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Transitions from Terrorism to Modernity: Linking External and Internal change Dimensions

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Linking External and Internal Change Dimensions

Greg Mills

The struggle between Arab nationalism and Islamic radicalism may determine the direction of Middle Eastern politics and society and possibly of world history for decades to come. The war on terror is likely to be more like the Cold War than a hot war, but a successful battle against the war on terrorism will have to involve military means with long-term engagement. The answer may lie in shifting the focus away from attempts to defeat the enemy to a strategy that attempts to neutralize the enemy, which demands nuance and empathy with local conditions.

> If we are just killing terrorists, we are not achieving anything ... I call them the leaves of a tree. As long as the tree is there, the leaves will keep growing.
>
> — President Pervez Musharraf, Stockholm, July 2004

Amid the theories and conspiracies around 9/11, the only two obvious common denominators about the nineteen terrorists were their religious identity and the fact that they had spent time in Afghanistan.[1] Ironically, the link between the two was understood by and familiar to the U.S. government, which, in the course of the Cold War, had supported a war of Muslim fundamentalists against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

Many Arabs understandably bemoan their association with radicalism and backwardness. They prefer to stress the great achievements of Arab culture over the centuries, including such contributions as the arch, the zero, the preservation of Greek learning during the Middle Ages, and algebra. During Europe's Dark Ages, as Will Durant reminds us, Arabs "led the world in power, order and extent of government, in refinement of manners, in standards of living, in humane legislation and religious toleration, in literature, scholarship, science, medicine and philosophy."[2] But in the same breath, many Arabs lay the blame at the door of the West or Israel or both. It is inescapable, however, that Islamic movements have chosen to advertise the link between the gun and the Koran: consider the names of Islamic Jihad (Holy War), Al-Dawa (The Calling), Hezbollah (Party of God), Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya

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(Islamic Group), and the moniker *mujahideen* (holy warrior).

Three days after the war started in Iraq in March 2003, I attended a *diwaniya* in Kuwait City. While Kuwait is, at best, a limited democracy, there is a thriving civil society debate. Kuwaitis — or at least Kuwaiti men — regularly attend such public meetings. At this one, I was surprised to hear the extent of the criticism of the Emir and his ruling clique, and of the absence of voting rights for women. While all present agreed that Saddam had to go, they were similarly concerned about the longer-term impact of the war on the Arab world. To deal with these negative perceptions, many felt that the United States has to promote reform and change wherever necessary, including in countries as diverse as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan, and Indonesia.

Until 9/11, the rise of militant Islam — now considered the new global threat — was largely ignored by the United States and other international leadership. But is it possible to reform the societies in which this form of political-Islam is taking hold? Can one modernize regimes where small, insular, and often isolated cliques rule their populations with consideration only for their own survival? What is the role of leadership in this environment, and what shapes its choices?

The End of Isms?

Every morning promptly at nine o'clock, the green police van pulled up outside my window in Cairo's sleepy suburb of Zamalek to collect the ten policemen who had gathered there. My hotel's guard watched this event slumped apparently disinterested in his chair, fiddling with his AK-47, perhaps because the conclusion of his twelve-hour shift remained some way off.

Cairo is a contradiction between function and frenetic activity; a contrast between the deep-rooted knowledge and power that built the three Great Pyramids of Giza, and today's sprawling, uncontrolled and poverty-stricken metropolis housing at least three times more people than its closest African rival, Lagos. Enveloped in pollution and dust, it emits a cacophony of noise from more than half a million cars and its 15 million-or-so inhabitants, one quarter of the country's population. Yet its people remain, for the most part, warmly hospitable and friendly — qualities for which the Arabs are renowned. It is, the author David Lamb notes, a paradox of civilization's birthplace and developing country status, a mixture of East and West, First and Third Worlds, and of old and new.[3]

But as might be expected of the nation living in such a thousand-year-old city where Plato once reportedly studied and for which Verdi composed *Aida*, Egyptians regard themselves as unique — as Lamb puts it, "a cut above the rest of the Arab world." Or as Anwar Sadat's National Security Advisor, Hafiz Ismail, is quoted by Lamb as saying: "We Egyptians are Arab, and don't ever forget this — but we are not like other Arabs."

Such self-belief founded in its pharaonic history combined with the knowledge that one in four Arabs is Egyptian granted Egypt leadership of the post-independence Arab world. This role was carefully cultivated and skilfully mastered by Gamal Abdel Nasser who, preaching a mix of pan-Arabism, nationalism, anti-Zionism, and Arab socialism, developed a bold foreign-policy agenda emphasizing Egypt's strategic location in the overlapping worlds of Arab, African, non-aligned, and Islamic nations.

