

What kind of war is it?

A Project White Horse 084640 FORUM Series

Obligatory Dead Guy Quote

“The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish by that test the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature.”

-- Carl von Clausewitz



Source: Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, editors and translators. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 88

***Essential Elements of Information
for a Culture of Preparedness***

<http://blog.projectwhitehorse.com/2010/01/18/so-what-kind-of-war-is-it-so-far/>

20 January, 2010

Introduction to the series



Miranda Rights, IEDs, Counter -Terrorism, Weapons of Mass Destruction, "reasonable doubt," Counter Insurgency, cyber war, Geneva Conventions, enemy combatants, gang warfare and Drug wars, etc., etc, are all elements that must be considered in defining or even just establishing *boundary conditions* in a search for "what kind of war." While certainly this series will not answer the question, the intent is to put in one place, discussion of at least some of the non- core World War II, non-core Cold War elements crucial to bounding the problem, leveraging serious writers with multiple perspectives.

The Articles

For ease of reference here are the posts/links with the main author or provider of the core thread in parenthesis:

1. **So What Kind of War Is It? (First in a Series)** [Von Lubitz, Beakley]
2. **On War, On Crime – the Intersection** [Sullivan, et. al]
3. **Civilian Courts no place for terrorists** [Brooks]
4. **War? What War?** [Krauthammer]
5. **Boundary Layers** [Beakley]
6. **5 Myths about keeping America safe from terrorism** [Flynn]
7. **The war of new words: Why military history trumps buzzwords** [Owen]
8. **No Exit** [Bacevich]
9. **Square Pegs, Round Holes vs. "War Amongst the People"** [Smith]
10. **Definitions or Targets** [Ganor]
11. **Science, defence and strategy... and John Boyd** [Elkus]

Closing remarks: So, What kind of a war is it? So far

EEI #15 So What Kind of War Is It? (First in a Series)

Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of Preparedness

Obligatory Dead Guy Quote

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Source: Carl von Clausewitz, [On War](#), Michael Howard and Peter Paret, editors and translators. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 88

This site has stated that it is neither a military/warfare specific -oriented or focused site nor is discussion of war and warfare its main operational theme. Rather, the focus is decision making in severe crisis and disaster environments with issues of leadership as obvious necessary elements. So what then is the context for asking “so, what kind of war is it?” And how important are the *words of war*?

Consider the following:

- The 9-11 planners are to be tried in a civil court in New York City. What exactly is their legal classification – criminals, enemy combatants, terrorists, radical jihadist? Is this similar to the WWII Nuremberg trials?

- Since 9/11, authorities in the United States have uncovered nearly 30 terrorist plots involving “homegrown terrorists.” This total includes plots to carry out attacks in the United States abroad, as well as support for foreign terrorist organizations. Although not all of the plots, if undiscovered, are likely to have resulted in successful attacks, very little separates the ambitions of jihadist wannabes from a deadly terrorist assault. The essential ingredient is intent. Domestic intelligence collection remains a necessary and critical component of homeland security.
- Is the killing spree at Fort Hood an act of terrorism? Is Major Hassan a terrorist?
- Is what we’re doing in Afghanistan overseas contingency operations, counter-insurgency (COIN), counter terrorism, nation building, fourth generation warfare, what? Why does this matter?
- Are we in a global war on terrorism, a hybrid war, an irregular war, a guerrilla war, an asymmetric war? Or is it just “war” as Clausewitz defined it based on Napoleonic times ingrained with an inherent element of constant change?

So, what kind of war is this, is it even a war in the sense that we recognize the process from past wars of movement from peace to confrontation to violent conflict of armies, to negotiation and then back to peace again?

Let’s begin with all four of the elements which have been previously stated as major contributors to crisis and disaster potential:

- **Natural Disasters**
- **Globalized Economy**
- **Internet Communications**
- **Non-state Warfare**

These elements by in large make up what Dag von Lubitz described in the beginning of [DaVinci’s Horse #5](#), as a world of “tightly coupled systems in unstable equilibrium” in which we attempt to survive and prosper. Each element in its own sphere is capable of manifesting a severe dark side (Katrina, current world wide banking/monetary crisis, day-day Internet threats and viruses, the 9-11

attacks), but if we consider all aspects of the day-day environment as that tightly coupled "system of systems" then that interdependency becomes the source of instability. Further from von Lubitz:

(A) failure of one element induces destructive reverberations within the environment which, unless promptly addressed and eliminated, will have sufficient force to overcome the tenuous ability of the system to resist. As a result, the equilibrium will be lost, and its loss will induce further, exceedingly destructive and potentially irreversible consequences. Since catastrophes can reach the extinction level (or, more directly, end the existence of humans at best, and at worst terminate all advanced life forms on earth), it is not surprising that in the recent years there has been an explosion of studies devoted to the "rule of calamity" affecting all super complex, tightly coupled systems. From engineers to social scientists, and explorers of crisis, all agree – "catastrophic destructuring" is a built-in property rather than a theory unlikely to become the reality. Catastrophic destructuring, whether manifesting as war or natural disaster displays a very similar pattern of increasing instability, followed by the critical event, then resolution in form of either diminishing tensions or recovery.

The increasingly tight coupling of modern world is mirrored by the exponential raise in the frequency of disasters related to human activity. Significantly, the incidence rate of catastrophic events escalated dramatically in the 80's, i.e., at the same time the continuously fragile and easily disrupted computer technologies (IT/telecommunications) started to play the ever-dominant role as facilitating and controlling tools in business, politics, transportation, industry, etc.

The issue is by no means trivial. Repercussions of major disasters have increasingly global range and what happens in the US can and often will have a major impact on EU, China, or Africa. Equally, distant events may have an indirect but still forceful influence on vital US interests at home and overseas.

Reverberations within tightly coupled and largely stochastic systems spread in often highly unpredictable even erratic patterns that are hard to predict, and with a constantly changing force. While the current preoccupation with global terrorism dominates newspaper front pages,

TV news, and academic activities, the economical and social consequences of natural disasters are not less worrying, and may have far more substantial repercussions.

... and for that matter, all crises and conflicts, are complex stochastic events where chains of interactions are unpredictable, and where consequences often lead to secondary disasters associated with their own, typically unexpected and sudden, consequences. In words of an insurance TV commercial "Life comes at you fast," and unless the response is equally fast and correct, life may actually annihilate you. To be prepared is simply not enough. Yet, because responders are conditioned to act that way, most do what they know **INSTEAD OF KNOWING WHAT THEY SHOULD BE DOING.**

Knowing what one **SHOULD** be doing under conditions of extreme stress induced by events unfolding with total unpredictability constitutes the state of **READINESS**. It is the state that is completely different from preparedness. Unfortunately readiness and preparedness are used synonymously, and, therefore, while an enthusiastic declaration "WE ARE READY" is made, in reality we are merely **PREPARED**. When the unexpected happens, the lack of readiness amplifies the magnitude of the disaster – again Hurricane Katrina.

Contrary to preparedness which is largely the function of administrative approach and solutions to foreseeable problems, readiness depends predominantly on the mental state of the actor. **Hence, it can be taught.** (emphasis added)

Development of readiness is the result of intensive training in which the trainee is exposed to increasingly more complex tasks that are presented unpredictably, and often in logically confusing combinations. Together with task complexity its intensity is also gradually elevated, and so is the number of either simultaneous or near simultaneous events that need to be addressed. Some events are critical, while others merely appear to be so, and vice versa. The trainee (or a group of trainees) is expected to select appropriate actions, appropriate sequence(s) of actions, and appropriate targets for these actions, while coping with sensorial and cognitive information overloads typical of crisis and disaster environments. Time is always a critical factor, and so is communication.

The effect? It was because of such training that the passengers and crew walked away from the aircraft ditched in Hudson River. Had the crew been merely prepared, the aircraft would have crashed either during ditching maneuver, or worse, into the populated part of New York.

Dr. von Lubitz then directs the ***readiness as a function of learning*** theme into discussion of the team of leaders (TOL) concept – a subject addressed multiple times and of most interest for Project White Horse. (See Edition #7 with links to FORUM articles)

Here for this post and the following series, we branch from leadership needs into one specific aspect offered as *what needs to be learned*. In particular we look at the non-state war and warfare element as it exists today – as compared to September **10**, 2001 – and what that implies about surviving in the noted environment of unstable equilibrium. This post then is intended to begin discussion on what **kind of war is it** as necessarily an “***essential element of information for a culture of preparedness.***” And thus we desire to leverage the “knowing what they should be doing” idea.

Note that PWH has referenced Alvin Toffler’s quote often that “the illiterate of the 21st Century will not be those who can neither read nor write, but rather those who cannot/will not learn, unlearn, relearn. What needs to be *unlearned* is that our survival in severe crisis is mostly dependent on arrival and performance of a government first responder cavalry. What must be *relearned* is the resilient community attitude of our frontier fathers, and at least one thing we need to ***learn*** is how the changing face of war in this century impacts our day-day highly coupled world in the condition of unstable equilibrium.

