



Executive Lecture Forum

*Radvanyi Chair in International Security Studies
Mississippi State University*

“Fighting the Long War--
Military Strategy for the War on Terrorism”



Rear Admiral Bill Sullivan

Vice Director for Strategic Plans & Policy

The Joint¹ Staff



Why America Wants: a “Short War”

- A short war means lower costs in lives and national treasure.
- A short war reflects the enormous talent and power of our nation.
- To the average American, the threat to the U.S. is difficult to comprehend.
- War is alien to the peaceful nature and desires of our nation.



Why the Global War on Terrorism is a “Long War”

- The enemy is committed to his cause. He is prepared to fight to the death for what he believes is a defense of his religion.
- The enemy has a strategy with global aspirations. He estimates it will take him decades to accomplish his strategic objectives.
- It requires change within the Islamic world. Historically, such changes have taken centuries to occur.
- It requires increased partner nation capacity – armed forces, police, economic development, and good governance – to combat the violent extremist threat. Such growth takes decades to achieve.

The enemy has committed to a long war and publicly articulated his goals for decades



Violent Extremism is not a new phenomenon

“Those who study jihad will understand why Islam wants to conquer the whole world. All the countries conquered by Islam or to be conquered in the future will be marked for everlasting salvation. Islam says: Kill all the unbelievers just as they would kill you all!”

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, 1942

“[The defense of the homeland] is not the ultimate objective of the Islamic movement of jihad, but it is a means of establishing the Divine authority within it so that it becomes the headquarters for the movement of Islam, which is then to be carried throughout the earth to the whole of mankind, as the object of this religion is all humanity and its sphere of action is the whole earth.”

Sayyid Qutb, 1955

How are these objectives related to the history of the Muslim empire?



Violent Extremists: What They are Saying



"We are seeking to incite the Islamic Nation to rise up to liberate its land and to conduct Jihad for the sake of God."
- Usama bin Laden

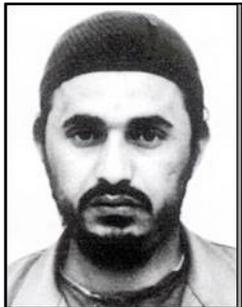
"If their economy is destroyed, they will be busy with their own affairs rather than enslaving the weak peoples. It is very important to concentrate on hitting the US economy through all possible means."
- Usama bin Laden

"Acquiring chemical and nuclear weapons for the defense of Muslims is a religious duty."
- Usama bin Laden



"The aftermath of the collapse of American power in Vietnam – and how they ran and left their agents – is noteworthy."
- al-Zawahiri to Al-Zarqawi

"Bush, reinforce your security measures. The Islamic nation which sent you the New York and Washington brigades has taken the firm decision to send you successive brigades to sow death and aspire to paradise."
- al-Zawahiri



"Oh Allah, strike the apostate rulers; Oh Allah, kill them one after the other, sparing none."
- al-Zarqawi

"Al-Zarqawi came to this arena (Iraq) only to expel the Americans from the Muslims' country and to establish an Islamic Government. This is part of the goal, because if this is not done, how will we be able to bring about coups d'etat in neighboring countries? How can we rescue Jerusalem when we have no base from which to set out?."

- Associate of Abu Musab al Zarqawi



Global War on Terrorism--Who is the enemy?

- The enemy consists of various extremist Islamic groups that espouse the use of violence to achieve their ideological aims – al Qa’ida being the most dangerous. Characteristics are:
 - **No state, no uniform, lives among the population**
 - **Believes religion is under attack and calls upon Muslims to defend Islam**
 - **Even support by 1% of the Muslim population would equate to over 12 million “enemies”**
- While we may view his beliefs as dangerously misguided....
 - **He is absolutely committed to his cause**
 - **His religious ideology successfully attracts recruits**
 - **He has a sufficient population base from which to protract the conflict**

How has the enemy become so dangerous?



How has the enemy become so dangerous?

Increasing ambitions coupled with an ever increasing capabilities gives extremists an unprecedented ability to affect world events with global ramifications

Weapons Proliferation

- IEDs
- Suicide Bombers
- Missiles
- Nuclear
- Chemical/Biological

Mass effects capture media attention

Information Technology

- Internet
- News Media
- Satellite T.V.
- Cell Phones

Ability to transmit message

Perceived Grievances

- The war in Iraq/Afghanistan
- Perception that we are fighting a war against Islam
- Palestine, Israel
- Visa, Immigration policy
- Detainee Abuse

Populace that listens and supports their message

Do we have to fight a war now? Can we wait?