This recent history should not, however, overshadow important developments in
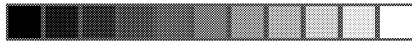
Arab politics: increasing diversity between states, and the shift over the past three decades toward Arab nationalism, a result principally of the devaluation of the other "isms," including socialism and anti-imperialism — even though this has not translated into a system of governance effective or efficient enough to meet the aspirations of their populations. The controversial reception of Francis Fukuyama's thesis on the supposed "end of history" at the conclusion of the Cold War should be enough to deter those who attempt to extrapolate the importance of events as representing the "end" or the "beginning" of a period of history. Yet it is the struggle between Arab nationalism and the most potentially damaging of all the "isms" — Islamic radicalism — that may determine the direction of Middle Eastern politics and society — and possibly world history — for decades to come.

Bernard Lewis[4] argues that the basic historical response of the Islamic world to its decay during the post-Renaissance period was to believe that the fault lay in its falling away from "good old ways, Islamic and Ottoman" and that the "basic remedy" was thus a return to them. This "diagnosis and prescription," he argues, "still command wide acceptance in the Middle East." Absolutism combined with the identification of a Western threat to these traditional, "pure" values is a cocktail for widespread violence, and provides a credible philosophical vehicle for radical leadership. Lewis is not alone, even though his (Western-origin) views have become targeted as "anti-Islamic." For example, the Lebanese scholar Fouad Ajami has also argued that some of the trouble in the Middle East comes from radical Islam rather than the widely held view that it is a response to U.S. policies.[5] But this explains Osama bin Laden's "Declaration of the World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders" three years before September 11, in which he stated that "to kill Americans and their allies, both civil and military, is the individual duty of every Muslim who is able, until the Aqsa mosque [in Jerusalem] and the Haram mosque [in Mecca] are freed from their grip, and until their armies, shattered and broken-winged, depart from all the lands of Islam."[6] His objective is, however, the overthrow of Middle Eastern governments and the establishment of Islamic states; the method, the undermining of the West's commitment to these states and the drawing of a link between Western influence and Middle Eastern rulers. There is nothing new here in terms of ambitions, except that now the main fight is taking place within the Muslim world.

Ironically, it is not only the failure of past "isms" but the emergence of new forces —including capitalism and globalism — that are seen today as potent threats to which the response is Islamic radicalism. The resultant tension — and conflict — between individualism and fundamentalism, between modernity and tradition, manifest between and within states, will likely be a defining feature of international relations for the foreseeable future.

Thus the principal security challenges facing us today are two-fold and inter-related. One is the threat of terrorism, striking at rich and poor countries and populations alike. The other is the threat of poverty and global exclusion to the bulk of the world's six billion people, 40 percent of whom are estimated to be living under the daily international poverty datum line of U.S. $1.

How can we meet these challenges?

The Challenge for Islamic States

Both the camel guide and carpet seller in Petra, Jordan, agreed that the reason for

the lack of tourists in November 2003 was "the American Bush, Sharon and Palestine." They agreed with the more sophisticated analysis of the Moroccan foreign ministry official who, in July 2004, said that success in the war on terror depended principally on settling the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, which in turn relied on greater pressure being exerted on the Israeli prime minister by the United States.

While no doubt the war in Iraq had led to a downturn in regional economies and tourism numbers, Arab states have routinely been fond of blaming others for their plight. Yet the *2003 UN Arab Development Report* suggests that Arabs have to take their share of responsibility for underdevelopment.[7] Moreover, Al Qaeda bombings in Saudi Arabia and Istanbul suggested that the war of terror is widening, pitching Muslim against Muslim and Arab against Arab.

There is an imperative for Muslims to ensure that the actions of Osama bin Laden and those around him do not define Islam. Yet it is important to acknowledge, that Islam is far from a monolithic religious force continent-wide. Islam practised in West Africa is dissimilar to that in East Africa, to that in North Africa, to that in Southern Africa. Yet partnership is key in dealing with the threat of global Islamic terrorism.

As noted, Al Qaeda poses an existential threat to moderate Arab regimes. In this it is sometimes presumed that Saudi Arabia, given its role in funding Islamic causes, is at the core of a global terrorist problem rather than a co-victim and key partner in dealing with this blight. This is exactly the wedge that Al Qaeda and its allies want to drive between Riyadh and the West. Partnership between Saudi and the West is "indispensable" to the success of a counter-terrorism strategy in which, if it fails, the House of Saud has the most to lose. As Ranstorp has noted, "the international community faces an Al Qaeda threat that does not emanate solely from Saudi Arabia but nevertheless requires its partnership to see this struggle through to a successful completion."[8]

The big wake-up call for Saudi Arabia was the fact that fifteen of the nineteen 9/11 hijackers were Saudi. This, combined with the bombings on May 12 2002, meant, as U.S. deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage put it, "the scales fell from the eyes of the Saudis."[9] In response, the Saudi government moved to confront terrorism in four ways:

- First, by clamping down on militants and particularly on Al Qaeda. In August 2003, Crown Prince Abdullah described the battle against "deviant" and "misguided" terrorists, as a "conflict between the power of good and the power of evil";
- Second, by internal reform. In October 2003, the Saudi government announced that municipal elections would be held for the first time in the kingdom in 2004;
- Third, by playing a more active foreign-policy role, for example, in trying to assist in finding a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli *impasse*; and
- Fourth, by dealing with the teachings of intolerance in the religious schools — *madrassas* — and mosques.
  But can democracy provide the answer?