A series of “what kind of war” is planned. The series of articles anticipated should address at minimum:

- Why the “kind of war” hasn’t already been defined for us, since after all, it has been some time since September 11th 2001.
- What elements must be consolidated within a definition
- What the definition “of kind” must incorporate or at least consider

As a starting point consider that events since Sept 11, 2001 would seem to dictate that we must at least include in discussion the following:

1. War-within-war to include counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism (Iraq, Afghanistan)
2. Expeditionary attacks (Mombai, World TradeCenter/Pentagon)
3. Lone wolf attacks (murders at Ft Hood)
4. Legal definitions and processes where criminal events and warfare style merge beyond historical precedent and understanding
5. Adaptation of 4GW concepts and methods by criminal elements and gangs (Mexico's drug war)

References and recommended other reading:

Books

- **The Utility of Force; The Art of War in the Modern World**, by General Rupert Smith
- **The Sling and the Stone; On War in the 21st Century**, by Col T.X. Mammes (USMC. RET)
- **Accidental Guerrilla; Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One**, by David Kilcullen
- **Brave New War; The Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization**, by John Robb
- **War Made New; Technology, Warfare, and the Course of History- 1500 to Today**, by Max Boot
- **Another Bloody Century; Future Warfare** by Colin S. Gray
- **The Transformation of War**, by Martin Van Creveld
- **If We Can Keep It; A National Security Manifesto for the Next Administration** by Chet Richards

Articles

- *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars*, Frank G. Hoffman
- *The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation*, by William S. Lind, Keith Nightengale, John F. Schmitt, Joseph W. Sutton, and Gary I. Wilson
- *Essay: The war of new words; Why military history trumps buzzwords*, by William F. Owens

EEI#16 “What kind of war” – continued (2 of ?) – On War, On Crime – the Intersection

Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of Preparedness

“At this stage, the drug cartels are using basic infantry weaponry to counter government forces,” a U.S. government official in Mexico said. “Encountering criminals with this kind of weaponry is a horse of a different color,” the official said. “It’s not your typical patrol stop, where someone pulls a gun. This has all the makings of an infantry squad, or guerrilla fighting.”

[From *INTERSECTIONS II (Scenarios for Training to the Ace Level) - 4. The 'Cat 5' Next Door: Drug Cartels' New Weaponry Means War describing the on-going drug based violence in Mexico.]*



In “What Kind of War Is It,” EEI#15, it was offered for consideration four broad types of user/method 4GW operations that include mixes of terrorism, insurgency, small unit tactics, media warfare, and cyber warfare. These methods can be characterized as manifesting themselves as follows:

- 1) war-within-war to include counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism (Iraq, Afghanistan)
- 2) expeditionary attacks (Mombai, World TradeCenter/Pentagon)
- 3) lone wolf attacks (murders at Ft Hood)
- 4) adaptation of 4GW concepts and methods by criminal elements and gangs (Mexico’s drug war).

As a continuation of “*essential elements of information for a culture of preparedness,*” and several previous posts under EEI on the impact of current high level government decisions on how we fight in future conflict, the following three articles/links discuss the **over-here** aspects of continuing war,

warfare, violence in the context of fourth generation warfare (4GW). Discussion of counter operations then continues on the INTERSECTION pages: [III. Crime and Fourth Generation Warfare- A really bad Intersection.](#)

[On War #323 Milestones](#) by Bill Lind

Excerpt: One of the ongoing themes of this column has been gangs and the role they play in a Fourth Generation world. Here in the United States they already serve as an alternative primary loyalty (alternative to the state) for many urban young men. Gangs will likely be a major player in 4GW because gang members are expected to fight. Those who won't do not remain gang members.

The November 15 [Washington Post had a story about gangs in Salinas](#), California, that deserves close attention from 4GW theorists. ... what is interesting in the *Post's* article is not the gangs themselves. It is a new response to the gangs. Salinas has brought in the U.S. military to apply counter-insurgency doctrine to a situation on American soil.

[Border Zones and Insecurity in the Americas](#) by John P. Sullivan and Adam Elkus

Excerpt: Border zones are incubators of criminal instability and violence. Weak state presence and the lucrative drugs trade is combining to challenge state sovereignty in acute ways. Consider Mexico, where the northern frontier with the US and southern border with Guatemala are contested zones. The bloody center of gravity of Mexico's drug cartels is the 'plazas', the drug smuggling corridors that link the borders....While some have fretted that these zones could harbor *jihadi* terrorists, the real danger lies in the violence produced by bloody competition over these lucrative areas and the spread of criminal reach and power throughout the state and across frontiers.

[The 'Lone Wolf Problem' poses security challenges for feds](#) - Dallas Morning News

Excerpt: What made the Fort Hood case so hard to prevent, Zarate said, "was that Maj. Hasan allegedly acted alone, in lone wolf fashion, and may have used his medical research to mask his own inner turmoil and attraction to a violent ideology."... It is impossible for the government to identify and, if necessary, take pre-emptive action on every person who espouses violence – to separate the wheat from the chaff.

"In many ways, the lone wolf insider threat is the most challenging and difficult of problems for the counterterrorism and law enforcement communities," said Juan Zarate, former deputy national security adviser for combating terrorism for President George W. Bush.

Please continue further: [III. Crime and Fourth Generation Warfare- A really bad Intersection.](#)

III. Crime and Fourth Generation Warfare – a really bad “intersection”

Here as a third PWH INTERSECTION, we offer thinking on **counter operations** for 4GW type warfare in a violent crime context from among others Lt. John Sullivan (LASD), Adam Elkus (co-author with John on **EEI #9 “operational art for policing”**), and Lt Fred Leland at Law Enforcement and Security Consulting. Linked title with excerpts are provided:

Police-Military Action Interaction in Mexico’s Drug War by John P. Sullivan

Mexico is engaged in a complex drug war. This war is actually an interlocking series of networked “narco-”or “criminal insurgencies” waged by criminal syndicates and gangs, popularly known as cartels. This situation challenges state institutions and the rule of law as Mexican drug-trafficking organizations (DTOs) seek to penetrate Mexico’s political institutions to further their lucrative drug black market. The situation has profound human and national security implications throughout the Western Hemisphere and beyond. This article looks at the current situation in Mexico. It will briefly examine the cartels and related criminal enterprises (i.e., gangs and enforcer organizations), the nature of their assault on Mexico’s institutions, and the impact on Mexican police and Mexico’s military. Finally, it will suggest potential bi-lateral and multilateral approaches for building police and military capacity to counter the threat.

Iraq’s Lessons on the Home Front - Wahington Post

Famed to readers as the birthplace of John Steinbeck and in supermarket produce circles as the “Salad Bowl of the World,” the city of Salinas carries darker renown in the netherworld of California’s prisons. Instant respect is accorded any inmate tattooed with the words “Salad Bowl” or “Salis” — gang shorthand for a city now defined most of all by ferocious eruptions of violence.

... Since February, combat veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan have been advising Salinas's police on counterinsurgency strategy, bringing lessons from the battlefield to the meanest streets in an American city.

Counterinsurgency to fight U.S. Crime? No, Thanks by Nathan Hodge at Danger Room

At first glance, counterinsurgency (at least the "soft," population-centric American version) bears a fair amount of resemblance to community policing: It's all about changing the dynamic in the communities where insurgents operate, encouraging troops to "walk the beat" and bringing in social services. And many of the tools of the modern counterinsurgent — forensic exploitation, pattern analysis and social-network diagramming — would be familiar to any detective. (The Law Enforcement Professionals program for combating roadside bombs in Iraq and Afghanistan even called on retired agents from the FBI, the DEA, and the ATF to help take down insurgent networks.) And if you look at the geographic reach and organizational sophistication of some gangs — think Mara Salvatrucha or 18 — and it's tempting to draw comparisons with, say, a Hizbollah or a Hamas.

But to the COINdinistas I would say: Be careful what you wish for. Counterinsurgency is still a tool for dealing with political emergencies, and it involves a heavy degree of population control. And at home, it's a bridge too far.

"Policing can be informed by counterinsurgency — and they are in fact similar at some points," said John P. Sullivan, a lieutenant with the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and an expert on transnational gangs. "But at others they really diverge. So you need to be very, very careful."

Small Towns, Soft Targets, Small Unit Swarming Tactics and Systems Disruption: Are We Ready For a Terrorist Attack? by Fred Leland

Soft targets have been discussed in law enforcement and security circles, but few have given serious consideration to the idea of terrorists exploiting small malls, schools churches and places where small groups from the community gather. In light of recent news of terrorist cells being uncovered in suburban American, it is critical to recognize that any location that is open and available for people to gather is a potential target of extremism and terrorist acts.

