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CTX
Combating Terrorism Exchange

From the Editor

In the last three short months, CTFP has helped convene hundreds of CT professionals in several locations around the world. Mongolia hosted the Asia Pacific Center's regional Alumni Symposium, where participants critically explored the 21st century challenges of "Ungoverned Spaces: Physical and Virtual". Greeting us with traditional blue scarves and fermented mare's milk, our gracious hosts made the conference a success both for pan-Asian CT network-building, and for deepening our understanding of Mongolia itself.

The National Defense University held its annual "Kickoff" exercise, uniting incoming CTFP Fellows with alumni from the College for International Security Affairs (CISA). Participants took part in a strategic-level exercise aimed at examining violent non-state actors and the national policies that could be used to counter them. Putting their experiences and education to the test, the incoming students found themselves up against a formidable Red Team comprised of CISA CTFP alumni.

At each of these events, CT practitioners engage in dialogue about CT issues affecting the worldwide community. At CTX, we aim to dive more deeply into these issues, and call upon real-world experiences to improve and inform CT operational effectiveness. As an example for readers considering submitting to us, Ronny Kristoffersen uses some of his first-person experiences to offer lessons learned in his article, contributing to exactly **what CTX seeks: a dialogue about better practices.**

Likewise, we very much want the overviews we publish to also generate dialogue. That is why we don't just welcome, but encourage responses from any of our Algerian CTFP Fellows, or others with experience in the Maghreb, to this issue's special section on Algeria.

For that matter, to all of our Fellows: help us be the journal of record for operational knowledge. Let's help each other fill in the blanks, fine-tune the analyses, and flesh out the overviews with the "been there, did/saw/thought something different" observations you each may have. Share your experience, and share your knowledge – we all still have much to learn.

This CT network is growing – in numbers and in strength – and we remain at-the-ready to report on your successes and lessons learned.

The Editors at CTX

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Inside this Issue

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Content Recon... *a sneak peek*

This issue opens with a report from the field by CTFP's director, **Dr. Dennis Walters,** on coordination efforts in East Africa against the Lord's Resistance Army. "CTFP: *In Action*" exemplifies how we can leverage our international CT community on an ad-hoc basis to counter terrorism.

In "Bleeding for the Village", Norwegian Coastal Ranger Officer **Ronny Kristoffersen** provides a synopsis of his experiences in Afghanistan, challenging conventional wisdom about how to conduct COIN. Incorporating his real-world perspective, he explains how CT practitioners could – and arguably should -- be tapping into existing cultural structures.

Many CTFP alumni may remember **Dr. Sebastian L. v. Gorka**, who hails from the National Defense University and, in this issue of CTX, adapts recent testimony to the U.S. House Armed Services Committee for an article entitled "Ten Years Later: Are We Winning the War?" In it he offers his insights about "disturbing truths" and real steps that should be taken in order for the U.S. and its allies to make lasting progress against Al Qaeda.

CTFP and other CT professionals hoping to better understand the challenges confronting Algeria and the Maghreb at large should appreciate this issue's SECTION ON ALGERIA. In it, U.S. Army Special Forces Major **Rich Nessel** outlines a history of Islamist and Islamic ideologies that have been influential in Algeria, including the strain that has given us today's Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. In this issue's "The Moving Image", **Dr. Kalev I. Sepp** draws out deeper messages regarding torture in Jean Lartéguy's book-to-film adaptation "Lost Command," and the uncannily prescient film, "Battle of Algiers". Without sacrificing reality for theory -- or conscience for approval -- **George Lober** walks us through the difficult topic of torture in "Ethics and Insights". Lastly, we asked Algeria expert **Dr. Mohammed Hafez** to compile a concise bibliography for CT professionals who want to catch up on how best to understand the latest developments in Algeria, beginning with its history.

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CTFP *In Action*: East African Alumni Take on the LRA

by Dennis Walters

If there is one thing we in the global combating-terrorism community have learned from our adversaries, it is the power of the network. The global reach and collective knowledge a network affords are excellent force multipliers. In keeping with this understanding, many of our alumni are reconnecting with us and their counterparts in other countries with requests for assistance or to share lessons learned.

So it came as no surprise when one of our African alumni contacted us and requested we assist him in gaining a broader understanding of regional efforts directed against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). We quickly canvassed our rolls for available subject matter experts and put the call out to our East African alumni. We soon had a venue to hold our LRA working group thanks to the efforts of the U.S. Embassy in Kampala and its Ugandan staff. A short list of CT experts in East Africa was soon compiled, and we began preparations for an in-depth look at the LRA and efforts to counter it.

As we got further into our research, it was obvious a great deal of interest in the LRA had been stimulated when President Obama signed into law the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act in May 2010. This landmark legislation received broad support in the U.S. Congress with 65 senators and 201 representatives voting in favor. It is no small wonder many Americans felt compelled to support legislation against a group as violent as the Lord's Resistance Army: the child abductions and gender-based violence perpetrated by the LRA are infamous in East Africa. In general terms,

Because of the joint efforts, the combat effectiveness of the LRA was greatly reduced, and it was denied freedom to maneuver in what had once been its stronghold.

the law makes it U.S. policy to support efforts "to protect civilians from the Lord's Resistance Army, to apprehend or remove Joseph Kony and his top commanders from the battlefield in the continued absence of a negotiated solution, and to disarm and demobilize the remaining LRA fighters." It also requires President Obama to develop a comprehensive, multilateral strategy to protect civilians in central Africa from LRA attacks and take steps to permanently stop the rebel group's violence. Furthermore, it calls on the United States to increase humanitarian assistance to countries currently affected by LRA violence and to support economic recovery and transitional justice efforts in Uganda. The language in the law was both ambitious and straightforward.

In Kampala, we listened to representatives from South Sudan and Uganda describe their joint efforts to oust the LRA from the border regions between the two countries. Their success was nothing short of phenomenal, and should serve as a template for future

multinational counterterrorism operations. Because of the joint efforts, the combat effectiveness of the LRA was greatly reduced, and it was denied freedom to maneuver in what had once been its stronghold. Current estimates put the strength of the LRA at only 400 to 500 fighters, and it has been relegated to operating in and around a large national park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Given the greatly reduced strength of the LRA, we asked the working group's participants where they ranked the LRA as a threat to the national security of their countries. Not surprisingly, none of the countries ranked the LRA as the most dangerous threat. Various regional disagreements, health concerns, and crime all ranked higher than the LRA. The representatives from the DRC did make it clear that they consider the LRA's presence on their soil a regional problem and emphasized that they should not be expected to deal

with it alone—a point with which all the participants readily agreed.

With the LRA's reduced combat effectiveness and other, more pressing regional concerns, it would seem the recent passage of the LRA Disarmament law in the United States is both late and unnecessary. Not quite. Any number of geopolitical problems in East Africa can be indirectly addressed through multinational cooperation directed against the LRA. Greater cooperation at the tactical and operational levels can also foster greater cooperation at the strategic level. The CTFP alumni in East Africa are well positioned to help develop this cooperation.

Dr. Dennis Walters is the Director of the Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program and is a former U.S. special operator.

Gain recognition through CTX for your international CT project:
if you're endeavoring to leverage the CTFP network for your country's or organization's CT efforts, we want to hear about it at [*CTXEditor@gmail.com*](mailto:CTXEditor@gmail.com)

Bleeding for the Village:
Success or Failure in the Hands of the Local Powerbrokers
by Ronny Kristoffersen

Coastal Ranger Command—Military Observer Team "November" (MOT Navy), I am number four from the left. Without their skills on the battlefield, I would not be alive today.

June 2007, Farjab Province, Afghanistan

On a moonless night, I crested a hill on my way to check out the valley below for enemy forces. Suddenly, I came upon three Taliban fighters approximately 10 meters in front of me; they were apparently as surprised as I was. "Dresh!" (Pashto for "stop,"), I yelled. They responded instantly with a spattering of automatic fire. A bullet struck me in the shoulder and knocked me to the ground. Bleeding heavily and unable to quickly reach my rifle, I returned their fire with my pistol, as five other fighters began shooting at me from 75 meters away. As the bullets whined past my head, I thought, "Is this the end? Will I never see my wife or my children again?" Bleeding and in pain, I pulled my rifle, retreating slowly while returning their fire, killing two and injuring another. Soon my team members, hearing the firefight in the still night, reached me, and together, we defeated the rest of the Taliban fighters. I had looked death in the eye and survived. But because the skirmish had occurred in an unsecured, dangerous area, an instant medical evacuation was impossible, and we had no choice but to stay where we were for the night.

At dawn, in the relative safety of daylight, we traveled down to the village, where my second-in-command told the village leader, who was the brother of the governor, how we had saved the village from a Taliban attack. The village leader and the village elders looked at me—the team leader, obviously in pain, my uniform drenched in blood, resting in the car—and the expression in their eyes reflected amazement, gratitude, and deep respect. My "bleeding for them"—their own terminology for such incidents—ensured that our mission was a success.

That mission, as part of Norway's contribution to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission, had been to protect the village from a Taliban attack, which had been rumored to be planned for that night. This village was especially important because the family of the provincial governor, an influential local powerbroker, lived there. Our hope was that by protecting the village, we would gradually gain the trust and support of the governor, his family, and the other villagers.

What does this story tell us about counterinsurgency (COIN) operations? Traditionally, scholars of COIN talk about "winning hearts and minds," as part of a strategy centered on popularity. The key to success typically is to get the local population to move from supporting the insurgents to supporting the government. However, this episode illustrates how winning the support of the entire population may be unnecessary. Instead, this article will argue that counterinsurgency operations should focus on local leaders. If these influential community members support the government, their followers will as well. Conversely, if they oppose the government, so too will their followers. This article focuses upon these leaders, who I identify as "local powerbrokers" (LPBs).

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>
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Three hours after I was shot—still out in the field.

In most Afghan villages, a prominent member acts as the leader in the village *shura,* (council of respected leaders), and *jirgas* (council of the elders, tribal leaders, lineage leaders, or the heads of families).[1] In some cases, he may be the current tribal elder, or he may be a former mujahedeen fighter. These men wield the influence necessary to gain villagers' general acceptance of the coalition forces fighting in Afghanistan and so are the most important societal elements that the coalition needs to win over. The same is true for the Afghan government: to gain the support of local communities in the current fight against the Taliban, it must first gain the support and involvement of the local leaders.[2]

If approached correctly and persuasively, these leaders will convince the majority of the population to cooperate with the coalition and Afghan government. In other words, it is not necessary, and indeed may not be possible, to win support directly from local villagers. So far, it has proved far more effective to first win over their "controllers," the LPBs. Seth Jones says simply, "gaining the support of tribal and community leaders is critical."[3] Since the local leaders already hold much of the power today, it is virtually impossible to ignore or bypass them. Likewise, Noah Coburn finds that powerbrokers such as "warlords, local elders, maliks, and jihadi commanders"[4] are the most important people to influence in order to reach local populations because they "tend to have a large amount of political control over communities."[5]

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But what about strategy? How can U.S. coalition forces and the Afghan government win interest and support from LPBs? This article will show that the most effective strategy requires first having a clear understanding of the three elements that are most important to local tribal and village leaders: status, power, and legitimacy. If the counterinsurgency operation can enhance or threaten to deny any of these elements, which sometimes are interrelated, then it can influence the behavior of the local powerbrokers. By developing a strategy that combines positive and negative inducements, counterinsurgents can give LPBs the incentive to choose coalition and government forces over the Taliban and others.

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1 Harvey Smith et al., *Area Handbook for Afghanistan*, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), 427.
2 Anthony King, *The Powerbrokers We Need Onside*, (March 2, 2010), retrieved from *Parliamentary Brief Online*, http://www.parliamentarybrief.com/2010/03/the-powerbrokers-we-need-onside (accessed January 21, 2011).
3 Seth Jones, e-mail correspondence, July 8, 2011.
4 Noah Coburn, "Parliamentarians and Local Politics in Afghanistan: Elections and Instability II," (September 2010,) retrieved from *Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit* website, http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=453&ContentId=7&ParentId=7 (accessed July 27, 2011), 10.
5 Noah Coburn, e-mail correspondence, July 15, 2011.

If its efforts to win the trust and support of the Afghan people are to succeed, the government must put pressure on the district and village powerbrokers and show them there

> *…to be most effective in influencing local leaders,
> a use of both "carrots and sticks" is necessary.*

will be negative consequences if they join or support the Taliban. The process should not be one-sided, however, and the government must also show credibility and a willingness and commitment to fight the Taliban and all those who join and follow it.

In other words, to be most effective in influencing local leaders, a use of both "carrots and sticks" is necessary. "Gaining the support of tribal and community leaders is critical. Historically, doing this effectively in Afghanistan has required both co-option and coercion—providing incentives to tribes and communities to support the government, and sticks to keep them in line," Jones says.[6]

Three Factors of Success

Three important factors are involved in winning the trust and support of local powerbrokers: status, power, and legitimacy. Although all are intertwined, this article will address each factor separately to better show the variety of interactions among them.

Status, or Respect for Authority

The desire for and need to maintain respect and status are important motivations for Afghan powerbrokers. According to a U.S. handbook on Afghanistan, "Both tribalism and Islam have combined to make respect for authority basic to the value system. The tribal member is taught the supreme importance of showing proper respect to those who, because of their status, have the right to assert authority."[7]

Within a tribe, the man who has the highest status is the one who "is a member of the senior lineage, holds a recognized position of tribal authority, is the senior person in his family and lineage, and supports his status with wealth in animals and land, and a large group of well-armed men."[8] As the chosen village leader, or Malik, he "is the main channel of communications between the village and the central government."[9] Although the position of Malik is mostly hereditary, some flexibility is built into the system. If the Malik's son proves to be incompetent or lacks the support of the villagers, for example, he can be replaced by someone else of high status.[10]

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6 Seth Jones, e-mail correspondence, July 8, 2011.
7 Smith et al., *Area Handbook*, 183.
8 Smith et al., *Area Handbook*, 92.
9 Smith et al., *Area Handbook*, 93.
10 Noah Coburn, *Quam: Conceptualizing Potters in the Afghan Political Arena*, (September 2008), retrieved from *The American Institute of Afghan Studies* website, http://128.197.26.35/aias/coburn.pdf (accessed July 16, 2011), 9.