Some predict that democracy can only lead to political takeovers by radicals from Palestine to Morocco, since this group is generally better organized and Islam better represents the frustrations of the underclass. For the more optimistic, however, with

elections come certain rights as well as responsibilities. This is why analysts such as Shalom Harari, a colonel in Israeli military intelligence and an Arabist who has worked in the Palestinian areas for twenty years, stress the importance, for example, of staging open elections in the Palestinian Authority, in spite of the threat posed by Hamas and Islamic Jihad at the polls. Or as Saeb Erakat, the Palestinian chief nego-tiator has put it, "Anyone who says Arabs are not ready for democracy is a racist."[10] Importantly, democracy is key to ensuring the sort of freedom and way of life that terrorism tries to destroy.

Establishing democracy will not be an easy task, however, as Iraq shows. There the coalition has seemingly put aside its Jeffersonian instincts, to opt instead for a speedy transfer to civilian power for Iraqis — for what analysts describe as "democ-racy in a regional theme," a sort of benevolent authoritarian regime in the style of Egypt, under which the opposition has a role and "can speak" but can never come to power.

The problem for external agents for change, in Iraq as elsewhere throughout the region, is that some Arab leadership does not want to see liberal democracy flourish, but rather wants the status quo preserved and consolidated. Any long-term continued deterioration in the Iraqi situation will, as Halevy notes, give an "uplift to negative forces in the region." A combination of the upsurge in suicide attacks and the Iraqi situation has put into relief the stance of all regional actors on terrorism, an issue that one cannot be neutral about.[11]

The 2003 Riyadh and Istanbul bombings signalled a simultaneous widening of the war on terror and a deepening of cooperation in fighting it. No doubt much action will center on the Middle East. But care will have to be taken in the way in which the external powers engage in a region where the politics overlap with religion, ethnicity, geography, and personalities, and where political survival generally means physical well-being.

Ironically, despite the views of the carpet seller and camel rider, most of the tour-ists in Petra are American — certainly the bigger spenders are. The region cannot live without the global leviathan, but the United States and its allies will have to learn quickly to deploy their own power with care. As the Lebanese, Harvard-based academic Fouad Ajami has observed, a "great power should never wink at anyone in the Middle East. Small winks speak big things here. . . . They all want America's license, its resources and its green lights. . . . They like you big, but they want to send you back small; they like you a virgin, but they want to send you back a whore."[12]

Can the Military Provide the Answer?

A June 2003 edition of the influential *Jane's Defence Weekly* was headlined "The death of strategy." It argued that "effects-based operations dictate doctrine for the warfighter."[13] The use of effects-based operations (EBO) has seen a change in targeting strategy (and thus selection) from so-called "linear" to "parallel" sequence: that is, a variety of leadership, air, troop and other strategic targets can be attacked simultaneously. This targeting approach is enabled by the use of smart weapons employed in a "network-centric" real-time command-and-control battlefield system. EBO warfare, like that promoted by Sun Tzu, is about getting the enemy to fight according to your strategic interests. According to this line of reasoning, ultimately the United States can support a global military presence with fewer forces using air

and space assets. EBO, it is argued, "may provide the answer to an otherwise insoluble conundrum: how to maintain a high degree of readiness in an era of declining resources."[14]

But this invites a strategic corollary. In the face of overwhelming U.S. military superiority, it should not be surprising that opposing nations and paramilitary non-governmental groups should be attracted to the notion of asymmetric warfare. Whenever there has been a power with a clear advantage due to superior organization, doctrine, training, numbers or equipment, their opponents seldom seek straightforward combat, and instead try to avoid decisive confrontation. This has been the strategic guideline of guerrilla warfare since time immemorial. This largely explains why the world's largest power got so badly bogged down (and ultimately lost the war) in Vietnam, and how the cost to the colonial powers of continued occupation was made greater than any possible benefit in the wars of national liberation. It also explains the approach of the Iraqi resistance to coalition forces after the fall of Saddam.

The gap between conventional and guerrilla warfare has undoubtedly narrowed with the advent of complex, high-tech systems – not just laser-homing bombs, but the whole package of satellites, reconnaissance aircraft, drones, intelligence, and analysis needed to locate enemy targets. Ironically, largely civilian-based information-technology skills have given the United States an enormous military edge. But the utility of strategies such as "rapid dominance" or "overwhelming force" (bywords of "shock and awe" and EBO adherents), the aim of which is to make it apparent to an opponent that they have no real alternatives other than to fight and die or to give up, are still insufficient in guerrilla operations.

