True Grit

To Counter Terror, We Must Conquer Our Own Fear

—By Brian Michael Jenkins

Five Years After 9/11: Essays on Counterterrorism, Counterinsurgency, and Homeland Security
In 1998, a RAND Review cover series called “Old Madness, New Methods” warned of the intensifying ferocity of religious terrorism coupled with the growing capability of terrorist groups to exploit a new form of networked warfare that we dubbed “netwar.” Less than three years later, those dual dangers—ancient religious motivations abetted by modern information-age methods—converged with spectacular malevolence to produce the carnage of 9/11.

In 2002, on the first anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, a RAND Review cover series called “Hitting Home” warned that America should treat its European allies as full partners in the fight against terrorism, that the U.S. quest to tackle Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein could be at odds with the fight against terrorism, that America should promote its core values and interests by making global health care a centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy, and that Americans at home should be enlisted to help make their communities more resilient in the face of a terrorist attack. The series also included an introductory essay from our current issue’s lead author, Brian Michael Jenkins.

And now in 2006, on the fifth anniversary of 9/11, the Jenkins cover story called “True Grit” elaborates on those themes from 2002. But this time, Jenkins abandons the passionless language of the analyst. He warns that we in America have succumbed too easily to fear and, as a consequence, that we risk forsaking the very things for which we are fighting. He further warns that the American strategy for the long conflict ahead must become sustainable. Jenkins has devoted his entire life to defending America. He refuses to surrender his faith in what he believes are America’s truest values. He reminds us of what they are.

Jenkins understands that countering terror is less like gun fighting at the O.K. Corral and more like negotiating a tempestuous sea. The ocean is a given. It will always be there. It cannot be subdued with a rifle. Survival amid a stormy sea depends upon oneself and one’s understanding of the elements. Strength, stability, skill, and security must come from within. That’s true grit.

—John Godges
Middle-Aged Americans Less Healthy Than English Counterparts

Medical spending per person is more than twice as high in the United States as it is in the United Kingdom, but middle-aged Americans are a lot less healthy than are similar-aged Britons, according to a new study by a team of researchers at the RAND Corporation, University College London, and the Institute for Fiscal Studies in London. Full results of the new study appeared in the May 3 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The analysis was restricted to non-Hispanic whites in both countries. Researchers analyzed the results of representative samples of these residents age 55–64 from several large surveys conducted in each nation from 1999 to 2003.

The research showed that Americans between the ages of 55 and 64 suffer from diseases such as diabetes, lung cancer, and high blood pressure at rates up to twice those seen among people of similar ages in England. The figure shows the prevalence rates for diabetes, cancer, and heart disease, with the black bars comparing total prevalence rates in this age group in the two countries.

The prevalence of diabetes was twice as high in the United States (12.5 percent), compared with England (6.1 percent). The cancer rate was nearly twice as high in America (9.5 percent versus 5.5 percent), and heart disease was 50 percent more common among middle-aged Americans than among their English counterparts (15.1 versus 9.6 percent).

Because the differences are based on self-reports, the differences could simply be the result of Americans’ greater willingness to report illnesses. But researchers also analyzed separate studies that collected blood samples from participants to look for biological markers of disease. “It’s not just a difference in how people characterize their own health. The biological measures confirm that there is a difference,” said James Smith, a RAND economist and a study coauthor.

The colored bars in the figure show that the self-reports of poorer health were seen across all economic groups in the United States compared with their English peers, not just among the poor, who are generally perceived as having more health problems.

People with low incomes in the two nations were more likely to report being sick than were people with high incomes, except with respect to cancer. But because of the overall differences between the two nations, those at the top of the income scale in the United States reported rates of diabetes and heart disease similar to those at the bottom of the income scale in England.

Researchers say that differences in health between the two countries are not fully explained by lifestyle factors, such as smoking, drinking, excess weight, and lack of exercise. Smoking behavior is similar in the two nations, while excessive drinking of alcohol is more common in England. Obesity is more common in the United States. Researchers estimate that lifestyle factors account for less than half of the differences seen between middle-aged people from the United States and England.

The two nations also have different health systems, with the United Kingdom providing universal publicly funded health care for all households, while the United States has universal publicly funded health care only for citizens over age 65. But over 94 percent of the American sample had access to health insurance. Thus, lack of insurance cannot explain the findings either.

Middle-Aged Americans Are More Likely Than Their English Counterparts to Suffer from Diabetes, Cancer, and Heart Disease

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<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
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<td>15.1</td>
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<td>Cancer</td>
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<td>Heart Disease</td>
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NOTE: The numbers are adjusted to take account of differences in drinking, smoking, and being obese/overweight.
Highest Safety Risks Found at Small Worksites of Larger Businesses, Not at Small Businesses

Previous research has shown that worksites with fewer than 20 workers generally have much higher fatality rates than do worksites with larger numbers of workers. Some have wondered if this pattern has reflected poorly on small businesses. No one, however, had compared the fatality rates by size of business as opposed to size of worksite.

A new RAND study has confirmed the existence of high risks at small worksites but has also found that employees at worksites of fewer than 100 employees were much safer when a small business owned the plant than when a larger business did.

The first result can be seen on the left side of the table: Death rates in the left column are always much higher than the death rates in the other columns. The second effect can be seen in the green boxes. For worksites with 1–19 workers, the death rate among workers in businesses having a similar overall total of just 1–19 workers is only 3.4 per 100,000, many times lower than the risk faced in worksites of comparable size but within larger businesses.

For worksites with 20–49 workers, the death rate for businesses of that size is 2.3, less than half the rate in the next two larger business categories. These results are all for the manufacturing sector, but the pattern was found to be the same for most other industry sectors studied—transportation/public utilities, wholesale trade, and services—except for retail trade.

The green boxes represent single-worksite businesses (where the employment of the worksite equals the employment of the business). Thus, for small workplaces, there could be a protective factor associated with being part of a single-worksite firm. The authors of the study speculate that this protective factor may be the result of having the owners of the business on-site.

At small workplaces of much larger businesses, certainly those with 500 or 1,000 employees, owners are probably less likely to be on-site, and if they are, they will have less ability to oversee production. Further research is needed to determine whether these speculations have merit.

The study argues that the respectable safety record at small single-site businesses may justify lighter regulatory intervention of them. Meanwhile, instead of focusing exclusively on worksites, the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) might focus on medium-sized businesses (with 20–999 employees) that have small worksites (with 1–19 workers), because those worksites, as shown among those highlighted in red, have by far the highest fatality rates.

If fatality rates for small worksites in these medium-sized businesses could be reduced to the rates found for small worksites in either the smallest or the largest businesses, more than two-thirds of workplace fatalities at the medium-sized businesses would be prevented.

The study used data from OSHA accident investigation reports from 1992 to 2001.


Employees at worksites of fewer than 100 employees were much safer when a small business owned the plant than when a larger business did.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Worksite</th>
<th>1–19</th>
<th>20–49</th>
<th>50–99</th>
<th>100–249</th>
<th>250–499</th>
<th>500–999</th>
<th>1,000+</th>
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<tr>
<td>1–19</td>
<td>3.4</td>
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<td>20–49</td>
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<td>50–99</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>100–249</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>250–499</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>500–999</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,000+</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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Advanced Nations Will Benefit Most from Future Technologies, Study Finds

The world is in the midst of a technology revolution that shows no signs of abating, but not everyone will benefit equally from it. “Where people live will have a big impact on how new technology applications affect their personal health and standard of living and the environment,” said Richard Silberglitt, one of the lead authors of a new RAND study.

Researchers identified 16 technology applications that seemed to have the greatest likelihood of being widely commercially available, enjoying significant market demand, and affecting multiple sectors (such as water, food, energy, health, and education) by 2020. Researchers then analyzed the capacity of 29 representative countries—selected for variation in size, region of the world, and sociopolitical conditions—to acquire those 16 applications.

National capacity was measured in terms of multiple social, economic, and cultural variables that might act as implementation drivers or barriers. These variables included cost and financing, infrastructure, social values, public opinion, and politics.

The table shows that the countries fall into four capability levels based on their capacity to acquire technology applications. (The countries in each level would be able to acquire the technologies in that level and in the levels below, as shown in the table.)

According to the study, China and India lead the group of “scientifically proficient” countries, and their ability to adapt new technologies supports their emergence as military and economic powers. However, if they are to advance, they need to continue to make progress with respect to financial institutions, legal and policy issues, rural infrastructure, environmental protection, research and development investments, rural education and literacy, and governance and stability.

The study notes that some scientific advances will be controversial for environmental, privacy, religious, or other reasons. These advances might not take hold even if they are technologically feasible. For example, radio-frequency identification tagging has already raised questions of privacy that could limit its use.