In Afghan communities, having respect for a village leader is a matter governed by strict tribal codes, according to which the people recognize the necessity for and the legitimacy of the leader's position. Many expect to be leaders themselves some day, when they too will demand total respect and obedience in keeping with their high status.[11]

However, because tribal societies are basically egalitarian, with respect to the equal rights and privileges of all members, the leaders cannot base their power on their status alone.[12] A leader must work continuously to convince the village that he has superior personal qualities, is able to procure and redistribute resources from outside the village, and can provide maximum security. If the villagers should become dissatisfied with the current Malik, they may decide to replace him.[13]

*A local powerbroker must constantly **prove himself** worthy as the village Malik, or **tribal leader**...or he will be replaced by one of his ever-present **competitors**.*

Colonel Ralph O. Baker, former commander of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 1st Armored Division, describes similar lessons learned in Iraq. He identifies "five groups of Iraqis that had considerable influence among the population: local Imams and priests, local and district council members, staff and faculty from the universities, Arab and international media, and local sheiks and tribal leaders."[14] By approaching the most trusted and influential community members as well as social and cultural leaders, he hoped to convince the silent majority to cooperate with the U.S. coalition. The sheiks and other local leaders wanted outside support for a variety of key issues—security, development, and justice. If they could get this support from the U.S forces, the tribal leaders, in keeping with the tribal system, would increase their status and earn respect as leaders in their villages. Therefore, in COIN operations, outside resources must be channeled through the village leaders in order to increase the LPBs' status among their population.

Power

"Power," as defined by author Jeffrey Pfeffer, "involves the exercise of influence over others; leadership involving inducing a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers."[15] Thus, a tribal leader's power is vitally important to him, and he will try at all times to maintain or increase his power.

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11 Christine F. Ridout, "Authority Patterns and the Afghan Coup of 1973," *Middle East Journal* 29, no. 2 (Spring 1975): 166.
12 Bernt Glatzer, "The Pashtun Tribal System," in *Concept of Tribal Society*, ed. G. Pfeffer and D. K. Behera, (New Delhi: Concept Publishers, 2002), 272.
13 Glatzer, *Pashtun Tribal System*, 272.
14 Ralph O. Baker, "The Decisive Weapon: A Brigade Combat Team Commander's Perspective on Information Operations," *Military Review* (May–June 2006): 22.
15 Jeffrey Pfeffer, *Managing with Power, Politics, and Influence in Organizations* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1994), 171.

According to a 2002 study on the Pashtun tribal system by Bernt Glazer, "In a tribal setting a leader can gain power by (1) controlling tenants; (2) attracting many regular guests through lavish hospitality; (3) channeling resources from the outside world to one's followers; (4) superior rhetoric qualities and regular sound judgment in the *shuras* and *jirgas*; and (5) gallantry in war and conflict."[16] A local powerbroker must constantly prove himself worthy as the village Malik, or tribal leader, Glazer says, or he will be replaced by one of his ever-present competitors.[17] Throughout history, Afghan tribal leaders have contributed to what they perceive to be the most powerful military force in their area, and their support or lack of support for the kings has been crucial in maintaining national stability. The power of the tribal leaders was not generally contested by the government in their territories; they, rather than the central government, commanded the loyalty of their followers.[18]

The government's dependence on tribal military support has declined as the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police have increased in numbers, but tribal leaders continue to retain power in their respective

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communities.[19] Thus, to retain the cooperation of the powerbrokers in local villages, the Afghan government often appoints the tribal leaders to leading positions in the districts. According to Brian Petit, "The villages usually provide their own security and governance within the larger and generationally volatile swings of central government. The village will accept the basic provision of security and justice as the mark of the ruling power," thus, local powerbrokers gain personal power by providing security and justice to the village.[20] So, today, "lineage is no longer the singular source of power; the central control and coordination of economic, military, and religious resources now matters increasingly," writes David Ronfeldt.[21]

Baker, the former commander of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, describes initiating weekly and biweekly meetings with local leaders in Iraq in order to discover what they wanted and listens to their complaints about what the Iraqis felt his unit was not doing well. That they were sought out and asked to shape Baker's efforts made the local powerbrokers feel important. This newfound ability to obtain outside resources for their villages—such as electricity,

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16 Glatzer, *Pashtun Tribal System*, 272.
17 Glatzer, *Pashtun Tribal System*, 273.
18 Smith et al., *Area Handbook*, 214.
19 Smith et al., *Area Handbook*, 214.
20 Brian Petit, "The Fight for the Village," *Military Review* (May–June 2011), 31.
21 David Ronfeldt, *In Search of how Societies Work: Tribes—The First and Forever Form*, (December 2006), retrieved from the *Rand Corporation* website, http://www.rand.org/pubs/working_papers/WR433.html (accessed July 2, 2011), 46.

water, medicine, and freedom from criminality—resulted in their acquiring greater power and also greater respect in their communities.[22]

Legitimacy

According to John A. McCary's description of Iraq, "each tribe is headed by a sheik, whose legitimacy is based on the ability to provide for his village, which engenders patronage to his will. … Once a tribal leader flips, attacks on American forces in that area stop almost overnight."[23] If the government bypasses the local powerbrokers, they may undermine their legitimacy, but by involving and including the local powerbrokers in the local government instead of neglecting them, the government adds to the legitimacy of the LPBs, which gives them further incentive to choose to cooperate with the government.

To understand how legitimacy in the Afghan tribal society works, it is important to know how the tribes are organized. Particularly in Pashtun tribal organizations, "*jirga* usually refers to either a council of the elders, tribal leaders, lineage leaders or the heads of families,"[24] according to the *Handbook.* In his study of the war in Afghanistan, Sean R. Slaughter found that, "*Jirgas* enjoy strong legitimacy, particularly in the rural areas. With the lack of a strong central government and judiciary, *jirgas* became the only way to provide justice for the *quam*."[25]

> *Once a **tribal leader flips, attacks** on American forces in that area **stop** almost **overnight**.*

The term *quam* can be defined in a variety of ways, including "'tribe,' 'people,' 'ethnic group,' 'clan,' 'lineage,' or even 'profession' "[26] in different parts of Afghanistan. Together with lineage leaders, tribal elders, and local powerbrokers, the *jirga* can facilitate justice and legitimacy by using a local approach.[27] The *khan*—"a Turkic word meaning 'lord' or 'chief' of a tribe or local component of a tribe,"[28]—has great social currency patronage in the village. "*Khans*, in short, traffic in patronage, respect, service, and influence, joining personal charisma to collective legitimacy in all their paradoxes and ambiguities,"[29] according to Jon W. Anderson, and thus are important powerbrokers to influence.[30] A *khan* must do things to deserve and retain his title; therefore, khans tend to seek ways to achieve even higher status and greater legitimacy. However, that pursuit of

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22 Baker, "The Decisive Weapon." 19.
23 John A McCary, "The Anbar Awakening: An Alliance of Incentives," *Washington Quarterly* (January 2009), retrieved from *The Washington Quarterly* website, http://www.twq.com (accessed July 13, 2011), 46 and 52.
24 Smith et al., *Area Handbook*, 427.
25 Sean R. Slaughter, *Expanding the Quam: Culturally Savvy Counterinsurgency and Nation-building in Afghanistan*, (School of Advanced Military Studies, 2010), 33.
26 Coburn, *Quam: Conceptualizing Potters*, 12.
27 Jim Gant, "One Tribe at the Time," http://www.stevenpressfield.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/one_tribe_at_a_time_ed2.phpp (accessed 10.7.10), 26.
28 Jon W. Anderson, "There are no Khans Anymore: Economic Development and Social Change in Tribal Afghanistan," *Middle East Journal* 32, no. 2 (Spring 1978): 168.
29 Anderson, "There are no Khans," 170.
30 Anderson, "There are no Khans," 170.

status makes *khans* vulnerable to government exploitation, because the government can take advantage of them by giving them incentives to support the government.[31]

It is the *jirgas* or *shuras* (councils) in local districts that are instrumental in enforcing the local laws.[32] A local group called the *Arbakai* essentially functions as "a community police force; this group implements the local *jirga*'s decisions and has immunity for these decisions," according to Seth G. Jones and Arturo Muñoz in their study, *Afghanistan's Local War*.[33] The *Arbakai* generally are most effective when legitimate local institutions, such as *jirgas* or *shuras*, establish them.[34]

The second most widely practiced tribal code is that of the Hazara. In Hazara tribes, the Malik, the elected leader, performs the role that the *jirgas* do among Pashtun tribes,[35] and in Tajik tribes, the Mullahs and the village government fill those roles.[36]

In their study, *Afghanistan's Local War,* Jones and Muñoz say that the *Arbakai* forces, together with an impending resurgence of warlords and the Afghan National Army and Police, will eventually comprise a legitimate official power structure that is able to give the population justice,[37] and prevent local powerbrokers from joining the Taliban. However, if the local powerbrokers are not included in the establishment of the power structure, they will most likely desert their communities and join the

> *However, if the local powerbrokers are not included in the establishment of the power structure, they will most likely desert their communities and join the Taliban in order to retain some form of power base.*

Taliban in order to retain some form of power base. Therefore, the government must acknowledge the existing powerbrokers in local areas and include them in district governments. As Jones puts it:

> The current top-down state-building and counterinsurgency effort must take place alongside bottom-up programs, such as reaching out to legitimate local leaders to enlist them in providing security and services at the village and district levels. Otherwise, the Afghan government will lose the war.[38]

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31 Anderson, "There are no Khans," 170.
32 Seth G. Jones and Arturo Muñoz, *Afghanistan's Local War: Building Local Defense Forces* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2010); retrieved from the *Rand National Defense Research Institute* website, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2010/RAND_MG1002.pdf (accessed February 24, 2011), 21.
33 Jones and Muñoz, *Afghanistan's Local War*, 27.
34 Jones and Muñoz, *Afghanistan's Local War*, 61.
35 Smith et al, *Area Handbook*, 387.
36 Smith et al, *Area Handbook*, 387.
37 Jones and Muñoz, *Afghanistan's Local War*, 61.
38 Seth G. Jones, "It takes the Villages: Bringing Change from Below in Afghanistan," *Foreign Affairs*, (May 2010): 1.

In Afghanistan, individuals normally respect authority, but their respect is given first and foremost to their tribal chief or head of family.[39] Therefore, the cooperation of the local powerbrokers, which often is the tribal chief or village elder, is important for government forces to exercise legitimacy and authority. Moreover, it is critical that the government recognize the legitimacy of the local powerbrokers in order to gain their support. In turn, the government's recognition of the power of the LPBs will increase the legitimacy of those men among the villagers, which provides a major motivation for these influential leaders to cooperate with the government.

Meeting with the local powerbrokers in Senjetak village.

Case Study: "Bleeding" for Local Powerbrokers

The Military Observation Team "November" (MOT Navy), which I led in 2007, consisted of seven Norwegian Coastal Rangers deployed to Meymaneh, Farjab Province, in northwest Afghanistan, where an ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) was based. We operated for weeks at a time primarily in three districts: Almar, Qaysar, and Ghormach, where the Taliban had not yet achieved a strong foothold. But Taliban activity was increasing during that time, and the most vulnerable district was Ghormach. In 2001, when the Northern Alliance defeated the Taliban, a

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39 Smith et al, *Area Handbook*, 395.

number of Taliban fighters remained in Ghormach, a local safe haven. However, when my team arrived in the spring of 2007, they existed only as a sort of "sleeper cell," performing very few operations in the area.

Our basic mission was broad and nonspecific, designed primarily as an intelligence gathering operation in this relatively small, largely unfamiliar area of Afghanistan. As with most missions aimed at acquiring dependable information about the Taliban's increasing role in a particular neighborhood, our first challenge was to win the trust and confidence of local powerbrokers. As Dorothy Denning puts it, "brokers are in a powerful position to facilitate trust."[40] We soon realized that, while they were willing to talk with us, the LPBs shared little pertinent information because of a lack of trust. And it was obvious, also, that without the approval of their leaders, none of the villagers would provide any information either. We decided, therefore, to concentrate our efforts in the district where the threat from Taliban activity was the greatest: Qaysar. We also observed the same problem Col. Baker had seen in Iraq. Both Col. Baker in Iraq and my MOT in Afghanistan realized that the Afghans' expectations of a better and more secure life, as promised by ISAF, was different than what coalition envisioned. Coalition officials assumed that life would automatically be better for the Afghans if there were no longer the threat of Taliban attacks. But, to the Afghans, a better life meant a reliable supply of electricity, food, medical care, jobs, and safety from criminals. As we soon realized, if we were going to have any chance of success, the Afghans had to experience action from my team, either in the form of development or better security. Either way, we had to act, not only talk.

> *Coalition officials assumed that life would automatically be better for the Afghans if there were no longer the threat of Taliban attacks. But, to the Afghans, a better life meant a reliable supply of electricity, food, medical care, jobs, and safety from criminals.*

Determining How to Meet Local Leaders' Needs for Status, Power, and Legitimacy

Operating on the premise that gaining cooperation from local leaders depended largely on demonstrating to them that their cooperation would increase or enhance their status, power, and legitimacy in their communities, my unit's first move was to initiate meetings with three of the influential groups involved: tribal leaders, other local powerbrokers, and the Afghan National Police. Our purpose was threefold: to find out what was happening in the area; to begin to build a sense of mutually beneficial cooperation; and, most of all, to make them feel that they were included, important, and powerful components of the decision-making process. We deliberately and publicly recognized the legitimacy of each local powerbroker, which seemed to have the desired effect. Our efforts made a strong impression on the villagers in general, thereby enhancing the status of the local leaders in their individual villages. However, we did not officially recognize one local powerbroker because intelligence reports pointed to his

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40 Dorothy Denning, (lecture, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, August 1, 2011).

involvement in criminal activity. This decision I now see as a mistake of my own. We should have recognized him because later it became obvious that he was a very important, influential powerbroker.