Indeed, this is not enough to combat the sort of terrorist threat posed by Al Qaeda and other similar groups. Information technology can help prevent, but cannot altogether stop terrorists of no known fixed abode or base armed with box cutters intent on suicide missions. For those who command these men and women, asymmetric warfare is much less bloody and costly than symmetrical war would be. How then can terrorism best be countered?

The Internal Dimension

Bernard Lewis' controversial volume on the rise and decline of the Islamic world, *What Went Wrong?*[15] details how Muslims lost the leadership of civilization and retreated from modernity.

By the middle of the last millennium, Islamic control had expanded to the point of dominating much of central and Eastern Europe, all of the Middle East and North Africa, a significant belt of sub-Saharan Africa, and much of Central Asia, South Asia and Russia. Partly their decline was posted by their inability to take advantage of the expansion in sea trade, and partly signalled by the increasing frequency of military defeats. Both these relative failings illustrated the shifting balance of power between Europe and the Ottoman Empire, itself a reflection of the advances made as a result of European innovation, invention, and experiment. Lewis notes that "Usually the lessons of history are most perspicuously and unequivocally taught on the battlefield, but there may be some delay before the lesson is understood and applied."[16] But are there other ways to achieve this, beyond violence?

The reasons behind radical acts are complex, ranging from the crypto-religious, to the even more nebulous relationship between hope and despair, social humiliation
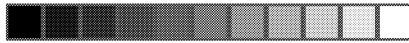
and powerlessness. The reality — and worse still, the prospect — of no jobs and no food in a mire of political repression, economic collapse, impoverishment, and corruption can lead citizens to grasp at the straws of radical solutions. In this environment, too, as Karl Maier observes with regard to Nigeria, "ethnic and religious prejudices" find fertile ground "where there is neither a national consensus nor binding ideology" and where the state almost totally lacks in morality and legitimacy.[17] For those nations that are not even classifiable as "developing" but rather, in terms of their economic decline (such as Nigeria and, indeed, much of sub-Saharan Africa) are, in fact "underdeveloping," the absence of job and education opportunities bears particularly hard on the youth — as a result often a generation seething with resentment and frustration.

The relationship between terrorism and poverty is, however, problematic. If terrorism is associated with the sort of acts perpetrated by Al Qaeda, then in the forty-nine countries currently designated by the United Nations as the least developed, hardly any terrorist activity occurs. If defined as a wider set of acts perpetrated by non-state actors against a civilian population, than of course these societies are far from immune but rather the tragic centerpiece (at least in terms of lives lost) of terrorism today – think only of the loss of life in Rwanda or in Sierra Leone or the Congo, numbering in the millions rather than the thousands of the World Trade Center.

Also many of the supporters of radicalism — and suicide bombings — are not poverty-stricken, but rather middle-class. There is not an exact correlation also between political repression and terrorism, in spite of the almost wholesale absence of democracies in the Middle East. Historically, repressive regimes such as Stalin's Russia or Nazi Germany did not suffer terrorism. No doubt the closing of legitimate paths of debate and dissent has, in some countries, led citizens to seek alternative avenues for political expression, however.[18]

More exactly, terrorism is a product of fanaticism, where the contemporary "pride of place" is taken by Islamic zealots, surpassing sectarian forces like the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and its Protestant loyalist counterparts or the more secular Baader Meinhof gang, with many of today's spin-offs of the Muslim Brotherhood.[19] Although the Brotherhood did not initially advocate violence, as a result of the influence of the ideologue Sayyid Qutb in the 1950s, by the 1970s, the Brotherhood had spawned radical terrorist groups like Takfir wa al-Hijra, whose Pol Pot-esque leader, Shukri Mustafa, believed that society was so corrupt that it had to be destroyed and built afresh.

But this does not explain why, even though acts are carried out in the name of Islam, some bombers are "as ignorant of Islamic jurisprudence" as they are "of Western liberal thought." For example, most of the Al Qaeda suicide hijackers had a technical education rather than religious background. And radicalism does not have a unique relationship with Islam. The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have used suicide techniques, but they do not do so in the name of Allah. Walter Laqueur notes that with the LTTE, a combination of *esprit de corps*, personality cult, and "the feeling of racial or religious superiority and an eternal conflict between their race or religion and that of the enemy" motivate the suicide bomber. Indeed, he argues that the Muslim suicide bomber is not a psychotic, but rather an introvert "looking for a spiritual anchor and a sense of certainties and community."[20] But even a religious motivation — in spite of its focus on preparation for the afterlife — is not enough. It demands an economic and

political condition and is sometimes accompanied by a gender dimension as women, often marginalized and victimized, are seduced and sent off to die by men for the cause.