World War II: A Historical Perspective

- **Despite the threat, France, Britain and the United States did nothing to stop the rise of Nazi Germany.**
- **Achieve “Peace in our Time” through appeasement.**
- **The consequences of inaction:**
 - Germany invades France and attacks Great Britain; invades North Africa, Russia and the Balkans; occupies Italy.
 - United States enters the war in 1941 after Pearl Harbor.
 - World War II costs:
 - **Lives lost: 300,000 US; 70 million worldwide (1937-45)**
 - **US war expenditures: \$3.114 Trillion (2005 dollars); 38% of GDP per year**
 - **US reconstruction expenditures: \$90 Billion over 4 years (2005 dollars); 1% of GDP per year (1948-1952)**

***Is the Global War on Terrorism a precursor to a larger conflict?
What’s the enemies plan? What might this conflict look like?***

Al Qa'ida's Plan: A Present Day Manifestation



"We are seeking to incite the Islamic Nation to rise up to liberate its land and to conduct Jihad for the sake of God." - Usama bin Laden

Objective 1: Expel American influence from Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula

Objective 2: Remove secular governments within the region

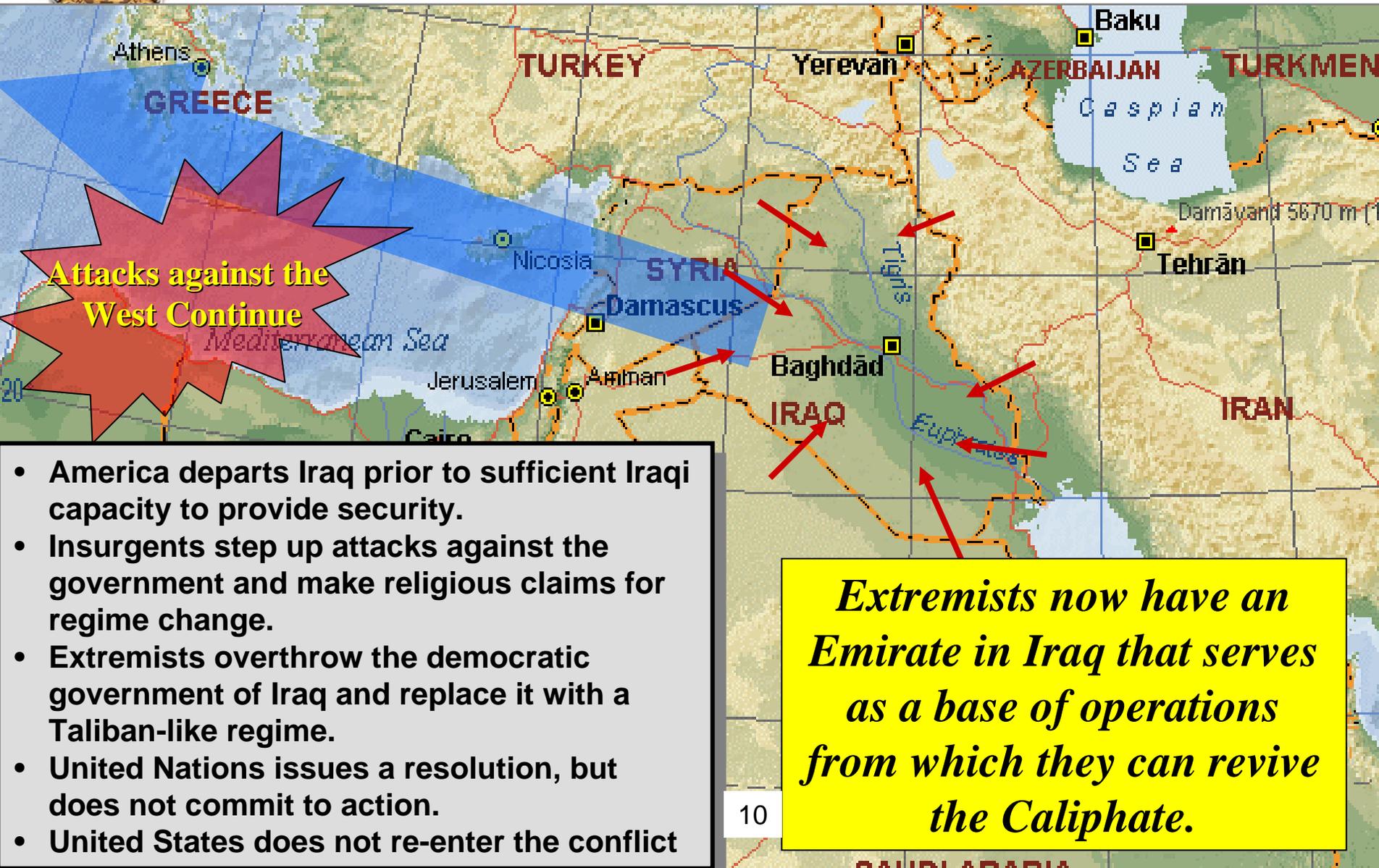
Objective 3: Eliminate Israel and purge Jewish and Christian influence

