex systems. Building complex systems is a tough job. For example, presently aircraft software consists of several million lines of code. Validating all these processes and ensuring safety has become a gigantic task. Every aircraft industry employs a rigid development structure with several tests during the development stage. But with every new capability which is added to the design, the number of possible errors and conflicts increases². Theoretically, the number of combinations increases with the faculty of the

number of processes. For example, if the software can handle 10 different tasks there are 3,628,800 possible combinations of tasks, adding an eleventh will raise the number of combinations to 39,916,800. Of course the real number is significantly smaller because software engineers will employ techniques to prevent cross-interference of running processes as much as possible. But during my experience of more than 20 years as an experimental test pilot I was never able to release new software to the service without any remaining errors. And during operational use more errors will surface. Of course, software errors are a common experience for anybody who works with a Microsoft product. But there is a huge difference between a bomb or a missile behaving wrongly or a word processor quitting because it has performed an illegal operation. Another interesting difference is that by releasing beta versions of its software, Microsoft creates an enormous test force without paying a penny. This is of course completely impossible in military developments.

So, what is left of the rapidly developing airpower which we used to have a few decades ago? The truth of the matter is that the aircraft industry today is so slow to incorporate new computers and sensors in its platforms that the most threatening problem is diminishing replacement of resources. The computers and components which were used in the design phase of the aircraft are obsolete by the time the aircraft comes into service. At the same time the aircraft has become more and more expensive as its capabilities increased and a growing part of the cost of an aircraft can be attributed to this very expensive development. The military combat aircraft has also become an all-round fighting machine. It is no longer a specialized aircraft for either air defense or ground attack but a fighter-bomber that can perform both. The positive effect of this change is that fewer aircraft are required to do the job; a modern fighter bomber can protect itself on its way to the target and can be re-rolled if necessary. On the other hand, more roles imply more complexity.

So, where do we stand today with airpower? We do have capable highly complex aircraft, but only in limited numbers because of the high cost. These aircraft have proven their capabilities during past conventional conflicts. They are expensive to maintain and adding new capabilities to these aircraft requires a considerable and expensive effort which will take at least several years of development and testing.

The man

But it is not only the machine; airpower is that fine combination of man and machine. How flexible are our pilots in changing tactics and procedures? My experience is that pilots do adapt to new situations. The air force is an environment in which there are not so many players and every pilot is a professional. Authority and respect among pilots is

more based on skill and experience than on rank or power. In this type of environment it is easier to be flexible than in an army where you have to deal with large numbers or organizations which are often controlled by rank and power alone. Even in peace time tactics constantly change as a result of experience gained by pilots during exercises. When you have been away from operational flying to do a desk job you will notice quite a change in tactics when you return to flying status. Also during debriefings by operators who participated in past conflicts I learned that they had constantly adapted procedures during the campaign to cope with the unexpected. Flexibility is indeed a key characteristic of airpower operators.

Opponent capability

The machine

How does this compare to our adversaries? First, we have to admit that our knowledge about our adversaries is limited. Some observations about their 'machines' can be made. They may have very old-fashioned weapons, but simple rocket propelled grenades can down helicopters and car bombs can be constructed from fertilizer and detonators. The weapons used in 9/11 were simple box cutters³. But that is not the complete story. Thanks to the great advances in the field of communication they, like everybody else, can communicate with each other from almost anywhere in the world, using the Internet and cellular phones. They can use these same phones to trigger explosive devices from a distance. By rapidly changing devices and using prepaid telephone cards, they are able to hide their identity. Through the Internet they have access to a lot of information and if they wish they can also communicate with each other in fairly secure ways⁴. Encoding programs can be downloaded freely. On top of that, the Internet may also be used as an advertising and recruiting device. And with the present cheap means of international transport people can move quickly and freely as long as they are not linked to terrorist groups. In short, our open, highly technological, society can be used to their advantage.

So, it appears that our adversaries are presently using low-technology weapons in a high-technology environment. In theory, it should be possible for terrorists to build small cruise missiles based on GPS, computers and remote control aircraft components, which are readily available in specialized hobby shops. This might be a much safer way to engage in an aerial attack than hijacking an airplane and hard to counter. Or they may produce some cheap chemical or biological weapons of mass destruction.

However, up to now terrorists have mostly attacked using old fashioned means, without using all the technology which- in theory at least- is available to them.

The man

We should be even more careful when we make assumptions about “the man”. We are certainly not talking about a homogeneous group and there does not seem to be a generally accepted theory on why someone becomes a terrorist⁵. However, the Frustration Aggression Hypothesis (FAH)⁶ developed by Berkowitz has been compelling, particularly in its simplicity. Therefore, it would be better to focus on how they operate to expose possible weaknesses⁷. We might assume that terrorists have a problem organizing and recruiting⁸. Recruiting is a long process which slowly draws people into the system. Recruiting the right mix of personnel takes time. Training and testing (in secrecy) is much harder than for a conventional army. This might be a reason why until now most terrorist have used relatively simple methods of attack. Even with highly skilled personnel, it requires much iteration and several specialists to make weapons that are more advanced and it also requires more training. An interesting article in *Natuur en Techniek*, a Dutch scientific magazine⁹, gave a few examples of how terrorist have failed (up to now) to produce adequate chemical and biological weapons. Maybe we should be thankful that making weapons of mass destruction is more complicated than is often suggested. On the other hand, because their simple methods are still effective the need to use more complex approaches might also be small.

To summarize, when we look from our perspective, we see complex weaponry that is difficult to change, with flexible and well-trained professionals as operators. Our opponents, however, have a high degree of flexibility in terms of machines, but problems recruiting, organizing and training personnel. This will hamper them in making more complex weaponry and necessitates more time to plan and execute attacks.

The use of airpower against unconventional opponents

Air defense

The air defense network has always been the most sophisticated part of airpower. It was the first to use a network centric approach with coupled radar stations, centralized command and control agencies that direct SAM batteries and highly sophisticated fighter aircraft equipped with beyond visual range missiles. However, the whole system

is intended to fight an enemy from outside, in which case the radars will give ample warning time to launch fighters. But the system is far less capable of countering a threat from within, as was proven on 9/11. The readiness state on 9/11 was of course not high, but even today with higher alert states the defense against a 9/11-type attack remains difficult. Let us look at the physics first.

We assume an aircraft in the air is hijacked and directed to a target that is 30 minutes' flying away¹⁰. Assuming a speed of Mach 0.8 (standard), the aircraft will fly approximately 240 nautical miles. Air defense has two options to counter this hijacked plane. The best result is achieved by having aircraft fly Combat Air Patrols and directing them to the threat if required. However, to have two fighter aircraft (the minimum) airborne 24 hours a day and 7 days a week is extremely expensive and would cost around 20,000 flying hours a year¹¹. That is close to the total number of RNLAf yearly flying hours, so it would drain all the resources.

A more economical way is to have aircraft on quick reaction alert (QRA) and scramble them only when needed. But scrambling aircraft costs precious minutes and calculations show that it is hard to intercept an aircraft that is past the scrambling base and flying away¹². On the other hand, if the hijacked aircraft were flying straight towards the threat the situation would be more favorable. The distance covered by the hijacked airplane and our interceptor can be added which means that an interceptor can easily be scrambled against a target that is still 300 nm away and approaching. It will complete the intercept in 20 minutes at half distance, which will leave 10 minutes to decide what to do and get permission to fire if conditions so dictate. The latter example was always the case in a classical war situation. The enemy is detected when flying towards our country and is met head on by our scrambled fighters. But in a terrorist scenario this will not work. First, it is not always clear what the hijacked airplane's target is and even if we did know the most likely target(s), we would not be able to reposition our airfields over night. Theoretically, fighters should be located close to possible target(s), which enables them to meet the threat head on. The bottom line is that aircraft on alert can intercept some aircraft, but certainly not all aircraft and the shorter the time is from the hijack moment to the target impact, the harder it will be.

A third way to defend the air space is to use SAM batteries. A tricky choice, of course. There is no way to ascertain whether the aircraft is having navigational or communication problems, the only choice is to either shoot or hold fire. It is possible to have a no-fly zone for certain special areas and for some time periods, but experience has shown that most real scrambles are against planes which are not hijacked at all but have some other kind of problem.

Air defense was never easy. In all classical wars, aircraft were able to penetrate air defense systems. Air defense against a terrorist threat is not easy either. It is either dan-

gerous (when using SAMs), has limited effectiveness (when using QRA aircraft) or is cost prohibitive (when using CAPs). From this analysis, it is clear that prevention is the only feasible option when trying to defend against a 9/11-type scenario. But we should also be aware that 9/11 was just one type of scenario. Terrorists might invent other ways to get control over an airliner or to terrorize airspace. Building a simple cruise missile is theoretically within reach. Detecting and defending against such a threat poses a different kind of problem. It is tough to detect and identify small and slow flying objects. On the positive side, those objects will probably not carry a heavy payload.

Reconnaissance

Reconnaissance is the oldest use of airpower. The high ground has always been the favourite position to watch the battle and the use of balloons and aircraft hugely improved the quality of reconnaissance. During the Cold War, the most common reconnaissance platforms were fast combat aircraft equipped with cameras. Of course there was a limited number of very specialized aircraft such as the SR-71 and the U-2 (TR-2), which could fly unchallenged above (some) enemy territory, but all other aircraft were vulnerable to enemy fighters and SAMs and needed speed and agility¹³. So, combat aircraft were used. But combat aircraft have little endurance and could not loiter over the target area. Neither could reconnaissance satellites stay above the target area because they have to be in low orbits (to get a better view of their targets) and low orbits are not geo-stationary. The result was that all information gathered by reconnaissance assets was always outdated by the time the aircraft came back. But low-intensity conflicts, where one party had air superiority, made it possible to employ a different kind of bird, the reconnaissance UAV. The combination of large wings, low speed and being unmanned in a theatre without any threat made it possible to loiter over the target area for more than a day using a relative simple and cheap UAV. The tactical consequence was that one could move from reconnaissance to surveillance. No wonder Israel was one of the first users of UAVs. Having air supremacy above its own country and part of the southern Lebanon it used simple UAVs to spot rocket attacks on its settlements in the north of Galilee. When a rocket firing was spotted, the operators were able to track the shooters and follow them to their hideouts and within half an hour of the attack a combat aircraft, equipped with laser-guided weapons would attack them. A perfect example of networking and of what surveillance can do. Today, Predators are doing the same job for the USA. To even shorten the cycle, some Predator-Bs are now equipped with weapons as well so they can immediately react to a threat. This is an interesting development, because whereas the UAV was initially a cheap an expendable aircraft, when you start to integrate weapons into the system, it will become more complex. The more expensive

it is, the harder you will seek to prevent it from crashing (which is what UAVs tend to do at a much higher rate than combat aircraft). To prevent it from crashing you have to add redundancy into the system, which will make it even more expensive and more complex, and finally you may as well add a crew! There should be some optimal point up to which you would want to invest in UAVs or you might end up with the equivalent of combat aircraft in terms of price and complexity, but without the versatility and adaptability to new tasks of manned aircraft.

There are, however, some limitations to these systems. At 15,000 feet you may be able to oversee an area of more than 20 square nautical miles¹⁴ but the sensor will only look at a small spot at a time, typically an area of 500 by 500 feet¹⁵. And the picture needs to be interpreted. To carefully scan the complete area (a few seconds in each direction) will take four hours¹⁶. Therefore, this will only work if the operators have some information on where to look or whether the whole area is deserted. And of course, if an explosion triggers the operators they might immediately direct the cameras to the troubled spot. But you can imagine that with a car bomb that was positioned hours ago with an explosion triggered from a distance, it will be hard to find any trace of the suspects. It will also be difficult to prevent the taking of hostages and suicide attacks. Only if the enemy has a limited area of operation and exposes himself, like, for example, in the insurgency in Fallujah, is the UAV able to make the difference. In terrorist attacks like those that took place in London and Madrid it is difficult to see a role for a UAV.

Ground attack

The final airpower role to discuss is in ground attack. Airpower today is able to strike any ground target with precision once it is located. The preferred way of operation is a composite air operation in which the attack aircraft, protected by air defense fighters and electronic warfare assets, will attack targets that were selected from a target list. To develop target lists requires a lot of work. However, the USA maintains a large peacetime effort to build target lists for all possible contingencies. Reconnaissance assets like satellites and electronic intelligence aircraft are able to locate most stationary targets in preparing for conventional conflicts. During the battle itself, real-time JSTAR aircraft can 'see' moving wheeled and tracked vehicles with their powerful synthetic aperture radar.

However, during unconventional battles, there might not be a target list and the enemy's truck is hard to spot by JSTAR if it does not stand out in the normal traffic flow. And instead of proceeding to a target from the list, attack aircraft in low-threat scenarios are presently orbiting until they are called up to intervene. What is true for air defense combat air patrols also holds for ground attack air patrols. They consume a

large amount of flying hours and are expensive to maintain. However, given the empty battlefield, airpower is the logical choice because of its ability to protect a large area with fewer assets. Good and fast cooperation between spotters and shooters enhances those capabilities.

Because of the cost involved in having expensive fighter bombers loiter, it is logical to look at the cost of an armed UAV as well. However, one thing should not be overlooked and that is response time. The speed of a fighter-bomber is more than five times higher than that of a UAV. If ground spotters detect a target and want immediate fire support, a fighter-bomber can deliver that five times faster than a UAV. Or, to put it differently, if for a certain area airpower is required to give fire support within, let us say, 30 minutes, you need 5 squared (= 25) times more UAVs than fighter bombers to do the job. The same holds true if you compare an attack helicopter with a fighter-bomber because the attack helicopter has about the same speed as a UAV.

It seems logical to conclude that attack helicopters and armed UAVs are more suited to a small area that is relatively target-rich. However, to cover a fast, not target-rich environment the fighter-bomber is the better choice. Special attention should also be given to the weapons used. A drawback might be that most weapons are still oversized for the role. If the price of stopping the insurgency in Fallujah is ruining the city, that price may be excessive and the resulting situation may backfire and trigger more unrest. There is a definite requirement for smaller and if possible non-lethal munitions so that collateral damage is much smaller. Precision alone is definitely not good enough.

Unconventional war and the airpower theory

The theory

The crucial question of course is: do our airpower strategies provide answers to the problems we are facing now? An interesting exercise is to apply some airpower theory and see if it can give any inspiration. One of the most popular theorists in the airpower arena is John Boyd with his famous OODA loop (Observe, Orient, Decide and Act)¹⁷. John Boyd realized that fighting an enemy is a process. As an educated engineer, he was well aware of the ins and outs of system and control theory. To control a process you have to observe and orient, make a decision, carry it out and then start all over again because the situation is changing. The use of control theory in other than mechanical processes became popular in last part of the previous century, for instance, in economics, biology and, thanks to Boyd, in the art of warfare. An important fact in the control and process theory is that the control should be swift enough to prevent the system from

running wild. One example of a system running wild by running too slow is of course the famous “pork price curve” and we should try to prevent that from happening. To put it in layman’s terms, if your loop is too slow the war is controlling you instead of the other way around. Here, I want to point out the common misconception that the OODA loop is only a decision loop. The A for Act is vital and a decision is just a part of it. And our whole loop should be quicker than that of our opponent. Another interesting point is that if you try to change a system faster than the system can handle, it will basically not change at all. This is a common experience in organizations where they reorganize constantly at a speed that their staff cannot handle. They might simply stop changing and become lethargic.

Another important phenomenon that was recognized by Boyd, and also by Warden, is that our opponent is a living organism, constantly changing, adapting to new situations as we are, in order to survive. Therefore, the orientation phase is very essential. If, for example, we were controlling a simple system like an airplane, the loop could be shortened to simply Observe, Decide and Act, in which case the decision is based on known algorithms. The flight control system of the F-16 is doing just that and is able to control even an unstable airplane. The orientation phase is important to discover our opponent’s changes in tactics and strategy and exploit them to keep the initiative on our side.

A further important consideration is that there is not just one loop. The loop that is most commonly known is the Air Task Order (ATO) cycle that repeats itself every 24 hours. However, the OODA loop for a pilot engaged in air-to-air combat is measured in seconds instead of hours. The same is true for a Patriot missile operator. On the other hand, if we consider our procurement and development cycle, as we discussed above, the process takes a few decades and the OODA loops should be measured in years.

If we restrict ourselves for a moment to the cycle of the military operation, we observe that the enemy’s cycle is normally fairly long. To plan and execute a 9/11-type attack took more than a year. And even a simpler attack like the one in Madrid needed several weeks to organize. If we compare the operational loop of our opponent to ours, we seem to be in the lead. Given the proper alert state, we can scramble an aircraft in minutes. In air defense and ground attacks, we have developed time-sensitive targeting procedures that facilitate a quick connection (preferably data link) between ground observers/Special Forces and combat aircraft. An OODA loop can take as little as 30 minutes and in some situations, for example, with armed UAVs or a combat aircraft loitering above a trouble spot, the reaction time can be measured in minutes.

The biggest problem is of course not the fact that our opponent’s loop is shorter than ours, but that most of his loop is hidden. Should we then change John Boyd’s rule to say that we must operate quicker than the visible part of the loop of our opponent? I

believe this is the consequence. Non-visible parts do not count⁸. And there we have it. If the opponent can limit his visible part of the loop to a few minutes, which is theoretically possible in a 9/11-type aerial attack, or even to zero in the case of a car bomb, we are operationally outmaneuvered. He is controlling us and we have lost the initiative. This is exactly the type of conflict, according to our airpower theorists, we should not engage in. Being defensive and reactive requires an immense number of personnel, and victory is hard to obtain. And for airpower a defensive posture is also extremely expensive, as was illustrated by the number of aircraft needed to man just one CAP over the Netherlands.

Future outlook

What is the role of airpower if we can make the opponent's loop more visible?

The type of opponent and how early he is detected definitely makes the difference here. If, for example, a small group of terrorists is detected well in advance you might not need airpower at all. Maybe some helicopters are appropriate when an arresting team takes them in, but “nice to have” is definitely not the same as necessary.

However, the larger the group of opponents, the better armed they are. The later they are detected, the more appropriate it seems to use airpower. When you are fighting an insurgency, or when some of your troops on the ground are ambushed, airpower might be your only option to concentrate enough firepower on the right spot. This is of course logical as airpower combines high firepower with high speed.

There are some other things airpower can do to alleviate, for example, the problems of an occupying force on the ground. Air transport, given air supremacy, can be a smarter way to move than ground transport. But the basic problem in engaging in non-conventional conflicts is exposing the opponent sooner.

How to make the opponent's loop visible?

In we put ourselves in the position of a terrorist, we will discover that having a magnificent plan to kill a few thousand people might seem easy in theory but in reality it is not easy at all. We would need an organization, money, weapons, training and time. This means that terrorist groups are vulnerable to entrapment, infiltration and other forms of good human intelligence. Another important point is that we need broad popular support. If we do not win the hearts and minds of the population of the country we are fighting in, the terrorist will have a massive support base, whereas we will lack the

essential information base. We must also maintain the moral high ground (as Boyd pointed out). Using non-lethal weapons as far as possible and treating captured prisoners humanely are some of the essential ingredients, not only to win the hearts and minds of the countries we might be fighting in but also to guard the hearts and minds of our own soldiers.

What can technology do?

Theoretically, technology can achieve a lot but not everything is practically possible. To mix fertilizer with a negative catalyst that will degrade its explosive potential and does not harm crops, or to protect all our weapons with devices that prevent unauthorized use might both be feasible. However, the problem is that there are millions of weapons around and at thousands of different fertilizer firms, which will make such ideas practically impossible.

Another approach might be to try and improve our high-tech weapons with more features. My estimation is that those weapons are very effective in their present roles but improving them is a costly and time-consuming effort. What we should do is make use of existing Commercial Off the Shelf (COTS) equipment and adapt it for military use. We need, for instance, more sensors, and not just a few, but probably thousands. We should try to find the easiest way to implement this new equipment with rapid prototyping and with a fast interaction between engineers and operators¹⁹, and not necessarily in complicated weapon platforms. Some options are being investigated.

It should be possible to measure metal objects without the need to pass through a detection gate and detect people with hidden arms, without them knowing that they are scanned. Every new handheld phone has a camera and exploiting this commercial technology should make it possible to change cellular phones into remote cameras forming a large network. To take full advantage of a large sensor network some automatic processing is also required. Some of these techniques are presently also being explored by police forces.

What changes are required for airpower?

General

There is a fundamental question that we must address: can airpower adapt to a quicker OODA loop or can it operate in a better way? One way to improve the loop is Network Centric Warfare (NCW)²⁰. A limited implementation of NCW could be seen in recent conflicts but the question is if NCW can be exploited in non-conventional conflicts as well.

Air defense

To improve the speed of the OODA loop in air defense is difficult. Speed increases for fighter aircraft can save just a minute or so and are extremely expensive. Long-range weapons are useful in a conventional conflict but not during a terrorist attack when the pilot has to join up with the target aircraft to identify what is going on. The network centric capabilities do give the general at the top a lot of detailed information. However, when a lot of information is available at the top, the tendency is to make all the decisions at the highest possible level and preferably at the political level. The 9/11 scenario is once again a good example. Say an air force pilot has intercepted a hijacked airplane, so, fortunately, he is in time, and recognizes that the plane is on a fatal collision course with a building. All the time advantages may be lost if the minister in charge of terrorism must first be contacted to get clearance to attack. Although understandably the minister likes to take that decision himself, I wonder if he realizes how little time he has available to get informed and how much time he has left to decide. So a system that requires high-level political approval in this situation might point at an unconscious decision not to act at all. The better way would be that politicians give guidelines up front to the military and let the military, who have people on duty 24 hours a day, control the action. This was also the way of air defense during the Cold War and the way it is presently handled in the USA. This change would increase the speed of the OODA loop probably more than any technical enhancement would

Reconnaissance

What we need for better reconnaissance is more sensors. Here, we should fully exploit the capabilities of cheap cameras and cellular phones, as mentioned earlier. Network sensors with automated scene recognition might be a feasible technical development. It may be a good idea as well to increase the number of sensors on a UAV platform. This might be more cost-effective than just increasing the number of UAVs, which is limited by the availability of satellite communications. However, because the area we have to cover is so large we should not focus on UAVs alone; we must start to consider every soldier as an intelligence source and he must be connected to the network. There are other airpower solutions to increase reconnaissance capability. A USA colonel missed the small Cessna Aircraft in Iraq that was available in Vietnam! Indeed a Cessna with GPS, laser pointer and NVGs can be an asset which might be even cheaper than a Predator.

Ground attack

Ground attack needs every intelligence source -basically every soldier- to give an accurate target description and position with minimum time delay. That is what we should

achieve with NCW. Furthermore, as stated earlier, we need smaller weapons and more non-lethal weapons that can be delivered from the air.

Conclusion

Airpower is limited in fighting unconventional wars. The smaller the war and the shorter the exposure time of the opponent the lesser the chances are that airpower can be used effectively. Airpower is expensive to use in a defensive position with aircraft in the air just patrolling. And this is not the way we should operate; we must take the initiative. The only way to gain that initiative is to expose the opponent earlier. Airpower can play a role in increasing the number of sensors but will never be able to do this alone. Unorthodox use of airpower, including the Cessna, might give some help.

One fact is in our favor: in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism we normally own the sky. We can use it to transport our troops more safely, engage in reconnaissance and attack if time is available. The airpower operators can adapt and should adapt to using unconventional and maybe low-tech means and learn to work with the individual soldier in the field.

Notes

1. The information on technical development is derived from the personal experience of the author. The author graduated from the USAF Test Pilot School in 1984 and has 20 years of experience as a test pilot for the RNLAf. He participated as a test pilot in more than 100 development projects for the NF5 and F-16. He was Test Director of the Operational Test and Evaluation of the Mid-Life Update of the F-16 in 1996 and 1997. He was Head of the Fighter Requirement Branch from 1998 to 2000 and was Head of the Flight Test Department from 2000 until 2004. He participated in the Multinational Fighter Program as a member of the cockpit review team and as a member of the operational sub committee.
2. There are several ways to model complexity. A common way (Metcalf's rule) states that the value of a network increases with the square of the number of nodes (participants). Another method, used here by the author is to calculate the number of possible combinations. In that case the number of combinations is the faculty (!) of the number of players/systems or modes, where $3! = 1 \times 2 \times 3$ (6). This means that with only three systems there are six different combinations. In flight testing all these combination might have errors that only surface in a particular combination and therefore the faculty rule is the better rule to describe complexity.
3. David Clark Technology & Terrorism 2004.

4. See M.Conway's essay in *Technology & Terrorism* 2004. It is interesting to note that, as far as we know, to date terrorists have used old fashioned means such as semagrams and have not used more sophisticated methods, for instance, digital steganography, which, by the way, can be cracked through statistical analysis.
5. Friedland *Becoming a Terrorist*: 82.
6. The theory was initially developed to explain individual behavior. The use for groups, e.g. terrorists, is indeed compelling. However, there are many who are frustrated but will never turn into terrorists. See John Horgan *The Psychology of Terrorism* 2005: 57.
7. John Horgan *The Psychology of Terrorism* 2005: 31.
8. John Horgan *The Psychology of Terrorism* 2005: 96.
9. See *Natuur en Techniek* September 2005, *De incompetentie van de terrorist*
10. A general description on how air defense is done can be found in Brassey's *Airpower Aircraft Weapons Systems and Technology* series, vol. 7, 1989.
11. $24 * 2 * 365 = 17,520$; adding 15% for moving to and from the CAP makes 20,148. The RNLAF produces around 25, 000 F-16 flying hours per year.
12. The following figures are valid for an F-16 and based on the T.O. F-16M-1-1 (LMTAS). It will take the pilot around 5 minutes to run to the plane, strap in and get it (and all the systems) started. To get airborne and accelerate to the preferred climb speed of 0.9 Mach will take another minute, to climb to 36,000 feet, which is the best altitude to fly supersonic takes two minutes and to accelerate to 1.5 mach takes approximately 3 minutes. So in a best-case scenario, 11 minutes after the alarm went off the interceptor is at high supersonic speed busy with the intercept and he has covered nearly 60 nautical miles. The F-16 will be able to maintain this high speed for another 4 minutes before it reaches bingo fuel and the use of afterburner must be discontinued. At that moment, the aircraft will have covered around 115 nm in 15 minutes. The aircraft will now decelerate to subsonic speed in 3 minutes and cover another 40 miles. So after 18 minutes the interceptor has covered around 155 nm and will be basically co-speed with an airliner. The hijacked plane will have covered 144 nm in those same 18 minutes. So if the hijacked aircraft was more than 11 nm past the airbase from which the interceptor was scrambled, the interceptor will not be able to catch up and join up with the hijacked airplane.
13. For a good description in airborne reconnaissance see Brassey's *Airpower Aircraft Weapons Systems and Technology* series, vol. 7, 1989
14. Assuming a viewing angle of 45 degrees around the aircraft the radius of the viewing area is the same as the altitude (e.g., 15,000 feet or 2.5 nm). The total area $= 2.5^2 * \pi$ is ca 20 nm².