The Nexus in Meeting these Challenges

The short answer as to how to do it — meet the challenge — is that every state is "experimenting." The Israelis have preferred to meet violence with still further violence. The coalition in Iraq has attempted to match the delivery of the hard security angle with the softer side of development efforts within a wider counter-insurgency type campaign. Both tactics have done little to break, but may indeed have worsened, the cycle of violence in that region.

One key problem in dealing with radicalism in the form of terrorism relates to the absence of common definition. As one Arab-based publication noted in 2004: "What is the real definition of terrorism, . .? Is it what is happening in Spain or what is happening everyday in Palestine?"[21] As a result of this, not only is one person's terrorist another's freedom fighter, but another defence used is that government's routinely kill more people than terrorists which undermines the "terrorist" label, often in dealing illicitly with political opponents from Tibetan Buddhists to the democratic opposition in Zimbabwe.

Understandings of radicalism and of dealing with its one manifestation, terrorism, have to hinge on questions of power. As Claude Ake notes with regard to Nigeria, "We have essentially relations of raw power in which right tends to be co-existensive with power and security depends on the control of power. The struggle for power, then, is everything and is pursued by every means."[22] The foundation for such radicalism is fundamentally in the nature of the state and its relationship with its citizens. In environments where the state is unresponsive to the basic needs of citizens, the strategic options facing leadership have ranged from divide and rule and patronage to the less-popular attempts to rise to the responsibility of management and what Chinua Achebe describes as "the challenge of personal example."[23] Political and religious radicalism can offer a useful diversion from criminal mismanagement of the economy, where the state serves less as a means of delivery free from fear or favour but a tool of plunder and distribution by rulers to their supporters.

According to the legal adviser of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Alan Baker, the legal environment offers little guidance on how to deal with asymmetric threats such as suicide terrorism. Given their focus on inter-state activity, there are no clear rules in the laws of armed conflict about how to deal with non-state terrorists.[24] The Protocol to the 1977 Geneva Convention offers the last formal legal interpretation on terrorism in this regard. Article 51 states that "Acts or threats of violence the primary purpose of which is to spread terror among the civilian population are prohibited."[25]

As William Schulz observes, "the fact that history has rehabilitated reputations [of those once considered terrorists] is no excuse for evading moral judgment today. And the fact that governments have been responsible for massive death and destruction offers no excuse for others' atrocities." While recognizing the fallibility of states in supporting international law, his argument of the need for an international treaty defining terrorism and outlining appropriate ways to combat it, is not without merit.[26] After all, at its root, the deprivation of human rights —

financial and political — has the greatest appeal for those promoting radical disorder.

The Need to Instigate Modernity

Some of Islamabad's *madaris*[27] were, by 2004, advertising their services via the Internet, contrary to their stereotype as hotbeds of Islamic radicalism. But Pakistani authorities continue to view the religious schools as a key focus in the war on terror.

Critics argue that the Pakistan has not only been a failed state since its bloody birth out of imperial India in 1947, but that today Washington's support for the Muslim state highlights both the hypocrisy of U.S. foreign policy and the illegitimacy of the rule of President Pervez Musharraf, the general who seized power *via* a military coup in October 1999.

Such criticism overlooks the available options for change. Musharraf has his hands full in trying to turn back simultaneously the tides of Islamic radicalization, poverty, corruption, and poor regional relations while civilianizing his government: a tall order for any leader, let alone one trying to walk the fine balance between keeping onside with the United States and maintaining legitimacy at home. As he put it in July 2004, "Muslim states are seen as the source of terrorism," warning of new "depths of chaos and despair" and of more "terrorism and an impending clash of civilisations" if the West, particularly the United States, and Muslim countries fail to eradicate the root causes of anger and resentment.[28]

Whatever the four-year electoral mindset of U.S. (and many other) administrations, there is little doubt that dealing with the post-9/11 brand of Islamic terrorism will take at least a generation. Military means can remove leaders but, as Iraq as shown, at best they will struggle to win the peace. In Pakistan, attempts to confront Islamic militants through military clampdowns are complicated by the self-governing system outside of Islamabad's control in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). As the violent response to the Army's 2004 operations in Wana and Wazeristan also illustrates, there is considerable local sympathy for Al Qaeda and other far-right religious groups in these tribal frontiers known as the *ilaqa ghair* — lawless country — to local Pathans.

A number of Pakistan's Islamic parties are dedicated to the stricter enforcement of Islamic Sharia law. These include *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi*, a Sunni Islamist militant group banned in 2001 because of alleged links to Al Qaeda. A similar fate befell *Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan* after the Sunni movement reportedly commenced a programme to recruit 50,000 suicide bombers. So has the militant Shi'a group *Tehrik-e-Jafria-e-Pakistan*.