Objective 4: Expand the Muslim empire to historical significance



**Al-Zawahiri articulated these objectives to Al-Zarqawi in July 2005.
How might this strategy play out?**

Objective 1: Expel America and Establish an Islamic Authority in Iraq

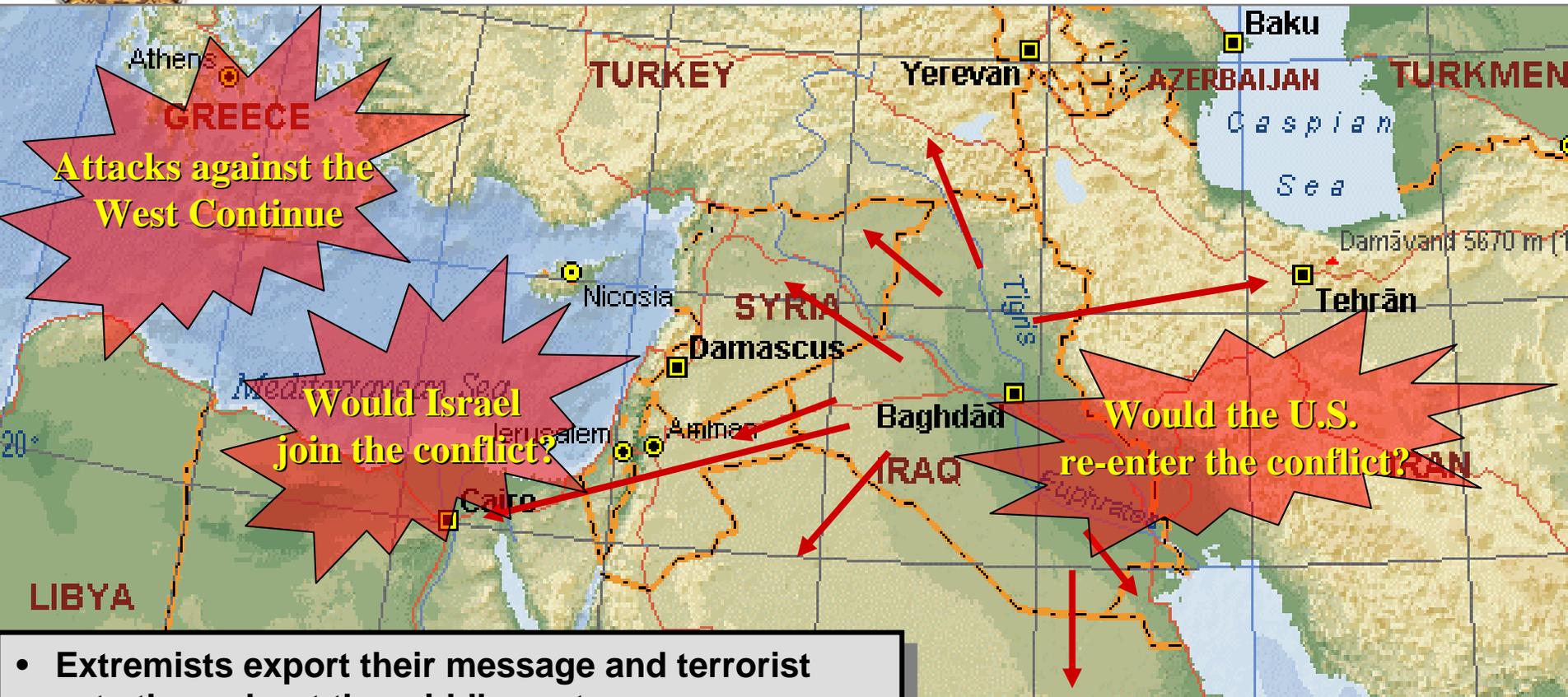


Attacks against the West Continue

- America departs Iraq prior to sufficient Iraqi capacity to provide security.
- Insurgents step up attacks against the government and make religious claims for regime change.
- Extremists overthrow the democratic government of Iraq and replace it with a Taliban-like regime.
- United Nations issues a resolution, but does not commit to action.
- United States does not re-enter the conflict

