

Naval War College Review

Volume 58
Number 2 *Spring*

Article 13

2005

The Moral Warrior: Ethics and Service in the U.S. Military

Cynthia Perrotti

Martin L. Cook

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Perrotti, Cynthia and Cook, Martin L. (2005) "The Moral Warrior: Ethics and Service in the U.S. Military," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 58 : No. 2 , Article 13.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol58/iss2/13>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

be expected to strike frequently to disrupt society, the strikes will be difficult to identify and stop, and a progressively more integrated world will continue to foster easier access and more effective networks.

In chapters 4 through 7, Ullman deals with a wide range of strategy options for dealing with the threat. His focus is on the causes of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; autocratic rule in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, and Egypt; the Indian-Pakistani conflict over Kashmir; and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

In the final chapter (chapter 8), Ullman does an excellent job of pulling his thoughts together and summarizing elements of a countervailing strategy that are addressed individually in the earlier parts of the book. They include international considerations such as a revised alliance system as well as domestic recommendations involving Congress, the Department of Defense, the intelligence community, and national security education. Overall the chapter presents a comprehensive and well thought out approach for tackling the threat of Islamic extremism. As such, it overcomes a minor distraction of earlier chapters, where the author occasionally digresses from his central focus to provide possibly unnecessary background information.

Overall, I recommend the book to any reader concerned with Islamic extremism. Much has been written about the subject, but Ullman is to be commended for his contribution to our understanding of the challenge and for his wide-ranging and insightful suggestions for a countervailing strategy.

HENRY C. BARTLETT, JR.
Naval War College



Ferguson, Charles D., William C. Potter, et al. *The Four Faces of Nuclear Terrorism*. Monterey, Calif.: Center for Nonproliferation Studies, 2004. 378pp. \$19.95

Only readers well prepared for a sobering analysis of the likelihood of the use of nuclear materials by terrorists and its consequences should read this book.

The Four Faces of Nuclear Terrorism stands alone as a realistic and scientific treatment of a dire threat. It is well researched, credible, and easily understood despite delving into nuclear physics. The authors, all with impeccable credentials, have effectively framed their discussions around four situations that chillingly illustrate how nuclear materials may find their way into a devastating weapon of mass destruction.

Each of the “four faces” is a distinct scenario of nuclear terrorism and a frightening apparition of what our nation confronts. The first example is theft and detonation of an intact nuclear weapon, without question the most worrisome, followed secondly by theft or purchase of fissile material leading to the fabrication and detonation of a crude nuclear weapon or, as the authors say, an “improvised nuclear device.” The third example is an attack on, or sabotage of, nuclear installations, causing the release of large amounts of radioactivity. The final manifestation is terrorist dispersal of highly radioactive material by conventional explosives, commonly referred to as a “dirty bomb” or, in the authors’ words, a “radiological dispersion device.” For each of these calamitous circumstances, the authors provide a cacophony of story lines, any one of which would make a riveting movie.

The writers cleverly create an analytic framework to examine the four “faces” of nuclear terrorism. This probing methodology includes looking at a causative chain of events leading to the acquisition and detonation of a mass-casualty weapon incorporating nuclear material; terrorist motivations and capabilities to achieve nuclear potential; transfer of radiological materials by force, intimidation, collusion, insider assistance, or as a gift by rogue states; defeating safeguards on the physical protection of fissile material or safeguards against unauthorized detonation of a nuclear device; undetected transportation of a device to the target; and lastly, consequence management of an undeterred terrorist nuclear attack.

Although the authors distinguish between the four scenarios, their analysis of underlying factors is often unnecessarily repetitive. Indeed, conclusions are lifted verbatim from previous chapters—understandably, since patterns of illegal activity often mirror each other, regardless of criminal goal. This frequent redundancy undermines the argument that there are four distinct paradigms relating to nuclear terrorism. Nevertheless, skillful incorporation of case studies helps to discriminate the authors’ definitions.

