Islamic Terrorism and Clash of Civilizations

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Abstract

The September 11 terrorist attack leaves two theoretical questions: “Is it an unmistakable harbinger of a clash of civilizations?” and “Will the new anti-terrorism international order emerging from the September 11 lead to a US-led unipolar international system?” The answers are mixed: short-term optimism and longer-term uncertainties. On one hand the anti-terrorism order looks firm given the quick military success in the war in Afghanistan, overwhelming diplomatic victory that isolated Osama bin Laden, and compartmentalization of Islam that makes an immediate anti-Western solidarity unlikely. Nevertheless, a long-term prediction is still shrouded with uncertainties since the next war requires a comprehensive victory. To destroy all terrorist swamps will be militarily difficult while the international coalition is diplomatically brittle. Islamic sentiment with potential to develop into anti-Americanism and the continuing Israel-Palestine conflict as a source of Islamic terrorism are further burden. This is why the next war should be won in many dimensions. It requires balanced analyses of criminality and cause of terrorism as well as with clearer distinction between majority ordinary Muslims and Islamic terrorists. A failure in the next war, for example a coupling of Western parochialism with what the Islamic world perceives as arrogance of power, will help continuation of terrorism or even precipitate a clash with the Islamic civilization. If it is won militarily, diplomatically, and culturally, the anti-terrorism order will facilitate a transition to a new US-led international order.
Emergence of Anti-Terrorism Order

Anti-American terrorism since the 1990s shows three distinct trends: (1) geographical diversification of origin from Libya, Syria and Lebanon to South Asian and African countries; (2) drastic mushrooming in lethality and brutality as shown in the 1993 World Trade Center bombings in New York and the 1998 bombings of US embassies in East Africa, and (3) diminishing state sponsorship of terrorism and increase in terrorism by non-state entities. On top of the 1979 legislation that requires special licenses for exports to countries the Secretary of State designates as supporters of terrorist groups, the new trends necessitated the Clinton administration to take a variety of measures: the 1966 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, Presidential Decision Directives on Counter-terrorism, creation of National Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism, Critical Infrastructure Protection and Security, a sharp increase in anti-terrorism budget, the expansion of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s counter-terrorism division, and annual updating of the list of terrorism sponsor states, to list a few.

However, the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in which nearly 4,000 burned were or crushed under tons of rubble shows that the United States and the world have to do much more to battle terrorism. It compels students of terrorism to rewrite theory books. For future study they may have to combine theories of terrorism with those of mass killing. More clearly than any other time before, the traditional assumption that non-state actors or sub-state groups usually lack the capabilities and organization necessary to carry out killings beyond a few scattered terrorist acts now becomes dangerously anachronistic. As Bruce Hoffman clearly points out, the old notion that terrorists find it unnecessary to kill many as long as killing a few suffices for the purpose, is now becoming wishful thinking. Contrarily, the September 11 assault amply demonstrates that some terrorists enjoy a promiscuous killing spree and that even a tiny minority or sub-state groups, well armed and well organized, can generate an

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1 Testimony before the Subcommittee on Terrorism and Homeland Security, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, US House of Representatives, September 26, 2001.
appalling amount of bloodshed when unleashed upon unarmed and unorganized victims; it suggests even the possibility that weapons of mass destruction (WMD) could be used for terrorist objectives.

The whole world was stunned by the synchronized actions and professionalism devoted to killing as many innocent people as possible. For the United States citizens, September 11 has become the most unforgettable Day of Blood and Fire. The initial weeks since the attack were the most traumatic period, awakening Americans into hitherto unimagined realities. US citizens who had never fought a war within their homeland for some 140 years realized that the American continent was no longer safe from outside attack. The dispersal of anthrax-causing pathogen awakened them to an even more frightening possibility that some day in the future they would have to deal with full-scale biological, chemical and nuclear terrorism. Americans also realized that not only state actors but also non-state actors or invisible enemies such as organizations, systems, religious creeds, or a particular sentiment spread over a certain cultural zone could threaten their security.

Nevertheless, both the World and the United States should still deal with even much more critical two theoretical questions. “Is the September 11 attack an unmistakable harbinger of a clash of civilizations between the United States and Islamic world?” and “Will the new anti-terrorism international order emerging from September 11 be stepping stones that lead to a US-led unipolar international system?” The first question deserves particular attention since it directly relates to future quality of life for all nations including the United States. This is why the international community has concentrated attention on how to separate the Islamic terrorists from ordinary Muslims and how to prevent the American war in Afghanistan from escalating into a clash between American and Islamic civilizations.

