

THE WAR ON TERROR

Is a Military or a Police Response
More Appropriate?

(Almost) Definition of Terrorism

“Any ... action intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants, when the purpose of such an act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population or to compel a Government or an international organization to carry out or to abstain from any act....”

Source: Draft UN Outcome Document, 8/2005

TYPES OF TERRORISM

- Nationalist Terrorism
- State-sponsored Terrorism
- Left-wing Terrorism
- Right-wing Terrorism
- Anarchist Terrorism
- Religious Terrorism

Nationalist Terrorism

Objective is to form a separate state or entity for their group

State-sponsored Terrorism

Used by radical states as a cost-effective way of waging war covertly through surrogate warriors

Left-wing Terrorism

Objective is to destroy Capitalism

Right-wing Terrorism

Objective is to eliminate liberal democracies,
replace them with fascist ones

Anarchist Terrorism

Objective is to overthrow established governments by assassinating major government leaders

Religious Terrorism

Objective is to use violence to achieve
divinely commanded purposes

Elements of Religious Terrorism

- Many faiths can be involved; Islam currently predominates
- Half of known terrorist groups are religious
- Lacks most constraints of other terrorisms
- No territorial base, global in scope
- Divine will forms operational philosophy

Need to Keep a Perspective

- Far lower casualty rate than “traditional” war
- Operates from state territories but not territorial
- Absence of larger security problems
- Threat is magnified by fear
- No threat to existence of governments or societies (WMD exception)

Is What We are Fighting Really a War?

- Term provides legitimacy to terrorism
- Exaggerates military role
- Implies only the military bear sacrifices
- Implies application of Rules of War
- Creates much conceptual confusion

But the term “War on Terrorism” retains its popular cachet

- Term “Struggle against Violent Extremism” invented
- Leaders continue to use “War” terminology
- Facts about Terrorism help define the nature and conduct of the struggle

Effective Counter-terrorism
strategies depend on the
deepening of international
coordination and joint action

Elements of Coordination

- Legal Regimes
- Intelligence Collection/Dissemination
- Police Actions
- Local Community Involvement
- Religious Collaboration
- Military Planning
- International Coordination

CONCLUSIONS

- All this is now being done
- Progress has been made, but long way to go before it is fully effective
- Both Police and Military Responses are needed
- New Role of Intelligence Forces
- Need for proper Public Affairs role
- Need to carefully monitor the line between security and civil liberties

Closing Question:

What positive benefits and advantages does
Terrorism represent for us and our
societies?