15. That is slightly more than the size of a soccer field. It should be clear that this is probably the minimum detail an observer would like to see to scan an area. In many situations more detail is warranted but that will directly affect the total scanning time.
16. An area of $500 * 500$ feet = $1/144$ nm². To scan 20 nm² takes $20 * 144 = 2880$ observations. If each observation last 5 seconds the total scan time is already 14,400 seconds or 4 hours.
17. The description of John Boyd's theory is primarily based on *Science, Strategy and War*, The Strategic Theory of John Boyd, dissertation by Frans Osinga 2005.
18. Another interesting situation might be where the enemy is intermittently visible; this will require some further analysis, which is outside of the scope of this article.
19. See also Network Centric Warfare Alberts, Garstka, & Stein 1999: 208.
20. Network Centric Warfare, Alberts, Garstka & Stein 1999.

Bin Laden from Commander-in-Chief to Chief Executive Officer

Maarten Rothman & Erik de Waard¹

Introduction

For a number of years now the fight against terrorism has dominated the Western security agenda. Because of its catastrophic character, especially al-Qaeda's religious terrorism plays a key role in this struggle. In May 2005, however, the American administration claimed it was reconsidering the fight against terrorism. The strategy of *decapitation* had robbed al-Qaeda of its most important ringleaders, but it had not paralyzed the organization, as had been hoped. The campaign of resistance against the American occupation of Iraq and the attacks in London of July 7 2005 are still attributed to al-Qaeda-affiliated terror groups. The latter attack showed once again that the network has had to drastically change its *modus operandi*.

Flexibility is usually considered as one of al-Qaeda's most important weapons. This flexibility largely derives from a way of organizing in which border-crossing contacts within transnational networks of sympathizers enables religious fanatics to carry out large-scale strikes anywhere in the world². The transnational character of this terror movement forces those who are trying to fight it to an international cooperation fraught with difficulties. Moreover, it is becoming increasingly apparent that al-Qaeda has managed extremely well to adapt to the changing situation since the beginning of the *War on Terror* as well as the American-British invasion of Iraq.

In spite of the fact that the relation between flexibility and the manner of organizing is deemed to be so important, the analysis of this phenomenon in studies on terrorism does not progress beyond making superficial comparisons between al-Qaeda and types of network from the world of business³. The present article attempts to break through that superficiality. Precisely by providing more insight into the reason for becoming more flexible in the world of business and the ensuing organizational aspects, will it become possible to better assess al-Qaeda's organizational form for its strengths and weaknesses.

The article sets out to present the framework for analysis. The second part projects the existing knowledge about al-Qaeda on this framework, shedding new light on the management and organization design of the terror network. Gradually, it will become clear that al-Qaeda has changed its character since 11 September 2001 as a result of the American *War on terror*, but also, more directly, the success of 9/11. On the one hand, the central organization seems to have weakened in the battle, but, at the same time, Bin Laden's appeal on the Muslim population in the Middle East seems to have become stronger⁴.

The focal point of attention is the position of al-Qaeda’s central organization in the extensive Islamic-fundamentalist (Islamist, for short) terror network. Not only the management within the organization is discussed, but also the way in which Bin Laden tries, and partially succeeds, to bend the broader organization to his will.

Theory: flexibility

The attention for flexibility is not new. For more than 25 years now, the concept has played an important part within the management sciences, resulting in, broadly speaking, three approaches. The general approach considers flexibility as a specific quality that an organization must have in order to be able to adapt to its changing environment and to stimulate innovation. The functional approach is directed at specific parts of the organization, such as the introduction of flexible work contracts, flexible production systems or flexible information systems. The actor approach assumes that personal qualities or certain interested parties in the organization influence flexibility. Table 1 elucidates the distinctions between the above-mentioned approaches by presenting a number of definitions and descriptions of flexibility.

<p>General approach</p> <p>Flexibility means an ability to adapt aspects of the organization rapidly in the face of new opportunities or threats in the environment. (Birkinshaw & Hagström 2000:5)⁵</p> <p>Organizations that move quickly are flexible. (Ashkenas et al.1995:8)⁶</p>
<p>Functional approach</p> <p>The flexibility and speed offered by advanced manufacturing technologies (AMT), when properly implemented, allow firms to design and commercialize new generations and variants of products faster than ever before. (Lei et al. 1996: 515)⁷</p> <p>The use of externalized workers adds needed flexibility to work arrangements and complements the stability provided by the internalized workforce. (Davis-Blake & Uzzi 1993: 218)⁸</p>
<p>Actor approach</p> <p>The only kind of strategy that makes sense in the face of unpredictable change is to become adaptive. Success will be determined by leadership's competence in making a particular set of choices within sense-and-respond model's framework. (Haeckel 1999: xvii)⁹</p> <p>The values of the elite inner circle are more important than those of the executive director or of the entire staff in predicting innovation. (Hage & Dewar 1973: 287)¹⁰</p>

Table 1: Three approaches of flexibility

On the basis of an extensive literature survey, in which these different definitions have been incorporated, Volberda¹¹ constructed a model in which flexibility is seen as the interaction between the management's ability to steer and the controllability of the organization (see figure 1). On the one hand, the management must have the dynamic capabilities to act adequately and timely on change, opportunities or threats in the environment. On the other, the organization must have the necessary structural, cultural and technological characteristics to support these capabilities. He emphasizes that neither may dominate the other. The interaction must be in balance, in other words, a management with many dynamic capabilities cannot weigh up to too rigid an organizational structure and vice versa. Moreover, creating a balance in the interaction implies dealing with duality. The management, for instance, can only decide to become active in new markets or to expand the product folio when it has created the necessary organizational conditions for it. Although words like market and product folio may seem out of place for a terrorist organization, al-Qaeda faces a similar challenge when it wants to decide, for instance, to establish new alliances with other Islamist groups or new ways of conducting attacks or propaganda.

The following two sections will deal with the concrete steps business organizations have taken on their way towards more flexibility. The managerial task and the organization design task of Volberda's model are used as a guideline.

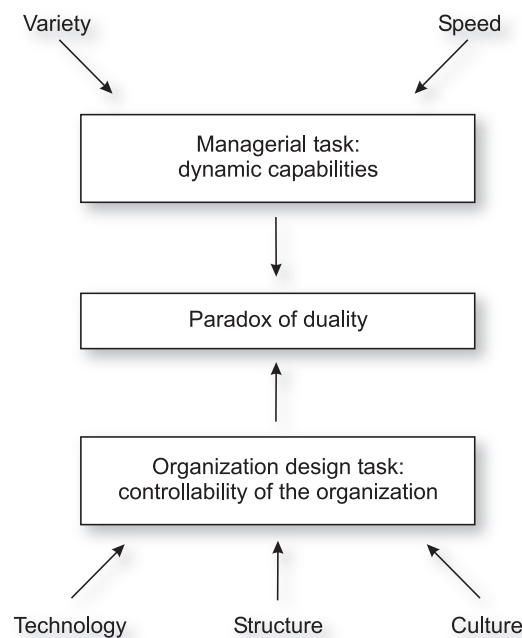


Figure 1 : Organizational flexibility (Volberda 1999)

The managerial task

It has always been the task of the management to react timely and adequately on changes in the environment and thus keep the organization on the right track. However, the globalization of the economy in combination with rapid changes in information and communication technology has led to such drastic changes in the competitive environment (the strategic environment) that traditional management capabilities have proven to be increasingly inadequate. The expanding possibilities of information and communication systems seem to have blurred borders and timelines and the need to react faster has become more and more pressing. Organizations must be able to anticipate adequately on the wishes of their clients and end users anywhere in the world. A consequence of this is that they are forced to introduce new products and applications on the market at an increasing rate. At the same time, the traditionally large-scale producers have to deliver tailor-made products more and more and they have to design their distribution networks in such a way that they can support the rapid service to customers all over the world. On top of that, market sectors become increasingly inter-related. Where in the past telephony was still a separate sector, it now finds itself positioned on the intersection of telecommunication, computer technology and even photography.

All these developments have caused control, which originally was rather reactive, to become increasingly proactive. Much more than in the past, managers invest in a broad knowledge basis. After all, organizations are much more capable of exploiting sudden product opportunities when they can dispose of range of expertise¹². The increase in the absorption capability is seen as a way to stimulate proactivity. In this context Cohen & Levinthal (1990: 128) state that, 'the ability of a firm to recognize the value of new, external information, assimilate it and apply it to commercial ends is critical to its innovative capabilities'¹³. In other words, picking up signals from the company's environment and successfully transforming them into new opportunities for the organization is a managerial capability that is of crucial importance in the turbulence of the present-day competitive environment. Furthermore, the management must have the will and the courage to learn and experiment. Top-level managers who cling too much to old thinking patterns and routines obstruct the necessary learning processes and thus limit the development of new capabilities (Volberda 1999).

The shift in managerial capabilities has also led to a change in the role of the management. The large vertically oriented bureaucracies of the past, where control was based on cost reduction and retaining control, will not do anymore¹⁴. Nowadays, it is all about the development and optimal utilization of dynamic core competencies and exploiting frontline knowledge¹⁵. The ability to quickly attract and cut off competencies largely determines the adaptability of organizations. Traditional, bureaucratically minded managers are not suitable for this. They work too much from fixed relationships, contacts,

structures and procedures, as instruments to control all their problems¹⁶. This rigid, often top-down, control causes problems in an environment that is continually changing. In the modern diversified and fragmented markets top-level managers simply do not command the necessary knowledge and multi-disciplinary expertise to adopt a dominant position in the process of strategy formulation¹⁷. Apart from that, their lofty position, far removed from the frontline, causes a lack of necessary fine-tuning to anticipate adequately and timely on local and urgent customer wishes. Rather than an omnipotent strategy guru, the present-day competitive environment requires a top-level manager who can facilitate, integrate and inspire¹⁸.

The facilitation is directed at enhancing bottom-up processes, whereby the top management sets the rules by which frontline managers can put to use their up-to-date knowledge of the market and expertise much more easily and directly for the general benefit of the organization. The integrator role is a result of the increased importance of cooperation. Single-handedly surrounding a competitor, gaining a market share, fighting brands and pressurizing suppliers, are examples of the conventional concept of entrepreneuring (i.e., business is war)¹⁹. This concept is losing more and more ground. Nowadays it is believed that companies can only be successful together with other companies²⁰. Partner companies join forces to develop the necessary competencies in mutual cooperation. In this way, organizations, in reacting on the unpredictable environment, can not only share the risks but also get a better view of them²¹. The top manager adopts the role of integrator to share knowledge and to keep the many subsidiaries and partners together and in tune with each other. The inspirer role emphasizes the ideological task that has increasingly become a managerial responsibility. In order to reach concord within the globally operating networks, propagating the overall *raison d'être* of the organization (i.e., an organizational objective with which the employees and partner companies can identify and to which they can devote themselves) has become a core managerial task. In this context Ghoshal and Bartlett speak of the *Beyond Strategy to Purpose* trend²². The comparison with al-Qaeda's changing leadership role is obvious, but in order to make it complete it is necessary to discuss the organization-design task.

The organization-design task

As has been indicated above, the management task and the organization-design task cannot be separated. The need to be flexible in the top management will have consequences one way or the other for the design of the organization. The impact of the flexibility urge for the organization-design task is therefore the main issue in this section, taking as a starting point the integral design method. It is a method that considers the

structure, technology and culture as separate sub-systems of an organization, but that at the same time assumes that the sub-systems influence each other and should be in tune with each other²³.

The need to be flexible has had a drastic impact on the organizational structure. In the first place flattening has been an important strategy for improving the reaction speed of organizations. For the steeper the structure, the slower and inaccurate the two-sided information flow between the top and the work floor (Volberda 1999). In this context many organizations have begun to cut out intermediate layers and organize themselves much more around large, relatively autonomous organizational components. Not only did the large vertically oriented bureaucracies of the past become increasingly difficult to control because of their vertical structures, also the internal complexity of these organizations began to play its part. The focus on cost reduction and retaining control had ensured that the organizations had over time begun to expand into cluttered giants. All sorts of activities, not belonging to the original “core business” of the organization, were added to the managerial process. The call for more transparency and becoming more “lean and mean”, induced companies to outsource or even cut off non-core activities²⁴.

The advantage of this strategy of the cobbler-sticking-to-his-last is that organizations can exploit their core competencies to the full and become better and better at it. But the specialization that is the result of this makes organizations rigid and more dependent on others²⁵. Where organizations in the past completely controlled their value chain, from raw material to final product, they nowadays choose for cooperation in the guise of strategic alliances with suppliers and clients. The thinking of organizations in terms of individual value chains has been replaced by thinking in common value chains²⁶. A telling example in this context is the network Toyota have built up with their suppliers. Their main purpose is the continuous improvement of the balance between costs and quality²⁷. Learning is central in this strategy. That is why Toyota are determined to enter into intensive, long-term relations with their suppliers. By investing in these relations the partners change from producers of basic half-finished products into sources of knowledge that can stimulate Toyota’s innovation process.

Next to vertical cooperation within the traditional company column, a key role is played by horizontal cooperation when it comes to improving competitive capabilities. De Man, Van der Zee & Geurts (2000) state that horizontal network organizations are characterized by an organic structure, which enables a fast build-up and build-down of relations between companies. On the one hand, this makes customization possible, on the other, it allows companies to develop themselves in many more directions than in the past when they were bound by the limitations of their own trade or industry. In other words, by cooperating organizations can exchange and combine geographic,

market and technological knowledge much more easily. Depending on the demand for their specific knowledge, partners can join or leave the network. In any case, combining the problem-specific knowledge ensures synergetic effects, which gives the organizations a competitive edge. Microsoft's X-Box is an example of a horizontal network. In the beginning of 2000, Microsoft began to penetrate the game computer market with the introduction of the X-Box. The central question asked by many at the time was how Microsoft managed to produce and market 1.5 million game computers per year, without having their own factories. The answer of Microsoft to this question is still valid today, namely cooperation. Philips provides the DVD drive, Intel the microprocessor, NVIDIA the graphic chip, Micron Technology the memory chip and Western Digital the hard disk. Subsequently, Flextronic takes care of the assembly²⁸. Although Microsoft are the leading partner in the network, the contribution to the actual product is limited to the operating software and the marketing.

In order to guarantee the effectiveness of these horizontal and vertical networks intra- and inter-organizational linking mechanisms are becoming indispensable, as products and knowledge are increasingly rarely based on one specific organization, business unit or functional department²⁹. Therefore, organizations are much more consciously active in developing capabilities to cross the traditional borders. Project work by means of task groups or multi-disciplinary teams plays a key role in this³⁰. Many R&D projects split up the newly-to-be-developed product into several subsystems and partial systems³¹. This allows the employment of a specialized team that can even consist of experts from different organizations. This splitting up gives the various project groups the opportunity to develop their own subsystems relatively independently of each other. Eventually, integration methods, such as project planning, hierarchic coordination, previously established rules and ICT support help integrate the partial systems into an aggregate³².

Apart from structure, technology has an impact on flexibilization, in that information systems support the flattening process described above. The coordination role of the manager and the staff specialist is increasingly taken over by electronic information systems, which makes all sorts of functions and management levels obsolete. Moreover, systems such as these also help to streamline internal management, which again leads to fewer functions. A good example of this is electronic banking, where the client is actively involved in processing his own transactions, at the expense of formal functions in the financial institutions.

Technology is also pivotal in the striving for customization. Market segmentation is becoming increasingly important for organizations in their ambition to meet the individualization processes in society. Traditional strategies, mainly based on mass production, yield a great advantage of scale. The ensuing low costs, make it possible to compete on price. But in the present-day competitive environment this is not sufficient anymore.

Apart from offering a low price, organizations must also produce a product of high quality and at the same time meet the wishes of several customer groups (Ghoshal & Bartlett 1997). “Mass-production philosophy” is replaced by a “mass-customization philosophy”. Griffin & Elbert define “mass-customization” as follows, ‘Although companies produce in large volumes, each unit features the unique variations and options the customer prefers’³³. Mass-customization has become possible due to an extreme automation of the production process. The integration of programmable micro-electronics in the production design (CAD), the planning and control of production (CAM) and the introduction of robot technology in the production process itself have generated a flexible system that can produce a range of products with a minimum of manual interventions. (Volberda 1999) So, technology has made it possible to retain the advantages of mass production while producing customized products for several customer groups.

Technology is not only used for organizational integration methods, such as project groups, it is also used to facilitate intra- and inter-organizational fine-tuning³⁴. Information and communication technology (ICT) blurs territorial, time and organizational borders, and for some it even drives cooperation³⁵. The introduction of electronic information systems, such as e-mail, electronic conferencing and groupware has been an enormous stimulant for coordination within companies, but also for fine-tuning and transactions between organizations. In addition to this, communication networks, such as the Internet and Extranet, have contributed to a better fine-tuning between primary processes of the customer and the supplier in order to guarantee timely delivery of raw materials and parts. The Internet has even played a crucial role in spawning entire new ‘e-business’ concepts, such as *amazon.com*, *easyjet.com* and *Dell’s Direct Model*³⁶.

In the previous section it was argued that flexibilization is partly determined by the ideological role of the top level management. In this context, Pettigrew states that the management of an organization does not only create the rational and tangible aspects of an organization, such as structure and technology, but also the symbols, ideologies, language, beliefs, rituals and myths³⁷. The question that remains now is what soft aspects are aimed for in the context of flexibilization of organizations.

To use Hofstede’s words, the present-day competitive environment demands a mental software geared at cooperation³⁸. Organizations must be able to gain an advantage from the multitude of customers, suppliers, competitors and other parties in their environment. This implies a collective awareness, in which creativity, improvisation and learning capabilities are central, so for employees who can receive and give feedback, are prepared to discuss mistakes, are able to actively process information and, on top of all that, are willing to look beyond department or organization borders³⁹. It takes specific organizational qualities to bring up these qualities in people. Thus, there is a requirement for a varied employee potential, consisting of co-workers of various educational

levels, different experience and ages. Bureaucracy must be limited by pushing back written and unwritten rules. To do this, participation and delegation are much more useful control concepts than the traditional top-down decision making and control.

The proposed formation of network, combined with the above-mentioned decentralization, also entails some risks, for organizations become less transparent and controllable for the management, which may create fragmentation and 'islandization'⁴⁰. *Ahold* got a first-hand experience of this in the form a bookkeeping scandal in one of their own subsidiaries, *US Foodservice*, in the USA⁴¹. Therefore, Bartlett & Ghoshal (1991) are of the opinion that in the 21st century organizations can only be successful if the management manages to create a culture of mutual 'individual commitment', on the one hand, and 'shared vision'⁴², on the other. In the former, the individual partners, business units and departments are motivated by giving them room for own initiative; in the latter, the management disseminates a shared vision in order to reach a like-mindedness within the varied mix of partners and subsidiaries.

In this section a short analysis has been presented of the steps business organizations have made on the road to a greater flexibility. In the following these steps are set alongside the al-Qaeda terrorist organization and its way of operating.

al-Qaeda

al-Qaeda was founded during the Afghan struggle against the Soviet Union. The organization's aim was recruitment and the financing of the struggle. After the retreat of the Soviet troops a lengthy civil war followed between the various *mujahideen* factions, in which al-Qaeda supported the Taliban, a fundamentalist movement from south-western Afghanistan. Meanwhile a more important objective became the fight against the West. The American invasion of Iraq, in response to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the use of military bases in Saudi Arabia, formed the occasion for a new *jihad*. The objective was to remove Americans and other Westerners, including Israel, from the *dar-al-islam*.

Between 1991 and 2001, Western presence in the Middle East was relatively limited. Israel was, and is, a complete civilization in an area that before had belonged to Islamic states. In Saudi Arabia there were a few American bases and Western tourists were all over the place, as were Western business people. In the eyes of Muslim fundamentalists the tourists threatened public morals, but so did Western television and it penetrated deeper. Exhausting raw material, in particular oil, Western economic interests kept in power regimes that had proven their incompetence for a long time, while their populations profited too little. al-Qaeda and its supporters faced an ungodly alliance of corrupt Middle Eastern governments and their distant Western allies. It made the strategic choice first and foremost to deal with the distant enemy by attacking his *heartland*⁴³.

Other groups, incidentally, attacked tourists while a military struggle was waged on the periphery of the *dar-el-islam* in Bosnia, Chechnya and the Sudan. In Algeria fundamentalist fought a Western-oriented government.

al-Qaeda's organizational design task

Because of Bin Laden's background he is regularly referred to as "terrorism's CEO"⁴⁴. A comparison that is not entirely unjustified, in view of the way he controls al-Qaeda. The ideological leadership shows remarkable parallels to the current control principles in the world of business. Civilian companies, too, try to give guidance to and keep together their often network-like constellations through ideological leadership. Apart from that, data found in the computers of incarcerated al-Qaeda members show that Osama has structured his organization as a modern company.

Above all, al-Qaeda's structure is based on core competencies and thinking in value systems. The "business units" form the strategic heart of the organization, they need each other and their tasks are so crucial to the organization that they are not left to external parties. The four main units have functional competencies: military religious-legal, financial and media. At the top is Osama bin Laden himself, assisted by a consultative body. Figure 2 represents this structure.

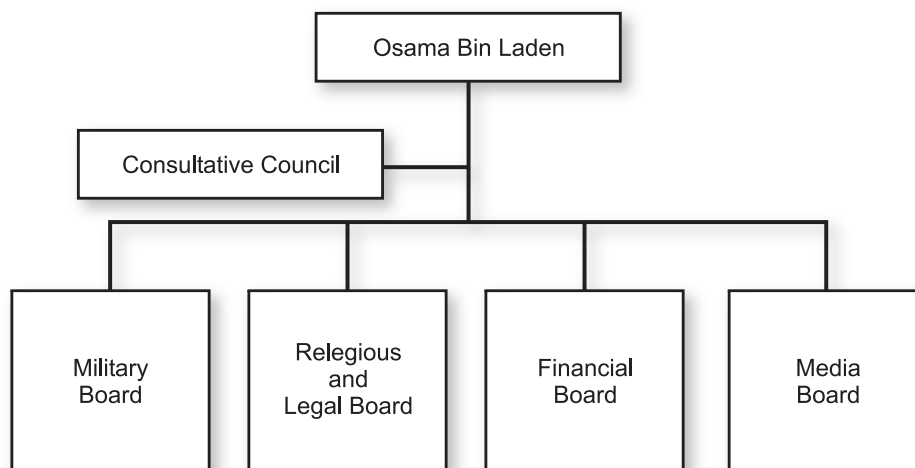


Figure 2: al-Qaeda's organizational structure

Each of the four directorates has a well-defined function. The task of the financial directorate is to provide the multi-million al-Qaeda company with the resources to carry out its other tasks. This function comprises fundraising (the original function of Bin

Laden's organization during the war against the Soviet Union), control and expenditure. Under the financial directorate there is a layered chain of parties that, in legal or illegal manner, are involved in raising and diverting money flows.

The military directorate is responsible for education and training of the warriors - those who are going to commit attacks as the "regular units" that fought shoulder to shoulder with the Taliban in the Afghan civil war and who more than three years after the American attack on Afghanistan are still offering resistance in some of the more inaccessible regions, particular in the South along the border with Pakistan. It also guards its own installations, for instance, the training camps. The military directorate is also responsible for the execution of the attacks, including planning and preparation. The attackers are managed by this directorate.

Of equal importance is the media directorate. Brian Jenkin's dictum that, 'Terrorists want a lot of people watching and a lot of people listening and not a lot of people dead' still applies, in spite of the obvious readiness to make great numbers of victims. Recruitment of new fighters, fundraising and mobilization of their own support group are dependent on media coverage, not to mention the fear effect among Americans and more in general Western populations. The media directorate ensures that attacks are claimed and the reasons for them are explained, so that they do not remain without consequences. The directorate makes sure that al-Qaeda's demands reach the public and it maintains the communication with the support group.

Bin Laden's video messages are, however, also equally the responsibility of his religious-legal directorate. The term religious-legal refers to the Islamic law of obligations, the *fiqh*, which determines which regulations and recommendations, prohibitions and condemnations are applicable in a particular situation⁴⁵. The directorate that does these things has authority regarding internal discipline and the rules that (have to) apply in an Islamic society, but it has probably also a say in the permissibility of attacks, including *targeting*. The motivation of the battle and the specific military operations fall within its competence. They are often given the form of a formal religious-legal pronouncement, a *fatwa*. This was the case, for instance, with the declaration of war by the World Islamic Front in 1998.

Organizational changes since 9/11

The *War on Terror* has seriously undermined the capabilities of al-Qaeda's central organization. This is best seen with respect to the military directorate. The more or less regular forces that al-Qaeda fielded in the Afghan civil war as a support for the Taliban have ceased to exist. Small groups of fighters are still active in a limited guerrilla against the Americans and Karzai regime they support. The fight in Iraq is outside al-Qaeda's con-

trol. It is conducted by local commanders, complemented by Al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian, who is sometimes associated with al-Qaeda, but whose position in or with respect to the central organization is unclear. Besides, up to 9/11 2001 al-Qaeda attacks were planned and coordinated by this directorate. This has been possible only to a limited extent since then. Also outside Iraq most attacks are committed by local groups. The central organization has hardly any authority over the composition, way of operating and targeting, as they are frequently set up ad hoc and often as a reaction to local circumstances.

The London attacks on July 7 2005 clearly show these changes. In the first instance, there was "al-Qaeda's signature": multiple simultaneous explosions (one was delayed). Place and time were picked for maximum publicity effect, namely, London during the British hosting of the G8 summit. The attacks were claimed by a group calling itself *Secret Organization for al-Qaeda's Jihad in Europe*. The British intelligence services have since uncovered that the London bombers were trained by al-Qaeda in Pakistan or Afghanistan. They may also have received orders at that time, but there is no evidence of this or of active involvement by al-Qaeda's central organization in the execution of the attacks. In a videotaped statement on Al Jazeera on August 4, al-Qaeda, by mouth of the second in command Ayman al Zawahiri, expressed its approval of the attacks, but did not claim any responsibility.

The perpetrators were British Muslims who seemed fully integrated. In the words of the intelligence services, they were 'blank pages'. What is most disconcerting from the perspective of the security agencies responsible for preventing such attacks, is that the attackers seem to be self-recruited. They can be linked to al-Qaeda through travels and training, but establishing the link before attacks occur, requires attentiveness and extensive monitoring even of (seemingly) innocent travelers who were previously indistinguishable from other Western nationals who share only the Muslim faith. Nor are the suspects of the second series of attacks, on July 21 2005, demonstrably linked to al-Qaeda. Incidentally, in this case the attackers were immigrants. Their attacks mimicked the attacks of July 7, as if wanting to say that tighter security measures since then were no obstacle. (The attacks failed due to faulty detonators.) Moreover, both attacks strongly resembled those of March 11 2004 in Madrid, with multiple explosions at a sensitive place and time, just a few days before a general election. The perpetrators in Madrid, however, have been linked to al-Qaeda, though indirectly. The message of July 7 is more disquieting: the enemy is among us, not as a recognizable other, but invisible and elusive.

The new situation has great advantages for a terrorist organization. As direct communication between central organization and associated groups is minimal, the chance of being tracked down by terrorist hunters has proportionally been reduced. Conversely, the tracing of the central organization does not immediately lead to the discovery of

other battle groups. The initiative lies with local groups that can quickly anticipate on changing circumstances. This makes it easier for them to escape repression and attack when an opportunity offers itself, for instance, because a target object is temporarily less well guarded. At the same time al-Qaeda's core is unburdened so that it can concentrate on its own continued existence, more ambitious operations on the long term, and – possibly its most important task – propaganda.