The second question draws the attention of students of international relations. The September 11 terrorist attack and the American war in Afghanistan heralded an abrupt conclusion of the post-Cold War era and rapid emergence of a new international order based on anti-terrorism cooperation. The new international order has already been visualized by a variety of international actions. Right after the US declaration of an anti-terrorism war on September 11, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted some landmark resolutions demanding international coopera-
tion to fight terrorists collectively and cut off terrorist financing networks. Such swift action has seldom been seen in the 56-year history of the UN. About this time, the European Union (EU) countries pledged “strengthened cooperation and coordination in the exchange of relevant intelligence and the crackdown on money laundering.” On October 8, the Arab League expressed support of international efforts to combat terrorism while APEC countries adopted a statement at the Shanghai summit on October 21 unequivocally condemning the terrorist attacks on the United States. The world now realizes the acute threat from the common enemy of mankind. Amid the unprecedented global anti-terrorism solidarity, the voice of some developing countries guarding against American dominance and unilateralism in the anti-terrorism drive is almost inaudible.

It is true that the United States that has pursued a firmly unipolar international order since the demise of the Soviet Union and the victory in the Gulf War. Such intention is well envisioned in the Bush administration’s new global strategy plan that includes a missile defense program and tougher nonproliferation policies. For the United States, therefore, to lead the anti-terrorism international order, an interim order emerged from the September 11 attack, in such a manner that it ushers the world into a new and permanent US-led international order.

The answers to these critical questions are mixed. Seen from a short-term basis, the international anti-terrorism cooperation looks firm, and worries about civilization clash seem simply irrelevant. The United States has already achieved three shining success stories in Afghanistan since its first strikes on the Taliban and al Qaeda on October 7: quick military success aided by technological superiority and high-tech weapons, overwhelming diplomatic victory that isolated the terrorists and terrorist supporters, and effective use of Northern Alliance and other anti-Taliban Muslims by which the US forces could evade major ground combat and reduce American casualties to almost nil. Judging from the swift US victory, collapse of the Taliban regime, global anti-terrorism solidarity, and unswerving American determination and high morale, the anti-terrorism coalition is likely to settle down indisputably into the foreseeable future.

Nevertheless, the quick victory in Afghanistan does not guarantee a successful management of the interim order and smooth transition
into a more stable US-led international order. Among other things, destruction of al Qaeda networks in Afghanistan and a vanquished Taliban does not mean an end of terrorist fighting against infidel powers but the beginning of a next war that will persist throughout a transitional period. Whether the United States can avoid a clash against Islamic civilization and open up a more stable international order depends heavily on how to fight and win the much longer and nastier next war.

In this context, the next war is critically important. If the US and its allies seek only another overwhelming military victory in a manner that aggravates Islamic sentiment, it can turn out to be a Pyrrhic victory accompanied later by a clash of civilizations. International anti-terrorism cooperation can also be fragile. To solicit support for the anti-terrorism coalition is not an easy job. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage predicated even before the beginning of the war in Afghanistan: You are either 100 percent for us, or 100 percent against us. To coerce countries to choose absolutely to be one of us or one of them, or achieve a perfectly polarized world where only terrorist states and anti-terrorist ones exist, will be a complicated process.

If such an attempt necessitates the US to continue to connive at proliferation of nuclear weapons by countries such as Pakistan, consent to Russia's brutal military campaign in Chechnya, or pander to Japan's rearmament, it may have to pay a hefty price in the longer term. This is why the next war should be fought and won carefully while the interim international order should be managed meticulously despite all encouraging initial signs.

**Short-Term Optimism**

The US retribution and counter-terrorism campaign in Afghanistan joined by other states is not legally problematic. The September 11 attack was a crime against humanity as well as a crime of massive-scale murder, prohibited by the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) adopted in 1998 in Rome. The use of commercial airliners as suicide missiles clearly violated the international laws banning aircraft terrorism such as 1963 Tokyo Convention, the 1970 Hague Convention, and 1971 Montreal Convention. The US intervention in Afghanistan to chase
perpetrators and supporters of the terrorist acts and international cooperation with it are also justified by the UN Security Council resolution 1368 on September 12 that recognized the individual and collective right of self-defense against terrorism under the UN Charter and resolution 1373 that demanded all nations to freeze finances of suspected terrorists and crack down on groups supporting them.\(^2\) Though US bombing blunders that killed civilians do undermine the moral justification of the military campaign in Afghanistan, they are incomparable with the criminality of the terrorist acts.