If scientifically advanced countries are to stay ahead, they will need to ensure that laws, public opinion, investment in research and development, and education and literacy are drivers for, and not barriers to, technology implementation, the report concludes.


### The Global Technology Revolution Will Play Out Differently Across Nations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capability Level</th>
<th>Representative Countries</th>
<th>Representative Technology Applications in 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scientifically advanced: Can benefit from</td>
<td>U.S., Canada, Germany</td>
<td>Tissues grown to implant and replace human body parts&lt;br&gt;Pervasive sensor networks in public areas to accomplish real-time surveillance&lt;br&gt;Wearable computers, using ever-smaller computational devices that can, for example, continuously monitor a person’s health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modest advances in technology, regardless of</td>
<td>(representing Western Europe), South Korea, Japan, Australia, and Israel</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>sophistication</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scientifically proficient: Can make significant and simpler advances in technology than the scientifically advanced</td>
<td>China, India, Russia, and Poland (representing Eastern Europe)</td>
<td>Drug therapies that preferentially attack specific tumors or pathogens without harming healthy tissues&lt;br&gt;Vastly improved medical diagnostic and surgical procedures&lt;br&gt;Advanced security techniques using quantum cryptography in sectors such as finance and defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientifically developing: Are poised to take advantage of modestly sophisticated advances in technology</td>
<td>Mexico, Turkey, Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, South Africa, and Chile</td>
<td>Hybrid vehicles&lt;br&gt;Devices to constantly track movement of everything from products to people&lt;br&gt;Easy-to-use health diagnostic tests that give immediate results for a large range of infections&lt;br&gt;Environmentally friendly manufacturing methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientifically lagging: Need to make concerted efforts to eliminate barriers to and support simpler advances in technology</td>
<td>Fiji, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Nepal, Pakistan, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Cameroon, and Chad</td>
<td>Cheap solar energy for remote or portable applications&lt;br&gt;Ways to purify water that do not require major infrastructure&lt;br&gt;Rural wireless communications&lt;br&gt;Genetically modified crops&lt;br&gt;Cheap housing for adaptable shelter and energy efficiency</td>
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NOTE: The countries in each level would be able to acquire the technologies in that level and in the levels below, as shown by the arrows.
Airbus or Boeing Derivatives Favored for U.S. Air Force Tankers

An extensive RAND study has concluded that the most cost-effective way for the U.S. Air Force to replace its aging fleet of KC-135 aerial refueling tankers is to acquire a fleet of new commercial aircraft derivatives—with candidates based on either medium-sized or large passenger jets manufactured by either Airbus or Boeing.

Without aerial refueling tankers, the United States would be unable to effectively deploy or operate air power overseas or to operate effective homeland defense air patrols. But the KC-135 fleet, the backbone of current refueling capability, is almost 50 years old and has been prone to technical difficulties and increased costs of operation.

The team of more than two dozen researchers compared the cost-effectiveness of a wide range of alternative aircraft and replacement schedules. The most “cost-effective” alternative was defined as the one that could meet the military aerial refueling requirement at the lowest cost.

The study found that a fleet of new medium to large commercial derivatives—based on either the Airbus 330 and 340 or the Boeing 747, 767, 777, and 787—is the most cost-effective alternative. Fleets consisting of two kinds of such aircraft have comparable cost-effectiveness as those consisting of only one kind. Other options, including used commercial derivatives, smaller or larger commercial derivatives, and a range of non-commercial alternatives (including unmanned or stealthy tankers), are less cost-effective.

The study also looked at the timing of recapitalization of the tanker fleet. It found that if the new fleet meets or exceeds the future aerial refueling requirement, then the timing of the recapitalization does not significantly affect the total cost of all tanker acquisitions and operations. In that case, the timing should depend on considerations other than cost, such as technical risk associated with the KC-135 fleet, the additional capabilities that new tankers would offer, or uncertainties that could reduce their desirability.

However, if meeting the future requirement necessitates additional tankers, then the cost of closing the requirement gap will be greater the more rapidly the additional tankers are acquired.

For more information: Analysis of Alternatives (AoA) for KC-135 Recapitalization: Executive Summary, RAND/MG-495-PAF, 2006.

The KC-135 fleet is almost 50 years old and has been prone to technical difficulties and increased costs of operation.
AMERICANS SPEND NEARLY $2 TRILLION a year on health care, but that’s about $1 trillion more than what Americans should be spending for what they’re getting in return.

That’s the bold assertion of Paul O’Neill, former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury under President George W. Bush; former chief executive officer of the Alcoa aluminum manufacturing company; and currently a chairman of the Value Capture Policy Institute, an organization that seeks to improve the value of health care. With just a few simple, small changes in the way the U.S. health system operates, Americans could “simultaneously see a huge improvement in health care outcomes and reduce the cost of health care to society by about 50 percent,” O’Neill argued during a provocative discussion at the RAND Corporation.

Aiming for Perfection
How can the health care system reap this “value opportunity,” as O’Neill calls it? He explained that when he began as the chief executive officer of Alcoa in the late 1980s, the company already had an enviable safety record, ranking nationally in the top third of injury-free work environments across the public and private sectors. Safety at organizations like Alcoa is measured in terms of lost workdays from injuries, and Alcoa’s lost workday rate (the number of injuries per 100 employees) was 1.87 per year, or two-thirds lower than the national average.

But O’Neill argued at Alcoa that the goal should be zero lost workdays per year. Despite some resistance from the safety director, Alcoa dedicated itself to aiming for perfection. This entailed using an online system to keep track of safety-related incidents, analyzing the root causes of those incidents, and sharing the results of those analyses and proposed solutions across the organization. Alcoa also encouraged all its employees not only to report problems but also to suggest solutions. Today, Alcoa has an annual rate of just over zero lost workdays.

A System in Chaos
Applying the Alcoa experience of aiming for perfection to the health care industry is more challenging, O’Neill said, because the health care system is “in chaos.” As one example, he discussed the simple but widespread problem of incomprehensible handwritten prescriptions, which can cause deaths. But more commonly, illegible prescriptions lead to what O’Neill dubbed “unnecessary rework”—massive amounts of wasted time and the enormous costs entailed in chasing down the doctors and ensuring that the prescriptions are correctly understood.

Another example of the chaos is “batch processing” of drugs for patients in hospitals. O’Neill described one hospital where drugs are filled every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday as a way to optimize the time of pharmacists. But not surprisingly, patient conditions change more rapidly than every other weekday. In fact, 40 percent of the hospital’s intravenous solutions that are filled on Friday come back on Monday because of changes in patient conditions, and the returned intravenous solutions are simply dumped down the drain. Moreover, for other medications that come back and that are not contaminated, the hospital employs a full-time person on Monday just to restock the shelves.

Simple Changes—Big Results
Despite the chaos, O’Neill believes that it is possible to improve the situation, citing his experience consulting
for three intensive care units (ICUs) in Pittsburgh. In the base year, the three ICUs saw 1,759 patients. Of those patients, 37 ended up with infections contracted from the central intravenous lines that had been used to administer medications, and 19 of those patients died from those infections.

Addressing the problem did not require massive new innovations; it required only standardizing how the central intravenous lines were administered—something as simple as having a clear, commonly accepted protocol and a prepackaged kit. The next year, O’Neill said, the ICUs treated more patients than previously, but there were only six infections (compared with 37) and one death (compared with 19). Of the six infections, four of them came from a breakdown in following the protocol.

Unfortunately, “growing” such best practices in health care settings is daunting. As O’Neill pointed out, the three Pittsburgh ICUs were under the direct control of one manager. In another five ICUs in the same Pittsburgh hospital, which were under the control of different managers, “it took a year for them to even entertain the idea of standardized practices to deal with central line infections—and they were just down the hallway.”

A Prescription for Change

Improving conditions in health care settings requires two key elements, according to O’Neill. First, it requires leadership—as in the case of the ICU manager—to set the vision and the goal of zero errors. But this kind of leadership must come from the chief executive officer to break down barriers between departments. Leaders must also impose accountability for everything that can go wrong in their institutions, because that accountability frees up employees to commit themselves to achieving the vision.

The other key ingredient is transparency. Transparency entails having data systems that post in cyberspace—for everyone to see—the safety problems that occur, the identified root causes of those problems, and the changes that were made—all in real time. Transparency also involves making data available on how well a health care system is performing. O’Neill cited a small health care system in Kentucky that “bravely” posts data on its Web site—color-coded in red, yellow, and green—on the quality of care the system delivers for 78 health care conditions in comparison to the average quality of care delivered in the United States for those conditions.