Us or Them: The Best Strategy to Prevent Violence is Foreknowledge and Strength of Character by Fred Leland

Is he a terrorist? Is he linked to an Islamic extremist group? If he is linked, how could he be a member of the United States Military? How could he be right under our noses and no one know whether he was a terrorist planning an attack on those he knew and worked with? All these questions and more surface in the aftermath of the Fort Hood killings; questions that should be asked as part of our efforts to understand and do everything in our power to prevent future acts of violence from occurring.

Rare events: Violence and Destruction...What are the Signs and Signals? (Don't Mind Your Own Business) by Fred Leland

Threats are often predicted based on behavioral indicators and whether or not a person shows intent, has the capability and opportunity to carry out a violent act. Two of these factors always exist in the United States due to our free and open society; the factors that are always present are capability and opportunity. A willing person who wants to commit a deliberate act of violence or destruction can easily collect the tools he needs to create that violence and destruction, making him capable of carrying out the act. **The good news is such acts of violence and destruction is rare. The bad news is, when they do take place, numerous** casualties are often the outcome. Columbine, 9-11, Virginia Tech, workplace violence incidents and most recently Fort Hood, TX are a few examples.

Also highly recommended:

[John P. Sullivan's Blog](#)

[Rethinking Security -Asymmetric Analysis by Adam Elkus](#)

[GroupIntel Network & GroupIntel Blog](#)

[Law Enforcement and Security Consulting \(Fred Leland\)](#)

This subpage is provided in conjunction with FORUM post EEI#16, On War, On Crime – the Intersection as a continuation of discussion focused on Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of Preparedness.

EEI#17 “What kind of war” – continued (3 of ?) – Civilian Courts no place for terrorists

Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of Preparedness

Fooling ourselves into thinking that terrorism is a just a criminal problem best handled by halfhearted security measures and civilian courts that rely on a “reasonable-doubt” standard is both naive and dangerous.



Bob Brooks is the Sheriff of Ventura County California. He has a Master of Arts in Security Studies (Homeland Defense and Security) from the Naval Postgraduate School. An excerpt of his Masters' thesis *Creating a Coordinated Game Plan: Improving the Effectiveness of Military Civil Support to Law Enforcement* appeared in [Edition #6](#) of this website. He has served as a Project White Horse 084640 advisor since first publication.

This article was originally published by the Ventura County Star on Wednesday Jan 6, 2010 and is presented with permission of the author.

Civilian Courts no place for terrorists - Sunday morning, I listened to the president's top counterterrorism adviser say that there was no "smoking gun" that could have prevented the attempted mass murder of airline passengers approaching Detroit on Christmas Day.

As a member of the executive committee of the Los Angeles Joint Terrorism Task Force, it is troubling to believe that specific information available on this terrorist was not enough to generate a response that would have prevented him from conducting an attack on our shores.

The adviser, White House aide John Brennan, went on to defend the decision to prosecute Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab as a common criminal protected by all the rights granted to a citizen of the United States, saying that prosecutors may be able to use our system to make a deal for him to disclose information about other threats.

Abdulmutallab stated that there were other terrorists coming with similar intent, before his taxpayer-funded attorney prohibited him from making further statements.

If Abdulmutallab was right, can we afford to wait weeks or months before finding out if there is an imminent threat? If he was willing to die for his cause, will a plea-bargain agreement convince him to divulge al-Qaida's plans? How many potential terrorist recruits will be influenced by this trial being played out on a world stage?

This is a continuation of a shocking trend toward treating a war as a law-enforcement problem. Changing the political terminology does not change the reality. Clearly, this terrorist is a soldier of an extreme ideology that intends to destroy the West and, therefore, he should have been dealt with as an enemy combatant. We must acknowledge that our enemies do not have to be nation-states, or we will enable our enemies and handicap those charged to protect us.

Later Sunday, the Transportation Security Administration announced that individuals flying to the United States from one of the 14 countries we recognize as state sponsors of terrorism will be subjected to additional screening measures.

While this policy, in addition to the use of full-body scan technology, are good ideas, why did it take this attack to implement these common-sense measures? Unfortunately, most of our security screening is directed at stopping certain items from being taken on planes, while a trained terrorist can make a weapon out of a wide variety of materials that can make it through screening.

In contrast, Israel's state-run airline has an outstanding record for passenger safety. It relies on the far more successful approach of looking for terrorists rather than a four-ounce shampoo bottle or nail clippers.

Israel's security personnel do pay attention to country of origin, but they also gather additional passenger information and rely on careful questioning of individuals to determine whether they display a combination of characteristics consistent with someone who may pose a threat. I have been subjected to the process several times and found it to be respectful and reassuring.

If we are really serious about protecting our skies and our communities, we need to acknowledge that we are at war with a serious and determined enemy and that this conflict may continue for decades.

Fooling ourselves into thinking that terrorism is a just a criminal problem best handled by halfhearted security measures and civilian courts that rely on a "reasonable-doubt" standard is both naive and dangerous.

EEI#18 “What kind of a war” – continued (4 of ?) – War? What War?

Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of Preparedness

As stated previously this site is not specifically focused on war and warfare, and most specifically, it has never been intended as one providing political commentary. The “kind of war” – as essential element of information- series is being extended because today’s war, how we define it, and how we defend our country in that defined context is a critical element of survival in our *tightly coupled system in unstable equilibrium* world. (PWH Edition #8, DaVinci’s Horse 5 by Dag von Lubitz)

To whatever extent you believe or not von Clausewitz’s “war as extension of politics by other means,” the political arenas of the world and war are certainly intertwined beyond separation. In **this kind of war** – whatever “this” is – a critical difference between *kinds* is noted by the fact that there is no political entity on the other side to negotiate with to come to terms for cessation of conflict. The **war** then continues so long as one side desires to carry out attacks. This is very distinctly different from the kind of war of Roosevelt’s World War II or Lincoln’s War Between the States. How then do we win in the “war on terrorism”, how then do we make this end? What are the boundary conditions of victory, defeat, co-existence, survival?

— *Charles Krauthammer* is a nationally syndicated columnist. © 2010, The Washington Post Writers Group. He is a noted conservative writer and the Townhall.com article below is very obviously a political OPED, but no matter your political affiliation or opinion on the current administration’s action, his points of distinction about “kind of war” need to be considered critically.



War? What War?

The Obama administration refuses to admit that we are at war.

By Charles Krauthammer

Janet Napolitano — former Arizona governor, now overmatched secretary of homeland security — will forever be remembered for having said of the attempt to bring down an airliner over Detroit: “The system worked.”

The attacker’s concerned father had warned U.S. authorities about his son’s jihadist tendencies. The would-be bomber paid cash and checked no luggage on a transoceanic flight. He was nonetheless allowed to fly, and would have killed 288 people in the air alone, save for a faulty detonator and quick actions by a few passengers.

Heck of a job, Brownie.

The reason the country is uneasy about the Obama administration’s response to this attack is a distinct sense of not just incompetence but incomprehension. From the very beginning, President Obama has relentlessly tried to downplay and deny the nature of the terrorist threat we continue to face. Napolitano renames terrorism “man-caused disasters.” Obama goes abroad and pledges to cleanse America of its post-9/11 counterterrorist sins. Hence, Guantanamo will close, CIA interrogators will face a special prosecutor, and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed will bask in a civilian trial in New York — a trifecta of political correctness and image management.

And just to make sure even the dimmest understand, Obama banishes the term “war on terror.” It’s over — that is, if it ever existed.

Obama may have declared the war over. Unfortunately, al-Qaeda has not. Which gives new meaning to the term “asymmetric warfare.”

And produces linguistic — and logical — oddities that littered Obama’s public pronouncements following the Christmas Day attack. In his first statement, Obama referred to Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab as “an isolated extremist.” This is the same president who, after the Ford Hood shooting, warned us “against jumping to conclusions” — code for daring to associate Nidal Hasan’s mass murder with his Islamist ideology. Yet, with Abdulmutallab, Obama jumped immediately to the conclusion, against all existing evidence, that the bomber acted alone.

More jarring still were Obama’s references to the terrorist as a “suspect” who “allegedly tried to ignite an explosive device.” You can hear the echo of FDR: “Yesterday, Dec. 7, 1941 — a date which will live in infamy — Japanese naval and air force suspects allegedly bombed Pearl Harbor.”

Obama reassured the nation that this "suspect" had been charged. Reassurance? The president should be saying: We have captured an enemy combatant — an illegal combatant under the laws of war: no uniform, direct attack on civilians — and now to prevent future attacks, he is being interrogated regarding information he may have about al-Qaeda in Yemen.

Instead, Abdulmutallab is dispatched to some Detroit-area jail and immediately lawyered up. At which point — surprise! — he stops talking.

This absurdity renders hollow Obama's declaration that "we will not rest until we find all who were involved." Once we've given Abdulmutallab the right to remain silent, we have gratuitously forfeited our right to find out from him precisely who else was involved, namely those who trained, instructed, armed, and sent him.

This is all quite mad even in Obama's terms. He sends 30,000 troops to fight terror overseas, yet if any terrorists come to attack us *here*, they are magically transformed from enemy into defendant.