The terror network around al-Qaeda has become a flatter organization since 9/11 out of necessity. In effect the central organization has become severed from most of its affiliated groups. The position of the pre- 9/11 central organization is already unclear; it seems that Bin Laden had little effective control over most of the affiliated local groups. Since the attack central control has become even more difficult. Through horizontal tuning and cooperation with like-minded groups al-Qaeda has adapted itself to the new situation.

Bruce Hoffman distinguishes four levels within al-Qaeda, beginning with the 'professional cadre', followed by 'trained amateurs', then 'local walk-ins' and, finally, 'like-minded insurgents, guerrillas and terrorists'⁴⁶. The former two groups belong to al-Qaeda, the latter are associated with it but they do not actually make up part of the organization. Rather, they belong to other organizations in the network surrounding al-Qaeda. In view of the long history of Islamic fundamentalism, it is not surprising that some of these have existed for longer than al-Qaeda. As described above, al-Qaeda came into existence during the Afghan war against the Soviet Union as a shelter for *mujahideen* and as a link in the financial network, in which also the American Central Intelligence Agency was involved. In various Islamic countries there had been local movements of all sorts since the interbellum (and the establishment of European protectorates in the Middle East), whose common objective was advancing the Islamization of the social order.

Up to a certain extent this network has been formalized as the *World Islamic Front*, that in February 1998 declared a 'jihad against the Zionists and the crusaders' (or in other translations 'against the Jews and the crusaders')⁴⁷. Bin Laden signed the declaration and Ayman al Zawahiri, who is often called al-Qaeda's second man, but who on this occasion acted on behalf of the *Jihad Group in Egypt*, and by representatives of an *Egyptian Islamic Group*, a *Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan* and a *Jihad Movement in Bangladesh*. The Front is an alliance of like-minded groups. The importance of their common declaration lies in the first place in their agreement on targets and priorities. Secondly, the Front declares in the form of a fatwa, a religious-legal pronouncement, that *jihad* in the given situation is an individual duty for every Muslim. It is in fact a call for a general insurgency, which makes its own position that of an organized vanguard. At the same time, this call places rivaling groups in an awkward position: they have to choose between joining, which increases al-Qaeda's authority, or rejection, which makes

them lose credibility.

What this makes clear is that the characterization of the system surrounding al-Qaeda as a network is doubtful. The field within which the organization exists is defined by sympathy with regard to the *jihad*. But within that field there are other rivaling groups beside al-Qaeda and its affiliated groups. Moreover, the number of players keeps changing whenever individuals organize for battle. New nuclei form themselves, also under the influence of the *fatwa*, but al-Qaeda is not in contact with each of them, nor are all the nuclei in contact with other nuclei.

The functioning of al-Qaeda and the alliance surrounding it is mainly supported by information and communication technology. The call of the World Islamic Front is mainly effective insofar as it is disseminated by modern media, in particular the Internet. (This is the organizational role of technology; al-Qaeda's use of technology in an operational sense is left out of consideration here.) Insofar as like-minded groups and new nuclei make contact with al-Qaeda, they do so through the Internet. When expedient, al-Qaeda can send its people to the affiliated groups, either with the general purpose of teaching them how to organize better and operate more effectively, or with specific intentions. But these contacts are vulnerable to anti-terror measures: persons can be traced much more easily than a single electronic message in a constant stream of communications.

Experience shows that messages through the Internet or via other relevant media channels for the target group, for instance, the news channel Al Jazeera, can do the job. For the communication with affiliated terrorist groups the Internet is of great importance. It also plays a major role in the dissemination of propaganda, where continuously changing websites, but, in particular, discussion forums and chatrooms, are used. A large section of the (supposed) support group has hardly any access to the Internet. The governments control the regular media in most Islamic countries and they will not transmit al-Qaeda's propaganda. That is why satellite channels like Al Jazeera, which are freer to broadcast news that they consider important, including Osama bin Laden's video messages, are so vital. The increasing reach of these channels has certainly contributed to the success of al-Qaeda's appeal to all Muslims everywhere to take up arms. Except for Iraq, they may yet be only small groups, enjoying the support of not more than a small percentage of the population, but from al-Qaeda's point of view the expansion of jihad to almost all countries in the Muslim world is pure gain. From Morocco to the Philippines, from Chechnya to Indonesia, armed groups have embraced Bin Laden. In various Western countries, especially in Europe, moreover, local (not always well-organized) "battle groups" have been established.

The cultural aspect of the organization is related to the management style. For its own professional cadre al-Qaeda uses a hierarchical organization. Those whom Hoffman

calls trained amateurs, such as “shoebomber” Richard Reid and Ahmed Rassem, who wanted to commit an attack at Los Angeles airport, are also managed along the hierarchical line, but their assignment is relatively free; al-Qaeda invests in their training and a modest starter capital or basic equipment and then sends them on their way with some guidance as to the location where or the target against which they will have to strike. Once they have been sent out, contact with the central organization and thus influence over their further operations is minimal.

Affiliated local organizations are equally free from hierarchical control. Often they have their own, usually local targets and their own history. Their own identity obstructs a reduction to just a local branch under the authority of the central organization, but they may be prepared to exchange expertise and are interested in financial and technological support. In return they give support, also frequently in the form of specific expertise, for operations conducted by the central organization, and they can sometimes be persuaded to carry out specific operations on certain moments falling within al-Qaeda’s strategy. Their role is somewhere in between that of an ally and subsidiary organization. al-Qaeda has some authority, but still depends on exchange and negotiation.

al-Qaeda’s influence on new groups seems greater at first sight. On the other hand, these groups often have a weak organization and are often manned by inexperienced individuals. They also lack the support groups of the more established organizations. They are an unknown entity, often literally so: they have hardly any contacts with other organizations. E-mail and the Internet allow them to get an idea of the objectives and style of operating of like-minded groups. In how far they actually internalize these lessons, however, remains an unanswered question. Attempts to make contact with other organizations often result in discovery by anti-terrorist fighters. Their lack of contacts and organizational stability are the greatest obstacles from al-Qaeda’s point of view. Management is all but impossible. Therefore, Bin Laden exerts most influence by means of general appeals, dissemination of his ideology and the inspiration of his own example.

al-Qaeda’s management task

The management task was given substance differently in the early days of its existence than is now the case, with the attacks of September 11 2001 on the World Trade Centre and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq as the major turning points. Initially, the al-Qaeda leadership had a strongly facilitating role. The fight against the Russian troops in Afghanistan was supported with financial and personnel resources. After the second Gulf War (1990), al-Qaeda changed focus by taking up the armed struggle against Western powers, which often had extensive interests in the Middle East. From

the Islamist perspective, this is not really a big change, as the Soviet Union and the West belonged to the same civilization, rooted in Christianity and essentially godless.

At the same time the facilitating role shifted gradually in the direction of a managing one, as the planning, preparation and execution of the attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Centre shows. The period since its establishment up to the attacks in the USA was consciously used by al-Qaeda to learn and to experiment. Attacks like those on the USS Cole and the American Embassies in Tanzania and Nairobi, relatively on the sidelines, were used to test the enemies out and to improve its way of operating. Eventually, this led to an extremely successful attack, from al-Qaeda's perspective.

After September 11 2001, the situation changed. The USA intervened against al-Qaeda's Afghan base of operations and eighteen months later against Saddam Hussein. In Afghanistan and Iraq, and incidentally also in Kuwait, large numbers of Western military, Americans and their allies, remained. At the same time, the military bases in Saudi Arabia were closed. In this country attacks were mainly carried out against the homes of Western specialists. In Afghanistan the Taliban refuse to give up their resistance. The battle in Iraq, however, holds the greatest attraction for al-Qaeda sympathizers. Apart from actively taking part in local resistance, terror in the home countries of America's allies has become an important activity for fundamentalist groups, with the Madrid attacks on March 11 2004 as their main feat of arms.

The main change in al-Qaeda's strategic environment is the much shorter distance towards the Western armed forces, which previously were the 'distant enemy'. On the one hand, this increases the possibility to employ new recruits against these forces, in particular against their support services and their local allies, in places which are more easily accessible and with less preparation. On the other hand, the shorter reaction time of the opponent requires stricter precautions. The fight against the military occupation force in Iraq requires a different *modus operandi* than the attacks in the West itself or even attacks on specific military targets (such as USS Cole). This adaptation is even harder because of the difficult communication with the al-Qaeda leadership who, presumably since late 2002 have been hiding out in the Afghan-Pakistan border area. The way in which al-Qaeda has reacted to the loss of a secure home base, on the one hand, and the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, on the other, is characteristic for this terrorist organization. Since the beginning of the large-scale insurgency in Iraq the leadership of al-Qaeda, in the person of Osama bin Laden, has gone an alternative path to reach its objective. He often shows himself in civilian clothes and seldom wears military gear anymore. Where in the past he projected the image of the warrior, now that al-Qaeda is not directly involved in acts of war at the most important front, he acts out the role of statesman. Instead of commander-in-chief Bin Laden is now an advisor and spiritual leader. *Fatwas* and pious words were already part of his repertoire in the 1990s; the

military jargon, however, is gradually disappearing. Concurrent with the development of an Islamist strategic discourse⁴⁸ political analyses of supposed weakness of the Western opponents have acquired a more prominent position in Bin Laden's video messages.

This shift marks the changeover from direct management to ideology and inspiration. It can be explained, in Max Weber's terms, as a changeover from rational-legal to charismatic exertion of power⁴⁹. Bin Laden's authority over affiliated groups, however, has always been a product of charisma; the rational management only applied to al-Qaeda's own central organization. The change of style in the charismatic leadership is equally important, therefore. He has already earned his own spurs as a heroic warrior and he now calculates that his target group needs a guiding great leader.

Nevertheless, there is a disadvantage to Osama bin Laden's new management role. Also without direct interference of the leadership, the fighters in Iraq serve the objectives of the organization. The same holds good for the local terrorist groups in Western societies. Their attacks are directed against the same Western powers and contribute to the perception of a global war between them and the powers of Islam. al-Qaeda does not have to be involved in every attack to be able to claim that it has called for one and inspired it. The problem for al-Qaeda is the variety of operations in various locations and to bring in line the required flexibility because of the continuous concerted hunt of anti-terrorist fighters. In the late nineties al-Qaeda acquired the reputation of being the main representative of the armed struggle of Islam against the West. The Pentagon and WTC attacks confirmed this reputation. When, however, the attention moves to battlefields where al-Qaeda can exert little influence, other groups can come to the fore. One risk is that such a local group, chastened by battle, gains authority at the expense of al-Qaeda. Another, greater, risk is that local battle groups allow local considerations to prevail over the interest of the common struggle on many fronts of the global *jihād* that al-Qaeda propagates in word and deed.

Conclusion

The war on terror has undoubtedly caused great harm to al-Qaeda. The hunt for the organization and its leaders has also demonstrated its resilience, something of which many organizations are probably envious. In a very natural fashion al-Qaeda brings into practice a great number of flexibility concepts that are striven for in the world of business.

After the invasion of Afghanistan al-Qaeda's central organization has lost much of its control. The four main directorates can to a much lesser extent leave their mark on the organization and its way of operating. For the military directorate it has become virtually impossible to direct and manage the armed struggle. The financial directorate probably

still commands large reserves, but it finds it hard to transfer them to those who need them. The media directorate is hampered by counter-terror measures whenever it tries to propagate its message. Besides, it is faced with the difficulty of having to respond reactively, to exploit attacks and other setbacks for the Americans as propaganda without knowing about specific actions beforehand. The task for the religious-legal directorate is to test operations against the *fiqh*. Because it has no control over associated groups and for security reasons it is limited in communicating with them, al-Qaeda cannot very well test actions beforehand. What is left to them is to distance themselves from an attack afterwards. This, however, will affect the enthusiasm of sympathizers to take up weapons themselves.

Even though al-Qaeda has lost much strength on these points, it has gained on others. Instead of operations under the authority of the central organization, there has been an increase in attacks carried out by associated groups in various Muslim and Western countries, where Bin Laden's *jihad* often finds a willing ear among young immigrants. The expansion of the struggle to almost all countries of the Middle East and northern Africa, to Southeast Asia and most of all to Europe, can be seen as a great success for al-Qaeda.

With a strategic ingenuity and preparedness to change, that can serve as an example for many a top-level executive, Osama bin Laden has exchanged the role of Commander-in-Chief for that of a modern-day inspired Chief Executive Officer, who stresses like-mindedness and manages his organization on the basis of a common ideology. Apart from that he has given enough room to the organization to change. Through horizontal tuning, cooperation with like-minded groups and decentralization al-Qaeda has adapted itself to these new circumstances. This has given the local groups the initiative to anticipate quickly to changing circumstances. Furthermore, it gives them more chances to escape repression and to strike whenever an opportunity presents itself.

Therefore, the American administration rightly asks itself whether the decapitation strategy against al-Qaeda is still the correct one. It seems more obvious to choose a strategy that attacks al-Qaeda where it is the weakest. Above all, the diversity of groups and parties within the al-Qaeda network offers the possibility to stimulate mutual division and to break the strength of the common ideology. In that way the threat of assimilation that is there for every ideological organization⁵⁰ can be given a hand, as it were. On the other hand, mistakes, clumsiness or atrocities of affiliated groups can be exploited to drive a wedge between al-Qaeda and the population.

Notes

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The Paymasters: Financial Systems Supporting Terrorism

Robert Beeres & Myriame Bollen

Introduction

From September 11, 2001 onwards, in the wake of the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, Madrid, and London, the need to develop mechanisms to identify (members of) terrorist organizations and networks has strongly increased. One of the ways in which this may be done is to follow the money trail that leads from those secretly financing acts of terrorism to the actual perpetrators of terrorist deeds.

Literature suggests that one of the strategies to eliminate terrorism is to understand the ways in which the terrorist organizations and networks obtain their financial resources (Adams 1986; Napoleoni 2004; Pieth 2002; Raphaeli 2003). In doing so, it would be possible to stem the flow of money on which they ride at the source (Raphaeli 2003: 59). Lacking the possibilities to collect funds makes terrorists unable to operate. Or as Napoleoni (2004: xi) puts it, terrorism 'cannot thrive without a constant supply of ready cash'. Against this background, a flood of research on the financing of terrorism has evolved. However, the authors involved offer contradicting perspectives on the costs of terrorism.

For instance, Rathbone and Rowley (2002: 8) state that 'because of the nature of an asymmetric war, terrorists are able to impose very high costs on their enemies at seemingly trivial costs for themselves. September 11, 2001 is the most extreme example to date of this asymmetry. It has been estimated that the successful attacks launched that day against the United States may have cost the terrorists no more than \$200,000. (The terrorist lives lost were at most costless since the perpetrators were expediting their journey to Paradise)'. Raphaeli (2003: 60), on the other hand, claims that the 'September 11 attack, with its complex planning, preparation and execution, would not have been possible without abundant resources'.

Whatever the perspectives on the costs, the primary question remains: Where do the organizations that terrorize the world get the money to do it? To date, two authors in particular have examined this question exhaustively. First, dating from 1986, Adams examines the funding of international terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s. His purpose is 'to encourage a re-examination of the way society views terrorism' (Adams 1986: 5). He argues that a refocusing of the counter-terrorist effort is necessary. He believes it makes sense for democratic governments to take initiative to go for the money feeding the terrorists, instead of repressing 'the civil liberties which democratic societies tend to revere'.

Second, originally dating from 2003, Napoleoni adapted her work with a new chap-

ter on account of the Madrid attacks in 2004. She introduces the concept of the *New Economy of Terror*. The New Economy of Terror is 'an international network linking the support and logistical systems of armed groups ... with a turnover of about \$1.5 trillion' (Napoleoni 2004: xix).

Based on a literature survey, this paper aims to provide an overview of the mechanisms terrorist networks may use to finance their operations. We gladly borrow Simons' concept of 'levers of control' (Simons 2000) to explain ways to financially control terrorism.

The present paper is structured as follows. First, a clear understanding of the concept of terrorism is called for. Therefore, the following section considers the definitions of terrorism Adams and Napoleoni use to paint their pictures of financial networks enabling terrorist attacks. Subsequently, the sources of terrorist groups' funds are examined, after which the question whether stemming the flow of money at the source would provide an adequate lever to control terrorists networks is discussed. Finally, section five summarizes the findings of this paper.

Who is a terrorist and what constitutes terrorism?

One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. In ancient Egypt, the Pharaoh may well have regarded Moses as a terrorist, while his own people beheld him as their hero. Similarly, Samson may be regarded as the world's first suicide bomber.

The concept of terrorism appears to be elusive. Definitions are either highly impressionistic, reflecting personal opinions, or else, they are of an all-embracing nature to cover a broad variety of acts and actors (see Mockaitis 2005: 22; Sorel 2003: 366-371). Perhaps it would be possible to acknowledge an act of terrorism, based on the assumption that certain acts of violence will not be condoned in certain societies. According to Nassar (2005: viii), terrorism is an inaccurate concept that lacks an acceptable definition. In 1794, during the Reign of Terror in the aftermath of the French Revolution, the term was coined, referring to the use of terror by governments against their own people (Napoleoni 2004: xviii; Nassar 2005: 27; Rathbone & Rowley 2002: 1).

Lacking an acceptable definition, it is possible to ask oneself whether the Second World War bombings of Dresden and Hiroshima constituted acts of terrorism. And if so, whether the United States of America and its allies could be considered terrorists. The problems in defining terrorism, according to Van Leeuwen (2001: 8), are caused by two controversies, i.e.: (1) how to distinguish between terrorists and freedom fighters, and (2) whether states can be defined as terrorist agents. Van Leeuwen (2001: 9) tries to solve these controversies by declaring that states should not be called terrorists, and that terrorists are not soldiers wearing uniforms. She (2001: 8-10) defines terrorists as: non-

state actors, trying to change the political, societal, or religious order by actually using violence or threatening the use thereof. Terrorists may look for inspiration and moral guidance to a charismatic leader. However, at the same time, terrorists traditionally operate in small units with a great deal of autonomy. Finally, according to Van Leeuwen, terrorists seek to demoralize their enemy and win public support for their cause.

In order to understand and describe the ways in which terrorist organizations obtain their financial resources, a definition of terrorism and terrorist organizations is necessary. The remainder of this section looks at the ways in which Adams (1986) and Napoleoni (2004) approach their concepts of terrorists and terrorism.

At the outset of his study, Adams (1986: 10) defines a terrorist as ‘an individual or member of a group that wishes to achieve political ends using violent means, often at the cost of casualties to innocent civilians and with the support of only a minority of the people they claim to represent’. Based on this definition, Adams studies terrorism in the context of the Cold War era, in which the USSR and the USA support terrorist groups to encourage destabilization. To this effect, in the early 1980s, both super powers devoted hundreds of millions of dollars to train and supply secret armies all over the world. Adams illustrates how terrorism has evolved from the idealistic poverty-stricken beginnings in the early 1970s, to the ‘sophisticated multinational corporations’ in the mid-1980s. In describing the financing of terrorist activities, Adams refers to the lucrative means of kidnap, ransom and the narcotics trade.

Adams offers an insight into the development and inner workings of the PLO and the IRA. Instead of producing balance sheets, he aims to have some of the hitherto accepted beliefs about the funding of international terrorism re-examined. According to Adams, all terrorist groups have begun with ‘a few dedicated idealists, no money, no training and few concrete ideas. In the progression from fringe radicals to recognized terrorists, all groups have to acquire some income ... they have to buy some arms; and ... they have to achieve the international recognition that will help gather donations from supporters outside the organization’ (1986: 53). To remain viable, ‘a friendly border or safe haven must be adjacent to the area of operations. Without such a bolthole, terrorists have nowhere to run and no direct conduit for arms and cash’ (1986: 53).

In order to avoid falling into the trap of political definitions of terrorism, Napoleoni (2004: xviii) uses the word ‘terror’ to describe ‘the recourse to violence by armed groups to achieve political goals’. Napoleoni (2004: xix) introduces the concept of the ‘New Economy of Terror’: an international network linking the support and logistical systems of armed groups. Napoleoni (2004: 267) claims that, together ‘with the illegal economy, the New Economy of Terror claims amounts to nearly \$1.5 trillion’.

According to Napoleoni (2004: xix-xx), today’s problems with terrorism are caused by a global clash between two economic systems, one being the dominant Western

capitalism and the other being the insurgent New Economy of Terror. By now, the New Economy of Terror is an integral part of the global illegal economy, generating vast amounts of money that flow into traditional economies.

In trying to assess the magnitude, Napoleoni (2004: 262-267) distinguishes between the *illegal economy* and the *New Economy of Terror*. The illegal economy consists of criminal money and illegal capital flight. Criminal money is characterized as organized drugs trafficking, weapons, goods, and people. Narcotics generate a turnover of about \$400 billion a year; another \$100 billion is produced by the smuggling of people, weapons and other goods, such as oil and diamonds. Another component of the international illegal economy is illegal capital flight that makes up for \$500 billion a year. The New Economy of Terror has an additional financial source: 'assets and profits acquired by legitimate means and even declared to tax authorities' (2004: 267). This additional source, Napoleoni estimates at about \$500 billion a year. In sum, the illegal and New Economy of Terror amount to approximately \$1.5 trillion a year.

Both Adams and Napoleoni describe the concept of terrorism and the development of viable terrorist organizations by emphasizing the importance of having access to international funding². Also, both trace the evolution of Cold War state-sponsored terror towards privately funded multi-billion corporations. On top of this, Napoleoni estimates the total amount of money involved.

Who are the paymasters: revenues and resources?

Raphaeli (2003: 59) describes the financing of terrorism as a 'subterranean universe governed by secrecy, subterfuge, and criminal endeavours'. According to him it 'is best described as an octopus with tentacles spreading across vast territories as well as across a wide range of religious, social, economic and political realities'. In raising funds for terrorism, legitimate and illegitimate sources of funding are hard to distinguish from each other. Funds may derive from legitimate charitable organizations or they may come from credit card fraud, smuggling, car theft, kidnapping, and extortion. This section discusses the question: Where do terrorists get their money from?

Adams (1986: 238) does not attempt to provide an exhaustive overview of all sources of revenue and resources for terrorism. Rather, his book is an attempt to unravel 'a number of myths [that] have been created around the whole phenomenon'. These myths, according to Adams, 'have tended to confuse the issue and the judgements made considering what should be done about the threat'. After unraveling the myth that 'the Soviet Union and its allies have been largely responsible for the growth of international terrorism', and, for instance, suggesting that 'the Soviets have never provided funding for the PLO ... but make the Palestinians pay in hard-earned foreign exchange for all

arms delivered', Adams (1986: 251) concludes that bank accounts should be meticulously scrutinized. As much effort should be devoted to tracing the sources of money, the bank accounts and the investments of terrorist groups as is spent on countering the suicide bomber and the assassin.

Napoleoni (2004: 235) divides terror revenues into three main categories according to their origins: (1) legitimate business, including profits from companies or state-shells controlled by armed groups, donations from charities and individuals, asset transfer and legally approved aid from foreign countries, (2) illegal revenues circumventing legislation, originating from covert aid, from foreign governments and smuggling and (3) criminal activities, including: kidnapping, blackmail, theft, fraud, piracy, and money laundering³.

Legitimate sources of funding

Napoleoni (2004: 222-223) states that to a considerable extent, the terror balance of payments involves *remittances* from those countrymen who have sought refuge abroad. For instance, the PLO has exposed the so-called Palestinian Diaspora to 5% taxation. In a similar fashion, the Kosovar Diaspora living in Switzerland and Germany sent about 3% of their income to support UCK, the Kosovo Liberation Army. Such contributions may also involve appliances (e.g., radios, and night-vision equipment).

Another source of terror funding is *charities*. According to Napoleoni (2004: 223), the link between charities and armed organizations stems from the 1970s when Irish Americans started to support widows and orphans in their home country. Islamic charities came to bloom during the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan. Napoleoni (2004: 223) estimates 'that a large portion of charity funds acts as an international pool of money, ready to be channeled to whichever group is in need in the Muslim world'. In this respect, Raphaeli (2003: 61) mentions *Zakat* (i.e., almsgiving). *Zakat* 'assumes a particularly significant role in countries, such as Saudi Arabia, which, for religious reasons, have no income tax ... individuals have to donate 2.5% of their income to the charity of their choice'. Raphaeli states there is no reliable figure on the size of the donations, nor on the ways in which they are used. However, he holds that some 'of these donations will find their way to nurture religious extremism or to finance terrorist activities' (2003: 62).

Another example of a legitimate source of funding is the *Hawala*. The *Hawala* 'is the transfer or remittance of money from one party to another without use of a formal financial institution, such as a bank or money exchange' (Raphaeli 2003: 70; see also: Napoleoni 2004: 167). Raphaeli (2003: 70) claims that 'international financial institutions estimate the annual *Hawala* transfers at about \$2 trillion a year'. *Hawala* leaves no

paper trail. 'A remitter gives money to an intermediary ... usually operating from a store or back office, who in turn instructs his correspondent in the receiving country to pay the beneficiary the transferred amount in local currency'. Furthermore, because 'so few elements of this informal transfer instrument are recorded, there is no way of obtaining the records of the transmitters and the beneficiaries or capturing the scale and magnitude of such transfers'. Because of its informal character, the *Hawala* is a money transfer instrument that is easily exploited by terrorists and other criminal elements.

Illegal sources of funding

Typical of Islamic charities linked to terror groups is the combination of humanitarian aid and illegal activities. Raphaeli (2003: 67-69) describes several cases in which terrorist networks are disguised as legitimate charities until their cover is exposed. He refers to organizations such as the Afghan Support Committee, the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society and the Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation. Another source for the terror balance of payments, according to Napoleoni (2004: 225) 'is state sponsorship, such as the US-government's covert and legitimate aid for the Contras' in Nicaragua against the Sandinists.

However, a much more common means in today's financing of terror 'is asset transfer, defined as the redistribution of external assistance or existing assets in favour of armed groups'. Napoleoni (2003: 225) takes asset transfer as 'one of the most lucrative sources of revenue for armed groups and state-shells in Third World countries'.

Criminal sources of funding

The kidnapping of tourists or expats is another source of revenue for the terror balance of payments, as well as other criminal activities (e.g. car theft, credit card fraud and counterfeiting consumer products) carried out abroad. Smuggling makes up for the most important criminal source of income. Contraband ranges from cigarettes, to alcohol, to diamonds. 'The benefits of contraband for armed groups are manifold. Not only is it a healthy source of income, it also erodes the infrastructure of traditional economies'. In doing so, it facilitates the breeding of the economics of war (Napoleoni, 2004: 231). In smuggling oil, also, terror, criminal and legitimate economies interact. For instance, Recknagel describes how Iraqis offer oil to smugglers at a price of \$95 per metric ton. 'This ... enables a smuggler to purchase the oil for that price, pay the Iranians \$50 a metric ton ... and then sell the oil at their destination for around \$205 a metric ton' (Napoleoni, 2004: 233-234). Finally, armed groups may fund themselves by transfer of domestic assets in various forms: looting, robbery, extortion and pillage.

This method preys directly on the resources of the traditional economy (Napoleoni 2004: 235).

Raphaeli (2003: 72) suggests that the Islamic banking network appears to have been important in transferring and laundering money intended for terrorist organizations. These banks are theologically denied to pay interest to depositors. Any Zakat provided by them are off the books and may be used for any purpose whatsoever. Several banks have helped transferring money to al-Qaeda through the Zakat system, by direct donations or by knowingly providing means to raise and transfer funds to the terrorist organization⁴.