In addition to increasing the legitimacy and status of the leaders by recognizing them as powerbrokers, I asked members of the three groups what kind of help the area needed and, more specifically, what assistance they thought my group, ISAF, or the Afghan government could provide. One of the first suggestions we acted on was from the Afghan National Police who requested money to build a defensive position on a hilltop so that they could better survey the area and defend the village from Taliban attack. Providing the finances to improve the village security served a double purpose: it demonstrated the village leader's ability to procure outside resources; and because both the police, representing the Afghan government, and coalition forces were involved, it also reinforced the local powerbroker's legitimacy. My team also benefited, as the villagers then began to approach us in a different way and to provide some dependable information about insurgent activity in the area.

> The *powerbroker himself told me* later that we now had his and the village's *support* "forever."

Another example of our success in enhancing the influence and position of a local powerbroker resulted from his request that we implement a medical vaccination and treatment operation. We brought in the necessary medical resources—doctors, equipment, and medicine—from the Meymaneh provincial reconstruction team. When the villagers realized that the medical operation would not have occurred without the efforts of their local leader, they changed their perception of his power and ability to beneficially affect their lives. The powerbroker's status was increased, and he gained legitimacy as we publicly acknowledged his efforts and cooperated with him. The powerbroker himself told me later that we now had his and the village's support "forever." In some villages, we donated school supplies and school tents for the local leaders to distribute; in another, we gave the local powerbroker money to dig and build water wells employing local contractors. These efforts accomplished similar results: enhancing and increasing the status, power, and legitimacy of local leaders.

In a similar way, Brian Petit explains how Afghan Maliks became responsive to U.S. coalition and governmental measures, such as the promise of local construction projects, representative *shuras*, and conflict resolution mechanisms.[41] Petit gives the example of a special forces team's sponsorship of some Afghan community elders, which provided them with the means to implement more than 55 small projects in their village cluster, at a total cost to the U.S coalition of $250,000,[42] but of even higher value in their results. Being given the means and authority to implement the projects on their own, the villagers were galvanized against the insurgent encroachment, and the local

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41 Petit, "The Fight for the Village," 28.
42 Petit, "The Fight for The Village," 28.

powerbrokers increased their status within the communities because of their ability to gain such beneficial resources from outside the village.

Becoming Powerbrokers

In my primary area of responsibility (Almar and Qaysar districts), there were other military units acting together in joint operations. However, since it was officially my area, they all told the local communities that "Commander Ronny" had sent them. We initiated small, quick-development projects, all ordered and organized by "Commander Ronny," and eventually, I became recognized throughout the area as a powerbroker. Local leaders of all kinds now knew me, had seen my ability to draw on outside resources, and viewed my role as team commander as a position of great power. For example, during a major intelligence-gathering operation, a local powerbroker approached one of the other teams with a request. Having observed the F-16 fighter planes that we used as operational over-watch, he asked; "Please tell Commander Ronny to spare our poppy fields from being bombed." In response, the team leader told him that they would pass on his request to Commander Ronny, but he would be the one to make the decision.

Meeting with local powerbrokers, becoming local powerbrokers.

Eventually, instead of our going to the local leaders, they began coming to us, and since we usually posted on hilltops, especially at night, we were easy to find. We had successfully demonstrated that the powerbrokers' cooperation with us was effective in increasing their own status, power, and legitimacy. Now they wanted me to come to a meeting to assist them with different issues, particularly village security. Thus, my own experience in Afghanistan convinced me that gaining the trust of local powerbrokers, and even becoming recognized as a powerbroker myself, greatly increased the possibility of mission success. It was when all those factors came together that I saw the greatest difference in the villagers' support.

"Bleeding" for the Protection of the Local People

Our most effective operations in gaining the cooperation of the local powerbrokers and their communities occurred when we stood with them in fights against the Taliban. Those shared experiences showed me that the security of their villages was the most pressing concern of local leaders. I also learned that the local powerbrokers had long since grown tired of giving information to a government that then failed to act on it. It was a pattern we tried our best not to repeat and a lesson we tried not to forget.

Getting first aid back in camp before being evacuated to the military hospital in Mazar-e-Sharif.

Another significant aspect to my team's operations in Afghanistan was going into areas where few, if any, teams had gone before. This happened when a local leader from Sakh village reported that there might be Taliban training camps in the Sadhi Kham area. By approaching villages perceived as "dangerous" by the local people, we demonstrated that we took their leaders' reports seriously, enhancing the status of those leaders. One meeting in a designated "dangerous" village particularly stands out because my interpreter, who came from Kabul, was terrified by the presence of several possible Taliban commanders, fearing for his life. As a result of this meeting, I had a price placed on my head: a mere $10,000.

One night, when we were back at the Meymaneh PRT camp, we received a phone call from the chief of police in a nearby village, asking that we come and help because he feared the Taliban was planning a night attack on his village. My team immediately made the five-hour drive to the village to help the chief of police and local powerbrokers. We took defensive positions on the roof of the police headquarters from where we could control the rest of the village. No attack came that night, but the response from the local powerbroker was overwhelming. He knew that if the Taliban took over his village, he would lose power; thus, he needed our help. After seeing that we were willing to fight for his village, he gave us his total support.

The next day, we received orders from the PRT commander to go to the home village of the provincial governor because it was rumored that 50 Taliban fighters would attack that village during the night. The provincial governor, the most powerful and influential powerbroker in our area, came from the village of Senjetak Jinab, on the border of the northwestern Bagdis Province. His younger brother was in charge in the village since the governor lived mostly in Meymaneh; the younger brother also wielded a big influence on the nearby villages because of his brother's high position.

We went to the village, talked to the elders and the governor's brother, and agreed that we would help them. People were ordered to stay inside during the night, and we prepared to fight the Taliban if they came. The village was difficult to defend because of surrounding hills, and we had to make some tough choices regarding our own security versus having the ability to oversee the entire village. That night, Taliban forces tried to ambush us, coming from an unexpected direction, and I was shot.

But good things came from that incident, because by "bleeding for the village," as the Afghans phrased it, we gained the total cooperation and support of the local powerbrokers. As one local leader told my second-in-command, the next time my team went into Senjetak village, "if you guys are willing to take a bullet for us, and are willing to die for us, why should we not trust you?" The fact that we had defeated the attack and that "Commander Ronny" himself was injured made a huge impact on surrounding villages. The LPBs understood that by supporting the government, they would at the same time strengthen their own position and power, giving them extra incentive.

> *As one local leader told my second-in-command…* "if you guys are willing to take a bullet for us, and are willing to die for us, why should we not trust you?"

Lessons Learned

In Senjetak and other nearby villages, the villagers gave us their full support in the two months immediately following my wounding. No Taliban managed to get a foothold in the area, and the villagers gave us good information regarding Taliban activity in the area.

Because of the good situation in those villages, military teams began to prioritize additional villages, meaning one or two months could often pass when no team was present in Senjetak or the villages nearby. After three months, therefore, these villages again started to show signs of hesitation about giving us information, and the LPBs no longer wanted to meet us. When my own unit's team went to meet some elders in Tez Nawa, a village near Senjetak, they were caught in a deadly ambush that lasted for six hours. One Afghan army soldier was injured and had to be evacuated by helicopter. Before this attack, my team had always received information about possible ambushes from the LPBs, either by phone or in meetings, but this time there had been no "heads-up." Later in the same area, a Norwegian soldier was killed in an IED attack, having received no information about the danger from local powerbrokers. Later, six of the eight MOT Navy team members were injured in another major ambush in the same valley where I had been wounded. More recently, in June 2009, a joint force consisting of 150 soldiers tried to get into the villages, but the Taliban proved too strong, and the joint force had to pull back. It has now become impossible for coalition forces to move into those villages where we once built a good relationship with the local leaders and won support from them and their people.

Also, in one of the villages, ISAF and the government established an *Arbakai* force to protect their own village. However, after ISAF left the village, Taliban forces came, cut off the head of the commander, and told the *Arbakai*

soldiers they would do the same to everyone who did not put down his weapons. Arming 20 people as an *Arbakai* force is of little use against a 100-fighter Taliban force.

What happened? Because we could not be in the villages for long periods due to other priorities and missions, the Taliban seized the opportunity to coerce the LPBs into joining them. They knew exactly which leaders were most susceptible to influence, and thus their coercive power was very effective. In order to survive, the LPBs surrendered to the Taliban, allowing them a foothold in their villages. For example, the brother of the provincial governor in Senjetak, where I was shot, is now trying to hold on to his reputation and position, and therefore is "playing both sides," meaning that he supports both the government and the Taliban. The same is true in the village of Khwaja Kinti. They have an *Arbakai* force, but it turns with the wind: sometimes it fights against Taliban forces, sometimes it fights against ISAF. Their loyalty depends on which side they believe has the best chance of winning the battle. The local powerbroker from another village has moved to Meymaneh, where he now sells weapons from his personal arsenal to the Taliban.

Consistency

"Villages and villagers principally aim to survive and prosper. To do so, they will visibly align or subjugate themselves to the dominant, lasting presence," Petit writes.[43] That sentiment means critical importance is placed on the consistency of ISAF military forces to maintain the security of a village until it is able to take care of its own security. The people must be shown that a more dominant and lasting authority than the Taliban will prevail, Petit says.[44] If we do not maintain consistency in an area, the Taliban will take it, as was the case in several of the villages in Qaysar and Ghormach districts in Farjab and Bagdis Provinces in northwest Afghanistan. My team's area of responsibility covered three districts—Almar, Qaysar, and Ghormach—with a population of approximately 200,000 people. Hundreds of villages populate these districts; thus a presence in all of them was impossible. My unit, MOT Navy, had seven soldiers and little support from other units; therefore, we could not consistently be present in any single village.

All in all, as these examples show, the support of local powerbrokers is paramount and should be our first priority. Once their support is won, a consistent presence of NATO military forces must be maintained until the villagers are strong enough to protect themselves. This can be done by establishing either local security forces or government forces strong enough to defeat Taliban attempts to take over. If not, the Taliban will succeed in controlling villages and local powerbrokers, and thus, the hearts and minds of the Afghan population.

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43 Petit, "The Fight for the Village," 27.
44 Petit, "The Fight for the Village," 27.

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Ten Years Later: Are We Winning the War?

by Sebastian L. v. Gorka

The year 2011 marks the 10th anniversary of the horrendous terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. [45] Al Qaeda' s religiously motivated murder of almost 3,000 people on that sunny Tuesday morning led directly to military operations in Afghanistan and then Iraq, which together mark the longest-ever military engagement by America since 1776. We are still fighting in a war that has already outlasted our combat in Korea, World War II, and even Vietnam. Whilst the mastermind behind the September 11th attacks is dead—thanks to the courage and audacity of the U.S. military and intelligence community—the war is not over, the enemy not vanquished.

At the decade-marker for this war, there remain two disturbing truths that the American policy elite has yet to recognize or understand:

- Stunning tactical successes—no matter how numerous—do not necessarily lead to strategic victory.

- The second related point is that today, a decade after September 11, America still does not fully understand the nature of the enemy that most threatens its citizens; and thus, its strategic response is undermined.

> *Al Qaeda's **religiously motivated murder** of almost 3,000 people...led directly to military operations... which ... mark the **longest-ever military engagement** by **America** since **1776.***

Know the Enemy

One of the more important reasons for the lack of an effective response to Al Qaeda is the lack of a clear and overarching strategy for the post-9/11 era. We have been given first the Global War On Terror (GWOT) and then the "Long War," and now the Overseas Contingency Operation (OCO). But we are still looking for the new George Kennan who will write a new version of the "Long Telegram," which can be used to formulate a doctrine that would be the strategic-level equivalent of the Cold War's containment policy.[46] Without a strategic-level doctrine, executing an effective response to any significant threat is very difficult.

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[45] The full testimony can be read at the *Council for Emerging National Security Affairs* website at http://www.censa.net/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=483:ten-years-on-the-evolution-of-the-terrorist-threat&Itemid=150, and the video is available on the *You Tube* website at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfmN86SlpKY. As with all CTX content, the views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any other government agency.

[46] The Council for Emerging National Security Affairs has compiled a survey of national security practitioners and academics judging the various potential doctrines that have been penned but not yet won universal adoption by the

After World War II, it was much easier to effectively communicate the stakes of the confrontation, why America had to act, and what we wished to achieve. This was due to several reasons. Communication is best when it clearly demonstrates values. After four years of engagement in a global war against a totalitarian enemy, America's values were clear. Likewise, after 30 years, the values of America's then-enemy, the Soviet Union, were not obtuse or difficult to grasp. When we witnessed the Berlin Blockade, the launch of Sputnik, and the first Soviet atomic test, it was clear that the game was one of survival—*Them or Us*. "The Enemy" was clearly an enemy; we knew what they were capable of and what they wanted; and most important of all, the previous four years—World War II—had shown us who we were. September the 11th was different.

In the hazy days of post-Cold War peace dividends, because our enemy had been vanquished, or rather, had become our "friend," it was hard to remember what America and the West stood for. The 9/11 attack itself came as a huge surprise. Despite the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, and the 2000 USS Cole attack, we did not appreciate the scale of the threat, the intention of the enemy, or his true capabilities. Even after 9/11, we have been obstructed in our understanding of our foe by the fact that his motivation is not simply political or rational but is religiously informed and has nothing to do with the logic of nation-state behavior. Thanks to this confusion, today, when you ask someone anywhere in the world, with whom they associate the word "caliphate," they will more often than not name Osama bin Laden. If you ask the same person which person or country they associate with the words "democracy" or "liberty," it is unlikely to be the United States. Not so long ago, neither statement would have been true.

To simplify matters—and given the urgency of the task—we can boil down the communications task into three fundamental questions the United States and its allies must answer if they are to have any chance of building a coherent, strategic approach that can delegitimize Al Qaeda. These questions are:

1. Who is the enemy? The answer to this question should be short and simple.

2. Who are we? What do we believe in; what do we stand for as a nation? And what do we require of other nations that hold themselves to be part of the community of peace-loving and freedom-loving countries?