The logic is perverse. If we find Abdulmutallab in an al-Qaeda training camp in Yemen, where he is merely *preparing* for a terror attack, we snuff him out with a Predator — no judge, no jury, no qualms. But if we catch him in the United States in the very act of mass murder, he instantly acquires protection not just from execution by drone but even from interrogation.

The president said that this incident highlights "the nature of those who threaten our homeland." But the president is constantly denying the nature of those who threaten our homeland. On Tuesday, he referred five times to Abdulmutallab (and his terrorist ilk) as "extremist(s)."

A man who shoots abortion doctors is an extremist. An eco-fanatic who torches logging sites is an extremist. Abdulmutallab is not one of these. He is a jihadist. And unlike the guys who shoot abortion doctors, jihadists have cells all over the world; they blow up trains in London, nightclubs in Bali, and airplanes over Detroit (if they can); and they are openly pledged to wage war on America.

Any government can through laxity let someone slip through the cracks. But a government that refuses to admit that we are at war, indeed, refuses even to name the enemy — jihadist is a word banished from the Obama lexicon — turns laxity into a governing philosophy.

and in this disruption, the flowing air can no longer stay attached to the layer/airfoil, drag over comes lift and the wing is no longer in stable positive flight – not flying it stalls.

Characterized and understood by most under the context “lack of imagination,” the 9-11 attack was planned, enabled and occurred successfully because the initial conditions – ***the boundary conditions*** – that existed on 11 Sept were ideal for the al Qaeda attackers. They were those of the Cold War, Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) as strategy, and what to do with the supposed *peace dividend* as the only global super-power. Not appropriately factored in were events such as the Khobar Towers attack, the first WTC bombing, or bombing of USS Cole, nor the emergence of non-state, religious and ethnic players suddenly attempting to control their own destiny in the wake of the USSR’s demise and demise of acceptance of the state boundaries imposed at the end of WWI. The conditions “of war” were metaphorically *laminar* for both American Flight 11’s high speed attack on the World Trade Center and for al Qaeda. A new set of boundary conditions with a great deal of turbulent flow in the *layers* around any future activity now existed. The fact that “what kind of war” has never been adequately addressed is evidence that “new norm” indicates only partial recognition of the *flight* environment for the ship of state.

Further, not recognized even as clearly, the initial 11 and 12 September plus later responses [the attack against the Taliban, invasion of Iraq, the Global War on Terrorism, the implementation of population-centric COIN tactics - and continued dithering (evidence offered in this series) on everything about "the war on terrorism" from its name to what to do with prisoner enemy combatants, to how to fight, where to fight, who or what to fight with, who gets to know what, to how much money goes to each city or state to how to keep explosives off of airplanes]

are direct result of operating with the wrong or at least insufficiently defined and understood boundary conditions. With the Cold War mind set prevailing to enable the attack, the WWII, big war (tanks, fighter jets, war by technology) mind set defined the boundary layers of our planning for response. All did what they know. Initial Spec Ops with horses and B-52s with precision bombs, and the run up the Tigris and Euphrates by Marine and Army forces worked well. Since then our metaphorical *wing-of-war* has seen more of the air flow shown at the end of the graphic than the beginning. Indeed not all airfoils are usable in all types of flight conditions.

Since Sept 11, 2001 the airfoil of our ship of state continues flight in turbulence – mostly resulting from trying to make the plans of another time and place meet a changed and ever changing 21st century circumstance. As stated in daVinci's Horse #5 and in the lead article in this series by Dr. vob Lubitz, we persist in *doing what we know*, rather than taking the apparently difficult path leading to *knowing what we should do*. Unstable air, unstable flight, indeed.

Rectifying the current situation – beginning by answering the question: “what kind of war is it?” – cannot be based on what we would like it to be considering our current defense posture, planning, and investment, nor can it be built on urban legend or myth. Retired Coast Guard Commander and recently selected president of the Center for National Policy, [Dr. Stephen Flynn](#) elaborated on this subject in the Washington Post on Sunday January 3, 2010. **5 Myths about keeping America safe from terrorism:**

With President Obama declaring a “systemic failure” of our security system in the wake of the attempted Christmas bombing of a Detroit-bound airliner, familiar arguments about what can and should be done to reduce America’s vulnerabilities are again filling the airwaves, editorial pages and blogosphere. Several of these arguments are based on assumptions that guided the U.S. response to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks — and unfortunately, they are as unfounded now as they were then. The biggest whopper of all? The paternalistic assertion that the government can keep us all safe without our help

Please continue to EEI#20, the sixth article in this series, for the complete article.

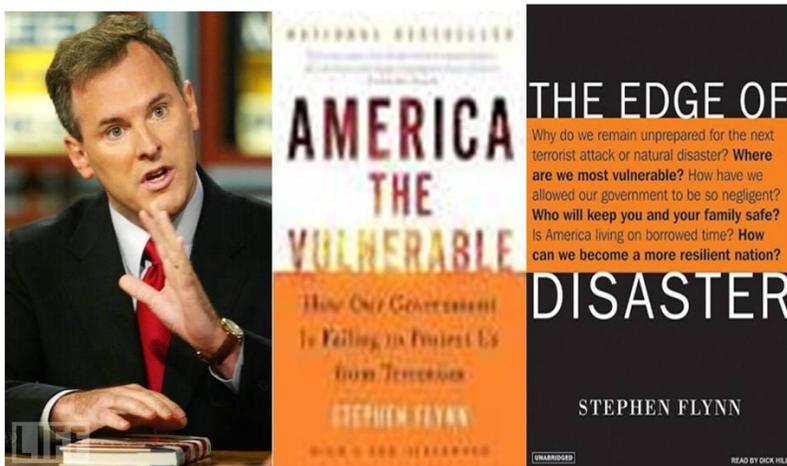
* The graphic “Boundary Layer Separation” is from Computational Fluid Dynamics and Visualization

EEI#20 “What kind of war?” – continued (6 of ?) – 5 Myths about keeping America safe from terrorism

Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of Preparedness

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Stephen Flynn is the president of the Center for National Policy and author of “America the Vulnerable” and “The Edge of Disaster: Rebuilding a Resilient Nation.” He is a retired Coast Guard Commander and spent a decade as a senior fellow for National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. The original article was published by the Washington Post on Sunday January 3, 2010.



5 Myths about keeping America safe from terrorism

by Stephen Flynn

With President Obama declaring a “systemic failure” of our security system in the wake of the attempted Christmas bombing of a Detroit-bound airliner, familiar arguments about what can and should be done to reduce America’s vulnerabilities are again filling the airwaves, editorial pages and blogosphere. Several of these arguments are based on assumptions that guided the U.S. response to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks — and unfortunately, they are as unfounded now as they were then. The

biggest whopper of all? The paternalistic assertion that the government can keep us all safe without our help.

1. Terrorism is the gravest threat facing the American people

Americans are at far greater risk of being killed in accidents or by viruses than by acts of terrorism. In 2008, more than 37,300 Americans perished on the nation's highways, according to government data. Even before H1N1, a similar number of people died each year from the seasonal flu. Terrorism is a real and potentially consequential danger. But the greatest threat isn't posed by the direct harm terrorists could inflict; it comes from what we do to ourselves when we are spooked. It is how we react — or more precisely, how we overreact — to the threat of terrorism that makes it an appealing tool for our adversaries. By grounding commercial aviation and effectively closing our borders after the 2001 attacks, Washington accomplished something no foreign state could have hoped to achieve: a blockade on the economy of the world's sole superpower. While we cannot expect to be completely successful at intercepting terrorist attacks, we must get a better handle on how we respond when they happen.

2. When it comes to preventing terrorism, the only real defense is a good offense.

The cornerstone of the Bush administration's approach to dealing with the terrorist threat was to take the battle to the enemy. But offense has its limits. We still aren't generating sufficiently accurate and timely tactical intelligence to adequately support U.S. counterterrorism efforts overseas. And going after terrorists abroad hardly means they won't manage to strike us at home. Just days before the attempted bombing of Northwest Airlines Flight 253, the United States collaborated with the Yemeni government on raids against al-Qaeda militants there. The group known as al-Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula is now claiming responsibility for having equipped and trained Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who allegedly tried to blow up the flight. The group is also leveraging the raids to recruit militants and mount protests against Yemen's already fragile central government.

At the same time, an emphasis on offense has often come at the expense of investing in effective defensive measures, such as maintaining quality watch lists, sharing information about threats, safeguarding such critical assets as the nation's food and energy supplies, and preparing for large-scale emergencies. After authorities said Abdulmutallab had hidden explosives in his underwear, airline screeners held up flights to do stepped-up passenger pat-downs at boarding gates — pat-

downs that inevitably avoided passengers' crotches and buttocks. This kind of quick fix only tends to fuel public cynicism about security efforts. But if we can implement smart security measures ahead of time (such as requiring refineries next to densely populated areas to use safer chemicals when they manufacture high-octane gas), we won't be incapacitated when terrorists strike. Strengthening our national ability to withstand and rapidly recover from terrorism will make the United States a less appealing target. In combating terrorism, as in sports, success requires both a capable offense and a strong defense.