Levers to control financing systems supporting terrorism⁵

Tracing financial transactions by terrorist groups is difficult because they often transact money through third parties, numbered accounts, offshore accounts, charitable organizations and disguised fronts. Many transactions are cash transactions, often through agencies that keep incomplete records and often operate outside the supervision of central banking authorities. Transactions may be conducted through Islamic banks that, until recently, have escaped close scrutiny. There is a considerable number of banks operating offshore and they are not subject to scrutiny either. Some countries invoke banking secrecy, often to conceal illegal activities. Many organizations suspected of terrorist or terrorist related activities use multiple aliases. In this respect, Raphaeli (2003: 78) mentions that the largest Saudi charitable organization, Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation, 'appears under 26 different spellings and configurations'.

According to Raphaeli (2003: 79), the response of the US to the financing of terrorism can be distinguished into *tactical action* and *strategic initiatives*. Tactical action involves interrupting individual practices. Strategic initiatives apply to changing the context in which terrorists raise and move their funds. Strategic measures are hindered by ineffective bank supervisory and anti-money laundering regimes in many countries, particularly in the Middle East and South Asia. International measures against terrorism combine *repressive* with *preventive* measures. 'The repressive measures involve agreements amongst countries to make certain acts criminal offences in their legislation, and to cooperate among each other by exchanging information and providing mutual legal assistance' (Raphaeli 2003: 79). Preventive measures 'involve the establishment of a regulatory regime for financial institutions that is intended to reduce the scope for using the financing system to collect and transfer funds for terrorist purposes' (Raphaeli 2003: 80).

While Raphaeli focuses exclusively on measures to control the financing of terrorism, at the same time, he is rather pessimistic about the impact of such measures. According

to him the financing of terrorism, and terrorism itself, is there to stay.

Adams (1986: 246) warned that by the mid-1980s the IRA had become so much a part of Northern Ireland's economy, its influence spreading throughout every aspect of working-class life, that it had become impossible to eliminate. As paradoxical as it may sound, it could be argued that a strong economic base might turn out to be the terrorist organization's pitfall in the end. After all, why should one destroy a societal system that allows for power, influence and wealth? Contemporary history shows Sinn Féin's metamorphosis as the former political wing of the IRA into a legal and respected political party.

Napoleoni (2004: 294-295) suggests 'that the first step in fighting [the New Economy of Terror] is to identify its channels of interaction with the economies of the West and progressively sever them - close its avenues into the free market and the world of capitalism'. According to her, this can only be accomplished 'if we ... take hold of the greatest privilege offered us by an open society - the opportunity to be informed about and to participate in the economic decisions that shape our lives'.

We believe that coping with the financing systems supporting terrorism needs a multi-actor approach. In this respect, counter-terrorism is as much a responsibility of the international police organizations and armed forces as it is a responsibility of international politics, business corporations and financial institutions. This would indicate worldwide inter-organizational cooperation, a phenomenon that is characterized, amongst others, by control, necessary to increase the predictability of –often unknown– partners. However, viable inter-organizational cooperation is also based on the awareness of interdependence to achieve the objectives and on trust.

Partners can reduce uncertainty about the other partners' behavior and develop confidence by two mechanisms. The first mechanism is based on control, or domain consensus. Examples are goal setting, rules and regulations regarding the participation in the alliance, monitoring the progress of activities and reporting the results of the alliance. Using such mutually agreed mechanisms, parties are able to reach consensus on the domains of cooperation and the division of responsibilities. The second mechanism is based on the development of trust, which is important for various reasons. Firstly, in inter-organizational alliances needed to cope with the financing systems supporting terrorism there will be no consented hierarchy. Partner-organizations participate in the alliance on a voluntary basis. Trust is one of the scarce means by which the alliance can be governed. Moreover, trust serves to foster positive expectations regarding the unknown partners' intentions. Only trust will enable the partners to depend on each other in situations entailing risk, which is necessary to cope with crises induced by terrorism (Bollen 2002: 47-63).

Concerning the amount of trust needed in inter-organizational alliances, Das and Teng (1998) refer to the concept of 'confidence in partner cooperation', which distinguishes three different kinds of dependencies that influence the necessary level of confidence. First, the amount of non-recoverable investments in the alliance has an impact on the level of confidence in partner cooperation that is needed. The more alliance-specific investments partners have to make, the more risk they will run and the more confidence in their partners' behavior they will deem necessary. Second, high levels of embeddedness and connectedness amongst partners require high levels of confidence, because partner-organizations will be hampered to leave the inter-organizational alliance voluntarily. Third, the amount of risk with regard to the partners' opportunistic behavior has an impact on the level of confidence. When chances are high for the partner-organizations to abuse the alliance's resources to further their own goals, high levels of confidence will be necessary.

Inter-organizational alliances, constituted to deal with the financial aspects of terrorism will be rather autonomous at a strategic level. Therefore, it can be expected, the amounts of non-recoverable investments in the alliance will not be very high. However, because of strong external and political pressure, which has been going on since September 11, 2001, the levels of embeddedness and connectedness will be quite intense. Partners may feel they are condemned to each other in order to solve the problems. Neither party is allowed to openly disclaim or refuse the need for cooperation. Finally, all parties involved in the inter-organizational alliance run some risk of the other partners abusing the mutual resources. Another sort of risk, however, may be that in cooperating within an alliance that is created to put a halt to terrorism, some partners may lose credibility in the eyes of their beneficiaries in the outside world. This may hold true, for instance, for members of the Islamic banking network and for some charitable organizations. To compound this effect, Lewicki, McAllister and Biest (1998) mention the mix of trust and distrust that manifests itself in most of today's transactional relationships. By this, the authors refer to the interdependence the alliance generates, while at the same time the parties involved in the partnership have to achieve their own goals in order to satisfy their grass root supporters. The occurrence of both trust and distrust at the same time is something participants in an alliance that aims to control financing systems supporting terrorist organizations will have to come to terms with.

We conclude that multi-actor alliances constituted to deal with the financial aspects of terrorism must be characterized by an average level of confidence in partner cooperation. Such levels of confidence require continuous communication and information sharing at strategic, operational and tactical levels amongst and within the partner-organizations involved. Intensive interaction is necessary to be able to solve problems

caused by fundamental differences among the parties involved in the alliance, by working in a nefarious context, by conflicts of interest, and by the performance of fluctuating and interdependent tasks for which new routines have still to be developed.

Summary and conclusion

To sum up, first, an agreed generic definition of terrorism remains absent. To a certain extent, this means that certain groups will manifest themselves as terrorists in the eye of the beholder. In a cynical mood, one might wonder whether the war on terrorism would have been declared if, on September 11 2000, some people had decided to destroy the Eiffel Tower, thereby attacking the hearts and identity of the French. Napoleoni (2004) tries to circumvent this problem by referring to 'terror' instead of 'terrorism'.

Second, after examining the sources of terror groups' funds, it appears their paymasters are manifold. They range from legitimate business enterprises and governmental support to the world of charities and *Hawala*, and ultimately, to downright criminal activities, such as car theft, narcotics trade and kidnapping.

Third, we examined whether it would be possible to stem the flow of terrorist supporting money at the source. There are many answers to this question. To a certain extent, criminal financing systems are already investigated by international police organizations and forbidden by legislation. However, when it comes to getting at the paymasters that appear to be more or less legitimate or who are expedient at circumventing legislation, imposing measures of control seems not good enough to achieve the objectives.

Unilateral pressure on the implementation of measures to control worldwide systems for financing terrorism fails to achieve its goals. Partly, this failure can be ascribed to the fact that these systems are highly complex and impossible for a single agency - or nation - to deal with. This indicates that a multi-actor approach is needed. A multi-actor approach presumes that all parties involved possess complementary expertise and knowledge which makes them dependent on one another to solve the problems. Therefore, all parties will have to participate in decision-making processes, which by nature will have to be multilateral instead of unilateral.

Another motive that may cause control systems to fail, could be the fact that there is no consensus about the problem at hand. In this sense, the cliché of one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter may hold true on the ideological side, and on the opportunistic side. Financing terrorist organizations may account for huge profits.

If one holds that certain acts of terrorism cannot be condoned in certain societies, and that one of the ways to put an end to these acts is by cutting off the cash flow, besides measures of control a certain amount of trust will be needed among the actors

to bring this about. In this respect, it is important to notice, that most of today's transactional relationships are characterized by the manifestation of both trust and distrust at the same time, because partners in an alliance have to achieve joint goals, while they are also responsible for achieving organization-specific goals for which they are accountable to their own grass root supporters.

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Notes

1. Both Winer (2002: 5) and Napoleoni (2004: 239) estimate the direct expenditure of the September 11 attack on \$500,000. Napoleoni adds, 'the cost for the US ... will be in excess of \$135 billion'.
2. We have adapted the word 'viable' from Beer (1995). He (1995: 113) assumes an organization viable if it is able to maintain a separate existence in its environment.
3. With 'state-shells' Napoleoni (2004: 36) refers to '*de facto* state entities created around a war economy generated by the violent activities of armed groups'.
4. For an overview of the "financial network" of al-Qaeda, see: Gunaratna (2002: 60-69).
5. With the phrase 'levers to control' we refer to - arguably - the most comprehensive control concept developed in the management control literature (i.e. levers of control for implementing strategy; Simons, 2000: 301-316). The relevant levers of control in his concept are: (1) belief systems (to empower and expand search activity), (2) boundary systems (to provide limits of freedom), (3) diagnostic control systems (to coordinate and monitor the implementation of intended strategies) and (4) interactive control systems (to stimulate and guide emergent strategies). We argue that pulling these levers will not be enough to stop the financing of terrorism. Inter-organizational alliances fighting terrorism should not only invest in control, but also in trust (e.g., by continuous interaction, personal contacts, open communication and information exchange in formal and informal settings). Partners in the alliance cooperate on a voluntary basis. Each of the organizations in the network must have confidence in the other organizations 'doing the right thing', while there exists no hierarchy and all are vulnerable to the actions of the other organizations in the alliance. In fact, for control mechanisms to work in such an alliance, an 'acceptable amount' of trust must be developed first.

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Terrorism and its psychological impact

Ad Vogelaar

Introduction

'The world will never be the same again', that is what many people thought after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001. That day the United States of America was hit by extremely violent and spectacular attacks and it became clear for many people that the Western world had become an easy target for a well-organized enemy. With that, the attacks had also effectuated a major psychological impact. They did not only make people afraid of further attacks, they also influenced the way communities viewed each other and how they related. Terrorism, therefore, does not only impact the perceptions and the behavior of people who are direct or indirect victims of acts of terror, but also those of the communities the victims as well as the perpetrators originate from.

Moreover, it also has a psychological impact on terrorists and the authorities fighting them. The perpetrators have often gone through a long process before they have decided to turn to a terrorist organization. There are a number of psychological theories that can explain how people turn into terrorists and how they live with the acts they commit. Besides, psychological theories can explain how the authorities react.

In the present article the psychological processes of perpetrators, victims and the fighters of terrorism are discussed by means of three questions:

1. How do people become terrorists, how do they arrive at their deeds and how do they deal with the consequences?
2. What is the psychological impact of terrorist attacks on the victims, their environment and society?
3. How can terrorism be dealt with?

Before dealing with these questions, a definition of terrorism is required.

What is terrorism?

There are many definitions of terrorism. According to Marsella (2004) most of them tend to gravitate around certain points:

- use of violence;
- by individuals or groups;
- directed against the civilian population;
- intended to create fear;
- as a means to make other individuals or groups shift their political or social position.

This definition implies that terrorists do not seek personal gain, but a higher objective, such as more voice, equal rights for a certain group of people, attention for their cause or way of life. Another implication of this definition is that, in principle, the actions are not directed against the victims themselves, but at the ultimate objective of reaching a large public. The means to do that are attacks at a relatively small group of indiscriminate individuals that happen to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. These attacks also serve as a signal that everyone can be hit. In general, actions of terrorists are seldom random, but frequently accurately directed at what they want to reach. It is therefore important to understand what terrorists want to reach (Crenshaw 1990). As said above, their target is not destruction in itself but the creation of fear. According to Reid (2002) the strategy of terrorists involves the following aspects:

- disruption: the creation of chaos, fear and confusion among the persons belonging to the target group, preventing them from pursuing their normal lives;
- deflection of purpose: ensuring that the target group has to focus on the terrorist actions and related activities;
- draining of resources: ensuring that the resources of the target group have to be employed against the terrorist activities, for their prevention or dealing with the victims;
- attention gathering: directing the attention to the terrorist organization, lending it a certain measure of notoriety, but at the same time generating a certain awe, popularity and legality among sympathizers. It is for this reason that the responsibility for terrorist acts is almost always claimed and that they are not committed anonymously.

Finally, Reid describes organizational profit as an objective. Terrorist organizations may attempt to win sponsors through their actions; funds they need to sustain their actions. A lot of money is needed for that and popularity helps them get it.

According to Hallett (2004) terrorists differ from criminals in two aspects. First, their actions are often more spectacular with a view to achieving the intended publicity effect. The attacks on the Twin Towers, partly carried out in front of the world's eye, and the simultaneous explosions of multiple bombs (like in Madrid in 2004 and London and Sharm-el-Sheikh in 2005) makes the assaults spectacular in that it links them to a very effective organization capable of doing this. Secondly, the perpetrators do not act out of self-interest, but on behalf of (in their eyes) the repressed or discriminated. Where normal criminals act out of personal gain, the terrorist are convinced they act in the interest of a certain cause. And where criminals usually commit their crimes furtively, terrorists seek publicity.

The above seems to explain what actions can be classified as terrorism, but as terrorism is a term with strong negative connotations, linking it to a particular action in

practice always brings along discussions. What some see as terrorism, others consider justified military action. What is law enforcement for some is state terrorism for others (Muldoon 2003). When Palestinians detonate a bomb in an Israeli city, they are not terrorists according to their own people but subjugated people resisting an unjust occupation. For them the Zionist entity is the only terrorist organization. They only claim to offer resistance. The Israeli government subsequently adopts a similar but contrary position. In its view the Palestinian actions are acts of terror, whereas it is only carrying out legitimate military operations itself. Actions directed against civilian targets should in its view not be considered as terrorism but antiterrorism (cf. Kronenwetter 2004: 7). Thus, terrorism is in the eye of the beholder.

In the remainder of this article actions carried out by states against other states or the own population will be left out of consideration, although recent history shows that state terror, in such places as Russia (Stalin), Germany (Hitler), and China (Mao Ze Dong) can be much more deadly than the combined attacks of the large terrorist organizations, such as al-Qaeda. In this article the focus lies on “insurgent” terrorism (i.e., the strategy of the weaker party to strike out at the established order).

What motivates terrorists?

Research into the motives of terrorists is relatively scarce. In Groebel's words (1989: 25), ‘Most data are either not available at all, are only fragmentary, or cannot be tested with respect to their reliability and validity. Terrorists are rarely open to direct observations and usually do not volunteer for scientific interviews’. For these reasons many statements about terrorists must be made with the necessary caution.

McCauley (2002) distinguishes three perspectives in the research into terrorism: the personality traits of terrorists, emotions as the drive for committing acts of terror and more goal-oriented and rational grounds for terrorist attacks. These three perspectives are discussed below.

Terrorists as disturbed personalities

For a long time it was believed that terrorists differed substantially from other people. In order to come to their deeds, the reasoning was, they cannot be other than abnormal people. According to McCauley (2002), however, research shows that many terrorists are not disturbed personalities as described in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Personality research further shows that terrorists differ in only few respects from non-terrorists. A thorough research into the Baader-Meinhof Gruppe, active in Germany in the 1970s, showed, for

example, that they were average people (e.g., McCauley 2002: 5-6).

It is also suggested that terrorists are psychopaths - in general, intelligent people who show socially and morally deviant behavior. Psychopaths tend to be impulsive, irresponsible and demonstrate no loyalty towards others. Apart from that psychopaths in general are not prepared to become victims themselves of their actions. The actions of the perpetrators of many recent attacks (New York, London, Madrid) show that they were not irrational people, but, on the contrary, acted in a very disciplined way in the context of a larger collective. A large number of them showed they were indeed prepared to sacrifice their lives. The present-day view in the research into terrorism is that terrorists do not arrive at their deeds as a result of a personality disturbance, but because of other processes (cf. McCauley 2002).

Terrorism induced by emotion

There are ideas that terrorism is driven by emotions such as anger, hate and frustrations generated by a perceived unfair treatment from a ruling majority. These emotions can lead to feelings of revenge. According to Cota-McKinley et al. (2001: 343), revenge is one of the most important keys to understanding terrorism. In this context it can be described as 'the infliction of harm in return for perceived injury or insult or a simply getting back to another person'. Cota-McKinley et al. base their conclusions about revenge as the main drive for terrorism on the often surprising readiness of individuals to sacrifice themselves and to suffer in the terrorist attacks they carry out. They reason from the supposition that people are prepared to sacrifice themselves exclusively for emotional considerations.

There is much anecdotal support for this supposition. A number of people, for instance, join a terrorist organization because they feel unjustly treated by the ruling system that is trying to deal with terrorism. Thus, there are scores of examples of people who would never have become terrorists if they had not clashed violently with the ruling system, which provided them with a reason for revenge (cf. Collins 1997; Morrissey 2000). It is not necessary for potential terrorists to have first-hand experience of injustice; they can also arrive at their deeds when they hear from the media that people within their group are repressed. According to Kinder (1998) it is identification with the group that turns people into terrorists. When they see that their own group is dealt with unfairly or discriminated against people can decide to commit acts of terror against the oppressors. Thus, in 2006 there are probably many foreign terrorists in Iraq to help "their brothers" in the struggle against the Coalition Forces. In their eyes attacks on the Americans and Iraqis that cooperate with them are justified to defend the integrity of their own nation and religion. They act out of a sort of revenge against Western

suppression of Iraq. The question remains, however, whether emotions can be the drive for committing acts of terror in the longer term. Although feelings of revenge may be the reason for a number of people to join a terrorist organization, being a member becomes a way of life after some time with its own rationality as a motive to continue committing acts of terror. For still others, emotions, such as feelings of revenge, have never been the motive for becoming terrorists in the first place, and they have joined for other reasons.

Terrorism on rational grounds

In general, terrorism can be seen as a form of target-oriented behavior. The higher objective often involves an ideal that the terrorists try to attain or an enemy they wish to defeat. Hoffmann (1993) distinguishes three broad categories of terrorists, based on their motivation:

- Rationally motivated terrorists: they are people who try to achieve certain objectives with their actions, such as the release of prisoners, ending certain production methods, or creating a state of their own. These people want to be heard and with their actions want to be on the agendas of those in power. The moment the objectives have been realized the rationale for their actions disappears in principle and they will stop them. In general, these terrorists weigh up the cost-benefit ratio of intended actions and they take care not to cause unnecessary victims as this can affect their negotiation position and support for their actions.
- Terrorists that act out of psychological distress: they are people who are searching their own identity and are trying to develop and retain a certain degree of control and self-esteem by joining a terrorist group. In particular, this involves young people who are easy to influence. The affiliation with terrorist groups, the process of being a terrorist and the appreciation and respect this brings along pleases them. They are not so much interested in reaching the objectives of the group, and often these objectives become increasingly extreme as a result. They do not feel the need for debate or negotiation because they want to stay terrorists.
- Terrorists with a cultural motivation: they are people who act out of fear of losing their own cultural identity. By committing acts of terror they make clear to others that they disapprove of their behavior. In particular religious aspects are important here. Often they act on a divine and dogmatic conviction which brooks no opposition. In doing so, they strive for an uncompromising ideal that is unattainable. They often have a categorical "good versus evil" conception of the world. By embracing the dogmatic idea of "we are right and they are not", this group never tests its own ideas against those of others.

Within one and the same terrorist group different people may have different motivations. Rationally motivated terrorists who in the course of time make a sincere effort to negotiate compromises, will be considered traitors by the “hardliners” (the people who have nothing to gain from a solution). This causes factions, which, if negotiations actually lead to results, will want to continue their actions. When, for instance, in the late 1990s the IRA sincerely wanted to lay down arms and start peace negotiations, factions, such as the Real IRA, continued their attacks.

Not only the target is a major motivator for terrorists, also the members of the organization that terrorists are involved with are very important. In general, people are members of many groups, such as family, work, clubs for spare time activities. All these groups influence the way people think. Terrorist organizations do everything to bind their members psychologically and to isolate them from all other groups of which they are members. They do this by physically separating them or through extremely strong fixation on the objectives of the terrorist organization. In the former case terrorists live separated from their families, they usually do not work and the group with which they plan and carry out their actions is the only one with which they are related and to which they feel an unconditional loyalty. They will do anything for this group and would rather die than desert it. The combination of a small group and a sacred objective lends great meaning to their lives. According to Volkan (1997) terrorist groups provide the safety of the family by replacing individuality for group identity. In the latter case psychological isolation takes place by effecting an extremely ideological fixation on the ultimate objective of the organization. This makes it possible to continue one’s own life with its daily contact with family, work, etc., and still furtively remain loyal only to the terrorist organization. In such a case it is often a surprise for their direct environment to find out that their close relations are involved in such activities.

In trying to achieve their objectives terrorist organizations have a tendency to radicalize. This is brought about by a number of psychological factors. In the process towards extreme violence a number of phases can usually be distinguished. In the first phase individuals recognize that, as a group, they are faced with difficult circumstances that frustrate their basic needs, making them perceive the present society as illegitimate and unjust. At a certain moment a number of individuals sharing the same feelings of discontent find each other and name their dissatisfaction. On the one hand, this gives a certain degree of recognition, security and identity, and, on the other, an idea may come up that something must be done to tackle the problem. What emerges then is a sense of urgency. Often there are one or two people who take charge and manage to name this sense of urgency or crisis. Sprinzak (1991) uses the term “crisis of confidence” when the group protests and demonstrates against the ruling political system, but still accepts the values of the system. They try to be put in the right within the existing conven-

tions. When all this is to no avail, it is possible that the group goes one stage further. It loses confidence in reforms and develops a competing ideological and cultural system, meanwhile resorting to small-scale violence. Sprinzak (1991) calls this a 'conflict of legitimacy'. In this case the violence is mainly directed at those they fight. Animal welfare activists, for instance, direct their actions at those organizations that in their eyes abuse animals or maltreat them for their own objectives. Environmental activists direct their actions at the polluting industries and at the governments that support them. They are actions in which as a form of collateral damage there may be a few victims. Making victims, however, is not an end in itself, and the violence is relatively small-scale. Some organizations move on to the third phase, in which the group embraces terrorist violence against the authorities and everyone who supports them. In that case Sprinzak (1991) uses the term 'crisis of legitimacy'. All means are admissible to reach the ultimate goal. Making victims has often become an end in itself. The terrorists believe in acts of terror as an instrument to destabilize society and at the same time they feel a need to shake up the population, to reveal the Achilles heel of those in power and to generate self-confidence from their activities.

When groups evolve to the later phases and become terrorist organizations in the process, they often lose sight of the reasonableness of their actions (Hallett 2004). They see themselves as, for example, freedom fighters involved in a good cause. For the sake of realizing this good cause, everything is justified. They have no feeling anymore for aspects that should in all good reason be considered when carrying out their actions, such as:

1. Proportionality: the ratio between the target and the means. To what extent are the acts committed proportionate to what they are going through.
2. Discrimination between the perpetrators and the innocents: who are they actually trying to hit? By making victims indiscriminately among groups that are not well protected in order to create fear, they hurt many innocent people who have nothing to do with the injustice extended to them.
3. Well-intentioned: what exactly is it they want to reach with their actions and to what extent are the objectives clear and justifiable? And to what degree are the actions in accordance with objectives they want to attain?

Losing sight of these aspects while committing brutal onslaughts in which many indiscriminate victims fall for the sake of a struggle for unclear objectives, causes terrorist groups to isolate themselves more and more from others. Thus, a recent poll shows that al-Qaeda loses popularity in Muslim countries that have suffered attacks of this organization (PEW Global Attitudes Project, 15 July 2005; <http://pewglobal.org/reports>).

The individual members of a terrorist organization often find themselves on a slippery slope, with their values and norms gradually changing (see McCauley 2002). Individuals themselves hardly ever notice that they are changing while the organization is becoming more radical. They rarely have the idea that in this process of radicalization they have at some point made a conscious choice. There are several psychological models to explain this process. In a group of like-minded persons, for instance, group polarization may take place (Moscovici & Zavalloni 1969). In mutual discussions it is determined on the basis of relevant arguments what is acceptable and what is not. In a group of like-minded persons, however, all the arguments point in the same direction. With that, the balance necessary for a well-considered formation of opinion falls away. As the terrorist group is often the most important group in the lives of the terrorists, as was seen above, the individual members are not corrected in their opinions. Furthermore, group pressure increases the tendency not to voice any doubts that may be felt and to keep them to oneself. Thus, group members reinforce each other in the idea that what is happening is good.

Research also shows that people can be brought to commit the most brutal of deeds through a process of small steps (cf. Milgram 1974). The principle works as follows. When people are pressured slightly into committing a small breach of norm, they will have the tendency to justify this by referring to the importance of their act. In doing so, they change their views of what is admissible and what is not (cf. insufficient justification, Smith & Mackie 1995: 323). Thus, they justify their behavior. When they go a bit further, they will also justify this behavior with the motto "*if it is wrong what I have done just now, it was also wrong what I did the first time, so I am not doing anything wrong*". In this way they move on, bit by bit, without noticing that they are crossing a line somewhere and they cannot go back again.

The model of moral disengagement that Bandura (2004) developed can also help explain why terrorists can disengage themselves morally from their deeds. He describes a number of processes that make it easier to justify acts that are morally reprehensible. The process of *advantageous comparison* enables terrorists to justify their acts of terror by labeling what has been done to them as worse than what they do themselves. They can also vindicate their deeds by emphasizing that there is no alternative and that inaction makes things worse. The use of *euphemistic language* implies the creation of a reality to make certain matters more acceptable. The use of the term freedom fighter, for instance, puts an entirely different light on actions than the word terrorist. What also often takes place is *displacement of responsibility*. Moral checks work best when people accept that they themselves are fully responsible for their deeds. When a legitimate authority assumes this responsibility, it will become easier for many people to disengage themselves from the consequences of their actions. Terrorist organizations are often

tightly led, which allows the members to act on behalf of the leadership or - in religious movements – on behalf of an even higher power, without feeling responsible. In line with this there is the principle of *diffusion of responsibility*, in which responsibility for actions does not clearly lie with the person who commits them. Often decisions are the outcome of group processes and actions are carried out by more than one person. It becomes easier to distance oneself from the consequences of acts of terror when the individual terrorist is only a small cog in the wheel. There is also frequent *disregard or distortion of harmful consequences*. It is easier to commit acts of terror while not seeing the victims by keeping distance. This can be done by detonating bombs by remote control or by seeing the victims in such a way that there is little room for compunction about one's deeds. The latter can be done by *attribution of blame*: people can do awful things to others by blaming them for it. In fact, in their eyes the victims asked for it themselves. Another way to make victims more easily is *dehumanization*: people do not consider members of other groups as people with similar feelings as they themselves have. As a consequence they feel much less compassion for them.

Impact of terrorism

Terrorism has important consequences for the victims and their environment, for the society in which the attacks take place and for the functionaries who are responsible for the security in a country. In the following section these three groups are discussed in greater detail.