Because such data are so hard to come by, O’Neill said that it is hard to either prove or disprove his assertion that the nation can reap a 50-percent savings by improving health care in the simple ways he suggests. But he argued that there is a need to look in a deep and complete way at all the opportunities for cost savings in health and medical care. Doing so can help identify the size of the opportunity and jump-start change.

Incomprehensible handwritten prescriptions can cause deaths. But more commonly, they lead to “unnecessary rework”—massive amounts of wasted time and the enormous costs entailed in chasing down the doctors and ensuring that the prescriptions are correctly understood.
To Counter Terror, We Must Conquer Our Own Fear

By Brian Michael Jenkins

A member of the U.S. Army Special Forces in the Vietnam War, Brian Jenkins is often described as the dean of America’s terrorism researchers. This article is drawn from his new book, Unconquerable Nation: Knowing Our Enemy, Strengthening Ourselves. Jenkins is a senior advisor to the president of the RAND Corporation.

We Americans and our allies have made undeniable progress in reducing al Qaeda’s operational capabilities since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, but we have neither dented the determination of the jihadists nor blunted the appeal of al Qaeda’s ideology. Its leaders, although in hiding, communicate frequently. Their message continues to inspire angry young men to prepare and carry out violent attacks on civilian populations. The terrorist threat is more dispersed but still lethal. The insurgency continues in Iraq. The fighting has intensified in Afghanistan. Radicalization continues worldwide. This will be a long conflict. It will require a sustainable strategy. It will require psychological strength as well as physical strength.

At home, we in America have spent the past five years scaring the hell out of ourselves. Terrorism is either violence or the threat of violence calculated to create an atmosphere of fear and alarm. As we have seen, terrorism often works. Unfortunately, the unceasing public discussion of America’s vulnerabilities, the alarming alerts that followed 9/11, the proliferation of barricades and bollards, and the media reports of government officials holed up at secret sites have all added to the national anxiety.

Instead of puncturing the terror by educating and engaging the public in its own preparedness and response, Washington consigned citizens to the role of helpless and frightened passengers while it went after the bad guys. What else but fear can explain the readiness of Americans to tolerate tossing aside the very Geneva Convention agreements the United States had fought to implement? What else but fear could have led Americans to even entertain public arguments in favor of torture and against any restrictions on how we might treat those in custody?

There has always been an alternative, a strategy more consistent with American tradition—a strategy aimed at reducing public fear through a different style of communication and governance and at more actively engaging citizens in their own preparedness and response. Such an approach, if adopted, would attack the terror, not just the terrorists. It would see the White House working closely with the legislative and judicial branches to increase security without trespassing on liberty. It would aim at preserving national unity. In sum, it would be a strategy that seeks lasting strength.

There is much concerning the conduct of the war on terror with which I agree: the muscular initial response to 9/11, the removal of the Taliban gov-
ernment in Afghanistan, the relentless pursuit of al Qaeda’s leaders and planners, the increasingly sophisticated approach to homeland security, and, although I have deep reservations about the invasion of Iraq, President George W. Bush’s determination to avoid an arbitrary timetable for withdrawal.

The list of things with which I do not agree is longer. These aspects of the war on terror have, if anything, undermined our campaign: the needless bravado, the arrogant attitude toward essential allies, the exploitation of fear, the exaggerated claims of progress, the persistence of a wanted-poster approach while the broader ideological struggle is ignored, the rush to invade Iraq, the failure to deploy sufficient troops there despite the advice of senior military leaders and the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, the cavalier dismissal of treaties governing the conduct of war, the mistreatment of prisoners, the unimaginable public defense of torture, the use of homeland security funding for political pork barrel spending, and the failure to educate and involve citizens.

I am not attempting to serve any political agenda. My sole objective is to reckon how America can defeat its terrorist foes while preserving its own liberty. Throughout the Cold War, Americans maintained a rough consensus on defense matters, despite substantive disagreements. Unity did not require the suspension of honest differences or of civilized political debate.

But today’s fierce partisanship has reduced national politics to a gang war. The constant maneuvering for narrow political advantage, the rejection of criticism as disloyalty, the pursuit by interest groups of their own exclusive agendas, and the radio, television, newspaper, and Internet debates that thrive on provocation and partisan zeal provide a poor platform for the difficult and sustained effort that America faces. All of these trends imperil the sense of community required to withstand the struggle ahead. We don’t need unanimity. We do need unity. Democracy is our strength. Partisanship is our weakness.

The recasting of counterterrorism as “war” immediately following 9/11 was a good idea, but the ensuing “Global War on Terror” has conflated too many threats and lumped together too many missions. The focus must return to the destruction of the jihadist enterprise.

In addition, homeland security must move beyond gates and guards and become the impetus for rebuilding America’s decaying infrastructure. We need to adopt a realistic approach to risk and become a lot
Armed force alone cannot win this war. The real battle is ideological.

more sophisticated about security. Instead of stoking fear, we need to build upon American traditions of determination and self-reliance—and begin firing up citizen participation in emergency preparedness and response.

Facing the Foe Without

The strategic calculations of 2006 differ greatly from those of 2001. Our counterterrorism efforts today should be governed by the following strategic principles.

Destroy the jihadist enterprise. The global jihadist enterprise remains the primary immediate threat to U.S. national security. Terrorist operational capabilities have been reduced considerably since 2001, but the jihadists have proven to be adaptable, resilient, and capable of continued action. Ideologically, they are still on the march.

Conserve resources for a long war. It took Germany and Italy more than a decade to suppress the tiny terrorist formations operating on their territories. It took Britain a quarter of a century to persuade the Irish Republican Army to give up its armed struggle. A small group of Basque separatists continued their campaign of terrorism in Spain for nearly 40 years. The United States must conserve its resources for the long haul. This will take blood, treasure, the will of the American people, and the support of allies.

Wage more-effective political warfare. Armed force alone cannot win this war. The real battle is ideological. Al Qaeda’s jihadist ideology must be delegitimized and discredited. We must therefore wage political warfare, which is notably different from advertising American values or winning hearts and minds—efforts aimed at the broader population. Political warfare comprises aggressive tactics aimed largely at the fringes of the population, where personal discontent and spiritual devotion turn to violent expression.

Political warfare targets those on their way into enemy ranks, those among the ranks who might be persuaded to quit, and those in custody. It sees enemy combatants as constantly recalibrating their commitments. It accepts no foe as having irrevocably crossed a line. It sees every prisoner not merely as a source of intelligence, but as a potential convert. It accepts local accommodations to reduce violence, offers amnesties to induce divisions and defections, and cuts deals to co-opt enemies. It is infinitely flexible and ferociously pragmatic. The United States today has no strategy for political warfare.

Break the cycle of jihadism. The U.S. strategy must be broadened to address the entire jihadist cycle, from entry to exit. The cycle begins with the radicalization of eager acolytes and ends with their indefinite imprisonment or death (see figure). U.S. efforts now focus on only the operational portion of this cycle, the visible tip of the iceberg: from late in the recruitment process to death or capture. Insufficient attention is paid to defeating radicalization, indoctrination, and recruitment at the front end or dealing with detainees at the back end. We have concentrated on eliminating jihadists but not on impeding recruitment, inducing defections, or persuading detainees to renounce jihad.

Impede recruitment. Respected communicators can be deployed to warn of jihadist recruiters and to counter their messages. Informants can be enlisted to gather information; even their suspected presence obliges recruiters to move with greater care. False recruiting sites can be used to circulate repellent material. Recantations and denunciations can be elicited and broadcast.
Known recruiting sites can be shut down or so obviously kept under surveillance that potential recruits see them as unsafe. As part of the campaign to reduce Ku Klux Klan violence in America, FBI agents conducted aggressive interviews informing Klan members that their identities were known, that there were informants in their ranks, and that, if trouble occurred, they would be under suspicion. The technique removed the cloak of clandestinity and created uncertainties and suspicions.

**Encourage defections and facilitate exits.** The ranks of even the most fervent fanatics include potential defectors who might quit if offered a safe way out. They might come to fear the mad leaders who would happily have them die. Yet they also fear what might happen to them in American hands. The images of Abu Ghraib should not be seen as the only alternative to martyrdom.

The Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) program during the Vietnam War persuaded more than 100,000 enemy soldiers to defect to the South Vietnamese side by offering them amnesty, cash, job training, and homes. Some of the “ralliers,” as they were called, eventually drifted back to the Communist side, but overall the program was an economical and certainly less dangerous way of removing a sizable number of enemy combatants.

**Persuade detainees to renounce terrorism.** Turning detainees against violence should be considered as important as interrogation. Rehabilitation, especially if it can be used to discourage jihadist recruiting, is more important than prosecution. Those in custody should be offered the opportunity to quit jihad, repent, publicly recant. We should not let our desire for revenge or our determination to see justice done get in the way. We must be pragmatic. We are not settling blood debts; we are waging a political war.