3. Getting better control over America's borders is essential to making us safer.

Our borders will never serve as a meaningful line of defense against terrorism. The inspectors at our ports, border crossings and airports have important roles when it comes to managing immigration and the flow of commerce, but they play only a bit part in stopping would-be attackers. This is because terrorist threats do not originate at our land borders with Mexico and Canada, nor along our 12,000 miles of coastline. They originate at home as well as abroad, and they exploit global networks such as the transportation system that moved 500 million cargo containers through the world's ports in 2008. Moreover, terrorists' travel documents are often in perfect order. This was the case with Abdulmutallab, as well as with shoe-bomber Richard Reid in 2001. Complaints about porous borders may play well politically, but they distract us from the more challenging task of forging international cooperation to strengthen safeguards for our global transportation, travel and financial systems. They also sidestep the disturbing fact that the number of terrorism-related cases involving U.S. residents reached a new high in 2009.

4. Investing in new technology is key to better security.

Not necessarily. Technology can be helpful, but too often it ends up being part of the problem. Placing too much reliance on sophisticated tools such as X-ray machines often leaves the people staffing our front lines consumed with monitoring and troubleshooting these systems. Consequently, they become more caught up in process than outcomes. And as soon procedures become routine, a determined bad guy can game them. We would do well to heed two lessons the U.S. military has learned from combating insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan: First, don't do things in rote and predictable ways, and second, don't alienate the people you are trying to protect. Too much of what is promoted as homeland security disregards these lessons. It is true that technology such as full-body imaging

machines, which have received so much attention in the past week, are far more effective than metal detectors at screening airline passengers. But new technologies are also expensive, and they are no substitute for well-trained professionals who are empowered and rewarded for exercising good judgment.

5. Average citizens aren't an effective bulwark against terrorist attacks.

Elite pundits and policymakers routinely dismiss the ability of ordinary people to respond effectively when they are in harm's way. It's ironic that this misconception has animated much of the government's approach to homeland security since Sept. 11, 2001, given that the only successful counterterrorist action that day came from the passengers aboard United Airlines Flight 93. These passengers didn't have the help of federal air marshals. The Defense Department's North American Aerospace Defense Command didn't intercept the plane — it didn't even know the airliner had been hijacked. But by charging the cockpit over rural Pennsylvania, these private citizens prevented al-Qaeda terrorists from reaching their likely target of the U.S. Capitol or the White House. The government leaders whose constitutional duty is "to provide for the common defense" were defended by one thing alone — an alert and heroic citizenry.

This misconception is particularly reckless because it ends up sidelining the greatest asset we have for managing the terrorism threat: the average people who are best positioned to detect and respond to terrorist activities. We have only to look to the attempted Christmas Day attack to validate this truth. Once again it was the government that fell short, not ordinary people. A concerned Nigerian father, not the CIA or the National Security Agency, came forward with crucial information. And the courageous actions of the Dutch film director Jasper Schuringa and other passengers and crew members aboard Flight 253 thwarted the attack.

EEI#21 “What kind of a war?” -continued (7 of ?)- The war of new words: Why military history trumps buzzwords

Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of Preparedness

To say “warfare is changing” is banal, obvious and thus irrelevant. When did warfare ever not evolve? The acts of Sept. 11 changed nothing in the Thucydidean and Clausewitzian nature of war, or even its modern practice. America’s choice of response did change U.S. foreign policy and defense planning, but the attacks themselves were in no way indicative of any change in the aims and purposes, or even methods, of political violence.

In order to provide a very different perspective on “what kind of war is it,” excerpts of William Owen’s essay on [Armed Forces Journal](#) are provided below. Owen is former British Army and currently a full time writer, theorist and critic concentrating on infantry and doctrinal issues. His writing is most easily found on highly recommended [Small Wars Journal](#).

My guess would be that he would disagree with much written in this series. My argument with his article would focus on the idea of serious need for clarity by use of appropriately defined terms as compared to consideration as “buzzwords,” simply because they did not appear in the text of [On War](#) by Carl von Clausewitz.

Essay: The war of new words: Why military history trumps buzzwords (excerpt)

by William F. Owen

War isn’t just transforming — it’s ushering in a whole new language to describe conflict, and this language is used in a way that pays little attention to logic or military history. Thus the forces we used to call guerrillas are now “hybrid threats.” Insurgencies are now “complex” and require “complex and adaptive” solutions. Jungles and cities are now “complex terrain.” Put simply, the discussion about future conflict is being conducted using buzzwords and bumper stickers.

The evidence that the threats of the 21st century are going to be that much different from the threats of the 20th is lacking. Likewise, there is no evidence that a “new way of war” is evolving or that we somehow had a previously flawed understanding.

In fact, the use of the new words strongly indicates that those using them do not wish to be encumbered by a generally useful and coherent set of terms that military history had previously used. As war and warfare are not changing in ways that demand new words, it is odd that people keep inventing them.

... The most common attempt to redefine the activities of irregular forces and guerrillas has been the using the word "asymmetric," predicated on trying to describe a dissimilar employment of ways and means that was apparently new. Yet history does not support this thesis, nor does it usefully inform thinking about the future.

...It may be that there is a generation of serving soldiers who do not understand war and warfare as well as past generations, but that is not to say that war today is more complex. The Internet does not make warfare more complex. TV coverage does not make war more complex. Public opinion does not make war more complex. If the root of the argument is that society is becoming more complex, therefore warfare will be more complex, then 20 years from now it will become supercomplex or hypercomplex. Obviously, this is rubbish.

To say "warfare is changing" is banal, obvious and thus irrelevant. When did warfare ever not evolve? The acts of Sept. 11 changed nothing in the Thucydidean and Clausewitzian nature of war, or even its modern practice. America's choice of response did change U.S. foreign policy and defense planning, but the attacks themselves were in no way indicative of any change in the aims and purposes, or even methods, of political violence.

... The use of the new words arguably puts good old wine in shabby new bottles. Most of this new vocabulary has been spawned by the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan. But despite the large amount that has been written about counterinsurgency, very little, if any of it, contains new insights or thinking that was not already part of the vast collection of English-language counterinsurgency writing. For whatever reason, the new words frame obvious and enduring observations about insurgency in a new light, creating an aura of discovery rather than simple relearning. The riposte that every insurgency is unique and requires unique solutions is true, but this is generally true for every war and every form of warfare. What worked for the German Army in France in 1940 failed in Russia in 1942.

... War is not changing. The aims and purpose of organized violence for political gain are enduring and unchanging. Insurgencies are war, and most if not all of the observations made in the Army's new FM 3-24 "Counterinsurgency" manual could have been written in 1991 or earlier. Future wars will be born of future politics, not "globalization" or the Internet. Yes, there will be "unknown unknowns," but they are just that: unknowable. New words won't change that.

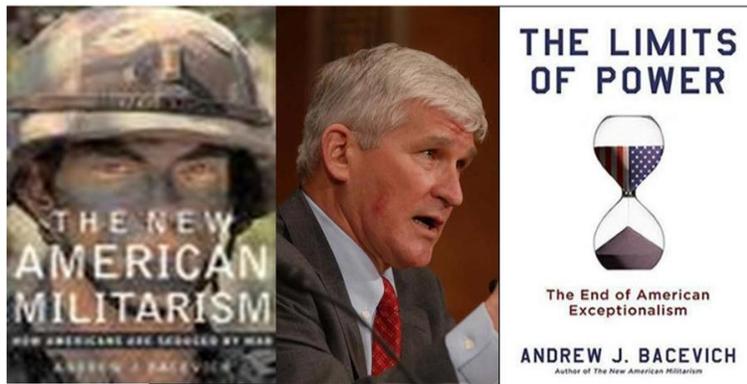
... The only thing that can obscure that obvious truth is the application of new words and altered meanings to bend the problem to fit the writer's purpose — or to pretend that military history is less useful than the insights of those incapable of expressing themselves in plain English.

EI#22 “What kind of war” -continued (8 of ?) – No Exit

Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of Preparedness

America has an impressive record of starting wars but a dismal one of ending them well.

Andrew J. Bacevich is professor of history and international relations at Boston University. He is a retired Army Colonel, graduate of West Point, serving in Vietnam in 1970 and 71. In his books [***The Limits of Power, The Long War, and The New American Militarism: How Americans are Seduced by War***], he is critical of American foreign policy in the post Cold War era, maintaining the United States has developed an over-reliance on military power, in contrast to diplomacy, to achieve its foreign policy aims. He also asserts that policymakers in particular, and the American people in general, overestimate the usefulness of military force in foreign affairs. Bacevich conceived *The New American Militarism* not only as “a corrective to what has become the conventional critique of U.S. policies since 9/11 but as a challenge to the orthodox historical context employed to justify those policies.” His new book ***Washington Rules: America’s Path to Permanent War*** is due out in the spring.