On the top of its legal legitimacy, the American war on terrorism achieved a quick victory over the Taliban regime of that very backward state. Weeks of devastating bombing and use of high-tech weapons soon made the al Qaeda loyalists abandon their hideouts and retreat or surrender. Given the American superiority in military technologies and a Pearl Harbor effect prompted by the September 11 attack, i.e., a coupling of the surge of patriotic sentiment and Washington’s desire to keep the flame alive by giving it a more permanent meaning, and the American counter-terrorism resolution, the US military dominance and high morale will prevail into the foreseeable future and serve as the locomotive driving the anti-terrorism international order.

Compared with expected military success, America’s other victory on the diplomatic front was somewhat surprising. For example, Russian cooperation came very quickly. Moscow dispatched to Washington Russian Foreign Minister Igor Sergeevich on September 19 for a meeting with US counterparts. Upon the President Bush’s September 24 address at a joint session of Congress, a stirring address calling on Americans and the world to fight against terrorists, on the next day in a televised address Russian President V. Putin promised close cooperation that included provision of information on terrorists, availability of Russian air space for aircraft delivering humanitarian supplies to the area of counter-terrorism operation, and expressed willingness to participate in international search and rescue operations.

Cooperation from Western countries came in quickly, too. In addition to the United Kingdom that joined the American military

\(^2\) For more discussion, see Seoungho Jhe, Legality of the War on Terrorism, Korea Freedom League, Jayukongron (January 2002), pp. 112–21.
campaign in Afghanistan from the beginning, Germany and Japan swiftly decided to dispatch troops or military equipment to the war area. The American diplomatic initiatives made Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates and, eventually, Pakistan withdraw their recognition of the Taliban regime, while cooperation of Central Asian countries contiguous to Afghanistan greatly facilitated operation of US Special Forces and air strikes. In a nutshell, the United States successfully constructed a two-layered diplomatic cordon sanitaire that encircled the Taliban and al Qaeda: the inner circle connecting Russia, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan and the outer one composed of the United Kingdom and other European allies, Asian friends such as Japan and South Korea, Saudi Arabia and other friendly Arab countries, etc. The US military superiority combined with such diplomatic achievements quickly overthrew the Taliban and crushed al Qaeda war machines in the Central Asian country. The US diplomatic endeavors forestalled the attempt on the part of Osama bin Laden and Muhammad Omar to draw the whole Islamic world into his anti-American fighting, and overpowered ubiquitous anti-American demonstrations in Pakistan and other Islamic countries during the military campaign. The anti-terrorism international order seems robust enough to sustain for the time being.

The Islamic world has been compartmentalized to the extent that it can hardly achieve any anti-Western solidarity unless fueled by some decisive turnarounds. Islamic fundamentalism which Osama tried to ignite during the war in Afghanistan turned out not strong enough to unite the Arab states against the United States. The old version of Pan-Arabism, or the Arab Nationalist Movement based on anti-Western Third Worldism initiated by Nasser over the 1956 Suez Crisis, was soon faced with emerging statism and pragmatism during the 1970s and 1980s. This Nasserism, based on the centrality of Egypt and his own charisma, was faced with challenges: Israeli victory in the Middle East Wars, emergence of petro-powers and reinforcement of sovereignty by the oil-producing countries, sub-regionalism, gradual retreat of the Palestine question as a major criterion by which to judge the political righteousness of Islam states, etc. Collective security, sharing of natural

resources, and other concepts that Nasser harbored were tarnished by the emerging regional safety, equal sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, the inviolability of sovereign rights of individual states, etc. It was in this context that Pan Arabism attempted by other Islamic leaders such as Libya's Muammar al-Qaddafi and Iraq's Saddam Hussein was also frustrated.

Now the Islamic world is divided by national interests over resources and issues while Pan Arabian appeal to Islamic ideology has diminished. Moderate Islamic countries accommodating secularized pragmatism began to distinguish themselves from Islamic theocracy while Saudi Arabia and Kuwait began to recognize the fundamentalist regimes as a threat to their monarchical system. Egypt and Jordan signed peace treaties with Israel. Of course these unilateral acts violated the Islamic consensus originally inspired by Nasser. During the Cold War period, the Islamic states were divided into pro-American and pro-Soviet camps. When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990 the Arab world was polarized into pro-Iraq and anti-Iraq camps and fought against each other. They were again divided into pro-American and anti-American groups after the United States surfaced as the only superpower from the Gulf War.

The presence of US forces in Saudi Arabia irrevocably estranged Osama from his fatherland. He warned that Riyadh’s decision to permit the infidel forces to stay in the sacred land would be a sacrilegious act inviting the disintegration of Islam and subjugation to American power. Osama then branded the Saudi government as having abdicated its legitimate rights as custodian of the holy shrines. This was an immediate reason he went into exile in Sudan, which Hassan al-Turabi, a Sudanese version of grand ayatollah, was dreaming of turning into the world’s center of Sunni Islamic revivalism. Considering all, it is very unlikely for the Islamic world to emerge as a united power hostile to the United States and the West in the near future.