Victims

Major attacks often leave the victims completely shattered. Norris (2002) shows that unexpected, sudden and violent traumatic experiences that have been consciously thrown upon people have a greater negative impact than natural disasters. The fact that there are others who apparently are able to commit such acts has an impact on people's perception of the world and values. In the literature several factors are described that increase the impact of acts of terrorism. According to Waugh (2001), the following components of terrorism are extremely traumatizing:

- the use of threats or actual use of excessive violence;
- intentional, conscious activities to inflict damage;
- the intention not only to cause psychological disorganization among the victims but also to the environment;
- the choice of victims for their symbolical value (e.g., their innocence).

The effect of an act of terrorism depends on who gets killed. The impact is greater when they are women or children. Apart from that, the location of the attack is very important for the effect. The attack on the government building in Oklahoma City in 1995 had a large impact on the sense of security of many Americans. This was caused by the realization that if this could happen in Oklahoma City, it could happen anywhere. The uncertainty about who will be a target and when and where a terrorist attack will take place, increases the fear. A meta-analysis by Rubinos & Bickman (1998) reveals two event-related variables that connect a terrorist act and the ensuing psychopathology, namely the number of people directly involved in the incident and the extent of human culpability in that event.

Ditzler (2004), too, mentions a number of factors that influence the psychological impact of acts of terror. First of all, giving little or no warning decreases the perceived control over the environment and increases the feeling of vulnerability. People like to be able to predict and control their environment. If they cannot do this a feeling of learned helplessness begins to emerge, which creates a certain degree of passivity. Secondly, the perception that such an attack can happen again any moment increases the impact. In that way people do not feel safe anywhere anymore. An element in this is that the authorities have lost control, which reduces their credibility. Thirdly, it is psychologically unsettling when people are confronted with unexpected risks that bring along serious threats of their personal safety for which they are not prepared. For those who are prepared, such as security personnel, this is different. Fourthly, the exposure to gruesome or grotesque situations, such as seeing the dismembered bodies of victims, has also a great impact on those who witness them. An attack that exposes people to the horror of seriously wounded and dying people will remain a collective memory for the environment for a long time. A fifth factor of influence is the degree to which there are casualties that require extensive treatment. This causes the victims to be confronted with the attack daily, but also for others they are reminders of what has happened. Finally, there is the potential for unknown health effects. Sometimes means are used that have unknown effects. According to Wessely et al. (2001), the long-term social and psychological effects of a chemical or biological attack, real or imagined, are probably as damaging as the acute effects, or even more so. They often lead to medically inexplicable physical symptoms that puzzle patients, doctors, scientists and policy makers.

Danielli et al. (2004) summarize the few studies that have been conducted into the long-term effects of terrorist attacks. They show that a substantial part of the victims of attacks develop post traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) after some time. Similar findings are reported from various continents. Thus, Abenhaim et al. (1992) found that of all the survivors of attacks on public targets in France between 1982 and 1987 nine percent of the lightly wounded or unharmed had developed PTSD, as compared to 31 per cent of

the heavily wounded. Curran et al.(1990) found that of the people involved in a bomb attack in Northern Ireland 50 per cent of the survivors had developed PTSD after six months. Kawana et al. (2001) discovered psychological after-effects five years after the Sarin attack in a Tokyo metro station. A third of the survivors of the Oklahoma City attack were reported to suffer from PTSD, and 30 per cent had other disorders (North et al. 1999). Studies into the consequences of the 9/11 attacks show that the incidence of PTSD is strongly related to the extent of direct exposure to the attacks and that therefore the PTSD problem is concentrated in the New York region. People who were not directly involved quickly learn how to live with it and have no problems anymore with the attacks, in contrast to those who experienced it in their immediate environment (Danielli et al. 2004) Studies by Gleser et al. (1981), Green et al. (1983) and Shore et al. (1986) all point at the number of victims as a moderator between traumatic incidents and psychological problems for two reasons:

- more people were exposed;
- bereavement over loss of life.

Not only victims can develop problems. Also their next of kin in a number of cases cannot cope with the situation. Sprang (2003) in this respect points at the phenomenon of complicated bereavement. It is the process of mourning the loss of loved ones. Usually bereavement is seen as a normal reaction on the demise of a next of kin and not a disorder. Conversely, complicated bereavement emerges when the shock of the unexpected loss is so stressful that it overwhelms the coping capacities of the individual who does not know how to deal with it. Some of the contributing factors, related to terrorist attacks, are (Rando 1995):

- fundamental loss of security and confidence;
- confusing and pointless loss;
- no opportunity to say goodbye.

Complicated bereavement often comes with secondary losses, such as the loss of employment, a relation that cannot stand the strain, isolation, etc.

There are, however, not only negative effects of terrorism. Thus, research has shown that there are those who feel stronger after a time than before (characterized as posttraumatic growth: Tedeschi & Calhoun 1996). People who have survived an attack testify in a number of cases to a clear appreciation for life, a reorganization of the things they think are important in life and a realization that they are stronger than they had always thought. Longitudinal research after 9/11 has shown that the problems many people had immediately after the attacks had disappeared after some time (Danielli et al. 2004). According to the authors this suggests that at least one of the components of stress in time and effects appears to be limited.

Society

In many societies there are groups that try to achieve certain objectives with violence, such as imposing their norms and values to those societies or secession of their region from a subjugating power. In societies such as these there are occasional outbursts of violence and this situation can last for generations. Although the majority of the population in such regions is not involved in the acts of terror, they often feel sympathy for the objectives the terrorists try to achieve and their acts are condoned. This makes it possible for the terrorists to shelter among the population and to prepare and undertake their actions from there. When acts of terror have been committed it is easy for the entire community from which the terrorists stem to be blamed for them and attacks on properties of that group to be carried out. Thus, soon after the murder of Theo van Gogh on 2 November 2004 (a murder which was called a terrorist attack from a Muslim extremist) mosques and Muslim schools in the Netherlands were set on fire as a reaction. This polarizing of attitudes of entire communities is supported by several psychological mechanisms. The process of *social identification* implies that groups are formed on the basis of salient characteristics and that people are categorized accordingly (Taylor 1981), e.g. Muslims and Christians. Subsequently, through the process of *stereotyping* certain characteristics are attributed to people who belong to a specific group, solely based on the fact that they belong to that group. Finally, the process of *social identification* implies that people try to lend their own group a positive image by attributing positive characteristics to it, while they typify the outgroup negatively by attributing negative characteristics to them. In a society in which groups resort to violence against each other, there is little need for subtleties. These three mechanisms combined create a negative image of the other party, with which one refuses to communicate anymore. The only thing one sees is the other party's violence and it is attributed to their violent characteristics. There is no awareness that all this can be the result of one's own behavior. Because both parties do not communicate there are few possibilities to break up the negative spiral. As a result a certain behavioral pattern begins to develop that only confirms the negative stereotypes (self-fulfilling prophesy). Terrorist attacks and the ensuing retaliations give both parties enough "evidence" for the unreasonableness of the other party, which only strengthens their resolve to continue the struggle.

People in such societies grow up with low-intensity, prolonged conflicts characterized by sporadic and variable levels of violence. This has two related effects. On the one hand, it causes human costs to continue, as it is hardly worthwhile to put too much energy in moving the country forward. It is, for instance, pointless to build up a company if it can be plundered or destroyed at any moment. On the other hand, the conflict hides these costs because it has become a way of life. So, the potential violence obstructs daily life while at the same time becoming a part of it.

The authorities

A society that is hit by a terrorist attack feels insecure and demands action from the authorities. Often the idea takes hold that the authorities have failed to prevent the attack and that they are not capable of adequately protecting their population. This puts pressure on the authorities to do something to satisfy their population and make them rally behind them, especially when the impression is that the leaders should and could have done much more. In such circumstances it becomes tempting to announce tough measures, to create the impression of decisive leaders who cannot be trifled with and who seem to know what has to be done. In times of crisis, when they feel insecure, people demand clear guidance. Announcing tough measures in itself is not a problem as long as it is accompanied by a thorough examination into the perpetrators, so that the authorities can arrest and try them. Tough measures, however, can also turn into revenge and retaliation to set examples, especially when a careful approach is not successful and the population and the authorities become frustrated. Thus, the authorities can order *razzias* to catch terrorists, to shell a village where the terrorists are supposed to hide out, or invade a country that seems to support the terrorists. In the first instance, these actions seem justified in the struggle against terrorism; on the long term, however, they can prove to be counter-productive and to cause more harm than good because they make innocent victims, kindling feelings of revenge in many people. The result is an increased recruitment of terrorists. Why, then, do authorities still choose this kind of measures? Janis (1989) provides a number of explanations by referring to certain rules that decision makers actually apply when taking decisions. These rules obstruct careful, vigilant decision making. First of all, the authorities have the tendency to choose a tough approach because it provides them with a safety valve for the very negative emotions (*emotive rules*) they and their people feel. It gives them the feeling that the terrorists are paid in kind. Secondly, by choosing this kind of action the authorities try to show, certainly on the short term, that they do not take things lying down, and thus make the population rally behind them (*self-serving rules*). So, they think to gain by acting tough. Thirdly, a number of *cognitive rules* will bias the decisions. The wish to retaliate has an impact on the cognitive aspects of the decision making. Thus, the time to take good decisions will be limited due to the pressure to do something. There may already have been a scenario for what to do and the authorities are merely trying to find a further basis for it. Thus, the gathering and processing of information and the process of seeking and considering alternative action will be one-sided. The information gathering will mainly be directed at short-term successes and much less on the disadvantages on the long term. After all, "tough action" may lead to exactly what the terrorists had in mind, namely an accumulation of hatred towards the authorities. The question is of course whether all authorities are so short-sighted in taking their decisions. Here the *affiliative*

rules play a role. In general, people act in accordance with what they think that others who are important for them think is right and do not easily strike a dissonant note. Especially in crisis situations there is a tendency to tow the party line and not voice any criticism, which would point at disagreement. Because of the initial tendency to take tough measures the “hardliners” will therefore prevail over the more thoughtful “doves”. People who doubt the use of tough action will often be reticent when the atmosphere is such that there is a risk of being dubbed unpatriotic or naive.

Fighting terrorism

In the literature there is no agreement on what constitutes an effective approach of terrorism. Different authors emphasize different things. Some say that retaliating terrorism is effective under the following two conditions: it has to take place immediately after the terrorist action so that all parties see that the authorities do not take things lying down, and it has to take place on the basis of accurate intelligence so that the right persons are caught and not innocent people. Reid (2002) states that there are several measures that can be taken to counter terrorism and its consequences. He acknowledges that it is difficult to dismantle a terrorist organization by eliminating the leadership, but he suggests that much can be done to lower the effectiveness of terrorists. Thus, it can be made more difficult to hit targets and to lower their value for the terrorists and an attempt can be made to keep effective weapons out of their hands. What does not help, according to Reid, is giving in to the terrorists’ demands, or hoping one will not be attacked by them by adopting a neutral position, by not attracting their attention or by refusing to resort to violence.

Dershowitz (2002) describes, what he calls, two paradoxes of terrorism. The first is that by sincerely trying to understand the root causes of a terrorist movement and by beginning a dialogue with them, the authorities may lessen the threat from that particular group, but in doing so they may encourage other potential terrorist groups to come into action since terrorism is apparently worth the while. The second paradox is that the more brutally and repressively the authorities treat the terrorists, the more they make them into martyrs and the more others will take over the torch. According to Dershowitz the first paradox is more powerful than the second, and he therefore pleads for tough actions against all terrorist organizations. In fact, however, two scenarios are presented here that both lead to the impossibility of rooting out terrorism. This is also in accordance with a number of studies that show that there is great concern about the effectiveness of counter-terrorism. Enders & Sanders (1993) indicate in their survey of effect studies that twenty years of counter-terrorism have never led to a reduction of the phenomenon. It often brings about heavier attacks, or, when certain targets cannot be

attacked anymore, other types of attack or attacks on other targets. A tougher approach also often leads to the breaking up of coalitions that develop differences of opinion about the way in which to deal with terrorism. The question is why this effect is so low. Three explanations can be given for this. First of all, terrorists often have a breeding ground in the communities of which they are a part. Therefore, it is not only 'madmen' who do this. Terrorists are often the activists that come from the silent supporters. These supporters have more or less sympathy for the objectives of the terrorists, but for various reasons they do not take part in the actions. Secondly, countering terrorism increases the cohesion of the ingroup and their perseverance. Terrorists can improve their position by getting the authorities to overreact. When this happens other people among the supporters are mobilized and their own position is strengthened, which is what they hope for. Thirdly, terrorists are convinced they are fighting for a good cause and they are prepared to sacrifice a lot for that. Most of them do not make a calculating consideration to stop when their losses outweigh their profits. That is what makes them different from normal armies that surrender when they perceive the battle lost. A conflict with terrorists, therefore, is not the same as a conventional military conflict, where taking out the enemy means the termination of the conflict. In a conflict with terrorists new terrorists will stand up time and again.

The question that authorities are facing, or should be facing, therefore, is the effect they create when they want to fight terrorism. The problem is to fight terrorism without losing the sympathy of the local population among which the terrorists are hiding. Military responses to terrorism will never be enough to stop the problem because they do not tackle the causes. What is also ineffective is to dehumanize the terrorists and the use of tactics that go against one's own values. It has a hardening effect. The treatment of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay, where unconventional interrogation techniques are employed and people are incarcerated without any form of trial, does more harm than good to the cause of fighting terrorism. Often terrorism has a breeding ground among the local population. A very aggressive treatment creates a feeling of injustice, not only among the terrorists, but also among other people, which may lead to support for the terrorists. In one way or other the authorities, therefore, must manage to separate and distinguish the terrorists from the population. Therefore, Marsella (2004) proposes a multi-frontal attack. He states that the deeper causes for terrorism often lie in complex historical and cultural backgrounds. His approach implies that a solution cannot be found by demonizing specific individuals and certainly not cultures, but in gaining an insight into the origins of a conflict and what keeps the terrorist movement going. This approach does not mean that terrorism is approved, but that its background is taken seriously. Marsella doubts that terrorism can be beaten by vigilance, counter-terrorism and the elimination of terrorist resources only, because it springs from dissatisfaction

and rejection of inequality and indifference and from the widespread belief that violence is admissible in case of oppression. An approach in which the authorities carry out razzias and take innocent people in the process, often yields the opposite effect. What is necessary is to ensure that the broad support for them disappears by offering the community from which terrorists stem a better future, and simultaneously an approach in which only terrorists are dealt with and not all sorts of other people. In order to fight terrorism it is in the end important to tackle as many roots of despair as possible and to further the satisfaction of needs. This implies the fostering of pluralism, democracy, economic development and decent material circumstances for all people and having an eye for the psychosocial needs of individuals and the society.

A complicating factor in all this is the media. Being able to provide very many people with fast and accurate information, they have, in general, an enormous influence on the public, which trusts them. When the media blow up or misrepresent certain facts this has an impact on the public. Different parties have different interests in the way in which the media report on acts of terror. The media are a party themselves for their livelihood and free news gathering (Elmquist 1990). It is in their interest that as many people as possible get the news through their medium, as this guarantees an income. Because they are in competition with other media, it is important to present the news as attractively as possible. Sensationalism is part of all this. In general, terrorists try to seek publicity, get acknowledgement, create fear and chaos, find supporters, show they can lash out at the ruling system, etc. It is, therefore, in their interest to get as much exposure of their actions as possible. This may be the objective of terrorists who try to attract attention. *The Hofstadgroup* received a large degree of attention in the Netherlands in late 2004 and possibly also popularity among certain groups because of the widely publicized murder of Theo van Gogh by Mohammed B. An action by the police which was broadcast live on TV to arrest several members of the group in the *Laakkwartier* in The Hague, contributed to this notoriety. Terrorist groups often provoke such media exposure in order to recruit potential members and sponsors. A sensational rendering of the facts is in their interest as it makes the organization look heroic or it allows their members to be portrayed as martyrs. The authorities (government) want to use the media to inform and reassure the population, to instruct them and to gain support. A factual representation of what has happened, without sensation is in their interest. Often there is a tendency to keep the media at a distance in the case of actual actions. This is in conflict with the interest of the media, which, as a result, make up their own story. The victims, finally, most of all have a need of privacy in order to cope with their suffering, sorrow and often feelings of shame about what has happened to them. The media are of little importance to them, they must be treated with caution. In conclusion, it is clear that those who profit most from the media are the terrorists and that the media in their turn profit from terrorism and the news it generates.

Summary and conclusion

In this article the psychological aspects of terrorism have been explored. It can be concluded that terrorists mostly act rationally. They know exactly what they are doing and why they are doing that. The reason why they have become terrorists, however, can be based on emotional motives. Another finding is that the process of radicalization of groups is a gradual one. Some groups become terrorists groups because they have not found justice via legal procedures.

Terrorism has an impact on victims, their immediate environment and the larger society. People who have been victims of or witnessed a terrorist attack run a considerable risk of suffering from PTSD. People at a greater distance may be afraid at first, there may be outcries of anger or frustration, but after a while life returns to its everyday routine again. The authorities feel the pressure to act decisively, but they should try to prevent (1) actions that hurt innocent people, and (2) actions that make martyrs out of terrorists. So, a thoughtful but still decisive approach is indicated. At least, the authorities should not give in to the feelings of frustration and hatred that can live among the broader population.

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Humiliation and terrorism

Peter Olsthoorn

The real cause of terrorism is the decision to launch a terrorist campaign.

Michael Walzer¹

Introduction

In recent years, looking for an answer to the question what is behind the rise of political Islam and the terrorist attacks by the hand of a few of its advocates, a number of authors, and not the least, have put forward the view that some Muslims feel that their culture is superior, but at the same time fear that in today's world their way of life is threatened and that their honor is at stake. Presumably, the resulting feelings of humiliation are among the causes of the terrorist attacks we have witnessed in recent years in New York, Madrid and London, and in Bali. Samuel Huntington, Robert. D. Kaplan, Bernard Lewis, Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, Jessica Stern and Jason Burke, have dwelled on this relationship between Muslim terrorism and the notions of honor and humiliation, and pride and shame². The rise in Muslim radicalism witnessed in recent years, they hold, is probably not best understood in religious terms alone. The motivation behind it is not primarily religious, but political³.

Both inside and outside the Islamic world, the September 11 attacks have been linked to 'the feeling of the loss of honor and dignity,'⁴ a loss that supposedly is the result of the colonial heritage of the nation state - a concept at odds with Islamic culture - and globalization. Humiliation by Western dominance thus led to the revolutionary wave in Islam over the last decades, we are told⁵. In this view, Bin Laden 'seized on the notion of honor,' blaming the West 'for robbing the Muslims of their honor and dignity'⁶.

There are three notions here that stand in need of some explanation: humiliation, dignity and honor. Avihai Margalit's *The Decent Society*, written from the perspective that honor and humiliation ought to have a central place in political thought, as they are central in people's lives,⁷ can provide a framework.

Humiliation, Margalit writes, is the injury of someone's self-respect,⁸ or the violation of a person's honor⁹. It often consists of rejecting a human being from the human common wealth, for instance, by ignoring him or treating him as subhuman¹⁰. According to William Miller, in his *Humiliation* - devoted to the complicated relation between humiliation, honor, shame and violence - this will often amount to humiliation 'with a big H'¹¹. Humiliation with a small h often consists of the deflation of pretension, and, as such, it 'is the consequence of trying to live up to what we have no right to'¹². Humiliation with a big H, on the other hand, also involves the deflation of pretension, but in that case,

‘the claim of the torturer, the concentration camp guard, the ideologies of ethnic, racial and religious genocide, is that the humanity of their victims is a pretense’¹³. Margalit, writing mainly about humiliation with a big **H**, mentions the Arabs working in the occupied territories in Israel as an example of people in humiliating conditions: colonialism is another case¹⁴. These two examples show that humiliation can be seen at two levels at least: within a society and on a global level. Margalit focuses on the first, where Huntington and others mainly write about the latter.

Dignity is the external aspect of self-respect, a descendant of the Latin *dignitas*, or social honor¹⁵. Although external, people attach great value to their dignity, and wounding it is often considered humiliating. And not without reason, according to Margalit: dignity, we read, is not a ‘show,’ but the behavioral expression of self-respect; it is not presentation, but representation¹⁶. Prior to both humiliation, as an injury of personal honor, and dignity, as a form of social honor, is the somewhat archaic sounding notion of honor.

Honor is best understood by contrasting it with the more modern notion of conscience. Especially in its modern understanding as an ‘inner voice,’ conscience is more demanding than honor, presupposing moral autonomy (it might prompt someone to go against social norms); yet it lacks an important external component. Honor, on the contrary, has an important external component as it concerns both the value that someone allocates to himself *and* the value others place on him; only in his or her relationships to others does it become clear whether or not someone is a man or woman of honor¹⁷. On honor’s relationship with humiliation, Miller writes that ‘honor is above all the keen sensitivity to the experience of humiliation and shame, sensitivity manifested by the desire to be envied by others and the propensity to envy the successes of others ... The honorable person is one whose self-esteem and social standing is intimately dependent on the esteem or envy he or she actually elicits in others’¹⁸.

After this short outline of some key terms, the remainder of this article looks into today’s prevailing view in the West, which sees honor as something obsolete and archaic and not as a legitimate motive. The article then turns to one of honor’s possible strongholds in modern times, (political) Islam, and the role humiliation might have in the motivation of its faithful advocates. Some insight into the way honor and humiliation can influence people might lead to a better understanding of the mechanisms behind Muslim fundamentalism. According to al-Qaeda expert Jason Burke, the ‘perception that a belligerent West is set on the humiliation, division and eventual conquest of the Islamic world is at the root of Muslim violence. The militants believe they are fighting a last-ditch battle for the survival of their society, culture, religion and way of life’¹⁹.

Honor and shame in Western culture

Although some domains of modern life, such as sports, politics and business, seem difficult to understand without taking honor into account,²⁰ clearly honor has lost much of its appeal as a guide in matters of morality in the modern West. According to most authors, our culture nowadays is individualistic, and honor and shame are therefore, though debatable, probably less relevant than they once were. Autonomy is the ideal, the way we want to be; other-directedness is the regrettable reality, and the way many people are²¹. Most of us believe in a free subject who chooses his or her own way through life, not needing the help judgments of others may offer, or the inhibition that the sense of shame can be. We are supposedly less concerned by how our behavior might look in the eyes of others; face and reputation are no longer of overriding importance. Instead, we have put our faith in conscience: the dominant view is that we, contrary to our predecessors, live in a guilt culture, not a shame culture. Anthropologist Ruth Benedict and classicist Eric Dodds are among the best known proponents of this view²².

We often tend to see this shift from a shame culture to a guilt culture as a moral improvement. Lawrence Kohlberg's influential model of moral development, a three-level (and six-stage) model, is paradigmatic for this way of thinking. According to this model, children are egoistic and calculating at the preconventional level, the one thing keeping them from misbehaving being their fear of punishment. Once at the conventional level, they are also sensitive to peer pressure and concerned about their reputation. Adherence to universal ethics is deemed the highest, post-conventional or 'principled' level²³. It is commonly thought that societies, like children, go through different phases of moral development²⁴. In this view, the Greeks and Romans of old were 'children, and young children, in a Piagetian tale of moral development'²⁵. This supposedly also holds true for those living in Islamic cultures. Other than the West, these cultures have remained more collectivist²⁶ and they are therefore more likely to give honor and shame a place. They still are, and probably will remain, shame cultures. Honor and reputation are more important in these societies, sometimes to a degree that makes them difficult to understand for Western observers. However, not only is their sense of honor stronger, they also feel that their way of life is threatened by Western culture, which is sometimes seen as both inferior and seductive at the same time²⁷. If this is true, humiliation and alienation are among the root causes of Muslim terrorism. The following two sections look into these possible, and related, motives for terrorism.

Humiliation and political Islam

Samuel Huntington, bluntly stating that it is not Islamic fundamentalism that poses a problem for the West, but Islam, writes about Islam as a civilization whose people 'are

convinced of the superiority of their culture and are obsessed with the inferiority of their power'²⁸. In addition, Muslims, writes another author, 'have a worldview that entitles them to dominate. But to the contrary, they are dominated by others, to whom they feel - thanks to their divine revelation - superior'²⁹. They share this sense of superiority with the West, together with a conviction of universality, and a desire to expand³⁰. Despite its diminishing role in the world, the West is still able to sustain this feeling of superiority, but in Muslim countries, lagging behind in more than one respect³¹, 'the modern successes of Christian empires were felt as an intolerable humiliation'³².

Talking about Islam, or Islamic culture, in such general terms is an awkward enterprise, however. As Clifford Geertz pointed out in his thorough article on the host of, sometimes hostile, books on Islam that have seen the light since September 11, it often does not do justice to the differences between the different creeds of Islam (and Islamism), and the different cultures and peoples that are among its believers³³. That Islamic culture is a shame culture seems beyond much dispute, however, and this it is not a matter of religion alone. Honor and shame are alien to Christianity, but they are not overly important in the Koran, either. Still, these concepts are not at all alien to most societies where Islam is the dominant religion, predating the rise of this religion³⁴. What seems to be alien to these societies, however, is the Christian idea that pride is the most deadly sin, and humility a virtue³⁵.

While declining in the West, the notions of honor and shame seem only to gain importance in Islamic societies. Although Islam, like Christianity, is a universalistic religion, group loyalties are becoming more important, not less:

The failure to create a just and compassionate society leads people to fall back to ideas of tribal honor and revenge. Divisions in society deepen on the basis of blood and custom. Killing and conflict are encouraged. The honor of the group and – if it is attacked – the need to take revenge become more important than worshiping God in peace and engendering compassion in society³⁶

According to another author, Arab society today is characterized by strong group loyalties and exaggerated forms of shame³⁷. This emphasis on group loyalty, always stronger in collectivist cultures than in individualistic cultures, can become excessive, and those outside the group are accused of dishonorable behavior.

Sensitivity to honor and shame makes people vulnerable to feelings of humiliation³⁸. Writing about 'real or perceived national humiliation by Israeli policies' terrorism researcher Jessica Stern found that:

It is not just the violence; it is the pernicious effect of repeated, small humiliations that

*add up to a feeling of nearly unbearable despair and frustration, and a willingness on the part of some to do anything - even commit atrocities - in the belief that attacking the oppressor will restore their sense of dignity*³⁹

The Palestinian terrorists are not alone in this: talking to terrorists from Burleson, Texas to Islamabad for her book *Terror in the Name of God*, Stern found humiliation mentioned most in the interviews she held.

Those I interviewed cite many reasons for choosing a life of holy war, and I came to despair of identifying a single root cause of terrorism. But the variable that came up most frequently was not poverty or human rights abuses, but perceived humiliation. Humiliation emerged at every level of the terrorist groups I studied - leaders and followers.

*The 'New World Order' is a source of humiliation for Muslims. And for the youth of Islam, it is better to carry arms and defend their religion with pride and dignity than to submit to this humiliation. Part of the mission of jihad is to restore Muslims' pride in the face of humiliation. Violence, in other words, restores the dignity of humiliated youth*⁴⁰

That the New World Order is humiliating to Muslims, is something al-Qaeda's second man Ayman al-Zawahiri claimed⁴¹. al-Qaeda's first man, Osama bin Laden stated in his 7 October 2001 videotape that Muslims had suffered humiliation by the West for almost eighty years, e.g. since the defeat of the Ottoman sultanate in 1918⁴². In his *Letter to America* he declared that the governments of 'our countries' are agents of America, and that they 'give us a taste of humiliation'⁴³.