This article found on [The American Conservative](#) would appear consistent with his past writing and the excerpt is offered as yet another view of “what kind of war.”

No Exit (Excerpt)

by Andrew Bacevich

President Obama's decision to escalate U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan earned him at most two muted cheers from Washington's warrior-pundits. Sure, the president had acceded to Gen. Stanley McChrystal's request for more troops. Already in its ninth year, Operation Enduring Freedom was therefore guaranteed to endure for years to come. The Long War begun on George W. Bush's watch with expectations of transforming the Greater Middle East gained a new lease on life, its purpose reduced to the generic one of "keeping America safe."

Yet the Long War's most ardent supporters found fault with Obama's words and demeanor. The president had failed to convey the requisite enthusiasm for sending young Americans to fight and die on the far side of the world ...

... That the post-Cold War United States military, reputedly the strongest and most capable armed force in modern history, has not only conceded its inability to achieve decision but has in effect abandoned victory as its *raison d'être* qualifies as a remarkable development.

Since 1945, the United States military has devoted itself to the proposition that, Hiroshima notwithstanding, war still works—that, despite the advent of nuclear weapons, organized violence directed by a professional military elite remains politically purposeful. From the time U.S. forces entered Korea in 1950 to the time they entered Iraq in 2003, the officer corps attempted repeatedly to demonstrate the validity of this hypothesis.

The results have been disappointing. Where U.S. forces have satisfied Max Boot's criteria for winning, the enemy has tended to be, shall we say, less than ten feet tall. Three times in the last 60 years, U.S. forces have achieved an approximation of unambiguous victory—operational success translating more or less directly into political success. The first such episode, long since forgotten, occurred in 1965 when Lyndon Johnson intervened in the Dominican Republic. The second occurred in 1983, when American troops, making short work of a battalion of Cuban construction workers, liberated Granada. The third occurred in 1989 when G.I.'s stormed the former American protectorate of Panama, toppling the government of long-time CIA asset Manuel Noriega.

Apart from those three marks in the win column, U.S. military performance has been at best mixed. The issue here is not one of sacrifice and valor—there's been plenty of that—but of outcomes.

... An alternative reading of our recent military past might suggest the following: first, that the political utility of force—the range of political problems where force possesses real relevance—is actually quite narrow; second, that definitive victory of the sort that yields a formal surrender ceremony at Appomattox or on the deck of an American warship tends to be a rarity; third, that ambiguous outcomes are much more probable, with those achieved at a cost far greater than even the most conscientious war planner is likely to anticipate; and fourth, that the prudent statesman therefore turns to force only as a last resort and only when the most vital national interests are at stake. ...

To consider the long bloody chronicle of modern history, big wars and small ones alike, is to affirm the validity of these conclusions. Bellicose ideologues will pretend otherwise. Such are the vagaries of American politics that within the Beltway the views expressed by these ideologues—few of whom have experienced war—will continue to be treated as worthy of consideration. One sees the hand of God at work: the Lord obviously has an acute appreciation for irony.

... The impetus for weaning Americans away from their infatuation with war, if it comes at all, will come from within the officer corps. It certainly won't come from within the political establishment, the Republican Party gripped by militaristic fantasies and Democrats too fearful of being tagged as weak on national security to exercise independent judgment. Were there any lingering doubt on that score, Barack Obama, the self-described agent of change, removed it once and for all: by upping the ante in Afghanistan he has put his personal imprimatur on the Long War.

Yet this generation of soldiers has learned what force can and cannot accomplish. Its members understand the folly of imagining that war provides a neat and tidy solution to vexing problems. They are unlikely to confuse Churchillian calls to arms with competence or common sense.

What conclusions will they draw from their extensive and at times painful experience with war? Will they affirm this country's drift toward perpetual conflict, as those eagerly promoting counterinsurgency as the new American way of war apparently intend? Or will the officer corps reject that prospect and return to the tradition once represented by men like George C. Marshall, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Matthew B. Ridgway?

As our weary soldiers trek from Iraq back once more to Afghanistan, this figures prominently among the issues to be decided there.

EEI#23 “What kind of war?” -continued (9 of ?) – Square Pegs, Round Holes vs. “War Amongst the People”

*Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of
Preparedness*



There seems to be a trend toward treating events of terrorism as if they were specifically a law-enforcement problem , rather than enemy operations in the context of war and warfare. Both require application of force **“but for force to be effective the desired outcome of its use must be understood in such detail that the context is defined as well as the point of application.”**

(The Utility of Force; The Art of War in the Modern World by General Sir Rupert Smith)

The issue here is not crime or war, the **context** is rather that war plays out “amongst the people” – not only in the villages of Afghanistan, but as readily in the airports, cities, communities, and

courtsrooms of all nations. The application of force, -whether by police or military – AND of law are essential.

Consider the following 3 new points (original list provided in EEI# 15) based on the Christmas Day attempted airline bombing:

- In the wake of the failed Christmas Day airplane bombing, President Obama ordered speedy reviews of how the air security system failed and the Transportation Security Administration began enhanced screening for passengers traveling through 14 nations.
- Eight years after WTC and Pentagon attacks, actionable intelligence still can't seem to get across intelligence agency boundaries so as to create "action."
- Nigerian-born Umar Farouk AbdulMutallab who tried to detonate explosives hidden in his underwear as a Northwest Airlines flight from Amsterdam, Netherlands, made its approach to Detroit, Michigan has been read his Miranda rights.

The 1648 [Treaty of Westphalia](#) at the end of the Thirty Year War essentially made war and warfare a function of the state and was in part at least an attempt to limit or control devastation among non-combatants. The 1949 [Geneva Conventions](#) set the standards in international law for the humanitarian treatment of the victims of war and established the qualifications for being considered a lawful combatant – must have conducted military operations according to the laws and customs of war, be part of a chain of command, wear a "fixed distinctive marking, visible from a distance" and bear arms openly.

Does not the above list give one pause to think, that maybe, just maybe in light of those long standing and current established rules and protocols, we are laboring most vigorously, quoting General George Patton, to make circumstances meet the plans and rules, rather than adapting as necessary to a very complex and dynamic set of events. Former CIA Chief of the bin Laden Issue Station, Michael Scheuer, asked are we in a war or chasing Thelma and Louise? The answer would appear to be BOTH, and without succinct definition of the specific kind of war as back-plane for understanding events as they occur and without either usable definition or following rules, we're continually trying to shoe horn square pegs in round holes.

It seems appropriate here to reflect upon some of the introductory words in General Smith's [The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern world](#):

On every occasion that I have been sent to achieve some military objective in order to serve a political purpose, I, and those with me, have had to change our method and reorganize in order to succeed. Until this was done we could not use our force effectively.

... it became obvious to me that the extant theories of military organization and application and the unfolding realities were wide apart. No more was I part of a world of wars in which the civilian and military establishments each had its distinct role in distinct stages. The new situations were always a complex combination of political and military circumstances, though there appeared to be little comprehension as to how the two became intertwined – nor far more seriously from the perspective of the military practitioner, how they constantly influenced each other as events unfolded.... I realized we were now in a new era of conflict – in fact a new paradigm –