Long-Term Uncertainties

Unlike the short-term prospects, however, a longer-term prediction
seems shrouded with uncertainties at best. Despite America’s overwhelming military and diplomatic victory in Afghanistan, Islamic terrorism is likely to persist, at least sporadically, rather than disappear; there are some reasons people worry over the possibility of clash between the United States and the Islamic world. Militarily, to smoke out all terrorists from their hideouts throughout world or to destroy all the swamps where terrorists find safe haven is by no means easy. Fighting ideologically motivated terrorists who are unafraid to die will be increasingly costly. The terrorists will keep finding more and more asymmetric methods as a way to confront the superpower, and perfect protection against weapons of mass destruction remains impossible or at least unimaginable how. Despite its military superiority, when non-state terrorist groups are camouflaged under legitimate businesses or intermingled among civilians the United States will find it increasingly difficult to distinguish what it can attack from what it must not.

Theoretically, asymmetric means, ranging from kidnapping of important persons and civilian killings to cyber-attacks and use of weapons of mass destruction, have no upper limit. If the terrorists use biological or chemical weapons against urban areas, perfect protection of civilians may be either impossible or require astronomical expense and restrictions against personal freedom that modern society would not tolerate. This situation will obscure the general belief that currently no single state can pose a comprehensive challenge to American security. The military victory in Afghanistan does not suffice to preclude terrorist use of asymmetric means.

It is a difficult diplomatic challenge to press countries to stop supporting terrorism, and bolstering the capabilities of friendly countries to cut off terrorist fundraising is also a tough task. The brilliant diplomatic success in Afghanistan does not guarantee continued international anti-terrorism cooperation in the longer term. To maintain a firm and sustainable international anti-terrorism alliance requires much more than sheer military capability. A final and decisive victory in the next war, therefore, will not be achieved in one grand moment. It needs a multiple-front protracted war effort that coordinates diplomatic pressure, economic sanctions, international law enforcement, political negotiations, and most importantly, secure international cooperation.

In contrast to its unproblematic facade, a closer look into the
international cooperation for the war in Afghanistan reveals vehement competition and calculation over national interests of each nation. Russia had been at odds with the US over its suppression of the independence movement in Chechnya. Anti-terrorism cooperation with the United States would help do away with American opposition over Chechnya. Troubled by its protracted military engagement to pacify Islamic resistance in Chechnya, Russia was also wary of the Taliban since its Islamic fundamentalism could prompt Islamic activism in the former Soviet Central Asian republics such as Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.

Saudi Arabia's earlier recognition of the Sunni Taliban regime was motivated by its sectarian rivalry with Shiite Iran, but what was more important was to cooperate with the United States to protect its national security and monarchy system. This was amply reflected in the kingdom's 1991 decision to accommodate US forces for the Gulf War or the September 2001 decision to withdraw recognition of the Taliban regime. For Pakistan, time-old patron of the Taliban regime, it had been in its national security interests to support the Taliban dominated by ethnic Pashtuns who populate both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. For Pakistan, friendly relations with Afghanistan was a desideratum to forestall a Pashtun separatist movement in Pakistan, and to secure strategic depth against its archenemy India. President Pervez Musharraf's about-face and support of the anti-Taliban campaign was also of course a result of calculating the risks and the stakes offered by the United States. In a similar context, the prompt German and Japanese decisions to send troops to help the American war in Afghanistan was hardly seen as humanitarian. Both nations had been vigorously seeking expansion of their international roles including permanent seats in the UN Security Council they believe commensurate with their economic and technological prowess. International cooperation against terrorism, upheld by complex calculations of national interests, can collapse whenever American coercive power loosens or higher priority national interests come to dictate differently.

There are other variables, too, that could destabilize the anti-terrorism order. The US decision in December 2001 to withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty will in the long run surely worsen its relations with Russia and China. Both nations have opposed the US
missile defense which they believe might neutralize their nuclear weapons, while European countries worry that it could prompt another round of global nuclear arms race. In South Asia, Pakistan and India, both important components of the anti-terrorism coalition, are at odds over Kashmir.