Extremists now have an Emirate in Iraq that serves as a base of operations from which they can revive the Caliphate.

Objective 2: *Extend the Jihad Wave to Neighboring Countries*



Would the U.S. re-enter the conflict?

Would Israel join the conflict?

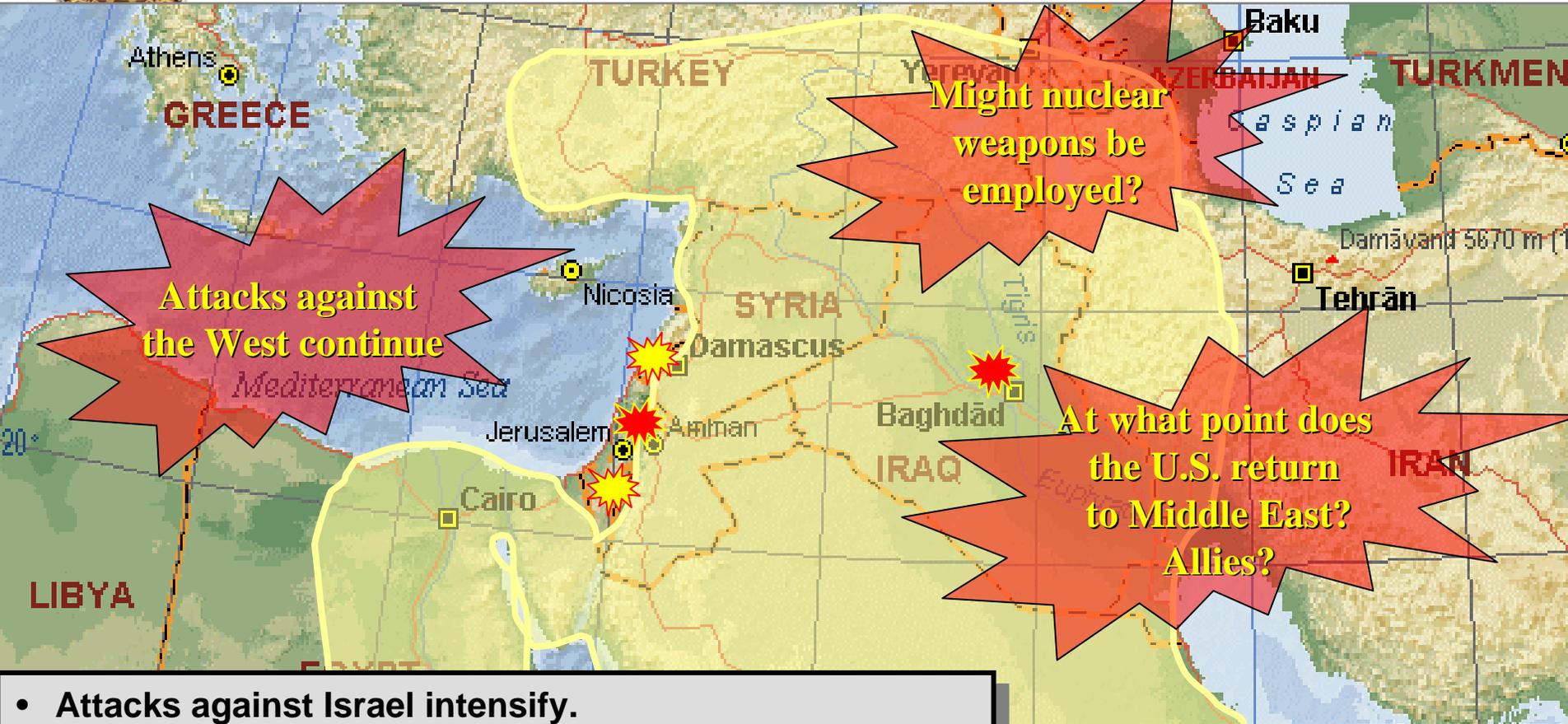
Attacks against the West Continue

The revived Caliphate now turns its attention to the destruction of Israel

- Extremists export their message and terrorist acts throughout the middle east.
- Violence and extremist ideology undermine governments of Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Egypt.
- Moderate governments collapse; Taliban-like regimes take their place.
- Baghdad becomes the capital of the Caliphate.