3. What are the core values that inform our behavior and our policies and that are not negotiable?

Given the weakness of communications to date, I would suggest one additional twist. At the moment it would be a waste to spend significantly more money trying to make the United States or the "West" look good in the eyes of non-Western audiences. This will most likely come when we are judged by our actions. Instead, we should focus on making the enemy look "bad." Why is it, for example, that since 9/11 Al Qaeda has been responsible for the death of

administration. For details, see *The Search for Mr. X* at the *Council for Emerging National Security Affairs* website at www.censa.net.

far more Muslims than Westerners? Publicizing such information is one way we can delegitimize and marginalize Al Qaeda.

There is, however, one last point that has been omitted in all the discussion of strategic communications in the past seven years. There is a very important reason that we were much better at strategic communications (or rather propaganda and political warfare) during the Cold War. When America established tools such as *Voice of America*, *Radio Liberty*, and *Radio Free Europe*, it was targeting a completely different kind of audience. For the most part, the citizens of the captive nations behind the Iron Curtain were not staunch communists who had to be converted through these broadcasts. The people of Hungary, Poland, East Germany, the Baltic states, and so on believed in democracy and longed to be free. They didn't tune into our federally funded stations because they wanted to be converted to our values system. They were already on our side and simply wanted access to information denied them by their illegitimate masters. This is not the situation today. Yesterday's audience was with us but captive. Today's audience may be suffering under a less-than-democratic regime or an authoritarian government, but that does not mean they are necessarily on our side. The Cold War may have been about winning "hearts and minds," but today we are in the era of needing to win "hearts and souls."

After Abbottabad—America and the Strategic Principles of Counterterrorism

The May 2011 special forces raid against Osama bin Laden in Abottabad, Pakistan, will clearly become the textbook example of how to perfectly execute high-risk military operations in the post-9/11 world. In locating and killing Osama bin Laden on foreign soil, America again demonstrated its peerless capacity at the tactical and operational level. Nevertheless, as the supreme military thinker Sun Tzu taught, "tactics without strategy is simply the noise before defeat," and it is my firm conviction that the past 10 years of this conflict have lacked the strategic guidance demanded by a threat of the magnitude of transnational terrorism.

This concept can be illustrated with one simple observation. Since the escalation of the Iraqi insurgency in 2004, the subsequent rewriting and rapid application of the U.S. Army/Marine Corps Field Manual 3-24 on Counterinsurgency, and the release of General Stanley McChrystal's report on operations in Afghanistan, Washington has persisted in calling our approach to the threat in theater a "Counterinsurgency Strategy." (In fact, a basic Internet search on the term "Counterinsurgency Strategy" yields more than 300,000 results). This terminology is used despite the fact that counterinsurgency always has been, and always will be, a doctrinal approach to irregular warfare, never a strategic solution to any kind of threat.

Strategy explains how one matches resources and methods to ultimate objectives. Strategy explains the "why" of war, never the operational "how to" of war. The fact that even official bodies can repeatedly make this mistake so many years into this fight indicates that we are breaking cardinal rules of how to realize America's national security interests.

With regard to the requirement to understand the enemy, I will share a personal experience. Several years after 9/11, I was invited to address a senior group of special operations officers on the last day of a three-day event analyzing progress in the conflict. As I rose to speak on the final day, I told the assembled officers—all of whom had just returned from the theater of operations or who were about to deploy there—that I would have to discard my prepared comments. The reason was that for 2½ days I had witnessed brave men who were risking their lives debate with each other and us, the invited guests, over who was the enemy they were fighting. Debates focused on whether Al Qaeda is an organization, a movement, a network, or an ideology. This, I said, would be akin to U.S. officers debating each other in 1944 over the question of what was the Third Reich or what did Nazism actually represent. The plain fact of the matter is that we have institutionally failed to meet our duty to become well informed on the threat doctrine of our enemy. And without a clear understanding of the enemy threat doctrine, victory is likely impossible.

> *Debates focused on whether Al Qaeda is an organization, a movement, a network, or an ideology. This, I said, would be akin to U.S. officers debating each other in 1944 over the question of what was the Third Reich or what did Nazism actually represent.*

The reasons for our paucity in this area are many. In the preceding section, we discussed the functional problems, most of which stem from two serious and connected obstacles of strategic magnitude. The first is a misguided belief that the religious character of the enemy's ideology should not be discussed and that we need not address it, but should instead use the phrase "violent extremism" to describe our foe and thus avoid any unnecessary unpleasantness. The second is that even if we could demonstrate clear-headedness on the issue and recognize the religious ideology of Al Qaeda and its associate movements for what it is—a form of *hybrid totalitarianism*—we still drastically lack the institutional ability to analyze and comprehend the worldview of the enemy and therefore its strategic mindset and ultimate objectives.

Here it is enlightening to look to the past to understand just how great a challenge is posed by the need for our national security establishment to understand its new enemy. It is now well recognized that it was only in 1946, with the authoring of George Kennan's classified "Long Telegram" (later republished pseudonymously as *The Sources of Soviet Conduct*) that America began to understand the nature of the Soviet Union, why it acted the way it did, how the Kremlin thought, and why the U.S.S.R. was an existential threat to America.[47] Consider now the fact that this document was written three decades after the Russian Revolution, and that despite all the scholarship and analysis available in the United States, it took more than a generation to penetrate the mind of the enemy and come to a point where a

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[47] The declassified text of Kennan's original cable can be found on the *Nevada Technical Associates* website at http://www.ntanet.net/KENNAN.html. The pseudonymous article he later wrote for a broader audience in *Foreign Affairs* is on the *History Guide* website at http://www.historyguide.org/europe/kennan.html (both accessed June 15, 2011).

counterstrategy could be formulated. Now add to this the fact that today our enemy is not a European, secular, nation-state—as was the U.S.S.R.—but a non-European, religiously informed, non-state, terrorist group, and we see the magnitude of the challenge. Whilst initiatives such as Fort Leavenworth's Human Terrain System (HTS) and the teams they provide to theater commanders are well-meaning efforts in the right direction—trying to understand the context of the enemy—they still miss the mark on more than one level.

To begin with, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to provide the contextual knowledge we need to understand and defeat our enemy if we rely solely upon anthropologists and social scientists, as the HTS does. Today, our multidisciplinary analysis of the enemy and his doctrine requires just as much—if not more—expertise from the regional historian and the theologian, the specialist who knows when and how Sunni Islam split from Shia Islam and who understands the difference between the Meccan and Medinan verses of the Quran. We should ask ourselves honestly how many national security practitioners know the answers to these questions, or at least have somewhere to turn within government to provide them such essential expertise.

Secondly, we must—after seven years—take the counsel of the 9/11 Congressional Commission seriously in recognizing that the threat environment itself has radically changed beyond the capacity of our legacy national security structures to deal with it.

> *Al Qaeda, **Al Shabaab**, or even the Muslim Brotherhood **cannot be forced** into **analytic boxes** which are military or nonmilitary, or into internal or external **threat categories**.*

In the case of how two of the 9/11 hijackers (Nawaf al-Hamzi and Khalid al-Midhar) were flagged as threats but still permitted to enter the United States legally, we see proof of how our national security structures do not match up well to the threat our new enemies represent. This problem is not unique to the United States, but is a product of what the academic world calls the Westphalian system of nation-states and how we are structured to protect ourselves.

In the 350 years since the Treaty of Westphalia marked the end of the religious wars of Europe, Western nations developed and perfected national security architectures that were predicated on an institutional division of labor and discrete categorization of threats. Internally, we had to maintain constitutionality and law and order. Externally, we had to deal with the threat of aggression from another state. As a result, all our countries divided national security tasks into separate conceptual and functional baskets: internal versus external; military versus nonmilitary. And this system worked very well for 3½ centuries during which time states fought other nation-states—the age of so-called "conventional warfare." However, as Philip Bobbitt has so masterfully described in his book, *The Shield of Achilles*, that age is behind us. Al Qaeda, Al Shabaab, or even the Muslim Brotherhood cannot be forced into

analytic boxes which are military or nonmilitary, or into internal or external threat categories.[48] We must recognize the hard truth that the threat environment is no longer primarily defined by the state-actor.

Take, for example, the case of the most successful Al Qaeda attack on U.S. soil since 9/11, the Fort Hood massacre. A major serving in the U.S. Army decided that his loyalty lay with his Muslim coreligionists and not his nation or his branch of service. He was recruited, encouraged, and finally blessed in his actions by Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen and Muslim cleric who was hiding out in Yemen. When Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan was about to be deployed in the service of our country, he instead chose the path of holy war against the infidel and slew 13 and wounded 31 of his fellow servicemen and their family members and colleagues on the largest U.S. Army base in the United States.

How Westphalian was this deadly attack by Al Qaeda? What does it have to do with conventional warfare? Was this threat external or internal in nature? Was it a military attack or a nonmilitary one? As you see, the conceptual frameworks and capabilities that served us so well through the last century fail us today in the 21st century. As a result, we must develop new methodologies to analyze the threats to our nation and new ways to bridge the conventional gaps between government and agency departments and their respective mindsets—gaps which are so deftly exploited by groups such as Al Qaeda.[49] We must recognize that the master of military strategy, Carl von Clausewitz, wrote his *meisterwerk* in the context of station state war. His trinity of government, people, and military and the related characteristics of reason, passion, and skill do not pertain in the realm of irregular warfare as they do in conventional war (see *Figure 1*). Today the enemy is more flexible and not driven by rational conceptualizations of *raison d'etat*.

> *Congress itself will have to remove* **outdated limitations** *on our national ability to fight the* **war of ideas**—*such as the Smith-Mundt Act—which were* **born of a bygone age** *before modern communications technologies…*

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[48] Philip Bobbitt: *The Shield of Achilles—War, Peace and the Course of History*, (New York: Random House, 2002). I take the discussion further and discuss just how different this post-Westphalian threat environment is and how we need to reappraise key Clausewitzian aspects of the analysis of war in "The Age of Irregular Warfare—So What?," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, 58 no. 3 (2010): 32–38.

[49] For a discussion of how to institutionally and conceptually bridge these gaps and so be able to defeat the new types of threat we face, see the concept "Super-Purple" described in my chapter, "International Cooperation as a Tool in Counterterrorism: Super-Purple as a Weapon to Defeat the Nonrational Terrorist," in *Toward a Grand Strategy Against Terrorism*, ed. Christopher C. Harmon, Andrew N. Pratt, and Sebastian L. v. Gorka, (New York: McGraw Hill, 2011), 71-83.
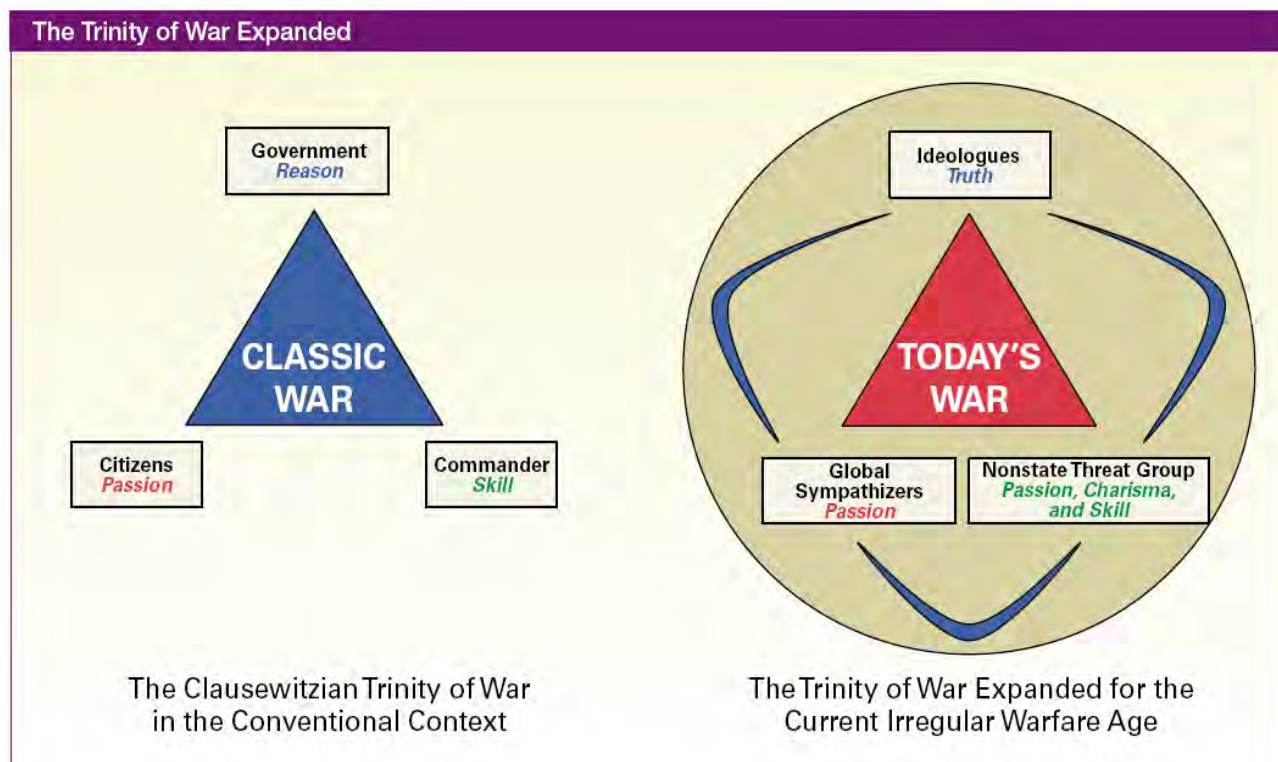
Figure 1. Clausewitz Versus Irregular warfare.

The paradox of Al Qaeda is that whilst we have in the past 10 years been incredibly successful in militarily degrading its operational capacity to directly do us harm, it has become even more powerful in the domain of ideological warfare and other indirect forms of attack. Whilst bin Laden may be dead, the narrative of religiously motivated global revolution that he embodied is very much alive and growing in popularity.[50] Whilst we have crippled Al Qaeda's capacity to execute mass casualty attacks with its own assets on the mainland of the United States, we see that its message continues to hold traction with individuals prepared to bring the fight to us individually, be it Major Hasan, would-be Times Square attacker Faisal Shahzad, or Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the Christmas Day or "underwear bomber."