It is not clear whether this is humiliation with a big **H**, or a small **h**. Although some Muslims might feel that they are treated as sub-human, part of the frustration that fuels the anger of some adherents of political Islam seems to be a consequence of not being able to live up to the pretension of being a superior civilization. Clearly, this is humiliation with a small **h**. The double standards of the West, both in politics and in the media, in tolerating regimes in the Muslim world with a very bad human rights record, as, for instance, the regimes of Saudi Arabia, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Algeria and, until recently, Iraq, and that would never be accepted in the West, suggest, however, that the peoples subjugated by those regimes are seen as having 'neither concern nor capacity for human decency'⁴⁴. Stern concludes in the final chapter of her book that people who join religious terrorist groups 'start out feeling humiliated, enraged that they are viewed by some other as second class'⁴⁵. This might be a reason for feelings of humiliation with a big **H**.

The quotes above show that the reaction to humiliation is often a violent one. In her final chapter, Stern states she considers humiliation an 'important risk factor'. Prominent Islamists such as Sayyid Qutb and Ayman Zawahiri, the intellectual leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood and of al-Qaeda, respectively, argue that violence is a way to cure Muslim youth of the pernicious effects of centuries of humiliation at the hands of the West⁴⁶. Disturbingly, the 'word humiliation, alas, is now coming up in Iraq as well,' Stern writes in an essay written after the invasion of Iraq - an invasion that in her view strengthened terrorists groups⁴⁷.

Alienation and political Islam

Interestingly, and possibly related to the sense of superiority mentioned above, there seems to be a shaming element in suicide attacks, presenting 'a challenge to a spectator's own lack of faith or inaction'⁴⁸. The willingness in some Muslim societies, with its often young populations and sometimes dim prospects for the ambitious⁴⁹, to accept casualties and to make sacrifices, seems to be considerably higher than in the West. As a Taliban fighter of undisclosed origin remarked, 'they love Pepsi-Cola, but we love death'⁵⁰. This brings us to another important point: the view some Muslims harbor about the West.

The feelings of Muslim superiority of some advocates of political Islam are based on the assumptions that Muslims do have a sense of honor, and do have a sense of community. So, some of them not only feel humiliated, they also feel contempt for their humiliators who are seen as morally degenerate and, consequently, weak⁵¹. This Western weakness does not only relate to the West's presumed unwillingness to accept casualties, but also its reluctance to *inflict* casualties among the innocent in defense of its own interests⁵². This view might well be mistaken⁵³. However, whether true or not, in the eyes of bin Laden and others, America is for this reason a paper tiger, easier to defeat than the Soviet Union in Afghanistan⁵⁴. The political Islamists' hatred is not constrained by respect for the West's military capabilities, and they frequently refer to earlier 'shameful' retreats from Vietnam, the Lebanon and Somalia⁵⁵. This partly explains why all suicide attacks of the past two decades have been aimed at democracies: terrorists see them as soft⁵⁶.

As Buruma and Margalit pointed out in their recent book, this view is part of a dehumanizing strand of thought⁵⁷, occidentalism, that goes back a long way and has many different manifestations. Some telling forms of occidentalism in the past were the Japanese view of the West during World War II, and the Romantic criticism of modern society in eighteenth century Europe, the birthplace of occidentalism and orientalism alike. The common denominator of most forms of occidentalism is the view that the

West is nowadays characterized by calculative, scientific thinking, mercantilism, and a loss of the sense of community. The *Gesellschaft* replaced the *Gemeinschaft*, in the words of the German nineteenth-century sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies⁵⁸. Today, occidentalism is found among the advocates of political Islam, who sometimes harbor views of the West that are often as simplified as the pictures of the Islam that have been held by many Christians over the ages. In the eyes of some supporters of the political Islam, moreover, living both outside and inside the West, Westerners are devoid of the sense of honor, their permissiveness being a clear sign of this⁵⁹.

Muslim occidentalists thereby largely underwrite the view generally accepted in Western countries that community and honor did play a role in the West in earlier times, but have disappeared from the stage since, and that the West can now be characterized as an individualistic guilt-culture, whereas in Muslim countries honor, community, and the related willingness to make sacrifices, are still present. Other than most Western authors, they definitely do not see this as a moral improvement.

Conclusion

The idea that terrorism is a result of wounded honor and humiliation by the West seems to lay part of the problem, and responsibility, at the doorstep of the West. Not many people in the West are defending terrorism, but some are finding excuses⁶⁰. And although looking for explanations should not be confused with justifying terrorism⁶¹, it sometimes borders, in some respects, on the apologetic. Stern's remark that violence is a way of restoring dignity after being humiliated, quoted above, somewhat echoes Sartre's defense of violence as a last resort for young Algerians⁶². For a number of reasons, this can be seen as an unjustified form of blaming the victim.

First, obviously, it is not at all clear whether the majority of terrorists actually act out of feelings of humiliation: '[t]he hundreds of groups, cells, movements, even individuals, lumped together under the rubric "Islamic Terrorism" is enormously diverse. Individuals and groups turn to terrorism for a variety of reasons, some of which, though not all, may be shared by others.'⁶³ Nonetheless, even the author of this passage, Jason Burke, seems to hold the view that humiliation is one of the reasons shared by many terrorists. A host of other reasons, for instance, envy, personal failure and the wish for self-glorification might play an important role, however⁶⁴.

Secondly, it is debatable whether the advocates of political Islam have a sound reason to feel humiliated. Margalit's distinction between humiliation in a psychological and a normative sense is crucial here⁶⁵. People with lower status, for instance, tend to *feel* humiliated more often than that they actually *are*⁶⁶. In today's world, citizens of Islamic societies might consider themselves lower-status people. Margalit writes on humiliation

within pluralistic societies: 'A vulnerable group with a history of humiliations and suspicion of its surroundings, especially suspicion of the dominant culture, is liable to interpret any criticism as humiliation. The hegemonic form of life may well be indifferent to such a peripheral form of life, so that it has no intention of criticizing it because it does not perceive it as a threat. The dominant culture may even consider the other culture too marginal to be worth criticizing. But such disregard is liable to be interpreted by an overly sensitive, vulnerable group as insulting'⁶⁷. In this case, what holds true within a society might also apply to a world scale.

In the third place: even if there is a sound reason to feel humiliated, be it with a big **H** or a small **h**, this of course forms no legitimate reason for terrorism, just like injured family honor does not justify honor killings, no matter how important the family honor is to the murderer. Margalit, although writing on humiliation, nonetheless depicts cruelty as the greater evil⁶⁸, and it is this evil terrorists have taken refuge to. As Walzer writes in his *Just and Unjust Wars*, insults 'are not occasions for war, any more than they are (these days) occasions for duels'⁶⁹. Of course, Walzer is writing about states, but there is no compelling reason why terrorists should have more leeway in this than states. Notwithstanding Walzer's arguments, wounded honor does seem to play a role in the motivation of at least some terrorists.

Finally, violence as a way of restoring dignity raises a few 'obvious and crippling questions'⁷⁰. Addressing Sartre's notorious remark, made in defense of Algerian terrorism, that 'to shoot down a European is to kill two birds with one stone, doing away with oppressor and oppressed at the same time: what remains is a dead man and a free man'⁷¹, Walzer wonders whether a one-to-one relationship - one European for one Algerian - is necessary⁷². Today, one might wonder whether it takes the killing of one European or American to restore the dignity of one humiliated Muslim. In that case, there might be not enough of them. However, of course, the vast majority of Muslims, although they may feel humiliated, for instance, by the invasion of Iraq, or the presence of American troops elsewhere in the Arabic World, do not sympathize with the terrorists' methods and reject their extremism⁷³. Especially attacks like the one in Madrid, making innocent victims, but with the attackers making sure not to be killed in the process, might alienate moderate Muslims from the radical ones, diminishing the number of supporting sympathizers terrorists are depending on for support, money and a safe refuge⁷⁴.

Notes

1. Michael Walzer, *Arguing about War* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2004), 62.
2. 'In the history of peoples, shame has always been associated with honor and pride.'

- Kaufman, G. (1989), *The Psychology of Shame*, New York: Springer Publishing Company, 5.
3. Jason Burke, al-Qaeda. The True Story of the Radical Islam (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 24-26. See also Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win* (New York: Random House, 2005), 16-17).
 4. Akbar S. Ahmed, *Islam under Siege: Living Dangerously in a Post-Honor World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 13.
 5. See for instance Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam. Holy War and Unholy Terror* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson), 16.
 6. Ahmed, *Islam under Siege*, 57-59.
 7. A. Margalit, *The Decent Society*, (Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press, 1998), ix.
 8. Margalit, *The Decent Society*, 9.
 9. Margalit, *The Decent Society*, 51.
 10. Margalit, *The Decent Society*, 100-112.
 11. Ian Miller, *Humiliation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 133.
 12. Miller, *Humiliation*, 137, 145.
 13. Miller, *Humiliation*, 165.
 14. Margalit, *The Decent Society*, 101-102, 150.
 15. Margalit, *The Decent Society*, 43, 51.
 16. Margalit, *The Decent Society*, 53.
 17. Charles H. Cooley, an American sociologist from the early twentieth century, defined honor aptly as 'a finer kind of self-respect. It is used to mean either something one feels regarding himself, or something that other people think and feel regarding him, and so illustrates by the accepted use of language the fact that the private and social aspects of self are inseparable.' Charles H. Cooley, *Human nature and the Social Order* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1902) According to anthropologist Pitt-Rivers someone's honor is 'the value in his own eyes, but also in the eyes of his society. It is his estimation of his own worth, his *claim* to pride, but it is also the acknowledgement of that claim, his excellence recognized by society, his right to pride.' J. Pitt-Rivers, 'Honor and Social Status,' in *Honor and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*, ed. J.G. Peristiany (Chicago: Midway Reprint, 1974), 21.
 18. Miller, *Humiliation*, 84.
 19. Jason Burke, 'What exactly does al-Qaeda want?' *The Observer*, Sunday March 21, 2004, <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/waronterrorism/story/0,1373,1174567,00.html>.
(Viewed on September 28, 2005).
 20. See on politics and business Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last*

- Man* (New York: Avon Books, 1993), 229, 233.
21. This view has been made popular by authors as Erich Fromm, Abraham Maslow and David Riesman.
 22. See Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), 156-157; Eric R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), 28-50. See also Bernard Williams, *Problems of the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 47. But Williams writes elsewhere: 'It is accepted that the world of Homer embodied a shame culture, and that shame was later replaced, in its crucial role, by guilt.' However, '[t]hese stories are deeply misleading, both historically and ethically' (Williams, *Shame and Necessity*, 5).
 23. Lawrence Kohlberg, *Essays on moral development: vol 1 The Philosophy of Moral Development: Moral Stages and the Idea of Justice* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981).
 24. Williams, *Shame and Necessity*, 5.
 25. Williams, *Shame and Necessity*, 77.
 26. See for instance Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama, 'Culture and Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion and Motivation,' in *Psychological Review*, 98, 2, 224-253.
 27. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster), 213.
 28. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations*, 217.
 29. Bassam Tibi, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2002), 61.
 30. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations*, 218.
 31. Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam*, 87-92.
 32. Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism. The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), 40.
 33. Clifford Geertz, 'Which Way to Mecca?,' *The New York Review of Books*, (June 10th, 2003).
 34. Reuven Firestone, *Jihad. The Origin of Holy War in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 30-31.
 35. Margalit, *The Decent Society*, 11.
 36. Ahmed, *Islam under Siege*, 6-7.
 37. Lynn, *Battle*, 313.
 38. Miller, *Humiliation*, 84.
 39. Stern, *Terror in the Name of God*, 62. According to John Elster, '[m]ost writers on the Palestinian suicide bombers emphasize the intense resentment caused by the

- daily humiliations that occur in interaction with the Israeli forces.' 'Motivations and Beliefs in Suicide Missions,' in: *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, ed. Diego Gambetta, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 245.
40. Jessica Stern , 'Terrorism's new Mecca,' reprinted from *The Globe and Mail*.
[Http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/news/opeds/2003/stern_mecca_gm_112803.htm](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/news/opeds/2003/stern_mecca_gm_112803.htm).
 (Viewed on September 28, 2005).
 41. Stern, J. (2004) *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (New York: Harper Collins), xviii.
 42. Lewis, *Crisis of Islam*, i.
 43. Osama bin Laden, 'Letter to America,' *The Observer*, Sunday November 24, 2002.
[Http://observer.guardian.co.uk/worldview/story/0,11581,845725,00.html](http://observer.guardian.co.uk/worldview/story/0,11581,845725,00.html).
 (Viewed on November 27, 2005).
 44. Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam*, 80.
 45. Stern, *Terror in the Name of God*, 281-282.
 46. Stern, *Terror in the Name of God*, 285.
 47. Stern, *Terrorism's new Mecca*.
 48. Burke, *al-Qaeda*, 35.
 49. See for instance Kaplan
 50. Buruma and Margalit, *Occidentalism*, 49.
 51. Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam*, 17.
 52. George F. Nafziger and Mark W. Walton, *Islam at War. A History* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), 260 and Pape, *Dying to Win*, 44
 53. See, for instance, Victor Davis Hanson, *Carnage and Culture* (New York: Anchor Books, 2002), 356-368 and Pape, *Dying to Win*, 44
 54. 'As I said, our boys were shocked by the low morale of the American soldier and they realized that the American soldier was just a paper tiger. He was unable to endure the strikes that were dealt to his army, so he fled, and America had to stop all its bragging and all that noise it was making in the press after the Gulf War (...)' Interview with Osama bin Laden, by ABC's John Miller,
[Http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/binladen/who/interview.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/binladen/who/interview.html).
 (Viewed on December 1, 2005).
 55. Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam*, 125.
 56. Pape, *Dying to Win*, 39, 44-45.
 57. Buruma and Margalit, *Occidentalism*, 5 and 106. See for dehumanizing also Vogelaar's contribution to this issue.
 58. Tönnies, F. (1955), *Community and association*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. In military sociology, this has a pendant in Moskos' institutional/occupational model. Charles Moskos and Frank Wood, 'Introduction,' in *The Military. More*

- than just a job?*, ed. Charles Moskos and Frank Wood, (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1988), 17.
59. Buruma and Margalit, *Occidentalism*, 134.
 60. Walzer, *Arguing about War*, 52.
 61. 'We need to stop confusing justification with explanation. Learning what motivates enemies does not mean sympathising with them. Merely saying that the bombers are mad, when there is no evidence that militants are mentally ill or backward, and when contemporary radical Islam clearly has its roots in the conditions of the modern world, does not help.' Jason Burke, 'Seven ways to stop the terror,' *The Observer*, Sunday August 7, 2005.
[Http://www.guardian.co.uk/attackonlondon/story/0,,1544321,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/attackonlondon/story/0,,1544321,00.html).
 (Viewed on November 27, 2005).
 62. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'The Wretched of the Earth,' in *Colonialism and Neocolonialism* (London: Routledge, 2001).
 63. Burke, *al-Qaeda*, 24
 64. See for instance Albert Borowitz, *Terrorism for Self-Glorification: The Herostratos Syndrome* (Kent and London: The Kent State University Press).
 65. Margalit, *The Decent Society*, 9.
 66. Miller, *Humiliation*, 144.
 67. Margalit, *The Decent Society*, 181.
 68. Margalit, *The decent Society*, 148.
 69. Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars* (New York: Harper Collins, 1977), 81. According to Margalit, humiliation is an extreme case of insult, but he also makes a qualitative distinction: insult 'denotes injury to one's social honor,' humiliation 'injures one's sense of intrinsic value.' Margalit, *The decent Society*, 119-120.
 70. Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 205
 71. Sartre, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 148.
 72. Ibid.
 73. Burke, *al-Qaeda*, 35
 74. See also Jason Burke, 'Who did it - and what was their motive?' *The Observer*, Sunday July 10, 2005.
[Http://www.guardian.co.uk/attackonlondon/comment/story/0,16141,1525470,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/attackonlondon/comment/story/0,16141,1525470,00.html). (Viewed on November 27, 2005).

The effects of death threats during peace operations

Coen van de Berg, Joseph Soeters & Mark Dechesne

Being a soldier under threat

Being a soldier, amongst other things, means being prepared to fulfil one's tasks under life threatening circumstances. War or deployment in an expeditionary armed force regularly involved in peacekeeping or peace enforcing tasks brings along a confrontation with circumstances in which one's life is in danger. Minister of Defence Kamp (2004) states that soldiers must be aware of the risks, linking acceptance of these risks directly to courage: 'Soldiers also expect courage of each other. The Dutch serviceman is proud of his profession, performs his task with discretion and is aware of the risks, which he accepts'. Likewise, the Royal Netherlands Army code of behavior (rule 7) explicitly refers to risks that the military task entails: 'I will carry out the tasks I have been given in a professional manner, also under difficult circumstances and even at the risk of my own life'.

Carrying out tasks in life threatening circumstances, however, is not an automatism for soldiers, as is exemplified by the attention for coping with stressful and traumatic experiences. That soldiers are indeed influenced by the confrontation with the risk of death is shown by Israeli studies in which servicemen were asked to indicate their greatest fear in actual battle situations. The big difference between soldiers with and without combat experiences was the fear of death or being wounded. Those who did not have experience indicated they had more fear of wounds or death than those who had. The latter were more concerned about letting down subordinates or other soldiers in their units. Of the officers and NCOs, 42% indicated that what they feared most was letting down their subordinates, as did 40% of the men with regard to their comrades. As for fear of death, the score for officers and NCOs and men was 10% and 21%, respectively (Shalit 1988).

Military cohesion under threat

One question that is brought up by this investigation is why in threatening circumstances soldiers seem to have a greater fear of letting down their subordinates or other servicemen than their own death. In the Handbook of Military Psychology, Noy (1991) states, 'The main conflict of a soldier in the battlefield is survival versus duty and loyalty. Fear of death is not unique to the battlefield. It is common in all traumatic situations. In combat, this threat is pervasive and difficult. The normal, everyday death anxiety which [is] rationally and irrationally dealt with is especially difficult to curb in combat

and is distinctly felt by most soldiers before or during combat and most intensely when prolonged. It is almost impossible to deny or ignore the threat. While it is the perception of threat which creates stress in combat, the gap is slim between the reality of the threat and its perception'.

In his article the relation between social cohesion, stress resistance and readiness among IDF personnel is explored further. Discussing the subject, Noy writes, 'The soldier whose resources have been depleted and who is not protected by unit social support may feel unable to endure the mounting anxiety any longer, and therefore fails to function in combat. This breaking point of losing one's adaptability and control of the situation in the face of an existential threat is traumatic. As a consequence, the personality is flooded by feelings of helplessness and rage. This is the starting point for the label CSR (Combat Stress Reaction) or in some cases for the post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).' So, according to Noy, unit social support is of importance to curb the fear of death and threat of the battlefield.

Being threatened with death is the most existential fear a human being can experience and how soldiers act under this threat is the main question of this article. In the past decades psychologists have done research into the influence of the awareness of one's own mortality on human behavior. The insights originating from this research have been compressed in the Terror Management Theory (TMT). Terror in this context is fear of death, as soldiers sometimes have to act in circumstances involving a risk of death. The validity of the claims of TMT, however, will have to be assessed for the military target group.

A number of studies have been conducted at the Netherlands Defence Academy (NLDA) into the influence of threat (with fear of death) on military operations. The studies carried out so far have, on the one hand, been directed at the preparedness to co-operate with foreign military, so international co-operation under threat, and, on the other hand, on the deployability or readiness in threatening circumstances. Apart from that there is also research into acceptance of the death risk in circumstances of peace and threat, such as in missions like ISAF and SFIR. The present article begins with an exposition of TMT, followed by a description of research on the basis of TMT in the Royal Netherlands Army (RNLA). The article is concluded with a discussion of the significance of TMT for the RNLA. The findings, incidentally, seem to have a broader relevance.

Terror Management Theory

Terror Management Theory (Solomon, Greenberg & Pyszczynski 1991; Greenberg, Pyszczynski & Solomon 1997; Pyszczynski, Greenberg & Solomon 1999) is based on

the instinctive tendency of all living beings to protect themselves against death and to strive for survival of the individual and the species. Instinctive behavior, as well as conscious risk analyses, taking protective measures or fighting threats, protects life and increases the chance of survival. For this purpose the human being is endowed with a number of unique intellectual powers enabling him to postpone immediate reaction in order to contemplate alternative reactions or solutions. He can also relate past, present and future events, and, in doing so, imagine things that do not yet exist and subsequently realize them. As a result of his intellectual capacities the human being also has a self-awareness, which means he is conscious of his own existence. This self-awareness is an important element in human behavior. It makes people conscious of life and its possibilities, but, conversely, it also makes them aware of their own mortality. It is this awareness that causes fear of death. His intellectual powers, however, also protect him against this fear.

Worldview and protection against terror

By creating a culture the human being can control his fear of death. Culture is a complex of meanings giving sense to the world around us. By constructing a robust worldview the fear of one's own vulnerability and death is alleviated. The cultural worldview lends structure and meaning to the world around us and gives us values to strive for on the basis of that meaningful world. Living up to the values of the culture of which we are a part, however, makes us also feel protected against death in a certain way. Thus, we are not only here for ourselves, but also for the others and in that way we attain a symbolic sort of immortality through our significance for others. The worldview also provides concepts and structures to fit all events around us in a stable, well-ordered and meaningful totality (Dechesne, Van den Berg, Soeters 2005).

Military culture and survival

Cultural anthropologist Becker has defined the importance of culture for survival and, in doing so, he has given a major impulse to the relation between death awareness and human behavior as it is worked out in TMT. 'Everything cultural is fabricated and given meaning by the mind, a meaning that was not given by physical nature. Culture is in this sense "Supernatural", and all systematization of culture have in their end the same goal: to raise men above nature, to assure them that in some way their lives count in the universe more than merely physical things that count' (Becker 1975: 4).

It is for this reason that military culture is built up around symbols, customs and ideas that increase battlefield survival and contribute to military virtues, such as courage

and the spirit of self-sacrifice. Also the values summed up in the army officer domain, such as professionalism, discipline, resilience, team spirit, responsibility and integrity, are expressions of the military culture which champions steadfastness, endurance and conviction. Other well-known cultural expressions are the uniform with symbols to indicate one's own place in the organization. They usually refer to sports certificates, as physical achievement seems to be a precondition for resilience in life-threatening circumstances. Unit symbols also contribute to esprit de corps, which expresses the feeling of togetherness. Symbols and cultural expressions are therefore important for co-operation and mutual trust during operations in life-threatening circumstances.

Self-efficacy and protection against terror

Public appreciation of behavior in risky situations, which stimulates faith in the importance of one's own contribution, has also a relation with mental health¹. In this study we did not search for an answer to this question. It might be the fact that having been decorated had a beneficial effect on the decorated heroes' mental health in later life. In addition, our findings that veterans of low military rank tended to report more PTSD symptoms and more general psychiatric symptomatology than veterans who were officers suggest that precombat factors played a role. Officers in the IDF represent an elite group of soldiers whose selection criteria include high IQ, high motivation to serve in the army, high self-esteem, and emotional maturity (Dekel et al. 2003).

This brings us to the second factor contributing to protection against fear of death, viz. self-esteem. Self-efficacy is the extent to which one feels valuable and it is an indicator for the measure in which one is appreciated and thus will be remembered by the others. Based on the conviction that there is more than just one's physical existence, self-esteem lends a certain symbolic immortality and alleviates the unique human dilemma of the fear of the finiteness of that physical existence.

That self-efficacy functions as a buffer against fear of death has also been confirmed in a number of experiments that show that people whose self-efficacy is increased or whose faith in their own worldview is strengthened report less fear of death than people with a low self-efficacy. People who are made aware of their mortality have a tendency to defend their cultural worldview and to increase their self-efficacy. Moreover, people whose self-efficacy is lowered in an experiment show more fear of death. This means that a high self-efficacy, so a high confidence in the importance of their own contribution to the armed forces or unit they belong to, is of importance for servicemen to protect themselves against fear of death. This, too, explains the tendency to attach more value to military culture in threatening circumstances.

The values of a culture and the behavior for which one may be appreciated can differ

per culture, as the emergence of suicide terrorism has made poignantly clear over the past few years. Where in his own environment the suicide terrorist is greatly admired and blessed with a promise of immortality, his deeds are only regarded with disgust in other cultures, like our own. The values of a culture or sub-culture, therefore, do most certainly not by definition lower risk in a rational manner.

In the above-mentioned studies there is a reference to one clear value within the culture of that group. As for the military the question may be whether it is only the military culture that determines the behavior of the soldier. In discussions on military operations social support and the home front also play a role (Van der Meulen and Soeters 2005). Soldiers who belong to more than one meaningful group, such as the unit and the home front, may also have to face contradictory values. Thus, the attitude towards the confrontation with danger in the culture of the unit or military culture may be appreciated differently than in the culture of the home front. A concurrence of expectations of the home front and the military profession can protect the soldier from having to live up to multiple standards.

As self-efficacy is based on the extent to which values that matter in one's own culture are lived up to, it can only serve as a protection against terror (fear of death) as long as the faith in one's own culture remains intact. Because the confirmation of a culture takes place through social interaction it is of importance that the values of the culture are confirmed by others. In confrontations with people of other cultures one's own worldview is threatened and with it the protection against the existential fear of death. In case of a death threat the confirmation of one's own culture becomes all the more vital, and that explains many problems and prejudices that emerge in confrontations with people of different cultures. When our own culture is threatened by another, there are in principle five ways to arm ourselves against the resulting loss of protection against the existential fear of death. First, the other culture can be considered inferior. The other worldview or its proponents are seen as backward. An alternative is to adapt to the other culture or, conversely, to convince the proponents of the other culture that one is right (assimilation). Another possibility is to form a new culture by encompassing parts of the other culture into one's own (accommodation). The last option is to destroy the other culture and in doing so, prove, as it were, that one's own culture is superior simply because the other culture does not exist anymore. Of all these mechanisms there are examples in the present-day political discussion on, for instance, the war on terror. Thus, in the debate on Islam, this religion is depicted as backward in certain circles, and Theo van Gogh, the late film director, too, succeeded in expressing himself in no uncertain graphic terms about Muslims. In the multi-cultural debate in the Netherlands, accommodation, with its ideal of mutual adjustment and the creation of a new "enriching" culture, is vying with the present political vogue of integration courses, also for religious leaders, and a

strong preference of new (and old) comes to “our” culture.

The first hypothesis that can be deduced from the TMT and that has also been confirmed in research, is that an awareness of death increases the meaning of the value of the contribution to one’s own cultural worldview, and that when self-efficacy is decreased, the experienced fear of death increases. Many military studies have documented the fact that soldiers with a high self-efficacy show less fear than those with a decreased self-efficacy. Soldiers who have been defeated in battle show more anxiety disorders. The above-mentioned study by Noy (1991) reports a much higher number of Combat Stress Reactions casualties among the side that has lost than among the victors. The 1973 Yom Kippur war has confirmed this: ‘Likewise, in 1973, the Israeli Army suffered many CSR casualties in the initial stage of trying desperately to hold on against the advancing enemies, while the Egyptian Army sustained only a few casualties. In contrast, once the initiative turned to the Israeli side, the Egyptians had many casualties.’ (Noy 1991). Here, the role of self-efficacy with regard to the resistance against distress disorders among the winning side is obvious.