Objective 3: Destroy Israel



- Attacks against Israel intensify.
- United Nations issues resolution to stand down.
- Caliphate gains support within the Muslim world
- Caliphate attacks Israel

Extremists now poised to re-establish the historical Caliphate



Objective 4: Establish the historical Caliphate

- The Caliphate calls for an uprising within the remaining Islamic states to join the restoration.
- Remaining Islamic states collapse from within.



This would require the defeat of the U. S.; how could that happen?



Consider How the U.S. can be Defeated...

The United States cannot be defeated militarily. The enemy knows this. But consider:

- The world's most dangerous people possess the world's most dangerous weapons – nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons...
- Terror attacks weaken the world economy
- Continued casualties weaken national resolve
- Traditional allies prefer accommodation

Would it expand the conflict into a “clash of civilizations?” Or...

- Force our economy into a recession? Depression?
- Create political pressure for isolationism?
- Deter us from necessary action?
- Force us to reach accommodation – “Peace in our Time?”

To win, the US must exploit the vulnerabilities of the enemy. What are they?



What are the Enemy's Vulnerabilities?

- **The enemy's violent acts, vision of the future, and ideology do not reflect the beliefs of the Muslim majority:**
 - Murder of ordinary people widely unsupported within the Muslim population.
 - Repressive Taliban-like regimes do not appeal to the average Muslim.
- **The enemy has inherent weaknesses as well:**
 - “Monolithic” view of Islam underestimates cultural and religious differences
 - No military capacity to expand their fight beyond terrorist tactics
 - Underestimates the will of America and our allies



So what do we need to do? What is our strategy?



US Strategy

The three key elements in win this war are:

- Protect and defend the Homeland
- Attack terrorists and their capacity to operate effectively at home and abroad
- Support mainstream Muslim efforts to reject violent extremism

In addition to the strategic elements, there are three critical cross-cutting enablers:

- Expanding foreign partnerships and partnership capacity
- Strengthening our capacity to prevent terrorist acquisition and use of WMD
- Institutionalizing domestically and internationally the strategy against violent extremists

This war goes far beyond the borders of Iraq, Afghanistan and the Greater Middle East

National Strategy for the GWOT



Strategic Aims:

- *Defeat violent extremism as a threat to our way of life as a free and open society, and*
- *Create a global environment inhospitable to violent extremists and all who support them*

Ends

Protect and defend the Homeland

Attack terrorists and their capacity to operate effectively at home and abroad

Support mainstream Muslim efforts to reject violent extremism

Ways

Expand foreign partnerships and partnership capacity

Strengthening our capacity to prevent terrorist acquisition and use of WMD

Institutionalizing domestically and internationally the strategy against violent extremists

Means

Instruments of National Power



Military Strategic Framework for the GWOT

Ends

Strategic Goal: Preserve and promote the way of life of free and open societies based on the rule of law, defeat terrorist extremism as a threat to our way of life, and create a global environment inhospitable to terrorist extremists.

Leadership

Safe Havens

Enemy

Finance

Communication

Movement

Intelligence

Weapons

Personnel

Ideology

**Protect the
Homeland**

**Disrupt and Attack
Terrorist Networks**

**Counter Ideological
Support for Terrorism**

Deny terrorists the resources they need to operate and survive.

Enable partner nations to counter terrorism.

Deny WMD/E proliferation, recover and eliminate uncontrolled materials, and maintain capacity for consequence mgmt.

Defeat terrorists and their organizations.

Counter state and non-state support for terrorism in coordination with other U.S. Government agencies and partner nations.

Contribute to the establishment of conditions that counter ideological support for terrorism.