*Whilst **bin Laden may be dead,** the narrative of religiously motivated **global revolution** that he embodied is very much **alive and growing** in popularity.*

Counterterrorism: Beyond the Kinetic

Although we have proven our capacity in the past 10 years to kinetically engage our enemy at the operational and tactical level with unsurpassed effectiveness, we have not even begun to take the war to Al Qaeda at the strategic level of counterideology. To paraphrase Dr. James Kiras of the Air University, whose views I

[50] For the rise of jihadi ideology and what should be done in response, see Sebastian L. v. Gorka: "The Surge that Could Defeat Al Qaeda," (August 10, 2009), retrieved from the *Foreign Policy* website: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/08/10/the_one_surge_that_could_defeat_al_qaeda; (accessed June 15, 2011).

highly respect, we have denied Al Qaeda the capability to conduct complex, devastating attacks on the scale of 9/11, but we now need to transition from concentrating on dismantling and disrupting Al Qaeda's network to undermining its core strategy of ideological attack. We need to employ much more the indirect approach made famous by our community of Special Forces operators of working "by, with, and through" local allies—moving beyond direct attacks on the enemy at the operational and tactical levels to attacking it indirectly at the strategic level.

We need to bankrupt transnational jihadist terrorism at it most powerful point: its narrative of global, religious war. For the majority of the past 10 years, the narrative of the conflict has been controlled by our enemy. Just as we did in the Cold War, the United States must take active measures to arrive at a position where it shapes the agenda and the story of the conflict, where we force our enemy onto his back foot to such an extent that jihadism eventually loses all credibility and implodes as an ideology. For this to happen, we must rethink from the ground up the way in which strategic communications and information operations are run across the U.S. government. Additionally,

Our ability to fight Al Qaeda and similar transnational terrorist actors will depend upon our capacity to communicate to our own citizens and to the world what we are fighting for and how the ideology of jihad threatens the universal values we hold so dear. To quote Sun Tzu again, in war it is not enough to know the enemy in order to win; one must first know oneself. During

> *…imagine if in the fight against the Ku Klux Klan federal law enforcement had been forbidden from describing that group as white supremacists or racists…*
>
> *We did not do it then, and we must not do it now.*

the Cold War, this self-knowledge happened naturally. Given the nature of the Soviet Union and the nuclear threat it clearly posed to the West, from the first successful Soviet atom-bomb test to the collapse of the U.S.S.R. in 1991, every day for four decades Americans knew what was at stake and why communism could not be allowed to spread its totalitarian grip beyond the Iron Curtain.

However, with the end of the Cold War and the decade of peace dividends that defined the 1990s, America and the West understandably lost clarity with regard to what about its way of life was precious and worth fighting for after the specter of World War III had been vanquished and the (Cold) War had been won.

The shock of the September 11th attacks did not, however, automatically return us to a point of clarity. The reasons for this flow from several of the observations I have already made, and also from the fact that our current enemy is a religiously colored one unlike the secular foe we faced during the Cold War.

Due in part to a misinterpretation of what the Founding Fathers actually meant by "separation of church and state," today we have hobbled our capacity to understand and counter this enemy at the strategic level. Based upon my experience with military operators and also U.S. law enforcement officers fighting terrorism at home, many in government senior management positions have misconstrued the matter to such an extent that religion has

become a taboo issue within national threat analysis. This has been done despite that fact that all those who have brought death to our shores as Al Qaeda operatives have done so not out of purely political conviction but clearly as a result of the fact that they feel transcendentally justified, that they see their violent deeds as sanctioned by God. If we wish to combat the ideology that drives these murderers, we ignore the role of religion at our own peril.

> *We are not at war with communists, fascists, or nationalists, but religiously inspired mass murderers who consistently cite the Quran to justify their actions.*

The official decision in recent years to use the misleading term "violent extremism" to describe the threat is deleterious to our ability to understand the enemy and defeat it. America is not at war with all forms of violent extremism. The attacks of September 11 were not the work of a group of terrorists motivated by a generic form of extremism. We are not at war with communists, fascists, or nationalists, but religiously inspired mass murderers who consistently cite the Quran to justify their actions. Denying this fact simply out of a misguided sensitivity will delay our ability to understand the nature of this conflict and to delegitimize our foe. By analogy, imagine if in the fight against the Ku Klux Klan federal law enforcement had been forbidden from describing that group as white supremacists or racists, or if during WWII, for political reasons, we forbade our forces from understanding the enemy as a Nazi regime fueled and guided by a fascist ideology of racial hatred, but demanded they be called "violent extremists" instead. We did not do it then, and we must not do it now. The safety of America's citizens and our chances of eventual victory depend upon our being able to call the enemy by its proper name: *Global Jihadism*.[51]

To conclude, the past 10 years since September 11, 2001, can be summarized as a vast collection of tactical and operational successes but a vacuum in terms of strategic understanding and strategic response. To paraphrase a former U.S. Marine who knows the enemy very well and whom I greatly respect, we have failed to understand the enemy at any more than an operational level and have instead, by default, addressed the enemy solely on the operational plane of engagement. Operationally we have

> *… his ideology of global supremacy through religious war is far more vibrant and sympathetic to audiences around the world than it was on the day before the attacks 10 years ago*

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[51] For the best work on understanding the enemy we now face, see Patrick Sookhdeo's *Global Jihad: The Future in the Face of Militant Islam* (McLean, VA: Isaac Publishing, 2007); and the analytic works of Stephen Ulph, including: *Towards a Curriculum for Teaching Jihadist Ideology*, The Jamestown Foundation, available at the *Jamestown Foundation* website: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=36999. For an overview of the key thinkers and strategists of global jihadi ideology, see Sebastian L. v. Gorka: *Jihadist Ideology: The Core Texts*, lecture to the Westminster Institute. Audio and transcript available at the *Westminster Institute* website: http://www.westminster-institute.org/articles/jihadist-ideology-the-core-texts-3/#more-385. (Both were accessed June 15, 2011).

become most proficient at responding to the localized threats caused by Al Qaeda, but those localized threats are simply tactical manifestations of what is happening at the strategic level and driven by the ideology of Global Jihad. As a result, by not responding to what Al Qaeda has become at the strategic level, we continue to attempt to engage it on the wrong battlefield.

The 10th anniversary of the attacks in Washington, DC, in New York, and in Pennsylvania afford those in the U.S. government who have sworn to uphold and defend the national interests of this greatest of nations a clear opportunity to recognize what we have accomplished and what needs to be reassessed. All involved must begin anew to recommit themselves to attacking this deadliest of enemies at the level which it deserves to be—and must be—which is, of course, the strategic level.

Osama bin Laden may be dead, but his ideology of global supremacy through religious war is far more vibrant and sympathetic to audiences around the world than it was on the day before the attacks 10 years ago. We need to guarantee the conditions by which the executive branch is able finally to produce a comprehensive understanding of the enemy threat doctrine that is Global Jihadism, a feat akin to Kennan's foundational analysis that eventually led to the Truman Doctrine and its exquisite operationalization in Paul Nitze's plan for containment, NSC-68.[52]

Ten years into this war, a strategic re-evaluation is justified. I suggest four successful principles that can guide such a re-evaluation:[53]

1. The United States must suppress the sphere of mobility of Al Qaeda and its Associated Movements (AQAM). This war will not end in a neat ceasefire and peace treaty. It must consist of a constant pressure against both the will and the capability of global jihadists to do us harm.

2. The American intelligence and national security communities must invest far greater effort into understanding the historic, economic, social and political factors that AQAM uses to mobilize its followers and operators. This is NOT a cause-and-effect relationship, but a dynamic whereby elite ideologies exploit objective conditions through a subject mobilizing religious ideology.

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[52] The declassified NSC-68 which operationalized George Kennan's enemy threat doctrine analysis of the USSR can be retrieved from the *Air Force Magazine* website: http://www.airforce-magazine.com/MagazineArchive/Documents/2004/December%202004/1204keeperfull.pdf (accessed June 15, 2011).

[53] For a lengthier discussion of these principles, see the forthcoming monograph "*Developing an Integrated Approach to Counterterrorism: Connecting the Academic, Operational and Policy Arenas*" (working title) by Gorka, Sloan, and Ishimoto from the Joint Special Operations University, U.S. Special Operations Command.

3. This war is no longer simply about hijacked planes, IEDs or gunmen. Ten years after 9/11, it is perhaps more nonkinetic than it is physical. America must rediscover and deploy the tools it used so effectively in past ideological wars to build a powerful and globally applicable counter-narrative. This narrative must undermine the legitimacy and attractiveness of the enemy, as well as deter potential allies and recruits. America must drive the global agenda of justice and liberty, as it did during WWII and the Cold War.

4. The American national security establishment must purge itself of well-intentioned but neutering concepts of political correctness and cultural sensitivity concerning the identity of the enemy and what the enemy intends. AQAM uses religion not only to win adherents, but also to justify mass murder. We must tackle this reality head-on. The religious nature of our enemy's ideology cannot obstruct us from defining and realizing our national interests.

Only if we have an overarching strategic response will America be able to defeat Al Qaeda and its associates before the next significant anniversary of 9/11.

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CHECK OUT PAGE 54 TO LEARN WHO YOU CAN CONNECT WITH AND HOW

Focus on Algeria

Not only has Algeria earned a distinct place in the annals of international terrorism, but terrorism is hardly only a matter of *historic* interest in the Maghreb. It is an ongoing concern. Movies, books, and articles offer numerous interpretations of how Algerians have responded to their country's waves of violence. One can hardly contemplate the use of torture, for instance, without recalling the movie, The Battle of Algiers. Liberation struggles the world over have looked to the Algerian example for inspiration. And Western counterterrorism and counterinsurgency thinking have been indisputably shaped by French and Algerian lessons learned.

Given its pivotal geographic position, both in the Maghreb and along the Mediterranean, this 2.4 million square-kilometer country continues to capture global headlines – not in the least because Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) continues to try to shred regional ties and stability through ongoing attacks and kidnappings.

This section provides CTFP and other CT readers with a fresh look at a most important country, focusing on evolving strains of dangerous ideologies, and the use of torture in countering terrorism. At CTX, we understand that context is key. In this issue, Algeria provides the context – key to our borderless discussions.

Islamism in Algeria and the Evolution to AQIM: Transformations of Significance and Insignificance

by Rich Nessel

Islamism[54] has a long history in Algeria, but it has been marred in the past 20 years by the deaths of 100,000 to 200,000 citizens killed in conflicts with religious roots.[55] The notions of Islamism, Islamic fundamentalists, radical Islamists, and Muslim extremists within Algeria—and the world—lamentably have been lumped into one category, which oversimplifies the complex ideologies involved. The purpose of this article is twofold: to define the forms of Algerian Islamism, which will expose the complexities and varying approaches to Islamism under a secular regime, and to highlight a particularly sinister brand of Islamism, which will demonstrate why the specific strain of revolutionary Islamism brought by the Armed Islamic Groups (GIA) is so radically unique.[56] This framework will allow for a better understanding of the current form of violent Islamism within Algeria as practiced by Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Within this historical view, the recent rise of AQIM seems far less ominous as it appears to be little more than the GIA with a new name.

Three Categories of Islamists

Algerian Islamist organizations are heterogeneous, with different philosophies that do not fit comfortably into one order, and they represent the full spectrum of views regarding how Islam relates to personal life and the government. Islamist groups fall into three broad categories, which are listed below.[57]

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[54] The terms Islamism and Islamist have different connotations depending on the way it is used. Here, Islamism means the Muslim pursuit of establishing an Islamic state governed by Islamic law. As demonstrated in this article, there are varying degrees through which Islamists pursue this goal, be they fundamentalist or moderate. The way this term is used is meant to encapsulate the full breadth of those with Islamist pursuits.

[55] Salima Mellah, "Justice Commission for Algeria: The Massacres in Algeria, 1992-2004," retrieved from *Justice Commission for Algeria* website*,* (May 2004), http://www.algerie-tpp.org/tpp/pdf/dossier_2_massacres.pdf (accessed August 6, 2011), 7.

[56] The GIA would later fracture into the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), which eventually would change its name to Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Camille Tawil, *Brothers in Arms: The Story of Al-Qa'ida and the Arab Jihadists* (London: Saqi, 2010), 127, 195.

[57] This is roughly analogous to Quintan Wiktorowicz's purists, politicos and jihadi categories of Salafism in his work, "Anatonomy of the Salafi Movement," (2006), retrieved from *CÉRIUM* website, http://www.cerium.ca/IMG/pdf/WIKTOROWICZ_2006_Anatomy_of_the_Salafi_Movement.pdf (accessed September 7, 2011).

1. **Apolitical Islamists** believe adherence to the fundamentals of Islam is a community or individual responsibility, and that government or political reform is not necessary.[58]

2. **Political Islamists** believe an Islamic state is the best form of government, but think satisfactory Islamic governance can be achieved through political participation in a secular system.[59]

3. **Revolutionary Islamists** believe an Islamic state must be established immediately and think the only way to achieve this state is through violent jihad. Their goal is to overthrow the government and impose their version of God's will upon the people.[60]

Apolitical Islamists

The first group of individuals, the apolitical Islamists, is the most benign, even if they are not completely benevolent These groups can be compared to many Western Christian community and church organizations such as the Salvation Army[61] and the Knights of Columbus;[62] such groups actively seek social change within their communities but do not advocate for fundamental political change or a theocratic solution. Algeria has a long history of organizations dedicated to spiritual enlightenment and reform that are comparable to these Western groups.[63]

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*These are religious people who **proselytize** to individuals or communities in an attempt to **persuade people** to lead morally correct lifestyles through the **tenets of Islam.***

The indigenous Berber population of Algeria makes up one such enlightenment group. The Berbers have always maintained close ties to their long-standing Sufi traditions, without advocating for government intervention to enforce those traditions.[64] Abdelhamid Ben Badis is an example of an apolitical reformer. He brought about a more Salafist point of view and is probably the most notable leader of social reform within Algeria.[65] Ben Badis was responsible for the formation of the Association of Algerian Ulama (AUMA) in May 1931.[66] The AUMA specifically stated within its

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[58] Michael Willis, *The Islamist Challenge in Algeria* (Lebanon, NY: Ithaca, 1996), 86.