East Asian countries are wary over the enlargement of Japan’s military roles. On October 18, 2001, the Japanese Diet passed the Anti-Terror Act in an attempt to provide a legal basis for dispatch of Self Defense Forces to help the American war effort in Afghanistan. So far neighboring countries have watched rather fretfully the gradual expansion of Japan’s military roles coupled by its unspoken but die-hard ambition toward becoming a normal state.\(^4\) By the passage of the 1992 PKO Act, Japan for the first time since World War II provided legal basis for overseas dispatch of Self Defense Forces while the adoption of New Guidelines for US-Japan Defense Cooperation in 1997 and passage of the Emergency Law in 1999 removed geographical limits in its military cooperation with the United States. Now with the Anti-Terror Act, Japan’s Self Defense Forces can go anywhere to cooperate with any country.\(^5\) This is why some commentators believe that Japan’s conservative leadership took efficient advantage of the American war on terrorism to achieve what they have long wanted.

A continued anti-terrorism alliance could be ambushed by uncertainties. Some time in the future it may turn out to have been brittle if something goes wrong. Otherwise, side effects may necessarily accompany. The United States may later have to overlook a tougher

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\(^4\) This is a term used by Japan’s conservative leaders such as Ozawa Ichiro, Morita Akio and Ishihara Shintaro and means a Japan with political, military and diplomatic power proportional to its techno-economic capability. Strength of aspiration toward a normal state is also well symbolized by Ishihara Shintaro’s 1989 book The Japan That Can Say No.

\(^5\) With regard to Japan’s military modernization and expansion of its international roles, South Korean views are divided into realist perspectives that view them as voluntary pushes toward a strong Japan and institutionalist perspectives that view them as pulls compelled by the US demand for greater Japanese defense burden sharing or Tokyo’s anxieties over China’s military modernization. For more discussion, see Taewoo Kim, “Japan’s New Security Roles: A South Korean Perspective,” Korean Journal of Defense Analysis, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 147-68.
Russian suppression of Chechen secessionists. The United may be abetting the expansion of Japan’s military roles disregarding misgivings of the neighboring countries. This situation can complicate US relations with Asian allies. The fundamentalists will continue to criticize the US support of monarchy states in the Middle East as blasphemous collusion between non-democratic and hegemonic forces.

Second, the increasing individuality of the Islamic states does not imply that a certain sentiment of anti-West solidarity does not run through the Muslim world. A more adequate interpretation may be that an Islamism intermingled with statism and pragmatism still exists and that, under particular conditions, like a dormant volcano it can explode into anti-Western movement. Some Muslims who remember Islamic history, past glory and predominance, attacks by Crusaders in the Middle Age, breakdown of the Ottoman Empire and Islamic influence by European powers in the beginning of the 20th century, Soviet aggression and domination by the US power in the late 20th century, etc., harbor a vague nostalgic desire toward Islamic revivalism. In the Islamic world, economically and technologically backward, Muslims tend to perceive monopoly of power and wealth by Western powers as violation of the providence of Allah and tend to criticize secularized governments that make friends with infidel powers. Some more radical Arab youths, poor and jobless, tend to believe their economic plight as a result of Western exploitation, and the Third World theories propagated by Nasser, Qaddafi and Hussein are still powerful in their inner minds.

This sentiment has been the soil that nurtures Islamic radicalism. It is the soil that gave rise to Osama bin Laden and gave him means to persist. This is the backdrop of the anti-American demonstrations in Pakistan protesting Islamabad’s anti-Taliban cooperation with the United States. As long as the anti-American sentiment hangs on, funding channels, supply sources, and transit points for Islamic terrorists will continue, while young terrorists stand in line to apply for suicidal terrorism. Killing or capturing Osama under this situation may mean appearance of hundreds of other Osamas.

Obviously, Islamic terrorism is still a never-ending story. For example, Libya hosted and supported the most violent anti-American terrorist attacks during the 1970s and 1980s and financed the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO). Though in 1999 Libya turned over two terrorists
who carried out mid-air bombing of Pan Am 103 in 1988, there has been no evidence showing that Libya has withdrawn completely from terrorism. Syria facilitated Hezbollah operations and helped the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ) while sheltering the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Iran under President Mohammad Khatami began to slouch toward democracy and market reforms. Whereas Iran’s moderate reforms are generally accepted by the West, some European countries no longer view it as a major threat to the moderate Islamic countries in the Gulf. Nevertheless, the nation financed Hezbollah, Hamas, and PIJ while helping Sudan strengthen African Islamic terrorist networks. Turabi’s Armed Islamic Movement, which played a major role in the consolidated emergence of the international terrorist training and deployment system in East Africa during the early 1990s, might have not been possible without the financial support and training provided by Iran. Iran has yet not been cleared of its complicity in the 1996 bombing of the USAir Force Khobar Tower residence in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Currently, though roles of Syria, Iran, Libya have substantially diminished, this does not mean they are becoming American allies in anti-terrorism collaboration. Lebanon remains a haven for Islamic terrorist groups and individuals while Sudan provided safe haven to Hezbollah, PIJ, Hamas, the Abu Nidal group, etc. Even Pakistan, which cooperated with the US through opening its air space, sharing intelligence and providing logistical support, had been one of only three countries that ever recognized the Taliban regime. During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Pakistan allowed Osama bin Laden to operate training camps in Peshawar and to produce over 10,000 Islamic warriors from various nations in an attempt to help his fight against the Soviets. They now are a major threat to American and international security. Sometimes government organizations were deeply involved in terrorism. For example, Pakistan’s intelligence agency, ISI, played a key role in generating the Taliban regime in 1994, and is believed to have been involved in supporting the Islamic fighters in Kashmir whom Pakistan calls freedom fighters and India calls terrorists. Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Ministry of Intelligence and Security are already noted for their support of Islamic fundamentalist movements in Africa and for roles to institutionalize terrorism as a policy instrument.