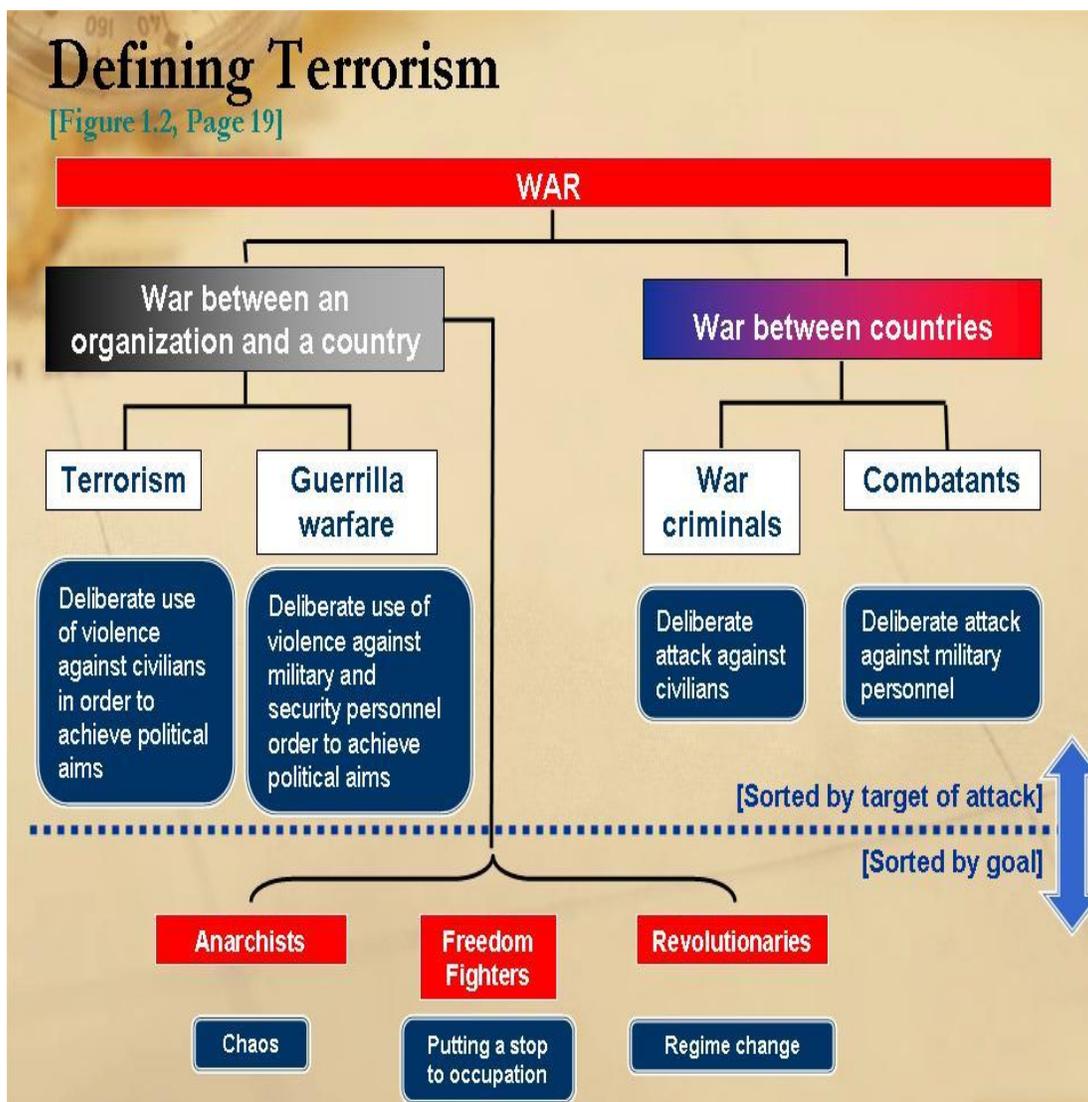
... from armies with comparable forces doing battle on a field to strategic confrontation between a range of combatants, not all of which are armies, and using different types of weapons, often improvised. The old paradigm was that of interstate industrial war. The new one is the paradigm of war amongst the people.

And so, what does "war amongst the people" as definition signify in regard to overseas contingency operations, the Long War, counter-insurgency (COIN), counter terrorism, nation building, fourth generation warfare, or what we're doing in Afghanistan? Are we in a global war on terrorism, a hybrid war, an irregular war, a guerrilla war, an asymmetric war? Or is it just "war" as Clausewitz defined it based on Napoleonic times ingrained with an inherent element of constant change?

The next post will provide some discussion of these terms by way of seeking at least a reference point of terminology .

EEI#24 “What kind of war” – continued (10 of ?) – Definitions or Targets

Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of Preparedness



(From *The Counter Terrorism Puzzle; A Guide for Decision Makers*, used with permission of the author, Dr. Boaz Ganor, the Associate Dean of the Lauder School of Government, at the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, Israel, and the founder and Executive Director of the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism)

The above graphic placing terrorism in context of war and the definitions below of many of the terms used throughout the “What kind of war” series are intended only as reference, not as anyone’s formal

authorized definition. They have been gleaned from multiple sources. Of particular note should be the degree of overlap and ambiguity.

Definitions: Special Operations, Asymmetric Warfare, Terrorism, Guerrilla Warfare, Irregular Warfare, Unconventional Warfare, The Long War, Fourth Generation Warfare, Hybrid Warfare:

Special operations are military operations that are considered “special” (that is, unconventional).

Special operations are typically performed independently or in conjunction with conventional military operations. The primary goal is to achieve a political or military objective where a conventional force requirement does not exist or might affect the overall strategic outcome. Special operations are usually conducted in a low-profile manner that typically aim to achieve the advantage of speed, surprise, and violence of action against an unsuspecting target. Special ops are typically carried out with limited numbers of highly trained personnel that are able to operate in all environments, utilize self-reliance, are able to easily adapt and overcome obstacles, and use unconventional combat skills and equipment to complete objectives. Special operations are usually implemented through specific or tailored intelligence

Asymmetric warfare is war between belligerents whose relative military power differs significantly, or whose strategy or tactics differ significantly.

“Asymmetric warfare” can describe a conflict in which the resources of two belligerents differ in essence and in the struggle, interact and attempt to exploit each other’s characteristic weaknesses. Such struggles often involve strategies and tactics of unconventional warfare, the “weaker” combatants attempting to use strategy to offset deficiencies in quantity or quality. Such strategies may not necessarily be militarized. This is in contrast to *symmetric warfare*, where two powers have similar military power and resources and rely on tactics that are similar overall, differing only in details and execution.

Terrorism is the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion. At present, there is no internationally agreed definition of terrorism. Common definitions of terrorism refer only to those violent acts which are intended to create fear (terror), are perpetrated for an ideological goal (as

opposed to a lone attack), and deliberately target or disregard the safety of non-combatants (civilians).

Some definitions also include acts of unlawful violence and war. The history of terrorist organizations suggests that they do not select terrorism for its political effectiveness. Individual terrorists tend to be motivated more by a desire for social solidarity with other members of their organization than by political platforms or strategic objectives, which are often murky and undefined.

Guerrilla warfare is combat in which a small group of combatants use mobile military tactics in the form of ambushes and raids to combat a larger and less mobile formal army.

The term means “little war” in Spanish and was created during the Peninsular War. The concept acknowledges a conflict between armed civilians against a powerful nation state army, either foreign or domestic and uses tactics such as ambush, sabotage and mobility in attacking vulnerable targets in enemy territory. The tactics of guerrilla warfare were used successfully in the recent 20th century by among others the People’s Liberation Army in the Chinese Civil War, Fidel Castro’s rebel army in the Cuban Revolution, and by the Viet Cong, the North Vietnam Army in the Vietnam War, the Kosovo Liberation Army in the Kosovo War and the Bosnian War . Most factions of the Iraqi Insurgency, Colombia’s FARC, and the Communist Party of India (Maoist) are said to be engaged in some form of guerrilla warfare — as was, until recently, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

Irregular warfare (IW) is warfare in which one or more combatants are irregular military rather than regular forces. Guerrilla warfare is a form of irregular warfare, and so is asymmetric warfare.

Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric warfare approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will. It is inherently a protracted struggle that will test the resolve of a nation and its strategic partners.

Concepts associated with irregular warfare are not as recent as the *irregular warfare* term itself.

Unconventional warfare is the opposite of conventional warfare. Where conventional warfare is used to reduce an opponent’s military capability, unconventional warfare is an attempt to achieve military victory through acquiescence, capitulation, or clandestine support for one side of an existing conflict.

On the surface, UW contrasts with conventional warfare in that: forces or objectives are covert or not well-defined, tactics and weapons intensify environments of subversion or intimidation, and the general or long-term goals are coercive or subversive to a political body.

The Long War is a term used by the administration of US President George W. Bush referring to US actions against various governments and terrorist organisations, as a reaction to the September 11 attacks. Other designations are the "*War on Terrorism*", the "*War on Terror*", the "*Global War On Terror (G.W.O.T.)*" and the "*Global Struggle Against Violent Extremism (GSAVE)*". It has been criticized as a justification for perpetual war.

Fourth generation warfare (4GW) is conflict characterized by a blurring of the lines between war and politics, soldier and civilian.

The military doctrine was first defined in 1989 by a team of United States analysts, including William S. Lind, used to describe warfare's return to a decentralized form. In terms of generational modern warfare, the fourth generation signifies the nation states' loss of their near-monopoly on combat forces, returning to modes of conflict common in pre-modern times. The simplest definition includes any war in which one of the major participants is not a state but rather a violent non-state actor. As such, fourth generation warfare uses classical tactics—tactics deemed unacceptable by more traditional thinking—to weaken the advantaged opponent's will to win.

Hybrid warfare incorporates a range of different modes of warfare, including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist's acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder. These multi-modal activities can be conducted by separate units, or even by the same unit, but are generally operationally and tactically directed and coordinated within the main battlespace to achieve synergistic effects. Hybrid wars can be conducted by both states and a variety of non-state actors.

EEI#25 “What kind of war” – continued (11 of ?) – Science, defence and strategy... and John Boyd

Essential Elements of Information for a Culture of Preparedness

Without strategy the science of war overtakes the art of war

The human decision-making process, Boyd argues, deals with this conundrum through a constant dialectic of creation and destruction of mental patterns and perceptions in response to a changing and complex observed reality. We cannot escape from chaos, rather we are most successful when we embrace it by shattering the rigid mental patterns that have built up and then synthesize the new realities we observe to create a new understanding. Such a process of structuring, dissolving, restructuring, and dissolving again must be repeated endlessly.