Both moderates and extremists claim the legacy of Pakistan's founder Mohammed Ali Jinnah, with radicals claiming that he wanted to build an Islamic state. Musharraf has to overturn the direct legacy of Major-General Zia ul Haq who ruled Pakistan from 1977–88, and who introduced Islamic principles in most aspects of Pakistani life. Zia was ironically aided and abetted by U.S. support via the war against the Soviets in neighboring Afghanistan for which *mujahideen* fighters were groomed in his madaris and recruited to the struggle.

Key in this, as Colin Powell has argued, is the need to address some of the underlying causes including education. For example, the U.S. Secretary of State has denounced Pakistan's madaris as being "breeding grounds for terrorists."[29] No wonder that Musharraf has said that his country is involved in a "greater jihad

(*jihad-e-akbar*) . . . a jihad against illiteracy, a jihad against poverty, backwardness, hunger."[30]

There are 1.7 million students in Pakistan's 10,430 madaris.[31] Many of them get drawn in for the food aid offered to students, with a bountiful supply of recruits for militant causes given the economic conditions in much of South Asia. As Musharraf has put it, "They feed and house the poorest of the poor children."[32] In this way, poverty can cause terrorism.

Madaris highlight more fundamental problems with Arab education systems. These link to the use of language as much as they do the content of syllabi. When teaching at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, in the early 1990s, I discovered most black students were terrifically disadvantaged by being taught — and having to respond — in English, what might have been their third or even fourth preferred language. In the same way, the formal Arabic medium — *Nahaoui* — that students are taught is light years away from street Arabic — or *Dareg*. Bridging this gap is critical to extending formal education and, in the view of local educationalists, moving away from today's rote learning of Arab systems.

While radicalization has a social dimension, analysis should not discount both the extent of religious ideological content and the organization behind it. This is what regional conflict specialists describe as "spiritual poverty."

As one influential Moroccan argues, radicalization relies on an archaic vision of the Sharia and an Islamic system based on the sanctification and legitimization of Allah. This use of God "is a political business — and it is not easy to challenge God in this way." While some in the Kingdom felt that they were previously immune to these tendencies, the *Salafiyah al-Jihadiyah* (Islamic Reform and Jihad) formed in the early 1990s is accused of involvement in bombings in Casablanca in May 2003, although responsibility for these acts was claimed by the *Saiqah* (Thunderbolt), a splinter of the radical *Sirat al-Mustaqim* (Correct Path).[33] As with Pakistan, many of these organizations have their origins in the radicalism and alienation brought home with returning *mujahideen* from the war against Soviet-run Afghanistan.

Countering this religious ideology demands, in turn, the identification of an alternative ideology and vision, in the Moroccan's words "fusing national identity, tradition and modernisation, also restoring the legitimate place of God in society." Indeed, the Islamic world might say "we have been too silent, too shy, and too paralysed to deal with this because of the issue of religion. But why should God not be on our side too?"

This demands dealing with social conditions and poverty, transforming the system of education. In Pakistan, the madaris have been obliged to introduce four subjects: Science, English, Pakistan studies, and maths, drawing them into the job markets outside of religion and into the mainstream of Pakistani society. But they will still graduate with a *Shahadatul-A'lamiya* (international degree) in Islamic and Arabic studies at the end of this five-year reform programme, as they do today. Although the education budget has increased to 2.3 percent of GNP and one-third is now allocated to reforming the madaris, just 200 have today received computers and teaching assistance for the new curriculum. Education reform will be a long slog. But, in the words of my learned Moroccan, change also hinges on "speaking out, taking the floor and filling the ideological vacuum."[34] Yet this is not happening — or at least not happening fast enough.

Arab states did not — and remained unlikely to — intervene to remove Saddam. Nothing happened when Saddam invaded Iran, and nor when he gassed his own

people at Halabjah. Yet when he was removed by the coalition, the Arab world responded badly, perhaps because they were fearful of the impact on their own society and reform path (or lack of it). When faced with the abrogation of human rights by leadership in their midst, their resort has, until now, been to close ranks and genuflect to sovereign concerns. The excuse for not interfering is often to allow for regional, historical, or cultural differences in the pace at and the extent to which democracy can be instituted and followed.