If this situation is coupled with reemerging anti-American sentiment
throughout Islamic countries, it will render US external policymaking an increasingly complicate job. The United States will have to double or triple its efforts and time consumption, without conviction toward success, to persuade or coerce all the various states and non-state actors and to contain all sorts of Islamic activism.

Third, as long as the Israel-Palestine conflict remains unsolved, the Middle East will continue to be a source of Islamic terrorism. As shown in the drastic increase in anti-Israel activities by the Hamas and other anti-Israeli terrorist forces even while the United States was achieving its shining victory in Afghanistan, Palestinian patriots will continue to apply for the chance to do a suicide bombing and Israeli’s unilateral military superiority will remain at best an allopathic treatment to the vicious cycle of violence in the Middle East. At the same time, as long as the United States continues to side with Israel in its Middle East policy, the Islamic terrorists will aim at America and American lives. The more strongly they feel American military might, the more likely Islamic terrorists may seek asymmetrical means. Given the stated anti-Israel policy of the Palestinians and Iranian and Iraqi governments and the scale and influence of Jewish-Americans in the policy-making process of Washington, US support of Israel and Islamic terrorism on America may be another never-ending story.

**Toward a Victory in the Next War**

Throughout the first war in Afghanistan Omar and Osama desperately attempted to define it as a conflict between infidel America and the whole Islamic world. To get the whole Arab world trapped in poisonous rage against America should have been the single largest reason for the September 11 attack. In the meantime, President Bush tried to define it as a struggle between order and malignancy, or, the whole of the civilized world against terrorist groups. Though both definitions tended to represent wishful thinking on the part of each side rather than reality, the United States was relatively successful while the Omar-Osama plea bounced. It will be critically important to characterize the next war as fighting between all peace lovers and those lusting for slaughter. If the next war is fought against the wrong enemies in the
wrong ways, the opposite may occur to what happened the first time; the United States might find itself alone fighting a hostile sentiment widespread among the Islamic countries. Here are some caveats.

First of all, policy makers need more balanced analyses of terrorism. So far they have concentrated their efforts on how to prove the criminality of the terrorist acts and how to punish them while relatively scanty attention has been given to how to redress root causes of terrorism. Similarly, it is equally important to identify and neutralize the soil that nurtures terrorists such as Osama bin Laden as it is to find his culpability in the September 11 attack and punish him. Above all, it is important to note that the exercise itself of power, by strong nations, can provide grounds for terrorism on the part of weak nations. That ground can become firmer if the exercise of power can be perceived as violating the religious creed of the ordinary people. For example, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan during the 1978–89 period gave Osama an opportunity during which he marshaled an international network of operatives and trained Islamic terrorists. It was then that he created al Qaeda as an anti-Soviet Islamic group and later expanded it into a multi-national terrorist network. During this period he attempted to cooperate with diverse terrorist groups ranging from Islamic Jihad of Egypt, Mujaheddin in Chechnya, Ittihad al Islami in Somalia, Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines and the Harakat ul-Jujahidin (HUM) in Kashmir, to the Islamic Movement in Uzbekistan.

The American war against Iraq in 1991 and the stay of American forces in Saudi Arabia since then gave Osama a pretext to move to Sudan where he stoked anti-American resentment among the elements of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in Algeria and organized international financial networks funding terrorism against the United States, another infidel power next to the Soviet Union. It was during this time that he oversaw the Sudanese Islamic drive and trained radical forces in countries such as Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Chad until his Africa cells played roles in the August 1998 bombing of American embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es-Salam, Tanzania, which killed 223 people and injured over 4,000. To prevent terrorism is always better than to punish after the fact. In this sense, to diagnose causes of a problem exactly is always helpful for a better prescription.