The second hypothesis is that the appreciation for and the significance of one’s own worldview becomes more important as a protection against fear of death, when one is confronted with the awareness of one’s own mortality through thoughts about or confrontations with death. This effect was indeed very clear after the 9/11 attacks, after which American culture and its expressions were extremely visible. There were overt reactions against people, countries or cultures that did not match the American culture. Clear examples were the showing of flags and expression like “If you’re not with us, you’re against us”. Similar effects could be noticed in the Netherlands after the murder of film director Theo van Gogh. Freedom of expression as a symbol of Dutch citizenship was vehemently defended in the public discussion following the assassination and also hostilities towards the Muslim community bore witness to it.

TMT and the RNLA

The question is whether TMT also provides an explanation for the behavior of soldiers, who have to execute their profession in mission areas under potentially life-threatening circumstances and, in doing so, will no doubt be reminded of death, through the risks they take themselves, their thinking about it or the confrontation with victims of violence. It is the central question in the studies described below. In a number of NLDA studies the influence of awareness of one’s own mortality or threat on behavior has been investigated. The first study which looked into the relevance and significance of TMT for the armed forces was the final paper written by student-officers Oppel and Van Dijk (2002). In their “*Terror management for the RNLA: the latest management trend*”

they asked themselves the following question, 'Do soldiers cling more to their world-view after exposure to thoughts of death, as compared to a situation in which they did not have that exposure?' In this final paper officer cadets gave their opinion about a foreign officer relating his experiences of his one year as a liaison officer in the RNLA. One half of the research group was confronted with thoughts about their own mortality prior to assessing the texts and the liaison officer. The other half filled out the questionnaire without this awareness. Their final conclusion was that soldiers confronted with thoughts about their own death held more negative views about soldiers of a different nationality than colleagues who had not thought about death. This conclusion is interesting for international military co-operation in risky circumstances - the typical environment of modern RNLA operations.

International military co-operation is a subject that cannot be ignored anymore in the present-day operations of the armed forces. The Officer Domain (2004) states that RNLA operations are always joint operations and very often take place in an international context. Examples of this close international co-operation are 1 German-Netherlands Corps (1GNC) as well as the NATO Response Force (NRF), of which the Netherlands constituted a part from 15 January 2005 until 15 July 2005. In order to investigate whether international co-operation comes under pressure in case of a threat, a unit was needed that co-operates with foreign military in peace circumstances (no threat) as well as situations of threat. During the Dutch contribution to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan such an opportunity presented itself. In the summer of 2003 an investigation was undertaken into the willingness to engage in international military co-operation in Afghanistan as well as Münster. It was precisely in this period that there were reports of tensions between Dutch and German soldiers. In their article Soeters and Moelker (2003) describe some of the problems that emerged during the ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

International military cooperation under threat

The possibility to do research into the influence of threat on international co-operation proved to be a unique opportunity, as 1GNC had already had a tradition of cooperation of several years' standing, which had proved to be a positive experience. In the ISAF study (Dechesne, Van den Berg, Soeters 2005) two personality factors were measured: a) need for structure, the extent of flexibility in dealing with new or unexpected situations, and b) self-efficacy. Apart from that identification with the RNLA as an organization, the Netherlands and international military co-operation and four factors of death threat were investigated. These factors were a) acceptance of risk of death, b) the need for care after being killed, such as a testament or help from the MoD, c) communica-

tion/talking about death and - finally – d) fear of death. The analysis of the results of the survey in which 313 ISAF soldiers from Kabul and 76 staff personnel of IGNC took part, showed significant differences with regard to the acceptance of the risk of death, fear of death and communication about death². These death threat-related scores were higher for ISAF than for Münster personnel (see table 1)

	ISAF in Kabul	IGNC in Münster
Fear of death	4,64	3,70*
The need for care after being killed	6,57	6,88
Communication/talking about death	4,25	3,56*
Acceptance of the risk of death	6,07	5,26*

[Table 1: Differences on a scale of 1 to 9 (* sign. dif. at $p < 0.05$)]

More important than this result was the analysis of the way in which these factors influenced international co-operation. It showed that fear of death has a negative effect on the willingness to engage in international cooperation. Thus, soldiers who have a greater fear of death seem to be less inclined towards international co-operation. However, the analysis also showed that there were several factors that enhanced international cooperation³. First of all, there was a positive correlation between acceptance of the risk of death and the willingness to engage in international cooperation. Soldiers with a greater acceptance of this risk are more inclined towards international co-operation. At the same time a greater self-efficacy, so the extent to which one feels appreciated, contributes to a greater willingness to cooperate internationally. The factor that contributed most was the extent of identification with the RNLA. Identification as an expression of the worldview with which servicemen identify, therefore, is essential. In this study the RNLA proves to be important for soldiers on a mission.

Apart from these analyses, factors influencing the acceptance of the risk of death were looked into. This study showed that a greater degree of *need for structure*, so a more rigid attitude, affected this acceptance negatively. These results are in accordance with TMT predictions, viz. that a threat and the awareness of one's own mortality undermine the willingness to cooperate internationally. Conversely, elements that are considered valuable in the dominating culture can bring about a different effect. The fact that identification contributes so strongly to the willingness to co-operate internationally

seems to be an indication for the willingness of the RNLA to engage in international contexts. The risks of threat, however, cannot be excluded and a repetition of this survey in a situation in which the threat is greater may increase the force of the predictions. This would also allow further research into the question why acceptance of the risk of death enhances the willingness to cooperate internationally. Probably there is a correlation with the experienced use of the mission. Service personnel with a great need for structure, and consequently little flexibility with regard to a deviation of the objective of the mission they have accepted, show a lower acceptance of the risk of death and are therefore less inclined to cooperate internationally.

Operational readiness under threat

An opportunity that presented itself relatively quickly after the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, was the Dutch contribution to the Stabilization Force in Iraq (SFIR). In this mission, too, there was a real threat, which gave rise to several predictions based on the Terror Management Theory explanations. The aspects, interesting from a theoretical perspective, were the readiness to accept to risk of death in this mission, fear of death and the way in which these factors influence the participation in the mission. Within the framework of this study a survey was held among the RNLA units in SFIR 3 and SFIR 4, as well as a control group of a unit that was not sent out. There were 60, 202 and 115 respondents, respectively⁴. The prediction that threat has a positive influence on the appreciation for one's own cultural worldview had to be operationalized into a number of concepts such as the appreciation for the mission, the extent of the support for the task of the mission and identification with the RNLA. The factors measured in this study are:

- **need for structure** (as was indicated above, a measure for the need for fixed structure and predictability of events),
- **self-efficacy**⁵,
- **acceptance of the risk of death and fear of death**,
- **identification with RNLA** and the military profession,
- **identification with foreign colleagues**,
- partaking in the mission out of **idealistic motives** (such as peace and security, the building up of a society, a struggle against terrorism and aiding people in distress),
- partaking because of **obligation** or **pecuniary motive**,
- the extent to which one supports the mission, or feels the mission is **useful**,
- the extent to which one feels **ready to be deployed** in crisis situations or battles.

The significant differences for the SFIR units and the barracks units in the Netherlands are presented in table 2.

	SFIR	Not on a mission
Need for structure	4,5	4,6
Self-efficacy	6,8*	6,2
Acceptance of the risk of death	6,1	6,3
Fear of death	3,6	4,0
Identification with RNLA	6,1	5,9
Identification with foreign colleagues	5,5	5,6
Partaking in the mission out of idealistic motives	6,0*	6,7
Partaking because of obligation or pecuniary motives	5,5*	6,3
Mission usefulness	6,3*	6,8
Ready to be deployed	7,6*	6,3

[Table 2: average score on a scale of 1-9 for questions about the topics indicated (* sign. Dif. at $p < 0.05$)]

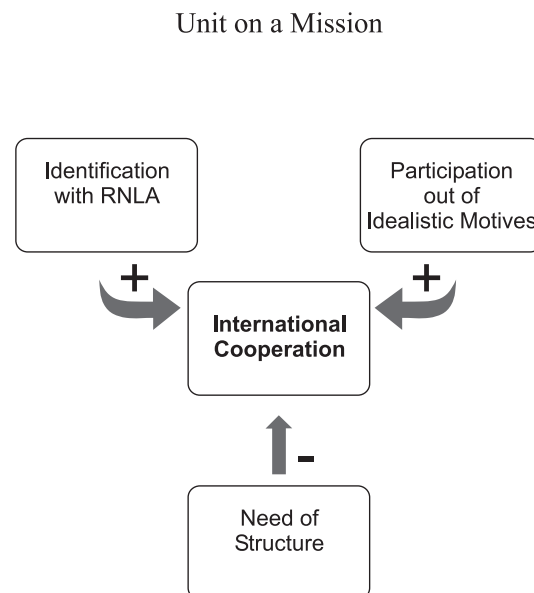
The questions on motivation for a mission were asked with respect to own experience during mission and the supposition of being on a mission, respectively.

Results for the reaction on threat in SFIR and control groups

In the first instance, there are few major differences between the results of the survey among units that were sent out and those that were not. The factors related to belief in one's own capacities and professionalism, viz. self-efficacy and operational readiness, however, show a higher score for the units in the mission area than those that stayed at home. Apart from that, the motivation for the mission of the unit in the mission area seems lower than that in the Netherlands. This is borne out by a lower motivation on

the basis of idealistic motives, and lower pecuniary motives or the mission being obligatory and a lower experienced usefulness of the mission. It is therefore interesting to further analyze the influence of the measured factors on the object of investigation, in this case the willingness to co-operate internationally, the usefulness of the mission and the extent of readiness. In order to do this the contribution of the factors mentioned in table 2 to these topics has been taken into consideration.

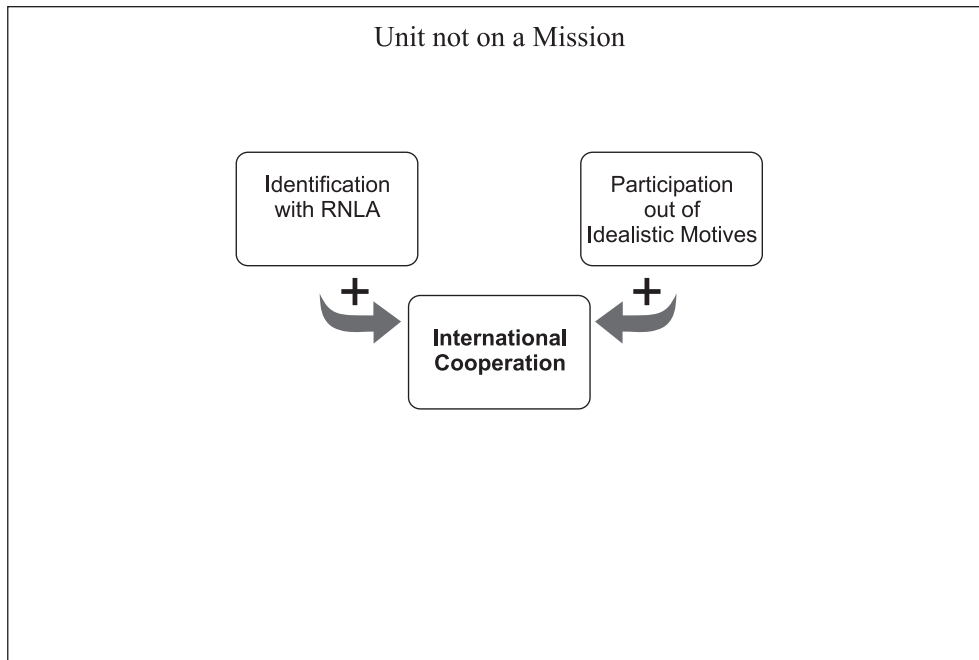
International Cooperation under threat



[Figure 1: International cooperation under threat in Iraq]

First, the willingness to cooperate internationally by personnel that were on a mission was looked into (see figure 1). For the SFIR units it appeared that the identification with the RNLA, as well as the extent to which the objectives of the mission were supported (so partaking out of idealistic motives), had a positive impact on the willingness to cooperate internationally. Apart from that the need for structure played a significant role. Personnel with a more rigid or inflexible attitude were less willing to co-operate internationally in situations of threat, so during missions⁶. At the time of the survey it appeared that for the units that did not go on a mission (see figure 2) the identification with the RNLA, as well as the extent to which the objectives were supported (so partak-

ing out of idealistic motives), determined the willingness to cooperate internationally. So the need for structure did not play a role here⁷.

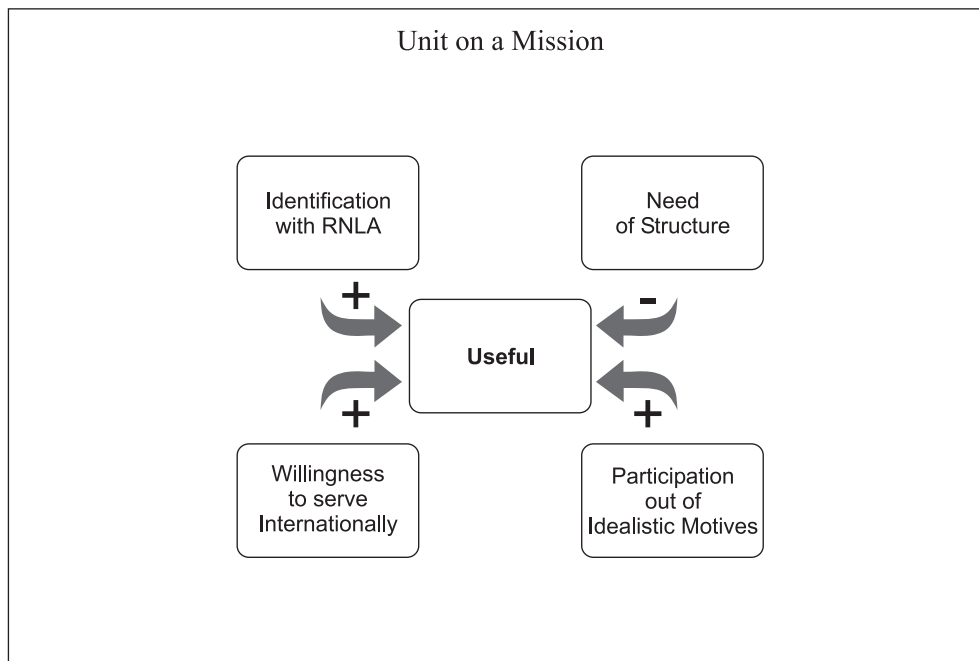


[Figure 2: Willingness to cooperate internationally in a unit not on a mission]

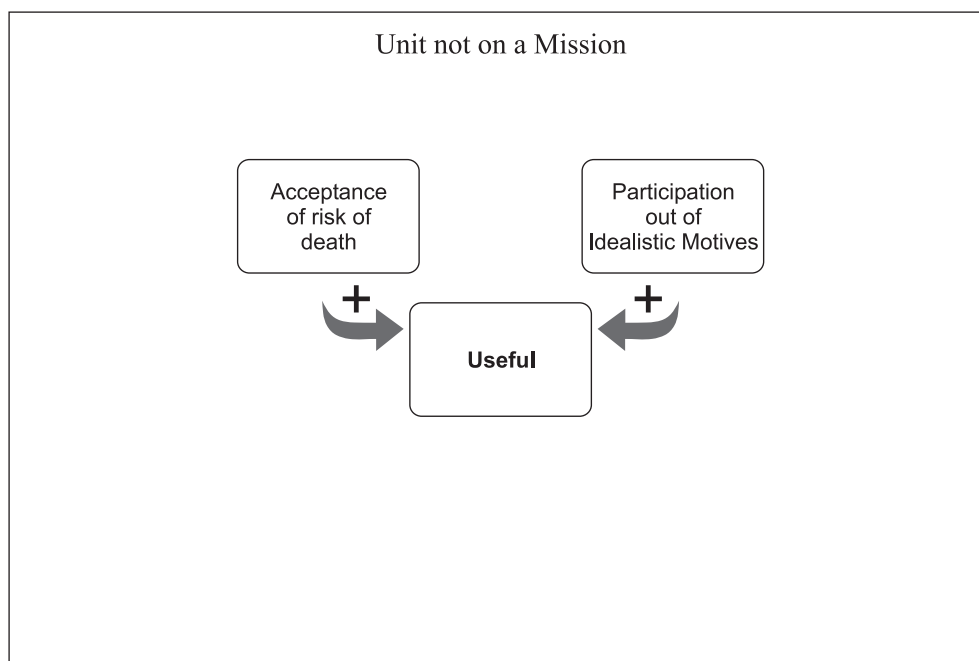
Usefulness of the Iraq mission under threat

Personnel of the SFIR units (see figure 3) indicate that participation out of idealistic motives and the identification with the RNLA and a greater willingness to co-operate internationally constitute a positive contribution to the experienced usefulness and that a greater need for structure has a negative influence. In other words, a more flexible attitude towards life matters to see the importance of the mission when under threat.

In the safe situation (see figure 4) the results of the control group show that the acceptance of the risk of death and the extent to which they support the mission objectives determine the degree of experienced usefulness of the mission⁸.



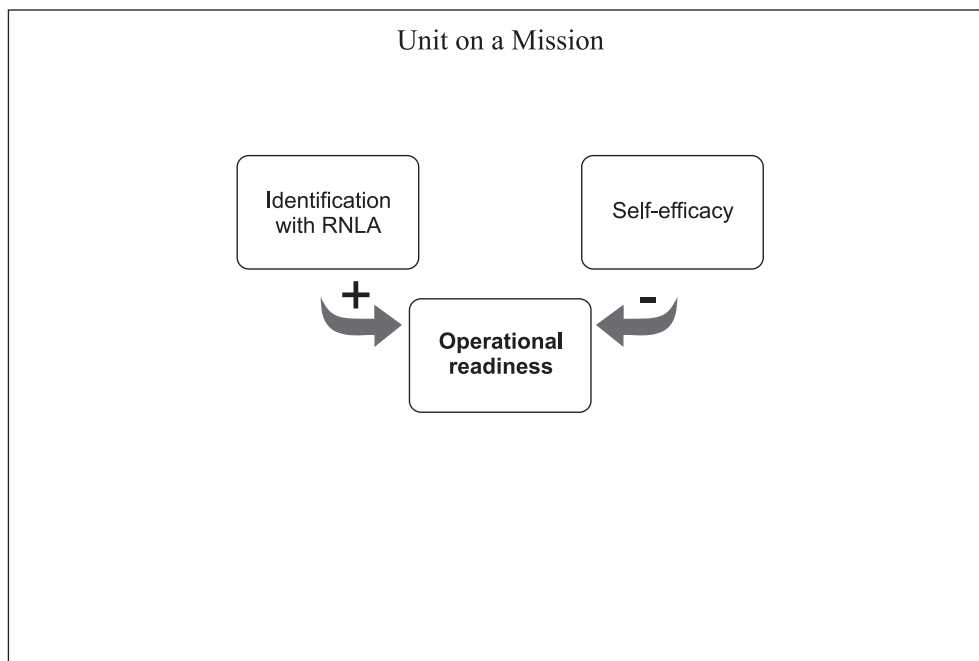
[Figure 3: Experienced usefulness of Mission]



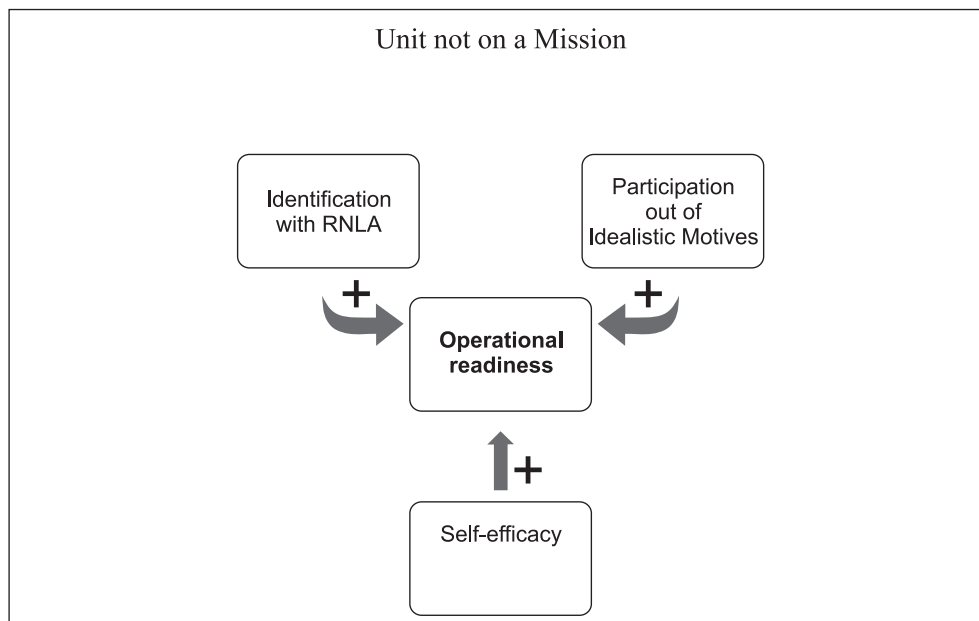
Operational readiness under threat in Iraq

The final comparison concerns the extent of operational readiness⁹. For units on a mission (see figure 5) the extent of operational readiness can be predicted by the self-efficacy and the identification with the RNLA. Personnel with a stronger belief in their own capabilities indicate a higher readiness. The same holds good for personnel that identify stronger with the RNLA. The factors idealistic motives and acceptance of the risk of death also play a role of some importance, although they fall just short of the significant level.

The control group, which is not in a threat situation, the own operational readiness is determined by the self-efficacy, idealistic motives for partaking in the mission as well as identification with the RNLA (see figure 6).



[Figure 5 : Operational readiness]



[Figure 6: Operational readiness]

Taken together, the results seem to indicate that identification with RNLA, which is strongly related to identification with the military profession, the extent of idealistic motivation for the mission, the acceptance of the risk of death, the soldier's flexibility and his or her self-efficacy are important factors for functioning in threatening circumstances. These factors also play a part in the thinking about functioning in threatening circumstances, but in the mission area the results become even more visible. In particular, the role of flexibility and self-efficacy become clear then. The two comparisons of the willingness to co-operate internationally and the experienced usefulness of the mission show the significance of a lower need for structure, so a higher degree of flexibility, in the mission area. With regard to the readiness, it is clearly the self-efficacy that plays a major role.

The above findings seem to be in line with the theoretical predictions that military personnel under threat will fall back more on their worldview and that self-efficacy and flexibility are important qualities to counterbalance all too rigid a worldview. The hypothesis that the education of military personnel and their operational attitude is important for the way they operate under threat seems to be confirmed, too. The Dutch soldier who identifies with the military profession and the RNLA is more willing to co-operate with foreign colleagues. Identification with the military profession is also of importance for the experienced usefulness of the mission and the extent to which one feels ready for operations.

Military culture has an effect under threat

The above clearly shows that fear of death influences the behavior of the soldier. However, the soldier does not flee from situations in which there is a risk of death. Rather, he seems to act in the spirit of the military profession. Terror Management Theory postulates that living according to the values of one's own worldview allows one not to succumb to the fear of death (terror). It is not the most rational attitude in relation to the risk of death that is central in this, but the belief that one can make a valuable contribution to the value community that one belongs to. This pre-supposes a certain degree of self-esteem, the extent to which one believes one is making a contribution to the value community. Flexibility plays a part in questions related to following a certain worldview or discerning multiple opinions of value patterns. People who are (mentally) more flexible do not have to turn against those who hold a different worldview so much.

For the military profession, that pre-eminently manifests itself in threatening circumstances, an insight into the significance of that threat for one's actions is of importance. A further deepening of our insight into behavior under threatening circumstances and the influence of education, personal characteristics, unit formation and military culture are very relevant for the Dutch military and their foreign colleagues.

On the basis of the above-mentioned studies, a number of recommendations for units in threatening circumstances can be made. First, there is the strengthening of the identification with the RNLA or the military profession. This has repeatedly proved to be a major factor in readiness, experienced usefulness of the mission and willingness to cooperate internationally and, consequently, there is a clear relationship with the soldier's education. Furthermore, the personal motivation of the serviceman is of importance, in that the factor participation out of idealistic motives has a great influence on the effects investigated during a mission. Commanders can certainly make a contribution here by explaining to their subordinates what the objectives of the mission are and, in doing so, motivate them. Finally, there is the fostering of a belief in one's capabilities. On the one hand, this can be done by providing a good preparation and training of the units, and, on the other, by giving positive feedback, which makes the serviceman see and experience he is capable of carrying out his tasks in a professional manner. The survey shows that a lack of flexibility is a dangerous thing and therefore it is important to educate military personnel in this respect and to show them how to deal with the complex realities that often require a flexible way of thinking and acting.

Doing research in units that are on a mission, however, is not always easy. They are very busy carrying out operational tasks and they are not always eager to fill out questionnaires. The authors wish to thank the RNLA units, at home and Germany or abroad on a mission, for their co-operation in surveys like the present one¹⁰.

Notes

1. The question arises why the heroes functioned better than the CSR casualties on the battlefield and suffered considerably less long-term pathology. In this study we did not search for an answer to this question. It might be that the fact of having been decorated had a beneficial effect on the decorated heroes' mental health in later life. In addition, our findings that veterans of low military rank tended to report more PTSD symptoms and more general psychiatric symptomatology than veterans who were officers suggest that precombat factors played a role. Officers in the IDF represent an elite group of soldiers whose selection criteria include high IQ, high motivation to serve in the army, high self-esteem, and emotional maturity (Dekel et al., 2003).
2. In this analysis no distinction has been made between officers, NCOs and privates because some groups in this survey are too small to warrant such a distinction.
3. Statistic data of the regression analysis: the willingness to co-operate internationally in the face of the four death threat related factors, identification with RNLA, identification with the Netherlands, self-esteem and need for structure. The model is significant $F(8,286) = 6.30$, $p < .001$. A greater fear of death negatively correlates with the willingness to co-operate internationally, $Beta = -2.829$, $p < .006$. Acceptation of risk of death positively correlates, $Beta = 2.019$, $p < .05$. A greater identification with RNLA contributes positively, $Beta = .354$, $p < .001$ and so does a higher self-esteem, $Beta = 2.08$, $p < .04$.
4. In this analysis, too, no distinction was made between officers, NCOs and privates, as some groups in this survey are too small to warrant such a distinction.
5. In this survey use is made of the concept of self-efficacy, which is also a measure of *self-confidence*, but which has been designed for research in military units and is used in US Army research projects.
6. In the figure this is represented by a + sign for a positive correlation and a – sign for a negative correlation. The value at the Beta indicated the strength of this correlation. A positive correlation means that a higher score for the factor indicated, for instance, identification with RNLA, leads to a higher score for international cooperation. Identification with the RNLA thus predicts the extent of willingness to cooperate internationally.
7. Linear regression analysis with international co-operation for dependent variable. Unit in mission area (Iraq) $R^2 = 0.375$, Need for structure: $Beta = 0.212$, $sign = 0.000$; Identification with RNLA: $Beta = 0.446$, $sign = 0.000$; Participation out of idealistic motives: $Beta = 0.205$, $sign = 0.000$. Control unit outside mission area $R^2 = 0.652$, Identification with RNLA: $Beta = 0.488$, $sign = 0.000$; participation out of idealistic motives: $Beta = 0.383$, $sign = 0.000$.