A 2004 report of the U.S. RAND Corporation — "Civil Democratic Islam: partners, resources and strategies" — argues that the West should help religious modernists in the Islamic world in order to prevent a clash of civilizations. It states: "It seems judicious to encourage the elements within the Islamic mix that are most compatible with global peace and the international community and that are friendly to democracy and modernity." It notes that modernists should be supported by, for example, assisting in education reforms, including getting their views into the Islamic curriculum and helping them in the new media world which is dominated by fundamentalist and traditionalists.[35] This is not a million light years away from the response of other American policy-thinkers — notably the so-called neo-cons — in attempting to counter the ideological component of Islam with an ideology not of containment but radical, revolutionary liberalization and democratization. Time will tell if this externalist strategy is successful, though events in post-Saddam Iraq are not promising. They are certainly light years away from early promises by Bush on the impact of an Iraqi democratic revolution. In his speech to the National Endowment for Democracy in November 2003, for example, he argued that "The failure of Iraqi democracy would embolden terrorists around the world, increase dangers to the American people, and extinguish the hopes of millions in the region. Iraqi democracy will succeed — and that success will send forth the news, from Damascus to Teheran — that freedom can be the future of every nation. The establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution."[36]

In the minds of local officials in both Morocco and Pakistan, is the need for the West to assist in ending injustices against Muslims, including the conflicts in Palestine, Kashmir, and Chechnya. "Imagine," said one senior Pakistani foreign office official, "if the Russians responded in St Petersburg as they have done in Chechnya? Would not the international community be outraged?" His point was that Muslims have somehow become dehumanised, and have resorted, in turn, to more and more radical acts of violence and counter-violence, including suicide bombings. Without such action to end these trigger conflicts, they would serve as draw-cards for international brigades like Al Qaeda in the same way as the Afghanistan conflict and, in earlier times, the Spanish Civil War had been a magnet for various causes.[37]

Of course, success cannot only be instigated from outside. Even though some Pakistanis dispute the right of militants to describe themselves as Muslims, it is impossible to ignore, in the words of a high-ranking officer in Pakistan's feared Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) bureau, that "most terrorists are Islamic fundamentalists." One also cannot similarly ignore that Islamic fundamentalism is attractive to the affluent as well as those in the madaris. After all, as an ISI officer reminded, American journalist Daniel Pearl's assassin was an LSE graduate.[38]

Responding to radicalism thus demands internal leadership in dealing with a wider struggle between modernists and traditionalists, which in most areas of the Arab and Islamic world remains unresolved. It demands an alternative ideology to

radicalism. In Musharraf's terms, this requires "enlightened moderation" eschewing radicalism.[39]

This does not mean that the majority of people are opposed to religion. Indeed, anything but. Rather, that many do not believe this demands a truly Islamic state with laws based on the Koran, but instead one in which Islam and democratic values co-exist. It means essentially that local governments in the Arab and Islamic world have to get on with it themselves: leadership has to convince their populations that they are built for democracy and are acquainted with human rights, and *vice versa*. For example, the Saddam trial in Iraq would be a high-profile step in establishing the rule of law and due process, necessary also in remedying an intervention criticized from the outset for its dishonesty.[40]

One Pakistani summed up his country's challenges by stating: "It's not the people or the politicians, but the system." Musharraf is something of a singleton reformer. Indeed, his constant and most difficult challenge is to challenge and change this system extending social benefits while gaining enough political support externally and internally from moderates and modernizers to head off the extremists.

Conclusion: Beyond Parody

It would be a mistake to dismissively parody the Bush administration as an aberration or underestimate international resolve in the war on terror. As John F Kennedy noted over the Berlin Crisis in 1961,[41] "We do not want to fight — but we have fought before. And others in earlier times have made the same dangerous mistake of assuming that the West was too selfish and too soft and too divided to resist invasions of freedom in other lands."

A successful campaign — one where the war against terrorism and not only the battle is won — will thus have to involve military means with longer-term engagement. As U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said,[42] "[The fight against terror] undoubtedly will prove to be more like a cold war than a hot war. If you think about it, in the Cold War it took 50 years, plus or minus. It did not involve major battles. It involved cooperation by a host of nations. It involved the willingness of populations in many countries to invest in it and to sustain it. It took leadership at the top from a number of countries that were willing to be principled and to be courageous and to put things at risk; and when it ended, it ended not with a bang, but through internal collapse."

Dealing with radicalization is not, as many in Israel and Palestine have preferred to view it, about calculating percentages of territory or of solely debating the legality of responses. Solutions have to be considered within the wider political process, where the concerns of people rather than questions of legal principle are the focus. That is why debates around the legality or even the legitimacy (or not) of targeted killings are less than half the point — the real debate should be around rights of belonging, whether this be the right of the existence of the state of Israel or the creation of the state of Palestine.

Part of the answer to this conundrum lies also in altering the (human) tendency toward dehumanizing one's foe: whether this be "gooks" or "Charlie in Vietnam," "ragheads" or "clothheads" in the Middle East, or "skinnies" in Somalia. But ultimately, terrorism and radicalism is a choice: it will thrive if it is not made a costly one or the only available policy selection. And the military can only provide part of the answer.