Other countries offer examples. British authorities compiled evidence to justify the release of those Irish Republican Army detainees whose family or community backgrounds suggested that they could be persuaded to turn against violence. This reduced both the population of detainees and the alienation in the communities from which they came.

Italy, a Catholic country, used an appropriate religious term to encourage Red Brigade prisoners to renounce terrorism and cooperate with authorities. Those who did so were called “repentants,” and their sentences were reduced accordingly. The mere fact that some repented dismayed those still at large, and the information the repentants provided was crucial in cracking the terrorists’ campaign.

In Yemen, Islamic scholars challenged a group of defiant al Qaeda prisoners to a theological debate. “If you convince us that your ideas are justified by the Quran, then we will join you in the struggle,” the scholars told the terrorists. “But if we succeed in convincing you of our ideas, then you must agree to renounce violence.” The scholars won the debate, and a number of the prisoners renounced violence, were released, and were given help in finding jobs. Some have since offered advice to Yemeni security services. A tip from one led to the death of al Qaeda’s top leader in the country.

Americans have not done well in this area. Despite holding hundreds of detainees, some for more than four years now—including many whose participation in jihad was minor—not one detainee has been publicly turned against jihad. Is it because the interaction is limited to confinement and interrogation, which produces only resistance and radicalization? It would not be easy, but would it not be better to try to enlist at least a few detainees as spokesmen against al Qaeda’s brand of jihad, having them tell their stories to would-be jihadists—explaining their initial illusions and their eventual disillusionment? Doing so would shift the public debate from “terrorists versus government spokesmen” to “terrorists versus former terrorists.”

**The images of Abu Ghraib should not be seen as the only alternative to martyrdom.**
Maintain international cooperation. One of the major reasons for the successes that have been achieved in the struggle against the jihadist network is unprecedented international cooperation among intelligence services, law enforcement agencies, and military forces. The United States cannot afford to waste the support of allies. The United States simply cannot defeat its terrorist adversaries by itself. In the long run, international cooperation is a prerequisite to success, a precious commodity not to be squandered by bullying, unreciprocated demands, indifference to local realities, or actions that repel even America’s closest friends.

The war against terrorism should not be America’s war. Having captured the world’s sympathy immediately after 9/11, the administration in Washington fumbled by claiming the war as its own. The message “You’re either with us or against us” may have been initially useful to get the attention of some uncommitted states, but as a constantly repeated refrain, it was insulting and it complicated cooperation, which could then be perceived as only yielding to American ultimatums.

Rebuild Afghanistan. Afghanistan is an initial success that could easily slip away. A representative government rules in Kabul, though not far beyond the city. The insurgency in the country has been growing. Ethnic and tribal antagonisms remain an obstacle to national unity. The country’s population is so poor and its infrastructure so undeveloped that the investment of even modest resources could have a significant effect. We have learned the lesson of neglecting Afghanistan once. We cannot walk away again.

Preserve but narrow the principle of preemption. The determination of today’s terrorists to carry out large-scale attacks, together with their growing destructive power, requires that preemption be preserved as an option, but it is important to distinguish between preemptive action and preemptive war. The invasion of Iraq has called into question U.S. intelligence capabilities, raised the issue of possible government misuse of information as a pretext for bringing down a foreign government, and allowed foes of the United States to portray preemption as disguised aggression. The subsequent problems in Iraq have further discredited the principle of preemption. Nonetheless, this option should be preserved. However, it should be limited to precise actions, not regime changes, and it should be
taken as a measure of last resort when no other options are available.

_Reserve the right to retaliate—a muscular deterrent._

Either a bioterrorist or nuclear terrorist attack would unleash unprecedented fury and would fuel a demand for all-out warfare against any group or government known to be or perhaps even suspected of being responsible. Everyone, including our adversaries, should understand that.

**Facing the Foe Within**

Fear is the greatest danger we face. It is more insidious than the jihadist enterprise itself. Fear can erode confidence in our institutions, provoke us to overreact, tempt us to abandon our values. Indeed, we have spent the past five years running scared.

We need to get more realistic about risk. We need to mobilize Americans to participate in homeland security. We need to become more sophisticated about security and seize the opportunity to rebuild America’s infrastructure. We need to improve local intelligence. We need to build a better legal framework for preventive interventions against terrorists, but we also need to ensure proper oversight to prevent the abuse of those interventions. In all these areas, we need to uphold our core national values as we move forward. Otherwise, the terrorists will have truly won, even without having followed through on any of their attack plans. Their terror alone will have sufficed. We will have unilaterally surrendered the very liberty we are fighting to protect.

_Get realistic about risk._ Since 9/11, most Americans have exaggerated the danger posed by terrorist attacks. This is because spectacular events, not statistics, drive our perceptions.

Psychologists have learned that we rank fatal events by roughly squaring the death toll per event. An automobile accident with one fatality is seen as one fatality. One hundred accidents with one fatality apiece are still seen as 100 deaths. But a single event with ten fatalities has the same psychological impact as 100 individual fatalities, and an event with 100 deaths has the impact of 10,000 deaths. This is why we pay more attention to increasingly rare airline crashes, which usually involve many fatalities, than we do to the much larger national death toll from automobile accidents. The terrorist attack on 9/11, with nearly 3,000 dead, had the psychological impact of millions dying.

Now look at the numbers. The average American has about a 1 in 9,000 chance of dying in an automobile accident and about a 1 in 18,000 chance of being murdered. During the past five years, including the death toll from 9/11, an average American has had only a 1 in 500,000 chance of being killed in a terrorist attack.

It should be our operative assumption that further terrorist attacks will occur on U.S. soil. Nonetheless, the heightened probability of an attack does not significantly increase the danger to the individual citizen unless we move up into the territory of truly catastrophic scenarios with tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of deaths. The only plausible scenarios that would achieve this larger scale of destruction would involve the successful, deliberate spread of a contagious disease or the detonation of a nuclear bomb in a crowded city.

Of more realistic concern, however, is the fact that lesser terrorist attacks involving lethal chemicals or small amounts of radioactive material might still produce mass psychological effects, causing panic and social disorder, which could cause more casualties than the attacks themselves. This is where public preparedness comes in.

_Enlist the public._ The best way to increase our ability as a nation to respond to disasters, either natural or man made, is to enlist all citizens through education and engagement. This also happens to be a very good way to reduce the persistent anxieties that afflict us.

In the wake of 9/11, Washington’s continual reminders of imminent threats induced Americans to think of themselves as victims instead of protagonists in a long struggle. By making homeland security a purely Washington affair, the government was signaling that it would take responsibility for both security and response. Instead of promoting self-reliance, the government created dependency. But the federal government does not provide homeland security. Citizens do. This nation has powerful traditions of self-reliance and resiliency, as proven on 9/11. We must build on those traditions.

It is amazing how many people want to assist in homeland security—not just “be vigilant” or patriotically keep shopping when alert levels are raised. Citizen volunteers, from schoolteachers to security
guards and from medical professionals to CEOs, could be assigned emergency roles, which could then be practiced in drills. Psychologists have learned that knowing what to do and having an assigned task in preparation, planning, and response not only increases preparedness but also reduces stress.

Public education is the first step toward strengthening ourselves. We need to aggressively educate the public through all media, in the classrooms, at town halls, in civic meetings, through professional organizations, and in volunteer groups. This means more than speeches in front of the American flag. The basic course should include how to deal with the spectrum of threats we face, from “dirty bombs” to natural epidemics, with the emphasis on sound, easy-to-understand science aimed at dispelling mythology and inoculating the community against alarming rumors and panic. More-advanced training, including specialized first aid and family protection measures, can be offered through youth organizations and other groups. Our goal should be to have all American teenagers, adults, and able-bodied senior citizens capable of taking care of themselves first, then taking care of their families, then taking care of their neighbors who need assistance.

Become more sophisticated about security. We cannot banish danger. Not every terrorist plot can be thwarted, no matter how much is spent on security. We have to become savvy about security, accept its limitations, and ensure that measures taken in the name of security do not destroy our open society or disrupt our economy.

Terrorists will always have the advantage. They can attack anything, anywhere, anytime. We cannot protect everything, everywhere, all the time. This makes it difficult to allocate security resources with any precision. Moreover, security against terrorism will almost always be reactive. The problem is that terrorists and terrorism analysts can conjure up more attack scenarios than security can possibly cover. We must avoid lurching from one nightmare scenario to another and instead formulate broad security strategies that estimate comparative risks and establish priorities.