[59] Hugh Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria 1988–2002* (London: Verso, 2003), 100.

[60] Luis Martinez, *The Algerian Civil War 1990–1998.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 60–62.

[61] *The Salvation Army* website, http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/www_usn_2.nsf/vw-local/About-us.

[62] *The Knights of Columbus* website, http://www.kofc.org/un/en/about/index.html.

[63] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 9–18.

[64] Berbers are the native inhabitants of North Africa and Algeria. They are often called "Berber Arabs," as they are nomadic people like the Arabs of the Middle East. The Berbers were conquered by Arab Muslims in the 700s, and subsequently converted to their own form of Islam. Sufism is a form of mystical Islam, and Berber Sufism incorporates traditions the Berbers practiced prior to being conquered by the Arabs. Before the fall of the Ottoman Empire, most of Algeria practiced Sufism. Willis, *The Islamist Challenge*, 1–8.

[65] Salafism is a philosophy that seeks to return to the original form of Islam, based on scripture. Salafism is most similar to Wahhabism and Arab fundamentalism. Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 8–12.

[66] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 10.

bylaws that participation in the Algerian political system was "rigorously forbidden."[67] Instead, AUMA advocated for reform at the community and individual level, which was similar to the position of a 1960s Islamist group, al-Qiyam. Unfortunately, al-Qiyam was outlawed by the Algerian government in 1970 as it edged closer to political Islamism.[68] In recent years, organizations preaching Da'wa Salafism (an apolitical form of Salafism) have grown in popularity, primarily because it does not represent a notable threat to the Algerian government.[69]

Apolitical Islamist groups, like the Da'wa Salafists, have traditionally sought educational reforms in an attempt to incorporate Islamic education into the lives of the population.[70] Some reforms have been accomplished at various times in Algeria through the efforts of AUMA, and in the mid-1960s by Malek Bennabi.[71] The promotion of religious education is not at all foreign to efforts seen throughout Western nations, such as ideas promoted by the Christian Educators Association International (CEAI).[72] Apolitical Islamists advocate for private religious education similar to the programs promoted by CEAI. Their efforts contrast with those of the political Islamists who advocate for government-controlled, public, religious education.

> *The promotion of religious education is not at all foreign to efforts seen throughout Western nations, such as ideas promoted by the Christian Educators Association International (CEAI).*

Political Islamists

This second group of Islamists participates and campaigns within the political system of the state to enact changes. This group believes an Islamic nation as dictated by the Quran prophetic model would be a better solution than the current secular government.[73] Political Islamists believe incremental political change should be the primary method to achieve this new government, which is an important distinction between them and revolutionary Islamists.

The pursuit of incremental Islamist changes has played out many times within Algeria. During the war of independence from France (1954–1962), Islamists were in the ranks of those attempting to form a new government.[74] Although other parties shut out the Islamists following independence in 1962, the political Islamists' ideals never

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[67] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 13.

[68] Emad Eldin Shahin, *Political Ascent: Contemporary Islamic Movements in North Africa* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1998), 166–77.

[69] Amel Boubekeur, "Salafism and Radical Politics in Postconflict Algeria," (September 2008), retrieved from the *Carnegie Middle East Center* website, http://www.carnegie–mec.org, 13–17.

[70] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 11.

[71] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 11–13, 57–60.

[72] *Christian Educators Association International* website*, http://www.ceai.org/.

[73] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 45.

[74] Boubekeur, "Salafism and Radical Politics," 4.

faded.[75]   When a more democratic government emerged within Algeria in 1988, the Islamists achieved widespread public popularity.[76] A 1991 Islamist political victory was thwarted by a military coup d'état that unleashed a violent civil war, but even after that, political Islamists still advocated for negotiation and political solutions.[77]

Early forms of political Islamist groups were characterized by the Jazira trend, which represented the more peaceful-minded groups who advocated social and political movements to effect governmental change.[78] The leaders who formed this group were some of the politically involved AUMA members who had been crowded out of the political process by secular groups after Algeria won independence from France.[79] This power arrangement remained in effect until the death of President Houari Boumedienne in 1978, which created a power vacuum.[80] His death coincided with economic woes and widespread desire for change within the government.[81] Attempting to avert public unrest, the regime under President Chadli Bendjedid attempted to avert public unrest by making the government more transparent and allowing the participation of multiple political parties.[82] This was a significant change for Algeria, as Algeria had basically been a one-party system after it had achieved independence, and the shift to a plural democracy allowed the previously muted Islamist voice to rise to the top.[83]

…the coup essentially nullified the electoral victory by the Islamists. The political Islamist groups responded with demands to restore the constitution and the National Assembly, which evolved into open demonstrations and general unrest in an attempt to reestablish the democratic system.

The political Islamist groups during the pro-democracy period (1988–1992) were characterized by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), al-Harakat li-Mujtama' Islami (HAMAS) and the Harakat al-Nahda al-Islamiyya (MNI).[84] The political Islamists formed political parties and campaigned for office in local and national elections, and within a short time, they had won many seats within the local and national legislatures.[85] The next bout of elections in 1991 brought an even greater victory for the Islamists, in particular the FIS. With the political Islamists on the verge of taking a clear

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[75] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 390.

[76] Democracy began to emerge in Algeria as the regime sought to maintain control during a period of poor economic times and high public unemployment. To solve the unrest, President Chadli Bendjedid proposed a series of measures to improve transparency and plurality in the government. Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 394.

[77] Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria,* 371–72.

[78] Shahin, *Political Ascent,* 120-21.

[79] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 35-37.

[80] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 61, 69–70.

[81] William Quandt, *Between Ballots & Bullets: Algeria's Transition from Authoritarianism* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1998), 159; Shahin, *Political Ascent.*

[82] Shahin, *Political Ascent,* 127–29.

[83] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 112–13.

[84] Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria,* 65.

[85] Martinez, *Algerian Civil War,* 20–22.

democratic majority (winning 188 of 232 seats in the first round of voting), events took a sudden turn away from democracy.[86]

In 1992, the Algerian military orchestrated a coup by claiming the regime was collapsing.[87] President Bendjedid was forced by the military to dissolve the National Assembly and resign from office.[88] The military feared that the election results would mean "one man, one vote, but only once."[89] This prevailing anti-Islamist view feared that after the Islamists had won a political majority they would disassemble the democratic establishment to construct an Algerian theocratic system under Shariah law. Therefore[90] The military, responding to demonstrations and actions by some revolutionary Islamists, outlawed the Islamist political parties and jailed some of their leaders and followers.[91] Nonetheless, even this severe repression did not stop the political Islamists from continuing to advocate for political solutions to the increasing violent struggle.

Since 1992, organizations like the Wafa party have continued to fight through peaceful demonstrations and political maneuvering to re-establish an outlet for their Islamist views.[92] The use of peaceful tactics by these groups does not mean these organizations never employed violence as a mechanism for change. On the contrary, violence was utilized by many organizations within this rubric—such as the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), the armed wing of the FIS.[93] However, such groups did not use violence as their primary tool to force change but as one to achieve influence in politics.[94]

The political Islamist philosophy continues to exist in Algeria, and as late as 2002 a resurgence of political Islamism crept back into the Algerian political arena. The Movement for National Reform, a moderate Islamic party, has seen mild success, winning about 11% of the seats in the National Assembly.[95] Political Islamists continue to hope for reconciliation that will resolve the long-standing conflict and allow them to fully participate in the Algerian government. In sharp contrast, revolutionary Islamists are wholly against any reconciliation or notion of working within the bounds of secular government.[96]

[86] Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria,* 369.
[87] Shahin, *Political Ascent,* 149–50.
[88] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 247–50.
[89] *Algeria's Bloody Years,* directed by Malek Bensmail, (Icarus Films, 2003), 22 mins.
[90] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 253–56.
[91] Shahin, *Political Ascent,* 150–51.
[92] Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria,* 277.
[93] Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria,* 164.
[94] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 350–51.
[95] Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria,* 347.
[96] Martinez, *Algerian Civil War,* 21.

Revolutionary Islamists

The third form of Islamism promotes a view that Islam has an absolute interpretation and that the only way to achieve a nation under Islam is by violent jihad. Fundamentally, revolutionary Islamists believe the only solution to governance is an Islamic nation under Shariah law. Further, they believe that any government not founded completely on Islamic tradition is tantamount to heresy and that the "heretics" of secular governments will not give up their power unless they are removed by force.[97] Thus, revolutionary Islamists justify uncompromising actions of violent jihad to achieve their goal of a nation governed by Shariah.

Such Islamist groups were initially characterized by the Algerian Islamic Movement (MIA), formed by Mustapha Bouyali, and later by the al-Takfir wa'Hirja.[98] After Algeria gained independence from France, these groups stockpiled weapons and conducted covert warfare against the state.[99] Although these Islamists groups were ever-present, they were often termed as bandits or criminals and not seen as a substantial threat to the state. However, as the political situation within Algeria deteriorated, local support grew for revolutionary Islamists.[100] This newfound popularity allowed for the birth of militant Islamist organizations such as the GIA and the Movement for an Islamic State (MEI).[101]

> *…revolutionary Islamists…believe that any government not founded completely on Islamic tradition is tantamount to heresy and that the "heretics" of secular governments will not give up their power unless they are removed by force.*

Revolutionary Islamist organizations within Algeria took to the offensive after the 1992 coup, striking out against the government in a series of attacks and assassinations. The first attack was against an army barracks on January 22, 1992, which unleashed a series of government reprisals, effectively intensifying the violence on both sides.[102] A spiral of violent rebellion and repression ensued for the next five years.[103] During this period, a competition of ideologies began within the Islamists as well.

The political Islamists were competing with the revolutionary Islamists for legitimacy and public support. Groups like the FIS attempted to sue for peace and a return to politics, while organizations like the GIA and MNI[104] saw no place for compromise and purposely sabotaged ceasefire agreements.[105] The convictions of the GIA were so strong

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[97] Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower* (New York: Vintage, 2006), 34–35.

[98] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 65, 71–72.

[99] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 71–74.

[100] Martinez, *Algerian Civil War,* 72–73.

[101] Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria,* 131, 258.

[102] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 255–57.

[103] Martinez, *Algerian Civil War,* 19.

[104] The MNI, like the FIS, developed a militant wing following the 1992 coup. However the MNI, which had formerly been a political Islamist group, grew more like the GIA and less interested in political settlement.

[105] Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria,* 268–69.

that its agents assassinated fellow Islamists simply for attempting to negotiate with the secular government.[106] Additionally, the GIA assassinated fighters of a neighboring jihad organization, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Groups (LIFG).[107] In effect, organizations like the GIA were not only disinterested in peace, they were actively preventing it from occurring.

However, the public finally lost tolerance for the indiscriminate killing and withdrew support for the GIA. About the same time, the government began reconciliation programs to reintegrate the Islamist fighters. These two factors brought the decline of the GIA in the late 1990s.[108] Additionally, one GIA commander who was disgusted by some of the group's actions separated and formed his own organization, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) in 1998.[109] Consequently, the GIA withered on the vine and, by the mid-2000s, was no longer a major threat.[110] The GSPC fought on against the Algerian regime but no longer waged an open war against the population and foreign interests.[111] Though this approach was more tolerable, the general public was by and large done with war after witnessing the death of between 100,000 and 200,000 citizens during the civil war.[112] This public sentiment, along with effective government reconciliation programs and the loss of religious support for the jihad, led to the steady decline in the GSPC as an effective insurgent organization.[113] The GSPC was on the path to failure.

The Roots of AQIM

Sensing a need for significant change, the leadership of the GSPC declared itself subservient to Al Qaeda (AQ), [114] and in 2007, the GSPC formally became Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).[115] More than a name change, the transformation was meant to project an image of an entirely new group, and along with a new propaganda campaign came a return to attacks on Western targets and a rise in suicide bomb attacks.[116] Additionally, AQIM attempted to broaden its reach as a regional threat by increasing fundraising, trafficking, training, and recruiting in areas of the Sahel, such as Mali and Niger.

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[106] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 129.
[107] The GIA created a long-standing grudge between the Libyan and Algerian jihad organizations, and that is why, contrary to public speculation, no real link exists between AQIM and the LIFG. This separation is plainly seen by the near simultaneous declarations to support Al Qaeda by each organization. Both organizations refused to fall under the authority of the other, and so each pledged their individual loyalty to AQ. Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 131–33.
[108] Boubekeur, "Salafism and Radical Politics," 7.
[109] Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria,* 372.
[110] Boubekeur, "Salafism and Radical Politics," 7.
[111] Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria,* 299.
[112] Mellah, "Justice Commission for Algeria," 7.
[113] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 182.
[114] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 194.
[115] Boubekeur, "Salafism and Radical Politics," 9.
[116] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 195.

However, AQIM did not fundamentally change its strategic goals from those of the GSPC or GIA. Though publicized as a regional terrorist organization, AQIM showed "no real threat" to any regime within North Africa,[117] and the fundamental goal of establishing an Islamic state in Algeria remained its top objective. This focus is evidenced within the 2010 U.S. Bureau of Diplomatic Security report, which notes that AQIM has continued its focus on Algeria. The report summarizes 196 bombings and 170 other terrorist acts inside Algeria in 2010.[118] In comparison, AQIM conducted a total of six attacks in 2010 through the beginning of 2011 across the Sahel (Mauritania, Mali and Niger).[119]

AQIM and its predecessor, the GIA, have yet to meet their objectives of establishing an Islamic state in Algeria through jihad, and in fact appear further from success since 1992. Although the public appears to desire reconciliation, AQIM has continued to fight. The reason that Algerian revolutionary Islamism, in its latest form of AQIM, has persisted is predicated on the rise of the GIA, which is unique within the three forms of Algerian Islamism discussed thus far.