Military Strategic Objectives

Ways

Means

Combatant Commands, Services, and Combat Support Agencies



Defeating an Ideology: Takes Time

“The Islamic Radical threat of this century greatly resembles the bankrupt ideology of the last. The murderous ideology of the Islamic radicals is the great challenge of our century. Yet, in many ways, this fight resembles the struggle against communism in the last century.” -President Bush, 6 October 2005

- **Communism**

- Communist ideology gained prominence in 1919
- US opposition began in 1946
- 43 years of Cold and Hot War to defeat the ideology
- Communism ultimately collapsed from within

- **Violent Islamic-Based Extremism**

- Threads of history thousands of years long
- Potentially more legitimacy with a religious based ideology, especially when conditions support
- group based vs. state based – more difficult to apply cold war strategies

***Key Lesson: Marginalizing an ideology requires patience
and promoting reform from within***



Ideology: Cold War vs. Violent Extremism

Cold War Similarities:

- Measured in decades
- Requires all elements of national power
- Requires efforts of coalitions/alliances
- Extremely high stakes
 - The further spread of terrorism – “Spillover” or “Domino Theory”
 - Greater restrictions of civil liberties to stem the expanding threat
 - Moderate governments in the Middle East at risk
 - Civil unrest in countries with sizable Muslim minorities

Key Differences:

- Religious basis of violent extremism versus a political ideology
- Extremists are predominately a stateless enemy
- We cannot discredit all of Islam as we did with communism, it is a divine religion.
We can only discredit the violent extremist

“...cures must come from within Muslim societies themselves. The United States must support such developments. But this process is likely to be measured in decades, not years.” - 9/11 Commission Report



Building Capacity in the Cold War

- **Long Term Examples of Success (Decades of Support)**
 - Germany, Japan, South Korea
- **Commonalities**
 - Sustained American Presence – still today (over 50 years)
 - Significant American Investment
 - Democratic societies with free market economies
- **Payoff**
 - Partner nations stood up to Communist threats
 - All are significant allies and trading partners
 - Each is a stabilizing force within their region

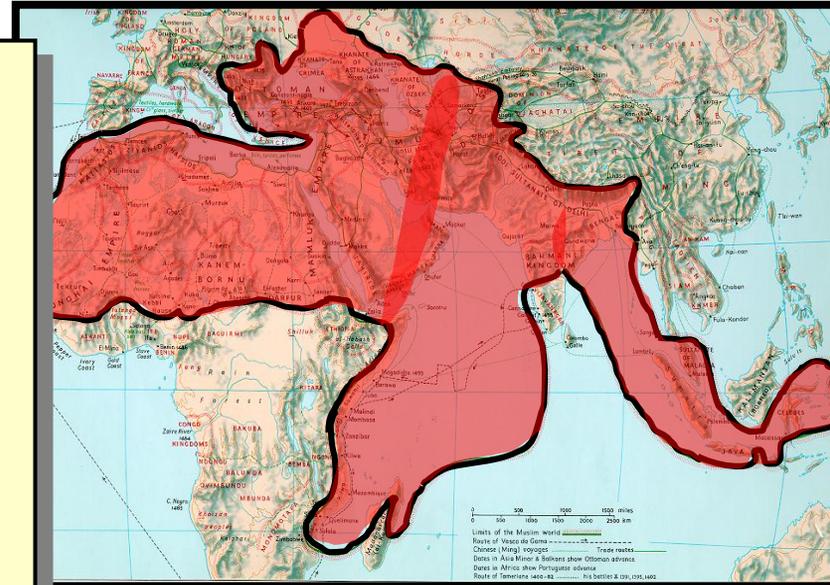
Key Lesson: Capacity building takes decades...but it is what allows the United States to win this war in the long term.



What are the Implications of Quitting? Failure?

- Violent extremist overthrow the government of Iraq.
- U.S. image damaged throughout the world – an emboldened enemy
- Resource rich save havens for the enemy – increasing our risk of attack
- Failure to stop the enemy now, while he is relatively weak, portends a larger conflict later – at enormous costs.

- **Much of the worlds energy resources held hostage**
- **Many of the world's population repressed and isolated from growth and prosperity**
- **Extremists with the resources to carry-on continued attacks**
- **Countries isolated from a global trading economy**
- **Other religious beliefs repressed**
- **American security and standard of living at jeopardy**

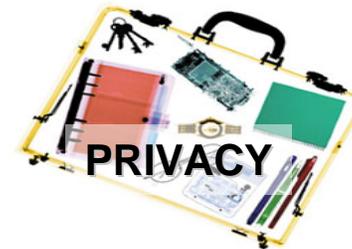


So, how do we commit to a “Long War?”