Favor security investments that help rebuild America's infrastructure. Given the uncertainty of terrorist attacks, compounded by the uncertainty of security costs, funding should favor investments that yield benefits even if no attack occurs. Improving the nation's public health and emergency care systems are two obvious examples. Homeland security should also provide a basis for renewing America's crumbling infrastructure.

Much of America's vital infrastructure is privately owned, and security mandates in the realm of infrastructure will affect major businesses. The private sector should be enlisted as a partner with government, but there will be friction. The fact is, the airline industry for decades successfully opposed measures to improve aviation security. Currently, America's biggest retailers are opposing certain measures to increase the security of shipping containers. Vital infrastructure, even when privately owned, may sometimes have to be treated as a public resource and be required to meet higher security standards.

Improve local intelligence. The more than 600,000 sworn police officers in the United States are in the best position to monitor potential homegrown terrorists. Recruited locally, police officers are likely to be ethnically closer to the communities they serve, more aware of local changes, and more acceptable to community leaders than are federal agents. Local police are in the best position to identify “hot spots” for terrorist recruiting, to talk with merchants and community leaders, and to develop sources of intelligence. Through routine criminal investigations, community policing, or dedicated intelligence efforts, local police may be the first to pick up leads on terrorist plots. But local police need to be given sufficient resources for intelligence collection and analysis, which differ from making cases for prosecution. Local police also need to be connected with other police departments, at home and abroad, and with the national intelligence apparatus. One can envision an arrangement in which the U.S. Department of Homeland Security would sponsor the building of a nationwide network connecting local police department intelligence operations and would participate in the analysis of intelligence gathered locally. This would keep collection under local control while ensuring nationwide connectivity. Such an approach would be compatible with U.S. traditions of strong local authority.
Build a better legal framework for preventive interventions. The USA Patriot Act expands the definition of providing “material assistance” to a terrorist group, an offense that courts appear to be interpreting broadly. Meanwhile, President Bush has asserted wartime authority to detain whomever he wants as enemy combatants and hold them indefinitely, without judicial review. This type of extrajudicial action should not be allowed to become routine. It opens the way for abuses that could cause innocent people to be held for years, or even for their entire lives, without any kind of trial. It would mean accepting the idea of permanent warfare, which would profoundly change our political system. Carefully crafted legislation is needed to provide a better legal alternative.

Guarantee oversight. Adopting a more aggressive posture toward alleged terrorists means that mistakes will inevitably be made in gathering intelligence and in making arrests. Oversight through internal mechanisms, by judicial reviews, and at the national level of congressional committees is therefore critical. The purpose of oversight is to provide guidance in an area where doctrine is still being developed. Such oversight could also protect intelligence operations against unwarranted attacks when honest mistakes occur.

Traditionally, electronic surveillance and physical searches have been placed under the jurisdiction of special courts established by the Foreign Intelligence and Surveillance Act (FISA) of 1978. Until recently, to monitor telephone lines or conduct secret searches, investigators had to apply to a FISA court, where judges with appropriate security clearances reviewed the applications. Following 9/11, however, the administration chose to bypass the FISA courts altogether, claiming war powers of the president to do so. The later revelation that telephone conversations were being monitored without judicial oversight provoked a storm of criticism over privacy rights. But the real, neglected issue has been that we have systematically ignored established oversight procedures that no one has demonstrated were not working.

The administration has claimed that all of its activities are lawful, but are they? To eliminate all external review by courts or legislative bodies on the grounds of executive authority in wartime is to assert unlimited presidential power, which is incompatible with the practice of democracy.
If existing procedures are obstacles to keeping up with extraordinary circumstances or rapidly changing technology, then the procedures should be changed or replaced, not disregarded. The administration has claimed that all of its activities are lawful, but are they? To eliminate all external review by courts or legislative bodies on the grounds of executive authority in wartime is to assert unlimited presidential power, which is incompatible with the practice of democracy.

Preserve American values. The United States has demonstrated that it will secretly apprehend suspected terrorists anywhere in the world, turn them over to other governments for interrogation, or hold them indefinitely at known or secret bases. The United States has engaged in “targeted killings,” or assassinations, of terrorist leaders. The president has authorized the apprehension and detention of U.S. citizens without allowing them access to legal counsel or courts. The administration defended its “right” to use harsh interrogation techniques, without defined limits, on suspected terrorists—until the U.S. Senate enacted legislation prohibiting abuse or torture of prisoners. In sum, the U.S. government recognizes very few constraints in its counterterrorist campaign.

Today’s terrorists believe they can defeat America’s superior military technology with their superior convictions, and we have sometimes handed them ammunition to reinforce those beliefs. But we, too, have convictions—a cause more powerful than al Qaeda’s cult of intolerance and violence. We must not be cowed into abandoning our values. They are not constraints. They are part of our arsenal. The preservation of these values is no mere matter of morality; it is a strategic imperative, particularly in a battle rooted in ideology.

Whatever we do at home and abroad must be consistent with our values, and here I think we in America are in some danger. We have ignored our own strengths. We have too readily accepted assertions of executive authority as necessary for our security. We have confused the appropriate need to gather intelligence with the rejection of all rules that govern collection. We have yielded too much to fear, and it is fear that could destroy us.

No stranger to adversity and war, Abraham Lincoln in 1838 said in one of his most memorable speeches: “If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide.”

Existential fear is the only reasonable explanation for America’s toleration of torture after 9/11. One of the unreasonable explanations is that many Americans were simply reacting out of anger. For them, it made little difference whether or not torture was an effective way to extract information; it was treatment the terrorists deserved. But it was unimaginable to me that I would ever witness the highest officials of the United States of America arguing publicly against any restrictions on how we treat those in our custody. I found it even more amazing that the statements did not provoke widespread outrage. As a nation, we treated the issue with remarkable insouciance. Here was a direct violation of the most fundamental value of Americans at war—we don’t torture—and we wobbled.

“It has always been done,” many said, “we just didn’t know about it before,” as if ignorance justified it. Or we dabbled in sophistry about the precise definition of torture, how much pain could be inflicted, under what circumstances it might be permitted, whether we should consider the obscene idea of a judicial warrant permitting torture.

Torture is wrong. Outlawing torture will not prevent every abuse, but we must keep the bar high. Torture must remain a crime. Violations must remain individual choices, with the consequences well understood. Abuse cannot be national policy. Officials who reject that position might be reminded that with authorization comes inescapable accountability.

America will be judged not just by what we say, but by what we do. We cannot claim to be a nation of laws, a champion of democracy, when we too easily accept a disturbing pattern of ignoring inconvenient rules, justifying our actions by extraordinary circumstances, readily resorting to extrajudicial actions.
based on broad assertions of unlimited executive authority, and espousing public arguments against any constraints on how we treat those in our custody. The defense of democracy demands the defense of democracy’s ideals. To ignore this is to risk alienation and isolation. And defeat.

Upholding our values may at times be inconvenient. It may mean, in some circumstances, accepting additional risks. But America has fought wars to defend what its citizens regard as inalienable rights. The country has faced dangers greater than all of the terrorists in the world put together. Neither the terrorists nor those who would promise us protection against terror should compel us to compromise our commitments. The campaign against terrorism is a contest not only of strength and will, but of conviction, commitment, and courage. It will ultimately determine who will live in fear. The choice, ultimately, is ours.

Our most effective defense against terrorism will come not from surveillance, concrete barriers, metal detectors, or new laws. It will come from our own virtue, our courage, our continued dedication to the ideals of a free society. It will come from our realism in the acceptance of risk, our stoicism in the face of threats, our self-reliance, our humanity, our sense of community, expressed too fleetingly in times of disaster. It will come from our fierce determination, despite the risks, to defend our liberties and to protect our values, for which we have fought many wars. These are the kinds of defenses—the ones that come from deep within—that will make us an unconquerable nation.

The defense of democracy demands the defense of democracy’s ideals. To ignore this is to risk alienation and isolation. And defeat.

Related Reading


Suicide tactics have been adopted by a growing number of terrorist organizations around the world because the tactics are shocking, deadly, cost-effective, and very difficult to stop. There are only two requirements that an organization must be able to satisfy to get into the game: a willingness to kill and a willingness to die. Indeed, it is the ease and simplicity of suicide bombings that make them so appealing to terrorists.

The challenge in responding to suicide terrorism is not to fall victim to the psychological paralysis and sense of defenselessness or powerlessness that the terrorists hope to achieve. With the proper attention, focus, preparations, and training, this threat can be countered.

Perhaps most important is the realization that suicide terrorism is an instrument of war that is not going to end suddenly, so we in the West need to accept that a long struggle faces us. Suicide terror attacks are rational acts undertaken as part of a deliberately calculated and orchestrated campaign to undermine confidence in government and leadership, to crush popular morale, and to spread fear and intimidation. Responding to suicide terrorism must therefore be equally as calculated and just as instrumental in spurring contrary reactions.