Birth of the GIA

Revolutionary Islamist groups, including the MIA and al-Takfir wa'Hirja, existed within Algeria well before the 1992 founding of the GIA.[120] However, the GIA had a wholly different origin and, therefore, a different strategy to jihad. The MIA and MEI, which relied on attacks against the government and its institutions, predominantly viewed the public, foreigners, and competing Islamists as neutral parties.[121] The GIA did not, instead viewing all who failed to actively support its jihad as collaborators with the government, hence making them eligible military targets based on *takfir* beliefs. Under the *takfiri* policy, the GIA slaughtered entire villages, murdered foreigners, and killed citizens for "violating Islamic law," with executions carried out for infractions ranging from infidelity to wearing Western clothing.[122] In this way, the ideas of the GIA essentially differed from those of other Algerian, revolutionary Islamist organizations.

Though publicized as a regional terrorist organization, AQIM showed "no real threat" to any regime within North Africa,[1] and the fundamental goal of establishing an Islamic state in Algeria remained its top objective.

The major difference in ideology was born in the Soviet-Afghan War, which exposed between 1,200 to 2,000 Algerian fighters who served in the conflict to the hard-line precepts of Arab Islamism.[123] The Algerian-Afghans (as they

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[117] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 195.

[118] U.S. Bureau of Diplomatic Security, "Algeria 2011 Crime and Safety Report: Riots/Civil Unrest; Crime; Terrorism," (April 21, 2011), retrieved from the *Overseas Security Advisory Council* website, https://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReportPDF.aspx?cid=10878 (accessed July 18, 2011), 1.

[119] The Sahel is sub-Saharan North Africa, which includes Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria. AQIM's attacks listed in this report occurred in only three of those countries. Modibo Goita, "West Africa's Growing Terrorist Threat: Confronting AQIM's Sahelian Strategy," *Africa Security Brief*, no. 11, (February 2011): 1–2.

[120] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 65, 71–72.

[121] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 282–84.

[122] Willis, *The Islamist Challenge,* 282–84.

became known) were particularly exposed to the teachings of Ayman al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden.[124] These Algerian fighters trained in the Pakistani camps set up by the Arab and Egyptian mujahadeen, and there, some members were indoctrinated while others were simply exposed to the more revolutionary ideas of the mujahadeen.[125] One Afghan-Algerian mujahad, Qari Said al-Jazairi, served as an AQ facilitator and messenger and would later be influential in establishing the GIA with AQ startup money and recruiting.[126] Thus, Algerian-Afghan veterans like Qari Said imported their ideas from the future leadership of AQ.

AQ was instrumental to the formation of the GIA; however, responsibility for the carnage of the Algerian Civil War does not rest solely on Al Qaeda. AQ leaders certainly had a hand in the war, but it was not all their doing. In the beginning, the few Algerian-Afghan veterans brought inspiration, leadership, professional fighting skills, organization, and determination with them to Algeria. But as the GIA evolved, Algerians who had not served in Afghanistan became its primary constituents. These GIA members more than likely were former members of the FIS, MIA, or other Algerian Islamist organizations. As AQ formed in Sudan, it played a role as a GIA sponsor, providing funding, training, and support; and reports from before 2001 that highlight the open support coming from Sudan to the GIA may allude to the genesis of AQ in Sudan.[127] Ultimately, however, as referenced by Wright in *The Looming Tower,* the GIA acted on its own to reach levels of violence well beyond the scope of what AQ had intended, which eventually caused a cooling of relations between the two groups.[128]

AQ was instrumental to the formation of the GIA; however, responsibility for the carnage of the Algerian Civil War does not rest solely on Al Qaeda.

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[123] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 70.

[124] This claim was made by Abu Mus'ab Al-Suri, a leading Al Qaeda strategist, and by Abdullah Anas, one of Osama bin Laden's close friends and fellow mujahadeen (prior to their decision to go separate ways because of their differences in Islamist ideology). Abdullah Anas ran one of many hostels hosting foreign fighters in Afghanistan and Pakistan and witnessed the Algerians as they were indoctrinated by the Arab forms of jihad and Islamism. Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 13, 43–45.

[125] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 44-48.

[126] Though Qari Said's role in the GIA has been questioned by later leaders of the GIA, author Camille Tawil states that, "their [the later GIA leaders] aim seems to have been to inflate the Salafists' role at the expense of the Afghan veterans." *Brothers in Arms*, 68, 73.

[127] The following sources, writing before 2001, all mention the support from groups within Sudan, when Al Qaeda was not a known entity. Therefore, these authors most likely would have been unaware of the significance of Islamist aide coming from Sudan and noted it merely as an Islamist ally like Iran: Willis, *The Islamist Challenge*, 378; Quandt, *Ballots & Bullets*, 97, 154; Martinez, *Algerian Civil War,* 21. Martinez goes so far as to mention the notion of *takfir* originating from Egyptian values from the affiliation with the Afghanistan mujahaden. After 2001, when reading these texts, the link between AQ in Sudan and the Algerian jihad is seen clearly. The fledgling AQ organization, in its first operational test, sent operatives to Algeria, according to Wright, *The Looming Tower,* 142, 216; and Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 96.

[128] Wright, *The Looming Tower* 215–17.

Evolution of the GIA

By the time Djamel Zitouni took over the GIA in 1995, he had completely incorporated the principles of *takfiri* violence.[129] Zitouni had condemned the entire society of Algeria and any foreign influence. "The Butcher," as he became known, lashed out at all outside his organization. His successor, Antar Zwabri, went even further and was responsible for the worst massacres of the entire conflict.[130] In retrospect, the GIA was a spawn of AQ ideology that received its baptism under fire in Algeria as Algerians in the GIA simply ran with the ideological beliefs, taking them to an extreme end. The GIA village massacres of 1997 and 1998 precipitated the eventual split to the GSPC.[131]

In 2001, AQ sent an emissary to meet with Hattab, the leader of the GSPC, in an attempt to influence the new revolutionary Islamist leader in Algeria. However, the emissary was killed by Algerian security forces, providing proof that AQ was actively courting the Algerian jihad.[132] Thus, the 2003 allegiance to Osama bin Laden and the subsequent 2006 merger of AQ and the GSPC, announced by Ayman al-Zawahiri, appeared as no surprise.[133] The reality is that Al-Qaeda had always been in Algeria.[134] With this historical perspective, AQIM does not appear to be a brand-new organization, formed as a new AQ front to the global jihad. Instead, AQ formally and informally sponsored the Algerian jihad with ideology, training, and financing for more than 15 years and had a part in the GIA, although it could not control it. In this context, the arrival of AQIM on the Algerian Islamist stage seems far less significant and can even be seen as more of a rebirth of the GIA than anything else—an attempt to restart the engine of *takfiri* jihad begun by Afghan veterans like Qari Said. From this point of view, the rise of GIA can be seen as the more important and more dangerous event.

> *… an attempt to restart the engine of takfiri had begun by Afghan veterans like Qari Said.*

Prior to the formation of the GIA, Algeria had not experienced the indiscriminate types of violence that became routine under the group, which introduced two forms of violence: the murder of civilians in the name of *takfir and* the killing of foreigners. The concept of murder of noncombatants under *takfir* was justified by a GIA *fatwa*, which declared, "the populace should pick sides [either the state or the jihad] on pain of death."[135] The *fatwa* meant the GIA was no longer satisfied with neutral parties or tacit support but would view citizens as either with the GIA or against it. The extermination of entire villages became a common practice after this *fatwa* was issued.[136]

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[129] Zitouni had actually been a butcher by trade, and this reference stuck as he increased the GIA's level of violence against the populace. Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 127–29.

[130] Zwabri was credited with massacres of entire villages, killing 400 or more unarmed citizens. He was also the GIA leader who ordered the murder of the LIFG fighters. Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 129.

[131] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 127.

[132] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 184.

[133] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms,* 194–95.

[134] Tawil, *Brothers in Arms*, 44–48.

[135] A *fatwa* is an Islamic religious decree or law that provides religious justification for whatever actions are to be taken. Anneli Botha, *Terrorism in the Maghreb* (Pretoria: Institute of Security Studies, 2008), 34–38.

The *takiri fatwa* also applied to all foreigners and foreign institutions.[137] One example of the GIA acting upon this tenet was the hijacking of Air France Flight 8969 in 1994, with the intent to crash the fuel-laden airliner in Paris, a predecessor to the 9/11 plot carried out in the United States.[138] Another example can be seen in the murder of seven French monks in Algeria.[139] These types of events were not prevalent prior to the rise of the GIA, and the only substantially new tactic brought by AQIM was the use of suicide bombings.[140] Overall, AQIM of today seems little changed from the GIA of the late 1990s.

The philosophy of Islamism within Algeria has a long historical precedent. While the GIA provided a significant transformation of revolutionary Islamism in the country, AQIM can be seen as just another part of Algeria's long history of Islamism. Furthermore, Islamist ideals have never been homogenous but instead vary widely from individual spiritual salvation to the use of violent jihad to force compliance with the tenets of Islam. These principles can be explained broadly in the terms of apolitical, political, and revolutionary Islamist divisions. Grouping Islamists into these categories makes it easy to see how revolutionary Islamists differ from the rest. Even within the revolutionary Islamist groups of Algeria, the GIA was a clear aberration, representing something novel from traditional Algerian Islamism. The difference grew from the experiences of a few Algerian fighters as mujahadeen in the Afghan jihad combined with the subsequent influence by the future founders of Al Qaeda. However, because AQ has maintained a close relationship with the Algerian jihad throughout; the birth of AQIM can be seen as a fundamentally trivial evolution. In fact, AQIM appears to be an attempt to return to the GIA, the original Algerian jihad group of 1992. Essentially, AQIM is less of an instrumental transformation in Islamist ideology than an insignificant name change in a chapter of Algeria's Islamist history—a history of spiritual tradition, political reform, and unrestrained violence.

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[136] There were 250 village massacres in the next three years. *Algeria's Bloody Years,* Bensmail, 43 mins.
[137] Botha, *Terrorism in the Maghreb*, 34–38.
[138] This attack was thwarted by French security forces when the plane was forced to land and refuel in Marseille, France. French snipers and hostage rescue forces stormed the aircraft, killing all the hostage takers. *Algeria's Bloody Years,* Bensmail, 40 mins.
[139] This event was later made into an independent film, "Of Gods and Men." James Mackenzie, (May 18, 2010), retrieved from *Reuters* website, http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/05/18/us-cannes-monks-idUSTRE64H3SQ20100518 (accessed August 20, 2011).
[140] Botha, *Terrorism in the Maghreb*, 80-81.

The Moving Image

Kalev I. Sepp

LA BATAILLE D'ALGER (Battle of Algiers)
Casbah/Igor, 1966

LOST COMMAND
Columbia/Red Lion, 1966

There is a remarkable theme that runs through two movies set on different sides of the same insurgency: torture works. The insurgency is the Algerian Revolt, 1954–1962, that ended when France granted independence to its long-held North African colony. The two movies are *Battle of Algiers*, directed by Gillo Pontecorvo and nominated for three Academy Awards, and *Lost Command*, based on the novel *Les Centurions* by French war correspondent Jean Pierre Lucien Osty, who wrote under the pen name Jean Lartéguy.

Both movies ostensibly tell their stories by moving back and forth between the viewpoints of the insurgents and the counterinsurgents. *Battle of Algiers* is more convincing because of its realistic documentary style—shadowy black-and-white scenes shot on location in Algiers, with former *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) guerrillas playing themselves in several of the roles. *Lost Command*, shot in Spain, has the stagey, klieg-lit sheen of the Hollywood production it is, complete with movie stars—although the Basque highlands stand in well enough for the Atlas Mountains, where the FLN had its bases.

Despite the balanced portrayal both movies claim to present, Algerian rebels are the principal characters of *Battle of Algiers*, and French paratroopers – *les paras* -- dominate *Lost Command*. Where the two coincide, in a disturbing way, is when the French paras interrogate captured and suspected insurgents. Physical torture is not just implied, but plainly depicted. The result in both


movies is always the same—the prisoner tells all.

Battle of Algiers begins in small, tiled room, like a restaurant kitchen, with a sink and steel tables. Broad-shouldered paras in camouflage jackets and caps—called "leopard suits"—surround a slight, shivering Arab, naked except for undershorts. A para colonel strides in. "He came clean," reports one of the officers. The Arab suddenly bolts from his chair toward an open window. The paras shove him back—"Do you want another round?" With pain creasing his face, he leads the paras to an insurgent chief's hideout.

The necessity of this approach to intelligence collection is explained by the newly arrived para colonel, who has been sent to Algiers to crush the terrorist insurgents. Meeting with his staff, the colonel describes the FLN terrorist organization as a geometric pyramid of interconnected cells, and then announces his regiment's objective: identify the insurgent "Executive Bureau" (the leaders). The method they will use, he says, will be interrogation, "conducted in such a way as to ensure we always get an answer. … In our situation, humane considerations can only lead to despair and confusion."

Soon, another scene in a dimly lit space reveals leopard-suited paras at the edge of a cone of light. Next to a large tub of water, a shirtless Arab, his wet hair matted down on his forehead, gasps for air, his chest heaving. As a para takes notes, the Arab betrays all the details of his insurgent unit.
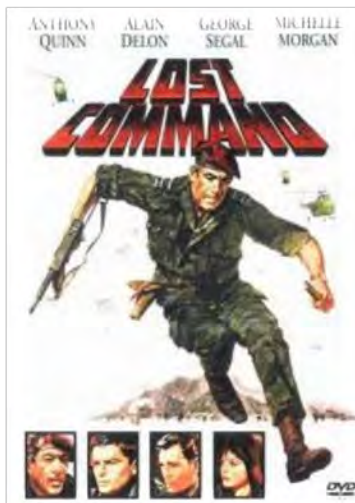
Journalists in the capital eventually get wind of what's going on, and at a press conference, they ask bluntly: Is torture being used by French troops? "The word 'torture' isn't used in our orders," the colonel replies with a straight face. He changes the direction of the interview. This isn't about methods, he asserts; it's about
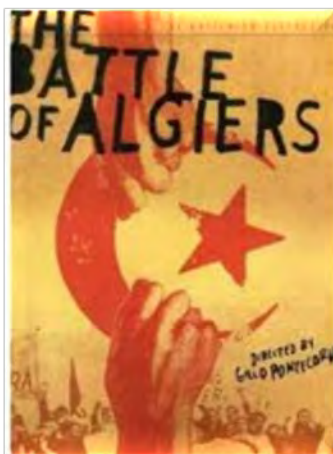
staying or going. If the *pieds noirs*[141] (Europeans) want to stay in Algeria, they must accept the consequences.