8. Linear regression analysis with usefulness of mission for dependent variable. Unit in mission area (Iraq) $R^2 = 0.358$, Need for structure: $\text{Beta} = -0.149$, $\text{sign} = 0.007$; Identification with RNLA: $\text{Beta} = 0.242$, $\text{sign} = 0.000$; Participation out of idealistic motives: $\text{Beta} = 0.235$, $\text{sign} = 0.000$; Willingness to co-operate internationally: $\text{Beta} = 0.233$, $\text{sign} = 0.000$. Control unit outside mission area $R^2 = 0.584$, Acceptation of risk of death: $\text{Beta} = 0.211$, $\text{sign} = 0.004$; Participation out of idealistic motives: $\text{Beta} = 0.691$, $\text{sign} = 0.000$.
9. Linear regression analysis with Operational readiness for dependent variable. Unit in mission area (Iraq) $R^2 = 0.460$, Self-efficacy: $\text{Beta} = 0.540$, $\text{sign} = 0.000$; Identification with RNLA: $\text{Beta} = 0.138$, $\text{sign} = 0.015$; Participation out of idealistic motives: $\text{Beta} = 0.019$, $\text{sign} = 0.053$; Acceptation of risk of death: $\text{Beta} = 0.095$, $\text{sign} = 0.063$. Control unit outside mission area $R^2 = 0.435$, Self-efficacy: $\text{Beta} = 0.327$, $\text{sign} = 0.000$; Identification with RNLA: $\text{Beta} = 0.275$, $\text{sign} = 0.007$; Participation out of idealistic motives: $\text{Beta} = 0.267$, $\text{sign} = 0.006$.
10. These thanks are extended in particular to Major General M. Celie, Brigadier General R.A.C. Bertholee, Lieutenant-Colonel R. de Vries, Lieutenant-Colonel R. van Harskamp, Lieutenant-Colonel A. Campo, Lieutenant-Colonel C.J. Matthijssen and Major drs. R.W.P. van der Heijden.

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Working and living in an environment under attack

Baghdad, 11 August 2004 - 11 February 2005

Carel Hilderink

Introduction

Would I want to go to Iraq for six months as head of a newly-to-be-established NATO mission in Iraq? It was a telephone call out of the blue. As Commandant of the Royal Netherlands Military Academy and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Higher Defense Education I was in the thick of a reorganization process to bring all officer education of the Netherlands armed forces under a single-headed leadership. Besides, I was only a few months away from my retirement. Not exactly the moment at which one expects to be sent out once more, something the Defense Operations Centre (DOC) realized; I was not ordered to go; it was a reasoned request.

After consulting with my wife, I decided the same day to go. I will not trouble the reader here with my reasons for doing so, let it suffice to say that we thought the DOC's arguments were convincing. I did lay down a number of conditions, though. To begin with, I wanted to pick my own *Military Assistant* (MA). I chose Ad Derksen, a lieutenant colonel of the Commandos, who was at that time working for the EU. I rang him on his holiday address in northern Italy. He, too, consulted with his wife, and, like me, had the freedom to refuse, but he said yes the same day. As this was a training mission, I also wanted to take along an experienced NCO who was familiar with the American way of training. Not that we wanted to apply it per se, but in view of the American position in Iraq I thought it was necessary to have someone around who knew the ins and outs of this. Moreover, an experienced NCO is indispensable when it comes to making the right contacts on all levels and if you want all the required know-how, at least on the main issues, within a team of absolutely trustworthy people.

After consulting the Armed Forces Warrant Officer, who understood perfectly what I was looking for, I chose Warrant Officer I Ad Koevoets, a commando, too, who had been working at the Royal Netherlands Military School at Weert. Sergeant Tanja Struijk joined the team. She had several missions abroad under her belt, and was familiar with the Dutch as well as American and British communication and ICT equipment. That, too, is an area where you would wish someone who speaks the same language as you do. Finally, I wanted my own security team of Netherlands Royal Marechaussee. An interpreter was not needed at the time, as NATO provided one. Incidentally, after some time it became clear that we could use some extra manpower in that field. Dutch Captain Ayad Amin, who was attached to my team in December, proved invaluable.

Not even two weeks later, we found ourselves in Baghdad. Ad, Ad and Tanya came via Kuwait. My security team was dispatched from the Dutch sector in southern Iraq. I, myself, had traveled a few days earlier to Naples, where I met my British deputy and the rest of the team, all in all some 60 men and women, of 11 nationalities, coming from various NATO headquarters. After a short but well-organized preparation, we were flown into Iraq by an American freighter. Unfortunately, the airfield where we were supposed to land was being shelled heavily, so our landing was put off several times, but at least we did not have to land somewhere else. As we landed considerably later than scheduled, the Chinook helicopter that was to take us for the last leg to Baghdad, had been assigned another task in the meantime. Only the command group could be transported by Blackhawk, the rest had to be patient for one more day, but then we could start off after all.

The first assignment

Our first assignment was to find out how NATO could contribute to the development and education of Iraqi security personnel. Subsequently, and where possible, simultaneously, that plan would have to be executed. It must be understood that this did not only concern the armed forces; they might as well be police or border security troops. Even the training of the separate units charged with securing important installations would be a possibility. Of course, we were not the only ones to be involved in education and training. Within the Multi-National Force Iraq (MNF-I) regular troops as well as a growing number of, in particular American, special training units carried out a large number of activities. Apart from that, much was done on the basis of bi-national agreements between the Iraqis and a number of other countries, among which NATO members. There was also training and education that the Iraqis carried out independently. Finally, the United Nations as well as the European Union were considering activities that were directly relevant for the NATO plans.

Our plan had to be submitted within two weeks at the NATO HQ in Brussels. As of course our direct operational boss, Commander Joint Forces Command-Naples (JFC-N), as well as SACEUR wanted to go over it, this meant that in practice we had ten days. Too little, if one bears in mind that on arrival we did not even have enough office space and the necessary transport and communication equipment. For that we were completely dependent on MNF-I, and that was also the case for our security and supplies. We were fortunate to be allowed to establish our provisional HQ and our sleeping accommodations in the American Embassy in the International Zone in Baghdad. But to be able to do our work adequately we would have to find other accommodations, in Baghdad and elsewhere in the country. No commander is happy with the idea to have to leave such

an important thing as the security of one's unit entirely in the hands of others, however much they want to be of service. And this was certainly true for this commander, who as Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations of the Defense Staff at the time of the fall of Srebrenica, had had first hand experience of what it meant to be completely dependent on others. That may have been at a distance, but it did not make the feeling of powerlessness any less.

In particular because I had put people in key positions who were familiar with the NATO requirements for such plans, we managed to successfully complete this first assignment. Fully coordinated with all parties involved and approved by the Iraqi authorities, our plan was submitted in time and was accepted virtually unchanged by the NATO Council on 8 October. It was an achievement to be proud of. That we had sometimes resorted to a somewhat unconventional approach was something our bosses forgave us. I still remember with pleasure the support that I received from two US JCF-Naples commanders that I worked with.

In essence, the plan comprised four main points. In line with the wish of the NATO Secretary General the training of the middle and top cadre of the national headquarters was started within two days. Secondly, the career profiles and the officer education of the Iraqi armed forces would undergo a complete overhaul. A new Iraqi Military Academy was to be established in the Ar Rustamiyah district, in the same location where it had been founded by the British in the 1920s. In fact, they had already started a new officer education there, naturally on the basis of the well-tried Sandhurst model. NATO was more than welcome to join in, elaborate and, eventually, take over the responsibility for that task. Thirdly, for the first time in Iraqi history, there was to be established a Training Command, responsible for all education and training activities of the Iraqi armed forces. Finally, we would function as a sort of broker in military equipment and courses abroad between the Iraqi government and donor countries.

The environment

Although we were active in other parts of the country in the exploration phase, most of our activities took place in Baghdad. This was by no means the safest of environments. In the six months that we stayed there, we went through frequent shellings. Usually, carried out with light mortars, but in a substantial number of cases heavy mortars or rockets were used. Although less often, NATO personnel were also several times involved in convoys under attack. The five-kilometer road between the American Embassy and the airfield was attacked twice daily on average, and with that had the dubious reputation of being the most attacked route in Iraq. The route to Ar Rustamiyah came in a close second. Both routes were essential for our work and we often used

them. Regularly this dangerous situation resulted in (fatal) casualties, also in units with which we were co-located, but fortunately not in my unit. The Iraqi authorities with whom we cooperated and the Iraqi laborers who worked for us ran a particularly great risk. They, and their families, often received written death threats. Although there is no definite proof for it, I have to assume that some of these threats were actually carried out. In any case, I lost three of my contacts in that way and I had to write several letters of condolence to families of Iraqi officers. Some of them lost members of their families because they cooperated with us. On top of that, we were confronted with kidnappings of Iraqi personnel and attempts to extricate ransoms from their Iraqi bosses. Although indirectly, this affected us too, and it was exceedingly frustrating not to be able to do anything.

Living and working in these threatening circumstances has an impact on people. It may be different for each individual, but in my judgment everyone is affected, consciously, or unconsciously. Sometimes people become afraid, sometimes reckless. Some start talking more, others fall silent. There are those that cling to procedures, the only certainties they have left, where others drop them as they do not help anyway. In what follows I will attempt to give an account of my personal experience in this by means of the three roles that I fulfilled during this mission: that of an individual, a member of a team and, finally, commander.

Individual

Several times I was confronted with shelling incidents in which people got killed and wounded. In one occasion it involved people I knew, though superficially. Yet, those were not the moments that made the strongest impression on me. Strange though it may sound, the fact that the compound where I happened to be was shelled did not give me the feeling that I myself was the target. In a sense I, and I was certainly not the only one, was rather fatalistic in that. Something like: this one went okay, so apparently my name was not on it. This was also the vein in which we discussed these incidents with each other, in the realization that all safety measures possible had been taken, and there was nothing else one could do about it, anyway. I also think that this was because we were usually in rather extensive encampments, and that it is an entirely different story when you find yourself in a small location, or when your convoy is under fire. The latter I never experienced personally. However, in one occasion my car broke down and I was stranded for 45 minutes on the most attacked route of Iraq, in a spot where several attacks had already taken place. In spite of the armored vehicle we had traveled in, and the protection of several US tanks that happened to pass by, I really felt a sitting duck at the time. What also made a deep impression was the fact that a British C-130, in which

we traveled around a lot, was shot down. There were no survivors. Self-protection measures, such as flare procedures, acquire quite another dimension on the next flight.

Team member

The BSB teams responsible for my safety deserve every respect. We had a simple agreement: I determined where we would go, and they determined how we would do that. At least, if we went by road, because I could often make use of air transport. My MA saw to all the details. We had several heavily armored cars at our disposal. What was less fortunate was that these dark blue vehicles in good Dutch fashion had been equipped with flashing lights and beautiful white letters that screamed out that these were Royal Netherlands Marechaussee cars. Slightly less conspicuous would have been better. That feeling became stronger when I was informed by MNF Intelligence sources that I had to assume I was on the hit list. That has an impact, as well as the fact that on several occasions during my trips my guards unceremoniously positioned their vehicle between my car and an unknown vehicle that came too close. Fortunately, they were not bomb cars, but you never know beforehand.

Of course, we were a somewhat anomalous unit. We started out with sixty people and we never reached more than 110 men and women. Especially in the first two months, we had a high Special Forces content, many officers, preponderantly lieutenant colonels and higher, one or two very experienced NCOs, no privates and hardly any corporals. In our small HQ, we were on top of each other, especially in the beginning. If I wanted to talk to someone in private, I had to do so outside. But our sleeping quarters were all over the place. Sometimes in tents, usually in caravans, but in any case always at a considerable distance. My MA's caravan was at a ten minutes' walking distance from my own.

Especially because of this dispersion outside working hours it was vitally important that people were not only responsible for each other, but that they also felt it to be that way. Fortunately, that was the case. We kept an eye on each other, and corrected each other if someone became somewhat lax after some time. This was done regardless of rank or position, in the simple realization that everyone sometimes falls prey to this in the course of time. That is only human. So I have on occasion corrected people, but I have also been corrected on a carelessness now and then. I consider such an attitude one of the characteristics of a professional team with a good team spirit. That the American norm sometimes differed somewhat from the British, Italian or Dutch one is obvious, but we started from a formally established minimum standard for all the NATO personnel. More was allowed, less was out of the question. After an attack people of course assembled at a predetermined location and there was a roll call. Officially, this was the heads of departments' task, but in practice everyone remembered whom he had seen

and passed this information on at the assembly location. People who lived near each other checked on each other. Of course the Dutch would have a double count. First, there was the NATO count, and then the count of all the Dutch, some ten outside our group.

Another characteristic of a good mutual understanding was that everyone realized that if someone had had an unpleasant experience, he should have the opportunity to discuss this within the group as soon as possible. There was the occasional macho, but that was the exception to the rule. Incidentally, it was striking that only very few members had ever been trained in taking care of people who had been traumatized. Insofar as I have been able to establish this applied only to the British and the Dutch. Personally, I have benefited immensely from a course on *Preventive debriefing of traumatic experiences* I once followed. And what is much more important, others confirm this.

Commander

Although a commander is of course a member of a team, he is mainly seen as the commander. On the acceptance of our plan by the NATO Council on 8 October, Lieutenant General Petraeus officially assumed command, and I became his 2iC, at least for the NATO part of the mission, as Petraeus was also in charge of the training mission within the MNF. This “double-hatted” construction had the advantage that we could make use of MNF facilities even better than before. And that was an absolute necessity in all sorts of fields. Internally, Petraeus gave me enough leeway and nothing really changed; externally, of course there were changes. But usually they involved formalities rather than content.

As commander I thought it my most important task to keep a good eye on the balance between the mission's interest and the safety of my personnel. If it came down to it the mission would of course always come first, but all the same it was only a training mission carried out on request of the Iraqi authorities. The time factor, for instance, tends to acquire a different dimension in such a setting. If the Iraqi did not stick to the arrangements, I did not feel the necessity to have my personnel run risks to get things done at the arranged time. This constant assessing implied that my MA and I spent most of our time continuously analyzing intelligence data related to our immediate work environment as well as the tasks springing from our assignment and the various ways in which they could be executed. Force protection, and my means to take adequate measures in this field and thus to assume the responsibility for the unavoidable risks my personnel ran, was essential. Especially because not all NATO countries share the same view in this respect, I have on frequent occasions been very anxious about that. In spite of the support that I received from my military NATO superiors as well as nationally on

all levels, this did not alleviate my worries, and at a certain point I actually considered returning my assignment. Fortunately, the eventual formal regulations proved to give us enough flexibility on the work floor to arrive at an acceptable solution.

The fact that not all NATO countries towed the same line did have its influence on mutual relations. Especially when the number of incidents was on the increase with a consequent rise in tension, there were those who were annoyed and could muster little or no understanding for the deviant views of representatives of other countries. This would sometimes lead to denigrating remarks that could ruin the mutual atmosphere to a considerable extent, even though by far not all countries involved were represented in our units. Consequently, there were a few occasions on which I felt obliged to interfere firmly.

The Dutch quartet were in fact the only members of the unit that had been assigned for the duration of six months. So, in all, I worked with three different groups. This meant that there had to be much attention for group formation. Good and personal briefing proved to be an important tool in this. During the first few months, the group was small enough to make it possible for everyone to be present at least once a day. At a later stage such instruments as the "Internal Weekly" gained in importance. That was an e-mail, addressed to everyone in the unit, in which I gave a weekly summary of what had been reached, where we were at the moment and what other things had kept me occupied that week. Apart from being able to inform everyone directly, it gave me a sort of check on what my section heads passed on to their people. It is by no means usual in other countries to do this so extensively as we are accustomed to doing this in the Netherlands, but this was the way I wanted it to be. An important part of our Weekly was the so-called "Commander's Critical Information Requirements" (CCIRs), an instrument, which, if short and concise, earned me great appreciation. These CCIRs contained matters, which if they occurred, had to be reported to the commander straightaway. If you phrase them well, they enable you to make clear to your personnel what you think is really important. And if you can make them see that their personal wellbeing is one of them, you have gained a lot.

That wellbeing includes the necessary alternation between work, rest and recreation. One of the things I introduced after the first hectic weeks was the obligatory day off. For everyone, including myself. Those were the days you could read a book quietly and go to the swimming pool. Yes, there are swimming pools in Baghdad, although I think that the only ones used are those within the International Zone. That sometimes created a peculiar feeling; sitting by the side of the pool and seeing the CASEVAC helicopters landing close by. An occasional barbecue, a collective meal on rotation days, and regular drinks: it is absolutely necessary, especially when tensions are running high. It gives you a chance to get to know people in a different way and, first and foremost, to allow

them to take some distance from their work. I am convinced this enhanced overall effectiveness.

Conclusion

Those were the most important characteristics of the way in which I have experienced or tried to give substance to my three roles as individual, team member and commander during this mission. I leave it to others to decide whether our mission achieved the objectives. NATO has already done so, and in all modesty, we have not come out badly. The respect we have always shown towards the Iraqi, and that has always been leading in the way in which we did business with them, has undoubtedly been a major factor in this. And then, of course, apart from the factors mentioned above, there was the bit of luck, always so badly needed, that ensured there were no casualties among the NATO personnel on my watch. I wish my successors the same.

An illusion lost, an experience gained

Jessica Van Hees

Introduction

In this article the reader is taken to Afghanistan, 2003. It presents an account of a suicide attempt during a transport of personnel, which the writer, in contrast to several others, can give in good health. The aim of the article is to provide a case that describes the impact of terrorism on the work of a soldier. This is done by a description of the events that took place on 7 June 2003 and the period immediately after. The account is based on personal observation, experiences and memories.

During my first function as a lieutenant in the Army Medical Corps, I got the opportunity to go on a mission to Afghanistan. I took it with both hands and in May 2003 found myself en route to Kabul as a member of ISAF-6. My function in the Kabul Multinational Brigade (KMNB) was that of Staff Officer Attached to the Movement and Control section. I was the second of a German captain. Together we were responsible for the transports of personnel in Kabul, which in practice came down to ferrying personnel going on leave or starting their tour between Kabul International Airport (KIA) and the city. As it happened my superior was on leave in the week the suicide attempt took place, so that I was temporarily in charge of the transports.

On 7 June 2003 at 08.00 o'clock in the morning, a suicide attack was carried out on my transport. I was transporting German personnel to Kabul International Airport. They had completed their six-month tour and were going back home. During the roll call it appeared that the Germans had their full personal equipment with them, which normally was sent after them due to a lack of space in the aircraft. In this specific case the unit needed their personal kit immediately on their return in order to be deployable again as soon as possible. The 4-ton truck that we had at our disposal was too small by far to take along all the gear. While we were discussing the problem, one of my coach drivers offered to come along with a second coach so that all the gear could be taken to the airfield in one shipment. This sparked of a new discussion on how to divide personnel and gear over the two coaches. One of the drivers insisted on separating the bags from the men, as he feared that the bags could cause extra injuries in case of an accident. I decided to transport the men in one coach and the gear in the other, as he proposed. A little before 08.00 o'clock I drove through the gate in my MB, followed by the coach with the gear, then the coach with the men, the 4-ton truck and two German MBs.

Personal experience

I never saw the car, or the terrorist. At the moment when the explosion followed on the flash of light I did not realize what was happening. I felt the blast on my body, but I could not comprehend what had happened. I looked in my rear view mirrors and all I saw was some rubble on the road. My German co-driver screamed, 'The coach, the coach'. I braked, looked again in my mirrors and saw that I was no longer followed by our two coaches. At that moment, a feeling of panic began to grip me in the stomach. In a reflex, I turned the steering wheel around so that I could see what had actually happened. I shouted at my co-driver, 'Funken Mann, funken' (That means, 'Signal man, signal'), not quite realizing what had happened. I got out, loading my weapon with trembling hands. The first thing that hit me was the smell of the smoldering wreck with bodies by the side of the road. Then I heard the smothered cries of pain and disbelief slowly swelling up from the wreckage. At that moment, however, everything was still coming to me subdued, as if under a wool blanket. It seemed an eternity before my brain finally could not deny anymore that the smoldering wreck there was our ISAF coach that had driven behind me just a few seconds before.

From that moment onwards the adrenaline, the stress took over (Situation That Releases Emergency Signals for Survival). Time flew, after an hour and a half it slowly began to emerge to me that "something big" had happened to me. Eventually the emotions overcame the adrenaline. A Dutch doctor had me taken back to the camp in a Patria vehicle. In the back of the vehicle I solemnly promised myself I would never use that road again, that the whole country could sink in the mud. Two hours after I had gone through the gate I got back to Camp Warehouse, still not fully grasping the extent of what had happened. Later that day I was told that this had been a terrorist assault. In the first instance my anger was directed at the young Afghan who had been run over by the coach. He was still alive when I found him covered with dirt, his clothes completely torn off his body from the blast. Later that day he died of internal wounds. At the site of the disaster I had caught his eye and felt pity for him, now I could only see in him the terrorist who had blown up the coach. No doubt, I projected my anger and impotence on this personification of the attack. Afterwards, of course it appeared that this boy too had been a victim who had happened to stand by the side of the road when the coach exploded.

The rest of the day I went on automatic. First the debriefing with the MDD (Armed Forces Social Service), together with my partner and somewhat later my buddy. Then I took a long shower to wash away the blood and smell from my hair. When I reported back at the KMNb building it was lunchtime, but I could not eat much. Then came the "hunt" for the wounded survivors who had been taken to hospital. Together with my co-driver and a Dutch colleague, we visited the coach driver who had been wounded and

we tried to see the doctors who had operated on the wounded. I was desperate to get as much information as possible about everything that had to do with the assault. In spite of all that had happened that day I had a good night's sleep, and, to my surprise, this stayed so the rest of my tour.

The consequences of the attack

Immediately I was faced with an important situation. Even if your world seems to stand still when you are trying to come to terms with it all, life around you goes on. The next day brought the usual bustle of planes arriving full of people that had to be met on KIA. The practical problems were there immediately: there were no coaches to transport them anymore, and besides one driver had been wounded and the other was in too much of a mental shock. The head of G4 arranged small armored vehicles, which allowed us to set up to ferry the personnel from the airfield to Camp Warehouse. This first trip after the attack was important for my further functioning during my mission. The terrorist had reached his goal: not only had he caused a great many casualties, he had also created fear. The moment I left the gate with five armored vehicles on my tail, I was very much afraid. What made me go out on the road again was my sense of responsibility. The German drivers of the other vehicles were at least very tense and I had to set the example. Apart from that it was my duty to collect the servicemen from the plane and to tell them what had happened. During the drive I felt much threatened. Every time we passed an Afghan car I thought that might be the end. When we had transported all the personnel to Camp Warehouse safely, I felt mainly relieved, even a little proud of myself. I had crossed the threshold of going to back to Kabul, although it never quite disappeared. Each time I left the camp I had to literally force myself across it. Its height varied with the extent of terrorist threat during the rest of my time there.

What I found striking were the reactions of my superiors in the first days after the attack. In my view they retrenched on a "befehl-ist-befehl structure". They were all looking for clarity and structure, wanting to build in certainties, and they found them in the command structures. This became painfully clear in the order for the funeral, written by a German colonel. According to this order the means of transport arranged for the escort of the dead colleagues to KIA was a coach. I confronted my commanding officer with this and I argued that this plan was not advisable in view of the intense associations this vehicle would no doubt evoke among the members of the escort of the coffins. Apart from that the discussion about what constituted safe transport of personnel had not been concluded yet and therefore use of the coaches that we had left was officially suspended. My commanding officer said that he had sympathy for my arguments, but that he was going to execute the order. Driven by emotion, but with rational arguments

I ended up in the office of the German Head of G4. This lieutenant colonel also chose not to refer back to his higher echelon, and he, too, was going to execute the order. Next, I went to the German Brigade Chief of Staff, who concurred with me, but referred me to the colonel who had initially written the order. I argued with him that an alternative would be to carry out the transport by armored personnel carrier. He indicated that it did not matter much to him how the transport was arranged, so as far as he was concerned the armored personnel carriers were all right. Nevertheless, he was not quite sure of himself and he announced he would put it to the general. The night before the funeral, 36 hours after the attack, MOVCON received the general's permission to arrange armored personnel carriers for the transport. This incident is one example of behavior that has drastically reduced my confidence in my military superiors. Given the fact that I mainly cooperated with German colleagues, I was very negative and disappointed in the "German way of doing things".

It also appeared to me that many servicemen developed a fear to leave the compound. Especially those whose activities had kept them from going outside the camp much were reluctant to go out. Those who did go out regularly on patrols or for other reasons, had much less trouble with this. It took me about three weeks to be able to drive more or less relaxed through Kabul, but the old feeling never came quite back. Even though it may have been terrorists from another country that had attacked our transport, I was convinced that the citizens of Kabul had known about it, given the empty streets, closed shops and the lightning speed with which El Jazeera was at the location of the attack. Although I have never been able to prove my suspicions, it made me feel very bitter and I could not really enjoy my work and Afghanistan anymore.

Cooperation and social contacts

After all my German colleagues who had been with me in the attack had returned home I had to rely a lot on my Dutch colleagues. I had the feeling my German colleagues did not know how to deal with me and the result was distance at a moment when I needed closeness. The Croatian major refused to work together with my German colleagues, one of the reasons being, I heard later, that he thought it a disgrace that a woman had to do 'such dangerous work'. A British major, working at the KNMB, felt he had been passed over as his advice about how to deal with terrorism had not been heeded by his commanding officer. I could get along better and better with my New Zealand, Canadian and Danish colleagues, though. I have the impression that this was caused by the fact that these people, just like me, had been posted on an individual basis in a preponderantly German staff. That this was not only nation-bound is borne out by my drastically deteriorating work relation with a Dutch commander. This happened after

he had impaired my coping process and functioning by handling my position in the wrong way.

Coping

During the mission I only summarily paid conscious attention to coping with the events. It has, however, been of great importance for my unconscious coping process that I stayed on in Afghanistan. Every day I drove past the place where the suicide attack had taken place, every day the threat warnings kept coming in. The realization that this attack was not an isolated incident, but that it came in a whole series of events, was a tough but necessary lesson. After several weeks, explosive charges were found along our route, clearly intended to hit our transports again. Other vehicles were attacked with mines, explosive charges, etc. The realization of continuous threat has been important for my awareness of the reality of things. A number of German colleagues who were taken out of the area immediately after the attack are still struggling daily with a number of unanswered questions: 'Why us? Could it have been prevented? What if...?' They are still having problems with this, because they have not been able to give the attack its place while still being over there.

Back at home the coping process starts. Not catching my sleep, reliving, jumpiness and grumpiness are just a few of the normal reactions to stressful occurrences. What was hardest for me to cope with was not the suicide attack or the sight of the dead and the wounded. Two things are more important. First of all, it has been quite difficult for me to accept that some colleagues impaired the coping process more than they realized, through their failure to understand and their ignorance. On the one hand, this is enhanced by a difference in nationality, as the cultural and linguistic differences can form an aggravating factor in this process. On the other hand, a shared nationality is no guarantee for good contact. Secondly, the suicide terrorist has forced me to change my view of the world. His act robbed me of my certainties, which I have had to reconstruct one by one. This costs must energy, patience and time. Finally, a large claim was laid on my environment. Often the role of one's next of kin is underestimated in situations like these. A stable home front is indispensable in a mission like this.

Now, more than two years later, I am convinced that the attack has changed my life, not only in a negative, but also in a positive way. To quote the doctor at the Dutch aid post: 'An illusion lost, and experience gained'.

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