Only by preparing for this threat before terrorists launch it can we effectively defend ourselves against both the psychological and the physical damage that such acts are designed to unleash. The police, the military, and intelligence agencies can take steps beginning far ahead in time and distance from a potential attack and ending at the moment and site of an actual attack. Although the importance of the following steps is widely recognized, they have been implemented unevenly by many countries, including the United States.

Understand the terrorists’ operational environment. Suicide bombers are rarely lone outlaws. They are preceded by long logistical trains. Thus, we should focus not just on suspected bombers but on the infrastructure required to launch and sustain the bombing campaigns. This essential spadework will lead to nothing, however, if concerted efforts are not made to circulate this information quickly and systematically within police forces, across regional jurisdictions, and among other government authorities charged with protection and defense against terrorist attack.

Develop strong confidence-building ties with the communities from which terrorists are most likely to come or in which they are most likely to hide, and mount communications campaigns to eradicate community support.
The most useful intelligence comes from places where terrorists conceal themselves and seek to establish their infrastructure. Law enforcement officers should cultivate cooperation by building strong ties with community leaders, including elected officials, civil servants, clerics, businessmen, and teachers, and thereby enlist their assistance.

Encourage businesses from which terrorists can obtain bomb-making components to alert authorities of large or unusual purchases of such items as ammonium nitrate fertilizer or the pipes, batteries, wires, and chemicals commonly used to fabricate explosives. Information about customers who simply inquire about any of these materials can also be extremely useful to police officers. Companies that either sell or distribute materials that can be used in the construction of a terrorist device must be instructed to identify and report suspicious activity to the authorities.

Force terrorists to pay more attention to their organizational and personal security than to planning and carrying out attacks. Specialized counterterrorism units, dedicated specifically to identifying and targeting the intelligence-gathering and reconnaissance activities of terrorist organizations, should be established within existing law enforcement agencies. Separate units should be formed and trained in community relations and assigned to be attentive to places—such as community centers, social clubs, schools, and religious institutions—at which organizations frequently recruit new members and bombers.

Make sure that ordinary materials do not become shrapnel. Ensure that windows on buses and subway cars are shatterproof and that seats and other accoutrements are not easily dislodged or splintered. Buses can be outfitted with barriers to make entry through rear exit doors impossible and to enable the driver to stop a suspicious person from entering the front door. Explosives sensors can also be installed at the point where passengers step up into the bus from the street.

Enlist the support of citizens in remaining alert for suspicious behavior of people on or around likely attack sites (buses, subways, historical landmarks, embassies, consulates, and well-known buildings) and in being aware of packages or bags left unattended at public venues. Although public awareness campaigns of this type have been instituted in some U.S. cities, in many cases the campaigns are insufficiently advertised, or they warn citizens simply to “be aware,” providing a toll-free telephone number without advising specifically what citizens should be aware of. Better educational campaigns are occurring in Israel today and were carried out in London from the 1970s to the 1990s during the bombing campaign of the Irish Republican Army.

Teach law enforcement awareness—what to do at the moment of an attack or attempted attack. Rigorous police training is needed for identifying a potential suicide bomber, confronting a suspect, and responding to and securing the area around an attack site in the event of an explosion. In the aftermath of a blast, the police must determine whether emergency medical crews and firefighters may enter the site. Concerns about a follow-up attack can dictate that first responders be held back until the area is secured.

An effective defense against suicide terrorism must be as nimble, flexible, and adaptive as are terrorist planning, reconnaissance, and attacks. Law enforcement cannot rest on past laurels in the areas of plans, procedures, and policies but must keep abreast of historical, existing, emergent, and probable future terrorist targeting patterns and modi operandi.

Related Reading


From the time of my arrival in Algeria until October 1957, my battalion’s quartier covered most of the Djebel Aissa Mimoun, an area five miles square. In my zone, as everywhere in Algeria, the order was to “pacify.” But exactly how?

The recollections of RAND consultant Lt. Col. David Galula, who served as a French commander in Algeria from 1956 to 1958, have a remarkable, almost timeless resonance nearly half a century later, with striking parallels to America’s recent experiences in Iraq. This essay is drawn from a RAND report written by Galula in 1963. He died in 1967 at a young age, depriving America of his guidance at a time when the United States was becoming more deeply involved in Vietnam.

I, too, had an axe to grind. There was no doubt in my mind that support from the population was the key to the whole problem for us as well as for the rebels. By “support” I mean not merely sympathy or idle approval but active participation in the struggle. A thorough census was the first step toward controlling the population. Control also meant that my soldiers had to know every villager by sight. I committed villagers to the French struggle by requisitioning their labor and paying them for their work. I opened a dispensary. I opened a school. Reflecting on who might be our potential allies in the population, I thought that the women, given their subjugated condition, would naturally be on our side if we emancipated them. I took care that the children were kept busy in school and in organized outdoor games.

From Algeria to Iraq

All But Forgotten Lessons from Nearly 50 Years Ago

By David Galula

The majority of Algerians voted for independence from French colonial rule in a nationwide referendum held July 1 of that year.
as an order and executed. Boys and girls regularly went to school, moving without protection in spite of the threats and terrorist actions against Moslem children going to French schools. Every field was cultivated. As they recognized the difference between their prospering environment and those surrounding areas still in the grip of hostilities, villagers were easily convinced of the need to preserve their peace by helping to prevent rebel infiltration.

Throughout the war our prisoner camps were open for unannounced inspection by the International Red Cross, the reports of which were made public. As was the case with every one of our activities, for a long time no standard pattern governed our conduct toward the prisoners, and the atmosphere varied greatly from camp to camp. In the best camps, efforts were made to sift the tough prisoners from the soft; where it was not done, the camps became schools for rebel cadres. In some camps, by contrast, psychological experts thought they could convert prisoners by having them repeat regularly certain slogans and songs.

The lack of a concrete, precise doctrine resulted in a mosaic pattern of pacification in the field. My battalion’s quartier could be considered as well advanced. Immediately to the north of us, rebels still controlled the population.

The war in Algeria broadly conformed to the characteristics of revolutionary war. And the essential “laws” of counterinsurgent warfare, as I see them, had to be respected by us. In all probability, these laws will apply to counterinsurgencies elsewhere.

The first law. The objective is the population. The population is at the same time the real terrain of the war. Destruction of the rebel forces and occupation of the geographic terrain led us nowhere as long as we did not control and get the support of the population.

The second law. The support from the population is not spontaneous and in any case must be organized. It can be obtained only through the efforts of the minority among the population that favors the counterinsurgent.

The third law. This minority will emerge, and will be followed by the majority, only if the counterinsurgent is seen as the ultimate victor. If his leadership is irresolute and incompetent, he will never find a significant number of supporters.

The fourth law. Seldom is the material superiority of the counterinsurgent so great that he can literally saturate the entire territory. The means required to destroy or expel the main guerrilla forces, to control the population, and to win its support are such that, in most cases, the counterinsurgent will be obliged to concentrate his efforts area by area.

As the war lasts, the war itself becomes the central issue, and the ideological advantage of the insurgent decreases considerably. The population’s attitude is dictated not by the intrinsic merits of the contending causes, but by the answer to these two simple questions: Which side is going to win? Which side threatens the most, and which offers the most protection?

What I achieved in the Djebel Aissa Mimoun was not due to magic and could have been applied much earlier throughout Algeria. I am not writing all this to show what a genius I was, but to point out how difficult it is to convince people, especially the military, to change traditional ways and adapt themselves to new conditions.

Destruction of the rebel forces and occupation of the geographic terrain led us nowhere as long as we did not control and get the support of the population.

Related Reading


Hundreds of emergency workers who responded to the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center towers in New York City five years ago have become permanently disabled from the exposures at ground zero, primarily from respiratory illnesses. To reduce the extent of such injuries in the future, we at RAND have proposed guidelines for better protecting emergency responders from the numerous hazards produced when large buildings collapse.

It is prudent for emergency response agencies in urban areas across the United States to make contingency plans for the hazards of multistory-building collapses, even though such events have been infrequent. As seen in the past, causes of building collapses—earthquakes, natural gas explosions, engineering defects, construction failures, or terrorist attacks—can occur anywhere in the country. Hazards from the collapse of a multistory building are larger and more uncertain than usual, and the duration of the response is much longer than usual, requiring protection that is different from what emergency responders are typically provided.

In conducting our study, we reviewed all potential hazards that could be present following a tall building collapse, all missions that emergency responders may have to conduct, and the full range of emergency workers who are most likely to respond to large structural collapses. These include police officers; urban search and rescue units; fire, medical, and hazardous materials teams; and construction and utilities support personnel.