Second, the next war should be fought with continued effort to
distinguish ordinary Muslims from the Islamic terrorists, a minority espousing what the great majority of Muslims consider a grossly distorted version of Islam. The latter are not harmless eccentrics but violent felons with creeds of holy terror indulging themselves in indiscriminate murders. Dealing with them necessitates internationally concerted use of military and intelligence capability. Careless intermixing of the two or underestimation of the importance of the effort to make the distinction may lead to disastrous results. Similarly, careless inattention to or underestimation of terrorists’ intensity and their potential danger always invites shocking outcomes, even though success in intelligence has so far prevented many other terrorist acts in advance. For example, the United States was not vigilant enough about the extremist ideological disposition of the Taliban and its links with Osama bin Laden until the regime under the leadership of Omar and Osama emerged as one the most hostile to the US.

The US may have underestimated, if not neglected, the repeated murderous declarations by terrorists until it was later stunned by what they actually did. In his 1996 Declaration of Jihad, Osama urged coordinated efforts to kill Americans. In a 1998 statement published in the Arabic newspaper Al-Quds Al-Arabi, he argued that Muslims should kill Americans including civilians anywhere in the world. Nevertheless, the 1998 bombing of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were not prevented. In November 1999, Omar sent a murderous declaration to the people of the US saying: “I call upon you to bring pressure on your government and ask it to cease hostility with us. If you do not take a step in this direction, you will be surprised about what is coming to you and you will not be able to do anything about it.”⁶ Nevertheless the September 11 assault was not prevented. It must have been a profoundly misplaced assumption if the United States had really expected right after the September 11 that Taliban could hand over Osama under some conditions. Outwardly, al Qaeda provided money and weapons and trained soldiers while the Taliban in turn offered safe haven and logistical facilities. Washington may have understood their relationship as one of calculative give-and-take and believed Taliban would turn Osama over if bigger stakes were offered. Later, it turned out that the

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Taliban and al Qaeda were one in flesh and spirit.

Third, military and intelligence capability is a necessary condition but not a sufficient one. International anti-terrorism war should be juxtaposed with deeper understanding and support towards the Islamic world. Support from the Western countries to solve poverty, inequality, disease and regional conflicts in the non-oil-producing Arab states and to help in the democratization of oil-rich states will be particularly conducive to prevent the creation of nourishing soil for radical propaganda. Still, some in the West tend to perceive Muslims as dangerously different people. This perception is not only insulting to the peace-loving Muslims but also dangerously parochial, helping Western policy makers choose policies that unnecessarily hurt Islamic pride. If these policies are coupled with what the Islamic world perceives as American arrogance, they are highly likely to precipitate an unnecessary clash of civilizations.

In this sense, unjustified escalation of war by the United States into other Islamic countries may be pointless as well as dangerous in the long run, while better understanding and humanitarian support toward common Muslims will contribute to comprehensive victory against terrorists. Jessica Stern aptly points out: When we talk about Pearl Harbor, we should also be thinking of a Marshall Plan.7

Fourth, if the world community really wants to win the next war, it should put an end to the centuries-old Israel-Palestine animosity, in any way. The Palestinian question, no longer an overarching criterion differentiating truly Islamic states against secularized ones, still provides Palestinians with real reasons to continue martyrdom operations and give pretext to fight on to Islamic extremists in other areas. An independent Palestinian state seems to be a bottom-line necessity in wrapping up the fierce political and physical struggle between the two peoples, although it is not clear how many more Camp David accords or Oslo processes will be necessary. The United States needs to continue to act as fair mediator as well honest peacemaker. Unilateral support of Israel of a quick-fix solution over the contested land and other issues and will have only nugatory effects for peace between major intifadas.

The international community may need to help Palestinians have new-generation leaders to replace the current leadership. Yasir Arafat may not be the appropriate man to achieve lasting peace with Israel. His Palestinian Authority is discredited by both sides. Israel is suspicious of Arafat's sincerity in halting Palestinian terrorism while to Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad he is just as distrustfully dovish. Probably, Arafat is unable to do what Israel and Hamas want since the 74-year-old leader and his followers who spent decades for fighting rather than governing a state may need both talks and struggle with Israel for their own existence. Now what Palestinians need is a new leadership with concrete plan and schedule for coexistence with Jews to whom endless struggle need not to be their raison d'être. The world community will have to help Palestinians so that a Hamas-led government cannot be the next alternative.

Conclusion

Since the late 20th century mankind has witnessed explosive increase of terrorism from various motivations: independence, ideological identity, religious extremism, anti-Semitism, white supremacy or other idiosyncratic purposes. Not a single continent has been free from terrorist acts. Among them, religious cults or radical religious movements deserve particular attention since they are capable of wreaking havoc out of all proportion to their size or importance through massive terrorism or murderous subversions. They have aims and beliefs so fantastic and unreliable that they constitute a lethal threat to their own members and general public.