Americans will commit to a “Long War” if:



- They understand our enemy and the threat he poses to the future of America.
- They understand our strategy and how long it will take to complete it.
- They are confident our leaders know what they are doing.
- They know we have what it takes to defeat the enemy.
- Our leaders communicate our actions plainly and honestly.



It is a “Long War”-- but it is a war we can and must win



QUESTIONS?



Backup

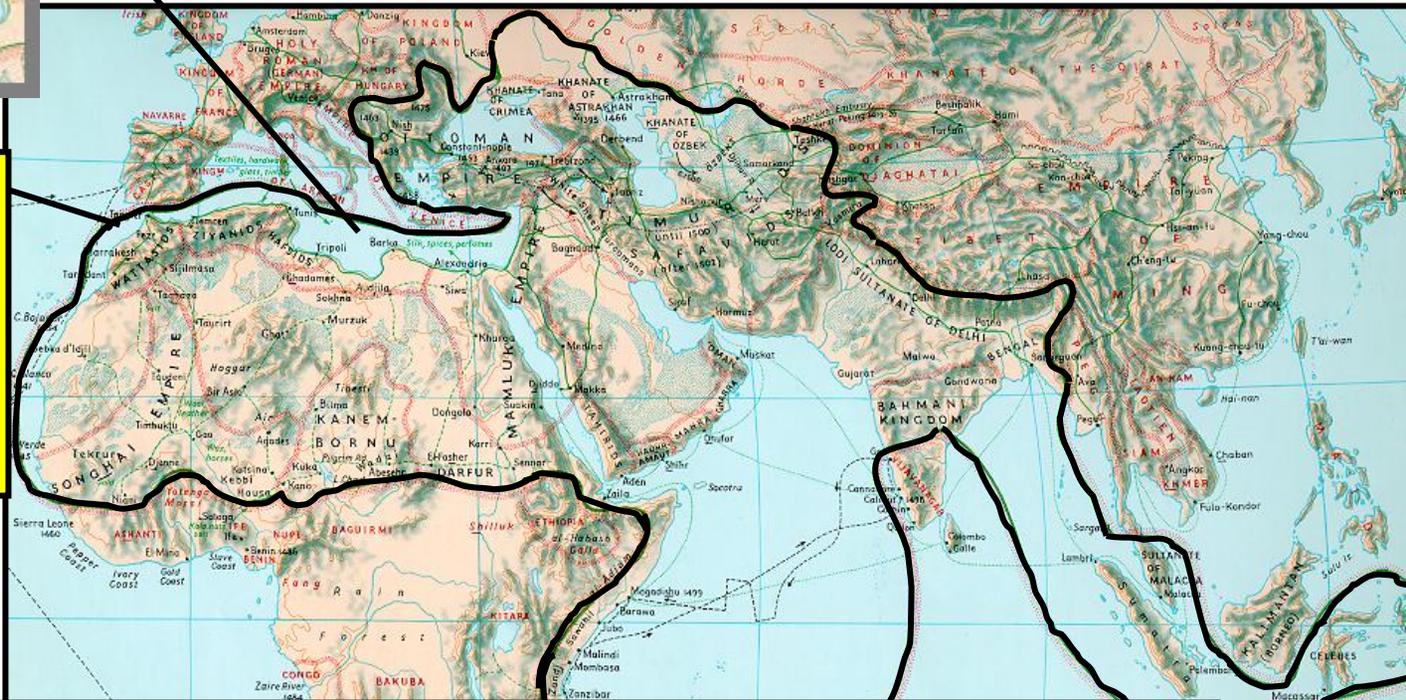


How does history impact our Enemy's Perspective?



In A.D. 900, the Caliphate included most of present day Spain and portions of France and Italy

The expanse of the Caliphate by 1500 included most of Africa, the middle east, much of SW Asia, and SE Europe.



The enemy is focused on the history of the Muslim world – which drives much of the extremist ideology



Global Application of Strategy

Ongoing Missions

- Deny Safe Havens
- Build Capacity
- Amplify Moderates
- Improve Governance
- Secure WMD
- Attack Terrorists
- Develop Partnerships
- Economic Development
- Educate & Train



While actions are ongoing, long term efforts are required