Although our guidelines encompass the duration of an emergency response, our emphasis is on protection during the first hours and days after a collapse. This is the critical time for rescue operations and also the time when the hazards are greatest, the logistical challenges are toughest, and the exposure monitoring might not be available, making the full extent of hazards highly uncertain.

The greatest risks facing emergency responders in the immediate aftermath of a building collapse are the chemicals that could be inhaled. Asbestos and crystalline silica are of particular concern because of their toxicity and prevalence in building materials. Such chemical hazards are the most difficult ones to identify, and the respirators often used to protect responders from these hazards can be heavy and cumbersome. A critical challenge in selecting respiratory protection from tall building collapses is choosing equipment that provides the required protection but does not impede the ability of responders to work and maneuver.

In addition to dangerous chemicals that could be inhaled, a diverse array of hazards can be expected in a building collapse environment: rubble and debris, protruding rebar and steel trusses, unstable surfaces, dust from pulverized glass and concrete, harmful metals, heat, standing water, severed electrical lines, excessive noise, and oxygen-deficient air due to smoke and fire.

The greatest risks . . . are the chemicals that could be inhaled. Asbestos and crystalline silica are of particular concern.
The following guidelines propose how emergency responders should assess the hazards, select protective equipment, and manage safety:

- Until hazard monitoring results are available, emergency responders should assess the hazards using visual cues and readily available information. Visual cues include the presence of dust, smoke, or fire. Other available information pertains to the building’s structural materials, contents, and commercial tenants.
- Air-purifying respirators should be available to emergency responders working at a collapse site. Unlike standard firefighter gear that uses an air tank, the proposed types of respirators use cartridges, weigh less, and last longer. If conditions allow, responders can wear half-mask respirators, which cover just the nose and mouth, as opposed to full face-piece respirators.
- Responders who will be treating victims or handling human remains should wear gloves, goggles or face shields, and water-resistant clothing and boots—all to shield the hands, eyes, face, and body from pathogens. Bloodborne, waterborne, and airborne diseases can be serious, but exposures to these biological hazards are easily identifiable and avoidable.
- Individuals without respiratory protection who are exposed to the dust cloud from a building collapse should be removed from the site and given medical treatment.
- Responders without protective equipment should not be allowed to enter hazardous areas at a building collapse site.

Beyond proposing guidelines for the selection and use of personal protective equipment, we offer these recommendations for logistic support and safety training:

- Responders in cities with tall buildings should have quick access to the protective equipment specified above.
- Because search-and-rescue operations might extend over many days, emergency planning should include provisions for decontaminating and replacing personal protective equipment.
- Training for emergency responders should include risk assessments and the use of protective equipment appropriate for building collapses. Everyone likely to be involved in the response effort—police officers, firefighters, urban search-and-rescue units, medical and hazardous materials teams, construction and utility workers—needs this training.

Our report was the fourth in a series of RAND studies examining the safety and health risks for emergency responders at the sites of terrorist attacks and natural disasters. This report was prepared for the National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

Related Reading


The 9/11 terrorist attacks and subsequent anthrax attacks pushed public health emergency preparedness in the United States to the top of the national agenda. Concern has intensified with the feeble response to the 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes and with the growing possibility of a pandemic caused by the H5N1 avian influenza virus.

The U.S. federal government has responded with an investment of some $5 billion during the past four years to upgrade the public health system’s capacity to prevent and respond to large-scale public health emergencies, whether terrorism related or due to natural agents. Yet the federal government’s call to arms on preparedness has fallen upon a system still in the process of recovering from years of neglect. Public health has traditionally been underfunded, and often ignored, by policymakers.

Our team at RAND has examined America’s public health infrastructure through a series of related projects, including an assessment of California’s public health preparedness, the development and conduct of tabletop exercises in 32 communities in 12 states, and a review of quality improvement efforts in public health. All told, our team has visited 44 communities in 17 states. Taken together, these assessments suggest that public health is in the midst of a major transition, spurred in part by the addition of emergency preparedness to the responsibilities of state and local public health agencies.

Key changes include new partnerships, new workforce needs, new technologies, and the integration of emergency preparedness with other public health functions. While each of these factors has had some positive effects on public health, they have not been managed without problems. The preparedness mission has also posed major challenges for public health in the areas of leadership, quality, and accountability.

Key Changes

The process of preparing a community to meet the challenges of a potential public health emergency has required public health departments to build relationships with new kinds of partners—emergency management agencies, law enforcement agencies, and other first responders—in addition to the hospital and health care community. Preparedness planning has been instrumental in forging these new relationships.
Communication and working relationships between many of these entities is better than in the pre-9/11 era, despite persistent differences among the communities in culture, work style, and mission.

Most health departments are facing difficulties related to staff availability and budgets. Many states currently have hiring freezes in place. There is no robust pipeline of trained personnel to work in public health, and salaries for public health nurses, epidemiologists, laboratory technicians, and physicians are often not competitive with those of their private-sector counterparts. An aging workforce has compounded workforce shortages in public health.

Many communities have invested in technology that enables public health officials, emergency medical services, fire departments, and police departments to communicate on the same radio frequencies even when power is not available. Federal funding has spurred other advances in the information technology infrastructure, from a national Health Alert Network and Laboratory Response Network (both for electronic reporting of diseases) to statewide systems for conducting surveillance and investigating outbreaks.

The integration of emergency preparedness with other public health functions has not been easy to implement. Public health agencies that have made strides to integrate preparedness with other functions seem to have better performance on preparedness exercises. In contrast, less well-integrated health departments have either tended to perform poorly on tabletop exercises or reported other challenges in responding to real events.

Major Challenges

One clear and consistent finding from our work concerns the role of strong leadership in public health preparedness. In our exercises with agencies, strong leadership repeatedly trumped all other factors in determining how jurisdictions fared when presented with a wide range of scenarios related to infectious disease outbreaks. The performance of health departments whose leaders were willing to take responsibility and make decisions in a hypothetical situation was far better than the performance of departments whose leaders said they would be willing to be coleaders with others.

Leaders were important in facilitating organizational change, motivating staff, developing relationships with key community groups and other constituencies, training staff to assume backup roles in the event of an outbreak, conducting strategic planning, and understanding when and where to hand off functions to officials from other agencies. Although our work to date has not examined closely the best means of developing and promoting strong public health leadership, we noted that successful health jurisdictions often provided aggressive leadership training programs for staff.

Because so much of public health preparedness depends on other routine functions and responsibilities of public health departments, we have been able to gain insights into the state of governmental public health more broadly. From that perspective, we argue that there is a “quality chasm” in public health that is analogous to that in the personal health care delivery system. Evidence for this chasm includes the marked variability in mission, scope, and performance of public health agencies, related to preparedness and other core responsibilities; the duplication of efforts seen in many areas of preparedness, such as training; and the uneven protection of the public in the event of a public health emergency. Beyond preparedness, health departments differ, for example, in the amount of emphasis placed on chronic disease prevention, such as obesity and diabetes.

There is a “quality chasm” in public health that is analogous to that in the personal health care delivery system.

Nearly 4,000 turkeys are held in one of 219 buildings on the Jaindl Farm in Orefield, Penn., where about 750,000 turkeys are raised per year. Pennsylvania public health officials say they have been preparing intensively for an avian flu pandemic that could strike nearly 13 percent of the human population and cause some 9,000 deaths statewide.

AP PHOTO/RICK SMITH
Public health has made significant progress in the area of performance measurement in general but has lacked the kinds of methods that have been developed to compare outcomes in the personal health care sector, making it difficult to compare outcomes across different public health systems. In the area of preparedness, the lack of well-accepted, standardized measures and metrics makes it difficult to gauge the level of preparedness, let alone to satisfy the numerous and frequent demands for accountability.

An important precondition for the development of an effective accountability system is greater agreement among stakeholders at the federal, state, and local levels regarding who should do what. Ironically, the advent of needed public health preparedness grants from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention soon after 9/11 posed significant challenges for the complex web of federal, state, and local government relationships that constitute the nation’s public health system. Unfortunately, the initial funds were distributed so rapidly that there was little time to determine which level of government should be responsible for what. In the ensuing years, there has been little clarification about the allocation of responsibilities between federal, state, and local public health agencies. Resolving this ambiguity is an important prerequisite for holding various governmental entities accountable for their performance and expenditures.