The 1978 case of Reverend Jim Jones who committed suicide with his followers, so-called Christian Identity Movement that resulted in the 1993 Waco incident in which some 100 cultists killed themselves after 51-day shootout against the FBI in Waco, Texas, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing by Timothy McVeigh, a Christian Identity fanatic, the 1997 case

of Heavens Gate in which its 39 members committed suicide in San Diego with a belief that they would be reincarnated on a spaceship flying in the wake of comet Hale-Bopp, are representative examples in the United States. The Church Universal and Triumph (CUT), another American religious cult, once predicted a nuclear doomsday and prepared huge private-owned underground nuclear shelters at its Montana headquarters. In Japan, the Aum Shinrikyo shocked the island nation by releasing sarin nerve gas in the Tokyo underground railway system in 1995. The world was surprised by the fact that the Japanese religious cults wanted to take over Japanese government and was even researching nuclear, biological and laser weapons. In Ukraine a radical religious group called Byeloye Bratstva (White Brotherhood) paralyzed the capital city of Kiev as they occupied St. Sophia Cathedral to meet November 14, 1993, the Armageddon day they had predicted. Violent cults and religious fanatics are not just quixotic but are becoming archfoes of mankind.

The September 11 attack clearly shows that the United States and the international community should pay keener attention to the rise of anti-Americanism and extremism in the Islamic world. On the top of the general dangers of religious fanatics, Islamic fanaticism if mistreated can possibly turn a huge Islamic civilization hostile to America and the US-led Western civilization, even though it represents only an unorthodox minority or purposeful twist of peaceful Islamic religion. Currently Islamic terrorists are internationally interwoven and their cells commit acts of terror highly systematically, while the nurturing soil in which they have thrived still exists. Though the United States and the US-led anti-terrorism alliance achieved a quick victory over the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan both militarily and diplomatically, to ferret out and destroy international networks of Islamic terrorists will be a difficult task. Above all, to fight and win a permanent victory over internationally organized terrorists armed with asymmetrical means, special structure where each terrorist team operates independently, activities camouflaged under legitimate businesses, diverse funding sources ranging from welfare organizations to wealthy Islamic donors, is by no means an easy job. To maintain international anti-terrorism alliance and to prevent spread of anti-American or anti-Western sentiment among ordinary Muslims will be a more difficult job. This is why the next war should be
fought and won on multiple fronts with many dimensions against visible and invisible enemies. If the next war will be won militarily, diplomatically, and culturally under the American leadership, the anti-terrorism international order will stay robust and it will facilitate a transition to a new US-led international order, whether the rest of the world likes it or not.

Undoubtedly, hard-kill capability does not suffice to achieve a terrorism-free world though it is a critical prerequisite. High-tech weapons, well-trained special forces, intelligence gathering, superb counter-terrorism instruments, expanded anti-terrorism budget and manpower, etc., are critically important components of the anti-terrorism campaign. Nevertheless, they do not guarantee a long-term success. A final and permanent victory in the anti-terrorism battle will be achieved only by full utilization of soft-kill capability that frustrates Osama’s attempt to cast himself as an Islamic David fighting against infidel American Goliath, foils the terrorists’ attempt to impose their radical beliefs and anti-Americanism over the whole Islamic world, prevents spread of sympathy with Osama in non-Islamic countries, provides peaceful settlement of the Israel-Palestine struggle, and insures a voluntary and sustainable international cooperation against terrorism, not a mere military coalition of states obedient to the United States.

A failure to do so may present to mankind a range of stark possibilities. Continuation of a vicious circle of sporadic terrorist incidents and return to complacency or prolonged fighting against ubiquitous terrorists throughout the world with a slide in public support for the anti-terrorism campaign in both the United States and its allies may mean a let-up. In a worse case, the world may have to witness new surge of international terrorism with a use of weapons of mass destruction, much more systematic and frightening than the 2001 case of the anthrax-laden letters that paralyzed governmental agencies and jammed up police and fire stations in the United States. In a worst case, the United States and its few allies will have to fight new invisible enemies such as anti-American sentiment or hostile culture widespread in Islamic world and increasing cynicism in non-Islamic countries that may render American superiority in hard-kill capability pointless. If such anti-American sentiment should unite the Islamic world to a firm enough degree, it could be the beginning of the clash of civilizations or
general exhaustion, if not an apocalyptic end of human civilization. What is in need indeed from now on is an all-encompassing but very careful victory on all battlefronts in the next war.