The difficulties faced by the coalition military in Iraq illustrate that military power alone is not enough to secure American — or Western — interests. But the contrarian appeal of terms such as "soft power" depends, too, on how these terms are defined. Sometimes soft power is viewed as the ability to convince people to do America's bidding with various inducements, as opposed to forcing them through military power and threats. At other times, it refers to the soft power of culture. The problem is that the latter, while an attractive, non-military option, is not a power in the sense that it can be directed and focused. Culture happens because of the market and communications. Put differently, it is difficult to use Michael Jackson and Michael Jordan in the same way that development aid can be employed. And in fact, to complicate matters further, the United States may be trying to use development aid to overcome the image that the two Michaels and other cultural phenomenon have given Americans.

Force and technology, however neat and sophisticated their splicing, are thus not enough to defeat terrorism. Here the answer lies partly in the shift in focus away from attempts to "defeat" the enemy but rather toward a broader-based strategy attempting to "neutralize" the enemy. This requires linking each act back to specific military and political objectives. But it requires more than the use of massive firepower aimed with precision. Instead of trying to destroy everything with a massive show of force, the success of guerrilla warfare depends on not destroying everything — and firmly linking military acts to a wider set of political objectives. But this demands nuance and an empathy with local conditions, aspects sometimes lost on the average GI, and for which intelligence and knowledge is key. Human rather than high-tech sensors are required for sustained regime change and reform. And in the Middle East in particular, defence and intelligence services will continue to have an important role to play in at least two respects: first, in terms of the defence of the realm, including society at large and the population; and second, and more controversially, as agents for change through an enlightened system of military governance. ❧

Notes

1. On the impact of Afghanistan, see George Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2003).
2. Cited in David Lamb, *The Arabs: Journeys beyond the Mirage* (New York: Vintage, 2002), 131.
3. Ibid.
4. Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong?* (New York: Perennial, 2002).
5. "The Falseness of Anti-Americanism," at *http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/983088/posts.*
6. At http://www.economist.com/displaystory.cfm?story_id=2035107.
7. At http://www.undp.org/rbas/ahdr/english2003.html.
8. Magnus Ranstorp, "Saudi Arabia and the global fight against Al-Qa'ida," *RUSI Journal*, February 2004, 32.
9. "Inside the Kingdom," *TIME*, September 15, 2003. See also F Gregory Gause III, "Saudi Arabia over a barrel," *Foreign Affairs*, 79, 3, (May/June 2000):80–94.
10. Both were interviewed in November 2003 in Herzliyah and Ramallah respectively.
11. Discussion, Jerusalem University, Mount Scopus, November 2003.
12. Cited in Thomas Friedman, *From Beirut to Jerusalem* (London: HarperCollins, 1995), 209.
13. Nick Cook, "Cause and effect," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, June 18, 2003.
14. Ibid., 54.

15. Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*
16. Ibid., 8–9.
17. Karl Maier, *This House has Fallen: Nigeria in Crisis* (London: Penguin, 2000), xx-xxii.
18. See, for example, "Fighting Terrorism for Humanity," a conference report, Government of Norway with the International Peace Academy, September 22, 2003, especially pages 6-7.
19. See Walter Laqueur, *No End to War: Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Continuum Pub. Group, 2003), cited at http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename = JPost/JPArticle/ShowFull&cid 1082518206388&p = 1006953079969.
20. Ibid.
21. *The AUI News*, Ifrane, Morocco, May 2004.
22. Cited in Maier, *op cit*, p, .xv.
23. Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1983), 1.
24. Discussion, Sandton, South Africa, May 7, 2004.
25. At http://deoxy.org/wc/wc-proto.htm.
26. William F Schulz, "Security Is a Human Right, Too," *New York Times*, April 18, 2004, at http://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/18/magazine/18ESSAY.html?ex = 1082865600&en = d3fafddecb5933c3&ei = 5062&partner = GOOGLE.
27. Also known as "madrasas."
28. At http://www.iht.com/articles/528151.html.
29. At http://www.tribuneindia.com/2004/20040312/world.htm.
30. See "U.S.-Pakistan Affirm Commitment Against Terrorism," at http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/02/20020213-3.html.
31. These figures were given in an interview in Islamabad with the Ministry of Education, July 14, 2004.
32. Ibid.
33. For details on these and the Moroccan Islamic parties, go to http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/talking_point/3181815.stm.
34. Interview, Rabat Palace, June 7, 2004.
35. "Preventing aCclash of Civilisations," at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/3578429.stm.
36. At http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/print/20031106-2.html.
37. Interview, Pakistan foreign ministry, Islamabad, July 9, 2004.
38. Interview, ISI HQ, Islamabad, July 10, 2004.
39. This is a term used frequently by the Pakistani president and his officials. See, for example, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A5081-2004May31.html.
40. See, for example, Patrick Bishop, "Saddam in the Dock," *Gulf News*, July 3, 2004.
41. July 25, 1961, at http://www.cs.umb.edu/jfklibrary/jfk_berlin_crisis_speech.html.
42. *TIME*, October 15, 2001.