A key dilemma is that because massive public health emergencies are rare, we must rely on exercises and drills to measure the capacity to implement and to adapt an emergency response plan. Such exercises can be quite expensive. However, our team has been developing a model of relatively small-scale drills and exercises that focus on the most important preparedness components and that apply an accompanying small number of standardized metrics. At the same time, we urge similar efforts that take advantage of more routine activities, such as those surrounding annual flu vaccinations or back-to-school immunizations, to test other aspects of preparedness. Creative development of such drills, which is a core part of our team’s work, offers the potential not only to enhance emergency preparedness but also to strengthen other aspects of public health.

Measurement of performance, of course, must be supplemented by efforts to develop and to implement corrective actions, and repeatedly we have seen health departments struggle in this area. We are now pilot testing methods to spread the adoption of quality improvement in public health; but we recognize that, in the long run, external incentives will be necessary.

**Vital Commitments**

Part of the reason for the current state of public health is that it has been significantly underfunded for a long time. Preparedness has raised the stakes regarding the implications of relying on a chronically underfunded system. Sustained federal funding for public health preparedness, and for the infrastructure on which it depends, will remain important for years to come. As the public health workforce ages into retirement, the assurance of an attractive career path for “the best and the brightest” in public health will be crucial.

The country also needs a uniform definition of public health as well as standard expectations for public health agencies. Even though today no clear national understanding exists of what public health is and does, the demand for emergency health preparedness has at least helped to create an understanding among Americans that all citizens should be protected from the consequences of a public health emergency, whether due to bioterrorism or a new emerging infection such as pandemic influenza.

The National Association of County and City Health Officials has taken steps to develop a uniform definition of a local public health agency. If widely
adopted, this definition could help reduce uncertainty about what the public can expect from such an agency and should also encourage the analogous clarification of expectations from state health departments. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention could, in turn, clarify the aspects of preparedness for which it is accountable and develop a set of performance measures for itself. Taken together, such actions could go a long way toward creating a more uniform standard of health protection for the nation.

As is often the case when individuals or institutions are asked to assume new and difficult responsibilities, the circumstances present a series of opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, the emergency preparedness mission can help public health leaders transform the nation’s public health system so that it can respond effectively and economically to a broadening spectrum of health threats. On the other hand, sustained commitments will be necessary to move the public health system toward this goal.

**Related Reading**

**RAND Research in Journal Publications**


“Public Health Preparedness: Evolution or Revolution?” *Health Affairs*, July 2006, Nicole Lurie, Jeffrey Wasserman, Christopher Nelson.


**RAND Corporation Publications**


*Tabletop Exercise for Pandemic Influenza Preparedness in Local Public Health Agencies*, David J. Dausey, Julia E. Aledort, Nicole Lurie, RAND/TR-319-DHHS, 2006, available online only, at www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR319/.


Hurricanes and Other Higher Callings
These Things We Cannot Ignore

By James A. Thomson

James Thomson is president and chief executive officer of the RAND Corporation.

Nearly 12 months after they were first broadcast live, the television images from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita continue to haunt America’s collective psyche. Desperate people clinging to rooftops and clamoring for help. Daring helicopter rescues. Flattened, flooded, deserted neighborhoods. Corpses floating down inundated city streets. Looting and martial law. Towns gone. Schools, hospitals, and businesses destroyed or “blue roofed.”

There’s no question that significant portions of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi are still in a shambles a year after these traumatic events. But where America stands with respect to the recovery effort is less certain. Many Americans have been tempted to turn away, to shake their heads, and to say that the region’s problems are so overwhelming, confused, chaotic, political, and so stymied and stuck that no solution seems possible. Some have questioned policies that allow flood victims “to choose to live where it’s going to flood.” Still other Americans, seeing residents returning to New Orleans or businesses being reconstructed in Mississippi, have decided that the region is starting to get a handle on its problems and should not receive further assistance.

None of these impressions is completely accurate, but all of them collectively have dampened financial and political support for the massive recovery effort that lies ahead. Perhaps at no other time in America’s history has there been such a confluence of issues—pertaining to health care, education, poverty, infrastructure, energy, and the environment—that will require long-term, multidisciplinary, interconnected policy solutions.

At RAND, we consider the torrent of problems that have befallen the Gulf region—both those that directly resulted from the hurricanes and those that came to light in their aftermath—to be an unmistakable calling for objective analysis and innovative policymaking. That’s why in late 2005 we partnered with seven universities in the region, three of which are historically black institutions, to create the RAND Gulf States Policy Institute (RGSPI) in Jackson, Miss., and have since allocated $2 million to the endeavor from funds donated to RAND or earned by RAND on contracts.

Why was it so important for RAND to set up a Gulf office, which was both risky and unprecedented? Why were we willing to commit such a large portion of RAND discretionary dollars? What does RAND want to get out of this? Here is my answer: We have a deep sense of mission to public service. The hurricanes presented us with a professional obligation—if not a moral obligation—to use our experience and expertise to help an entire region envision, develop, and implement comprehensive public policy strategies. We gain our greatest sense of accomplishment from tackling the toughest public policy problems and solving them on behalf of the public good.

Today, RGSPI is focusing on long-term rebuilding and disaster preparation. It is taking a systems approach to the Gulf area’s multiple challenges. Already, RGSPI has analyzed repopulation trends in New Orleans, evaluated options to rebuild affordable housing in hurricane-ravaged portions of Mississippi, studied hurricane-induced student displacement in Louisiana, and investigated school mental health programs in hurricane-affected areas of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas.

In all these efforts, we are supporting only those projects for which there are organizations committed to using the results. We are also committed to outreach efforts so that our work can benefit the communities in greatest need.

It’s clear that RAND is making a difference. But it is just as clear that in the post-Katrina, post-Rita world, we have an obligation to make a difference in the Gulf states. RAND’s long-standing dedication to research in the public interest and its ability to take interdisciplinary approaches to difficult problems make it one of the few research institutions in the world—if not the only institution—that could spearhead this enormous effort. We’re committed to doing our part.
How We Prevail

Unconquerable Nation
Knowing Our Enemy, Strengthening Ourselves
Brian Michael Jenkins

As the United States battles a fierce insurgency in Iraq, pursues a tenacious Taliban movement in Afghanistan, and wages a global campaign to dismantle the jihadist terrorist enterprise responsible for 9/11, many Americans are asking, “Where are we in this global struggle? Who are we fighting? What are we fighting against? What are we fighting for?”

Brian Michael Jenkins, an internationally renowned authority on terrorism, presents a clear-sighted and sober analysis of where we are today in the struggle against terrorism. He distills the jihadists’ operational code and suggests how they might assess their situation very differently than how we might do so. He outlines a ferociously pragmatic but principled approach that goes beyond attacking terrorist networks and operational capabilities to defeating their entire missionary enterprise by deterring their recruitment, encouraging defections, and converting those in captivity.

Jenkins believes that homeland security should move beyond gates and guards and become the impetus for rebuilding America’s decaying infrastructure. We need to adopt a realistic approach to risk and get a lot smarter about security. We need to build upon American traditions of determination and self-reliance. Above all, we need to preserve our commitment to American values. Preserving these values is no mere matter of morality, he argues; it is a strategic imperative.

Jenkins brings to his analysis the steady, calming, informed perspective of a historian. At the same time, he brings to his prose the driving rhythm, no-nonsense language, passion, and energy of a warrior. Unconquerable Nation is a powerful statement from a man who has dedicated his life to defending America, who has been dismayed by the propagation of homegrown terror, and yet who refuses to surrender his faith in what he believes are America’s finest, unconquerable values.

CONTENTS

How We Prevail • An Appreciation of the Situation • Knowing Our Enemy • A Sharper Sword: Strategic Principles for Defeating Today’s Enemy • A Durable Shield: Strategies for Strengthening Ourselves • Appendix A: Chronology of Jihadist Attacks Since September 11, 2001 • Appendix B: What Were They Thinking About Doing? • Bibliography: Combating Terrorism: A Reading List • Index

About the Author

Brian Michael Jenkins, one of the world’s foremost authorities on terrorism, currently serves as senior advisor to the president of the RAND Corporation. He is a former captain in the U.S. Army’s elite Special Forces, decorated for his combat service in the Dominican Republic and Vietnam. Frequently described as the dean of American terrorism research, he began writing about terrorism nearly four decades ago. He has advised governments, private corporations, the Catholic Church, the Church of England, and many other international organizations. He has served as an advisor to the U.S. Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and other government agencies.

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“Philanthropic contributions enable RAND to continue to be on the cutting edge, and I am pleased to have helped. In the 26 years I have been associated with RAND people, they have always been open to new ideas, different approaches, and unique perspectives. I applaud RAND for its consistently objective analysis in reaching effective solutions.”

Peter Norton

Generous contributions from donors such as Peter Norton enable RAND, a nonprofit institution, to fund groundbreaking research in the public interest.