The book does a less effective job of assessing the security environment. Chapter 1 states, “Risk can be defined as the probability of an event multiplied by its consequences . . . the greater the *probability* [emphasis added] or the greater the consequences, the higher the overall risk.” A more complete analysis of risk, however, should consider factors of vulnerability and threat with more specificity. *Probability*, as the authors use the word, may implicitly consider

threat, foreseeability, and vulnerability, but alone is inadequate to capture the challenge of assessing risk. The book asserts that all four scenarios “pose potentially grave and imminent dangers” and America “must work to address all of them.” Risk analysis is designed to prioritize resources and energy. Unfortunately, however, the book’s conclusions do not offer much in the way of clear focus when all four faces are equally serious. In case the reader is not convinced of a nuclear terrorist threat, the authors declare, “Given the significant quantities of radioactive material currently outside regulatory control around the world, the unambiguous evidence of terrorist interest in using these materials to cause harm, and the ease of carrying out a radiological attack, we believe that such an attack is all but inevitable.” So much for risk assessment.

In contrast, a particularly superb treatment of the most frightening development—that of a terrorist group acquiring an intact nuclear weapon—is found in chapter 3. This authoritative discussion of deteriorating nuclear security in Russia is at the same time candid and grave. The authors offer an intriguing juxtaposition between the ominous threat of huge Cold War intercontinental ballistic missiles and today’s menace of small, portable nuclear weapons. Thoughtful readers will not miss the implications that “the good old days” of the Soviet menace made risk assessment less risky.

Despite some drawbacks, this book effectively leads confused scientific neophytes toward clarity in dealing with the threat of nuclear terrorism. It describes solutions in ways that allow homeland security professionals to

international authority. Without a recognized legitimate international authority, he declares, future humanitarian wars will be conducted unilaterally or by a coalition.

Another chapter describes the intent of area bombing campaigns as either to target the “enemy’s capability to conduct military operations” or to “terrorize civilian populations and demoralize enemy citizens.” While today it is not politically correct to target civilians deliberately, the author believes any targeting of the enemy’s infrastructure could have a disproportionately negative effect on innocent civilians. The consequences of bombing now—the loss of clean water, heat, medical care, and food—would surely be death later. In addition, Cook states, that new precision targeting may tempt political leaders to use force early, instead of as a last resort.

The short, seven-page chapter on “Resisting Global Terrorism” briefly describes the challenges of applying the just-war framework to terrorism. Since al-Qa’ida is not a sovereign state and war is waged only against states, does the United States have the legitimate authority to curb terrorist organizations throughout the world? Is there a reasonable hope of success? Cook suggests that the former model of state sovereignty for the just-war framework must be adapted when dealing with terrorism, because terrorism is not necessarily a threat to a single state but to our civilization’s world order. I would have liked Cook to expand his thoughts on modifications to the just-war framework for terrorism.

What moral direction should the United States take now that it is the sole remaining superpower? What is the proper role of professional military

advice from an ethical and practical viewpoint? Why is force protection so imperative in humanitarian operations? Is the desire for human rights and democratic governments universally shared? Can we assume that the trend towards globalization will make it “irrational for large-scale interstate warfare”? These are a few of the thought-provoking questions that are discussed in this book.

Of the nine chapters, eight have been previously published. This may account for the lack of smooth flow among the numerous themes. Those interested in just-war theory will find this book an interesting read, but in our post-9/11 environment, this extensive treatment of “humanitarian war” has lost some of its post-Kosovo luster.

CYNTHIA PERROTTI

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force, Retired



Moore, John Norton. *Solving the War Puzzle: Beyond the Democratic Peace*. Durham, N.C.: Carolina Academic, 2003. 212pp. \$40

Solving the War Puzzle may be the most insightful and important examination of the causes of war since Clausewitz published *On War* in 1832. This slim volume, precisely written, superbly researched, and elegantly presented, carefully evaluates, integrates, and synthesizes the multiple elements the confluence of which results in armed conflict. This presentation is then used as a basis for choosing reasonable indices for the deterrence of interstate violence.

The broader international system is reviewed in terms of the government structures involved, the incentives presented to decision makers, and an examination of whether these structures