Different techniques of torture are portrayed. A para turns a blowtorch on a man's ribs as he hangs by his wrists. An Arab is trussed and hung upside down from a pipe. Paras fix battery clamps to the earlobes of a man who writhes in agony as the current is applied. Another captive is waterboarded.

Many of the same incidents are depicted in *Lost Command* as a French paratroop regiment hunts down FLN guerrillas in the sandpaper countryside. In a dusty village, a staff officer enters a storeroom to see an Arab slumped in a chair, unconscious, with a blackjack-

because the para officer shed his naïve notions of "rules of warfare," since the enemy doesn't play by them anyway.

So, according to one movie commissioned by the Algerian government and another scripted from the French perspective, torture works.

But did it? How did the tough French paras win the battle for Algiers but lose the war for Algeria? Part of the answer is operational. By 1957, the FLN leaders recognized Algiers had become too dangerous for them and moved back into the hinterlands, where they continued their insurrection.

So, according to one movie commissioned by the Algerian government and another scripted from the French perspective, **torture works**

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wielding para sergeant by his side. A para captain in the room boasts they've learned the location of the guerrilla base (this, after the unit has been in town five minutes). The staff officer is outraged: "Torture!" he accuses. The captain snaps back, "We came out here to win!"

There are parallel scenes from *Battle of Algiers* in *Lost Command*. A suspected bombmaker is arrested and brought to a dark cellar. A para interrogator taps battery clamps together, sending sparks flying. "And that's nothing, sir—it can be made 10 times as strong." The para intelligence officer warns the suspect, "I'm going to get that information from you … one way or the other." Another prisoner staggers in with a bruised and bloody face.

When the French commander discovers an Algerian woman is a spy, a para officer slaps and beats her (on camera) until she passes out (off camera), but not before she reveals every detail about insurgent arms shipments and the top rebel commander. This capitulation takes about three minutes. Success comes

They had not been destroyed, only beaten in one battle. Another explanation is that for years, the French government and security forces in Algeria fundamentally misunderstood the FLN to be a Marxist-Communist movement. Although some FLN members employed classic Communist tactics, notably ruthless terrorism, they were really nationalists.

One of the central reasons the French lost the war against the rebels stems from the larger ramifications of their use of torture. As Dr. Hy Rothstein of the Naval Postgraduate School faculty has pointed out, to whatever degree and for whatever rationale torture was employed, the French public was appalled. They lost faith in their government, and so the French government lost its legitimacy. The people lost confidence in their Army, and the Army lost confidence in itself. Unable to resolve the political and moral crises in Algeria, the Fourth Republic collapsed. Charles de Gaulle became leader of France, and he soon sought a negotiated end to the rebellion.

These "peace talks" infuriated a number of French officers, who formed the outlaw *Organisation Armée*

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[141] Literally, "black-feet," possibly from the black boots worn by 19th-c. French colonists.

Secrète (OAS) to kill Algerian Muslims, derail the negotiations, and assassinate de Gaulle himself. (This movement inspired Frederick Forsyth's best-selling novel and acclaimed 1973 movie *The Day of the Jackal*, which both include a plot-point torture scene.) In the end, it was the OAS—not the FLN—that was wiped out, and the Algerian revolutionaries finally gained their sought-after independence after a bitter, eight-year-long civil war.

But does this mean that torture still worked? Not according to then-Colonel Paul Aussaresses, who confessed his personal use of extrajudicial killing and torture in his memoir, *The Battle of the Casbah: Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Algeria, 1955–1957*. The French Army intelligence officer admits he gained fewer successes against the FLN through torture than he did through standard police methods, including careful analysis of records and files and a thorough population census. In combination, these tactics illuminated the nodes and connections of the insurgent networks. Patient and painstaking collection of information to form actionable intelligence is what eventually broke the FLN hold on the Casbah. There was nothing in the French methods that overcame the inherent unreliability of information received from torture—the distortion of memory under fear and duress, and the subject's willingness to say anything, particularly what he thinks his tormentors want to hear, to stop the pain.

So, why would both sides—the FLN in *Battle of Algiers* and the French military in *Lost Command*—ascribe such efficacy to torture? For the French practitioners, it can be explained as justification. If this illegal method were employed at all, it had to be presented as wholly effective in all cases to vindicate the torturers. For the FLN, it was necessary to emphasize, even overstate, the French use of torture in order to remake history. One reason the FLN would choose to attribute its setbacks to French torture would be to conceal its own poor leadership, internal informants, and tactical failures. Another reason would be to make its own widespread atrocities—including terrorist bombings, murder of anti-FLN Imams, and massacres of entire towns of Algerian Muslims who were French loyalists—seem less vile by contrast, and thus excusable.

In their depictions of torture and by choosing to give torture an integral role in the storylines, *Battle of Algiers* and *Lost Command* are both diminished. These films exaggerate the effectiveness of torture—for political effect on the one hand and for dramatic effect on the other. Torture didn't—and doesn't—really work. It is worth watching these movies for their cinematic qualities, the actors and the acting, and intriguing glimpses of history—the para colonel's analysis of counterinsurgency metrics on a wall chart might surprise some viewers with its familiarity. However, as studies of the viability of torture in counterinsurgency operations, there are no lessons to be learned. These movies are, in this regard, only movies.

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Ethics & Insights

by George Lober

Any discussion of torture in 500 words or less is bound to fail. This column will be no different. But for the sake of clarity, let me try.

Within the past 10 years, newspaper columns, magazine articles, academic papers, and entire books have been written on the ethics of torture. Films such as the 1966 classic, *The Battle of Algi*ers have been studied for the ethical questions they pose: were the tactics employed by the French military tantamount to torture, or were they, as the lieutenant colonel in the film suggests, merely a form of enhanced interrogation? Were the French justified in employing those tactics against Muslim detainees in order to save innocent French lives?

At the heart of these written pieces and film studies is a presumption: torture has come to the fore as a subject worthy of ethical debate. But is that really the case? Has torture finally escaped the historic domain of the powerfully cruel and sadistic and gained entry into the domain of academic inquiry? Are there really ethics to torture: is

there ever such a thing as good torture—as opposed to bad torture—a right time to torture and a wrong time?

Before answering those questions, let me offer a simple definition of what torture really is: torture is the purposeful and deliberate infliction of intense pain

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*Has **torture** finally escaped the historic domain of the powerfully **cruel and sadistic** and **gained entry** into the domain of academic inquiry?*

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on a subject who can neither escape the pain nor block it. Human torture, like that depicted in *The Battle of Algiers* involves intense pain methodically inflicted on detainees who are unable to either defend themselves or escape beatings, simulated drownings, and the use of a blowtorch on bare skin. Yet, according to the French lieutenant colonel in charge of securing Algiers, these actions are not torture. They are techniques of interrogation that

are within the bounds of the international charters and treaties to which the French government is party.

But can changing the name of an act change its violent nature? Can an act of torture become something less by calling it a tactic of interrogation? Frankly, I think not. At its core, torture is an act of brutality and sadism, and it is not, in my opinion, a subject worthy of ethical debate.

However, the questions surrounding torture are—particularly torture authorized for political purposes. Is it ever okay to deliberately inflict torturous pain in the name of a society; and if so, on whom and when? What if that society purports to represent strong moral or religious values? Can it still make that claim after engaging in torture? What if an enemy, such as the insurgents in *The Battle of Algiers*, displays little regard for innocent life? Is torturing that enemy justifiable? Are there ethical costs to a society that engages in torture, and do those costs justify the gain?

In my opinion, every ethically responsible society should debate and resolve such questions before ever sanctioning torture. But it should not kid itself about the ugly truth of what torture is, nor delude itself with a name change into pretending what torture is not.

Mail for George

George Lober guides U.S. and international military students through the tricky terrain of ethics and critical thinking at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Californi

Do you have an ethical dilemma or question? Address them to George at CTXeditor@gmail.com.

Resources:
Bibliography of Key Works on Algeria
Mohammed M. Hafez

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AfricaCenter.org
With a publicly accessible website, the Africa Center puts out a monthly eNewsletter, Africa Security Briefs, Special Reports, and academic Research Papers, such as the timely new piece on the grassroots evolution of the information environment, "Africa's Evolving Info Systems: A Pathway to Security and Stability". Their dedicated alumni staff coordinate dozens of regional workshops and events throughout the year. Go to AfricaCenter.org to connect.

Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS)
"Fifteen Years of Education, Empowering, and Connecting"
APCSSLink.org
Open to graduates of the Asia Pacific Center and affiliates, APCSSLink.org "provides a forum ... to deepen your understanding of security issues, maintain existing relationships, and develop new contacts throughout the Asia Pacific region." They offer APCSS Analytical Reports, News Briefs, and Currents Magazine, as well as specific Communities of Interest for security professionals in the region. Go to APCSSLink.org to connect.

College of International Security Affairs (CISA)
"a focal point for interagency and international security education"
www.NDU.edu/CISA
CISA is the flagship of the Combating Terrorism Fellowship program at the National Defense University. The Master's Degree program prepares military and civilian leaders from around the world "to better address national and international security challenges through multi-disciplinary educational programs, research, professional exchanges and outreach." CISA's robust alumni website is available at www.NDU.edu/CISA under the alumni tab.

Center for Civil-Military Relations (CCMR)
"Fighting terrorism is the ultimate civil-military challenge"
www.CCMR.org
CCMR is dedicated to strengthening democratic civil-military relationships and assisting other nations in making integrated defense decisions. "Our most important objective is to help them build the institutional capacity to fight terrorism. All programs include guidance on building national-level strategies that can guide effective, legal, and ethical operations against terrorists and their networks." CCMR will be publishing a book, "Fighting Back: What Governments Can Do About Terrorism" later this year. Find out more, and go to www.CCMR.org to connect.

Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (CHDS)
"toward a more cooperative and stable international security environment"
www.NDU.edu/CHDS
The CHDS mission is "to develop civilian specialists in defense and military matters by providing graduate level programs in defense planning and management, executive leadership, civilian-military relations and interagency operation."

Defense Analysis, Naval Postgraduate School (DA)
"to educate the leaders of tomorrow in the challenges of 21st century conflict"
www.NPS.edu
DA's overarching missions is "to develop critical thinkers and capable operators, planners and commanders for the rigors of irregular warfare". They host joint SOF, conventional, and international officers and house the nationally prominent Information Operations Center of Excellence, and the CORE Lab. More information is available through the Naval Postgraduate School website at www.nps.edu under the Graduate School of Operational and Information Studies' departments listing.

Defense Institute for International Legal Studies (DIILS)

"exploring new ideas ... and acting as a catalyst for positive change"

www.DIILS.org

DIILS "is the lead defense security cooperation resource for professional legal education, training, and rule of law programs for international military and related civilians globally." They also offer an alumni-only portal on the web. Go to www.DIILS.org to connect.

GCMC (George C. Marshal Center)

"enhancing enduring partnerships among the nations of North America, Europe and Eurasia"

www.MarshallCenter.org

"The legacy, goals and ideals of the Marshall Plan continue through the security education initiatives of the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies." The Marshall Center publishes its quarterly "per Concordiam" covering regional security and defense issues, in addition to publishing its renowned Occasional Papers, and Security Insights. These are available freely at MarshallCenter.org, where alumni can also connect to their exclusive online portal, offering additional resources.

JSOU (Joint Special Operations University)

"fostering closer relationships with SOF's international partners"

JSOU.SOCOM.mil

JSOU's mission is "to educate Special Operations Forces executive, senior, and intermediate leaders and selected other national and international security decision-makers, both military and civilian, through teaching, research, and outreach in the science and art of Joint Special Operations." Read through their recent publications and learn more about the University at jsou.socom.mil

NAVSCIATTS (Naval Small Craft Instruction Advanced Technical Training School)

"to provide partner nation security forces with the highest level of riverine and coastal craft training" Go to www.warboats.org/NAVSCIATTS.htm to connect.

National Defense Intelligence College (NDIC)

"to promote understanding of key transnational and geostrategic issues impacting the Intelligence Community"

www.DIA.mil/College

"...the Center for International Engagement co-hosts conferences and symposia on behalf of the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency. These events bring together Military Intelligence Chiefs to discuss regional security issues in an academic environment of non-attribution land transparency." Online, the NDIC offers unique publications on "Global Perspectives on Intelligence" and collaboration in the intelligence community, as well as insightful analyses. Go to www.DIA.mil/College to connect.

NESA (Near-East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies)

"To enhance security in the Near East and South Asia by building sustained, mutually beneficial relationships..."

NESA-Center.org

"The NESA Center concept is based on the premise that Arabs and Israelis, Pakistanis and Indians and others would come together in a neutral setting for mutually beneficial dialogue about national security issues. This concept has proven itself strong ..." The publicly-accessible website offers regional news, as well as a comprehensive list of U.S. and international online resources freely available, in addition to their alumni-only website. Go to Nesa-Center.org to connect.

PfPC CTWG (Partnership for Peace Consortium Combating Terrorism Working Group)

"Strengthening democracies through knowledge"

www.PfPConsortium.org

"the Combating Terrorism Working Group brings together interested officials, security practitioners and academics from several countries to examine how best to design and apply multinational responses to current international terrorist threats." The Partnership for Peace puts out a professional, quarterly journal, Connections, in addition to a number of other publication products. To read their journal, go to www.PfPConsortium.org and connect.