This series has attempted to highlight that no matter how well analyzed, no matter the length or the depth of discussion, no matter how well addressed in writing by a Sun Tzu, Carl von Clausewitz, Alfred Thayer Mahan, Winston Churchill, or Sir John Keegan, et al, success in *war and warfare*, must always be seen in light of “*an evolving, open ended, far from equilibrium process of self-organization, emergence, and natural selection.*” Those words from John Boyd’s last effort, *Essence of Winning and Losing*, seem a perfect match with the original question from Napoleonic times. The mismatch of “labels” with events and resultant ill-formed actions as described in these posts by multiple writers and analysts, would seem to signify the importance of answering the question, what kind of war is it, and the crucial need for *destruction and creation* – analysis with synthesis.

As this series draws to a close, *Science, defence and strategy*, by Adam Elkus, was recognized and excerpts selected as striking this issue point on. The full article can be found at the website openSecurity.

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Science, defence and strategy; (excerpt)

by Adam Elkus

War has always been such a tremendously complex undertaking that every force waging it has sought to simplify and standardize. At the same time, this simplification and standardization is usually inimical to the kind of creativity needed to win. Finding a balance between the art and science of war has always been difficult, especially in an era thoroughly dominated by science in all major areas of everyday life.

Some critics charge that counterinsurgency has become a new “progressive” science of war rooted in an application of social sciences to conflict. While this charge has some truth, the real issue is that science is being substituted for strategy. Without guiding strategic direction, the temptation to elevate pat formulas and simplistic doctrines becomes overwhelming.

... Critics of American counterinsurgency (COIN) theory have often charged that it is a new “science of war” rooted not in systems analysis or technobabble but “progressive” sciences such as anthropology or sociology (See Edward Luttwak, “Dead End: Counterinsurgency as Military Malpractice,” *Harper’s*, February 2007 or Gian P. Gentile, “A Strategy of Tactics: Population-centric COIN and the Army,” *Parameters*, Autumn 2009). There is truth in this charge, though more so in the political than purely military arena. Charges to intervene in Yemen and ritualistic calls to pacify every “ungoverned space” with a combination of development and surgically applied force show that policy elites have misunderstood both the nature of counterinsurgency warfare as well as the relationship between operations and strategy.

The issue is not necessarily the merits of counterinsurgency or conventional warfare, but the substitution of science *for* strategy. The post-Cold War strategic vacuum of American grand strategy allows vacuous concepts and management-speak to take the place of detailed strategic plans and concepts. Everyone is favor of “smart power” and the “whole of government approach” for example, but no one agrees about how to properly implement such concepts.

... For the military, the quest for doctrine and training adaptive enough to create a military capable of carrying out complex conventional and irregular missions is likely to be a decades-long pursuit. It took thirty years for the Army to experience a post-Vietnam renaissance in doctrine and training that would eventually result in the lopsided victory over Iraq in the first Gulf War. But military needs will be ultimately driven by the nature of American strategy. And when strategy is absent, science, whether rooted in technology, operational art, or social science, will take over. So what is to be done?

One of America's greatest (but little-known) strategic thinkers ironically found the answer in science itself. Air Force Colonel John Boyd busied himself with an expansive reading list after retirement, synthesizing insights from the emerging discipline complexity science along with the timeless lessons of classic military history. An iconoclastic figure, Boyd is known for declaring "If you've got one *doctrine*, you're a *dinosaur*." While Boyd's insights are often reduced down to the idea that one should simply be faster than the enemy, his real ideas were far more complex.

In Boyd's paper "Destruction and Creation," the widely read Colonel synthesized mathematicians Kurt Gödel and Werner Heisenberg's insights in pointing out that inward-oriented efforts to force observed reality to mesh with internally derived concepts only increase chaos and destruction. It is impossible to determine the consistency and character of an abstract system within itself (See John R. Boyd, "Destruction and Creation," September 3, 1976). Boyd noted that this had potentially dire consequences for rigid closed systems:

The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that all observed natural processes generate entropy. From this law it follows that entropy must increase in any closed system—or, for that matter, in any system that cannot communicate in an ordered fashion with other systems or environments external to itself. Accordingly, whenever we attempt to do work or take action inside such a system—a concept and its match-up with reality—we should anticipate an increase in entropy hence an increase in confusion and disorder. Naturally, this means we cannot determine the character or nature (consistency) of such a system within itself, since the system is moving irreversibly toward a higher, yet unknown, state of confusion and disorder. ...Furthermore, unless some kind of relief is available, we can expect confusion to increase until disorder approaches chaos— death.

The human decision-making process, Boyd argues, deals with this conundrum through a constant dialectic of creation and destruction of mental patterns and perceptions in response to a changing and complex observed reality. We cannot escape from chaos, rather we are most successful when we embrace it by shattering the rigid mental patterns that have built up and then synthesize the new realities we observe to create a new understanding. Such a process of structuring, dissolving, restructuring, and dissolving again must be repeated endlessly.

Contemporary American strategic problems flow from the fact that we cannot adjust the ossified thinking of Washington D.C. to the constantly shifting observed reality of the outside world. A failure to match concepts to observed reality has amplified the already formidable entropy of the American political system. The corresponding failure to make strategy results in a search further inward towards the "science" of war. Better strategy will come about only when the process by which strategy is made becomes supple, flexible, and less dominated by sacred cows and special interests.

Critics of American foreign policy often undermine their own case with conspiracy theorizing about the "military-industrial complex." The real problem, however, is not James Bond villain-style secret plans and hidden agendas but basic human frailty. A largely homogenous group of people is not going to have all the answers to questions of war and peace because they are necessarily limited by their experience, specialization, and biases.

Widening the circle of discussion is a necessary step for improving American strategy. Largely absent, for example, from the uninformed debate about counter-terrorism measures in Yemen are regional experts who have studied, lived, or worked in the region. Another happy outcome would be the breaking of the political double standard that marks skeptics of intervention abroad as "unserious" and grants the aura of statesmanship to those who reflexively call to send in the Marines. Until the process of conceiving strategy is characterized more by "destruction and creation" than closed debate, the science of war will continue to substitute for realistic strategy.

EEI#26 An Essential ELEMENT of Information:
 “So, What Kind of War and Warfare Is It?” – So far



Miranda Rights, IEDs, Counter -Terrorism, Weapons of Mass Destruction, “reasonable doubt,” Counter Insurgency, cyber war, Geneva Conventions, enemy combatants, gang warfare and Drug wars, etc., etc, are all elements that must be considered in defining or even just establishing *boundary conditions* in a search for “what kind of war.” While certainly this series has not answered the question, the intent was to put in one place, discussion of at least some of the non- core World War II, non-core Cold War elements crucial to bounding the problem, leveraging serious writers with multiple perspectives. For ease of reference here are the posts/links with the main author or provider of the core thread in parenthesis:

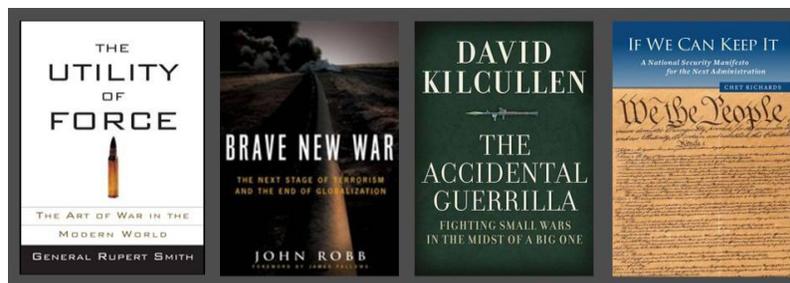
1. **So What Kind of War Is It? (First in a Series)** [Von Lubitz, Beakley]
2. **On War, On Crime – the Intersection** [Sullivan, et. al]
3. **Civilian Courts no place for terrorists** [Brooks]
4. **War? What War?** [Krauthammer]
5. **Boundary Layers** [Beakley]
6. **5 Myths about keeping America safe from terrorism** [Flynn]
7. **The war of new words: Why military history trumps buzzwords** [Owen]
8. **No Exit** [Bacevich]
9. **Square Pegs, Round Holes vs. “War Amongst the People”** [Smith]
10. **Definitions or Targets** [Ganor]
11. **Science, defence and strategy... and John Boyd** [Elkus]

While the question *what kind of war is it* remains unanswered, this appears an appropriate place to suspend the series, at least for now, with one final thought from British General Sir Rupert Smith:

... we are living in a world of confrontations and conflicts rather than one of war and peace; one in which the clear categories of security and defence – the basic purposes for which force is used – have merged...

This is no longer industrial war... absolute and clear threats in recognizable groupings, and... stable political contexts for operations... our opponents are formless and their leaders and operatives are outside the structures in which we order the world and society... The threats they pose are not directly to our states or territories but to the security of our people, of other peoples, our assets and way of life... They are of and amongst the people – in the flesh and in the media – and it is there that the fight takes place.

The famous ballad from World War I days –“Over There” – cannot be this century’s *hosting one for the boys* song of record. For those interested in further reading, the following four books are most highly recommended.



JEB

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